

Rehabilitate urban poor who contribute one-third of GDP

Speakers tell dialogue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a dialogue yesterday called for rehabilitating the urban poor instead of evicting them as they make significant contributions to urban development.

They urged the caretaker government to provide the urban poor with medical, educational and housing facilities so that they can survive in urban areas and curb their poverty.

The dialogue titled 'Urban poor of Bangladesh: Their contributions and achievements' was organised jointly by the Centre for Urban Studies (CUS) and Annyeshan in cooperation with Manusher Jonno Foundation at the National Press

Club in the city.

CUS Chairman Dr Nazrul Islam moderated the discussion where its Honorary Secretary Dr Nurul Islam Nazim presented the keynote paper.

The paper stated that despite lack of facilities number of poor people is increasing in urban areas.

Their number was 13.2 million in 2000 and in 2007 this number stands at around 15 million, the paper added.

Taking part in the discussion Dr Atiur Rahman of Dhaka University (DU) said there should be specific strategy for the urban poor who contribute one-third of the GDP.

Due to their evction from the urban areas, a negative impact has been witnessed in city life as well as

on the total economy, he added.

DU Prof MM Akash criticised the previous political governments including the caretaker one for pushing out the poor people from the urban areas.

He urged the caretaker government to take measurers so that the poor people could get the basic facilities including income, education, health and others.

Dr Humaiara Islam, founding executive director of Shakti Foundation for Disadvantaged Women, and Sagufta Yasmin, general secretary of Annyeshan, also took part in the discussion.

'Over 1 lakh held, 60 killed in crossfire or in custody in last 3 months'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 109,509 people were arrested while 60 were killed in encounters or crossfire with law enforcing agencies or under their custody in the last three months, says an Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK) press release.

ASK compiled the report based on the information available on the national newspapers.

40 people were killed in encounters with Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) while 20 died under police custody, said the ASK report.

During the period cases were filed against 33 journalists, while 29 were tortured, harassed and threatened to death, one was killed, and 20 others were threatened by law enforcers.

Militants harassed, threatened or tortured 35, law enforcers did so to 20 and hoodlums to 18 journalists, ASK noted.

Twenty-five prisoners also died during this period while Border Security Force of India killed 38 in shootouts and abducted 22.

Manju urged to withdraw decision

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders and activists of Jatiya Party and its front organisations yesterday urged Anwar Hossain Manju to withdraw his decision of retiring from politics, says a press release.

Manju should withdraw his decision of quitting politics for the greater interest of the nation, they added.

Seasoned politician and Chairman of a faction of Jatiya Party (JP) Anwar Hossain Manju announced his retirement from politics on March 23.



PHOTO: STAR

Dr Nazrul Islam speaks at a dialogue titled 'Urban poor of Bangladesh: Their contributions and achievements' at National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his right are Prof MM Akash and Dr Atiur Rahman.

'Steps to be taken for permanent CHT peace'

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign and CHT Affairs Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury yesterday said initiatives will be taken to ensure sustainable peace and overall development in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

He said this at a meeting with the chairmen of CHT Councils at his ministry.

As the chairmen apprised him of various problems, he assured them of resolving those gradually.

CHT Regional Council Chairman Jyotindra Bodhipriya Lama popularly known as Shantu Lama, CHT Task Force Chairman Samiron Dewan, and chairmen of Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban district councils attended the meeting.