

'Try war criminals to end crime against humanity'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar on Thursday said crime against humanity will continue unless war criminals are brought to justice.

"The crime against humanity will not end and continue taking place if we fail to punish the war criminals. The incidents of August 21 bomb attack, killing of former finance minister Kibria and former AL lawmaker Ahsan Ullah Master are chilling reminders of the trend of crime against humanity," said Dhaka University Vice Chancellor Prof. Arefin Siddique.

"Those who were defeated in 1971 had divided the nation with the concept of nationalism in a bid to end their agony of defeat. They have created the controversy to gain parochial political benefit. Trial of war criminals is the demand of 15 crore people in the country," he added.

Titled 'War criminals versus common nationalism', the seminar was organised by Bangladesh war-maimed freedom fighters and martyred family welfare organisation and international central command parishad at Liberation War

Museum yesterday afternoon.

Prof. Arefin also mentioned said the war criminals have posed a major threat to the nation, and have been carrying out militant activities in the country taking an advantage of the nascent democracy.

"We do not want any token trial of 30 to 50 war criminals but all of them," said poet Abdul Khaleque.

Journalist Khanadaker Muzammil Haque said, "There must have some topic and matters in a country upon which the countrymen should unite irrespective of their religious belief, opinion and race."

Mahtab Hossain, international affairs secretary of the organisation, read out a keynote paper which placed a set of seven-point recommendations badly necessary for freedom fighters.

The points include fixing an honourable remuneration for freedom fighters, making Mukti Juddha welfare trust an effective and profitable institution and immediate step to make sure that fake freedom fighters are excluded from the list of freedom fighters and gazette notification.



Editor and Publisher of The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam receives the National Environment Award 2009 on behalf of the newspaper from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the city yesterday while State Minister for Environment and Forest Mostafizur Rahman, second from right, looks on. (Story on Page 1)

'Free rivers from encroachers, polluters'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Green Voice, an organisation working for environment, demanded steps to free the rivers, including Buriganga, Turag, Shitalakhya and Balu, from encroachers and make them pollution-free.

They placed the demand at a human chain formed in front of the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

They also demanded steps to compel the industry owners to set up effluent treatment plants, stopping dumping of untreated wastes into the rivers, implementing wetland protection act strictly, and conducting drives to evict or demolish illegal structures on the bank of rivers.

Green Voice Coordinator Alamgir Kabir, convener of the National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Power and Port engineer Sheikh Md Shahidullah, member secretary of Buriganga Bachao Andolon Mihir Biswas, and Bidhan Chandra Pal, among others, spoke at the event.

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Primary edn cadre service demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of primary school teachers yesterday demanded separate primary education cadre service to appoint competent teachers.

They made the demand at a discussion titled 'Primary education and expectation of teachers' organised by Bangladesh Prathamik Shikkhak Samity (Bangladesh Primary Teachers Association) at the National Press Club in the city.

Their ten-point demand also included untrack system in primary education, higher pay scale, removal of promotion-related complexity, and involvement of primary teachers in primary education-related policies.

"Primary school teachers are the backbone of education but in some cases we fail to show due respect to them. Their salary is very poor," said Home Minister Sahara Khatun while speaking as chief guest at the discussion.

She said the present government will pay due respect to primary school teachers, but it is a decision that might take several years to implement, she added.

JSD President and member of parliamentary standing committee on post and tele-communication ministry Hasanul Haque Inu, and other Members of Parliament Shagufta Yasmin, Atiur Rahman Atik and Talukder Md Yunus also took part in the discussion.

In a written statement, association Secretary General BM Asad Ullah said there are about 38,000 government primary schools employing about 1.8 lakh teachers who teach about one crore students.

He urged the government to take steps to save primary education and thousands of primary teachers and their families across the country.

He said the deprived professionals who are getting very low salary in comparison to other government staffs.

The salary of a primary school teacher is less than that of an upper division clerk or a driver of a government official, he added.

Association President Wahiduzzaman Mia also spoke on the occasion.

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