



Students of marginalised communities pose for photograph with Jahangir Kabir Nanak, Shaheen Anam and Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed at a programme at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

'Ensure economic emancipation of marginalised communities'

DU CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a programme yesterday demanded equal rights of the members of the communities and opportunities in all sectors, including education, in a bid to develop their living standards.

They called on the government to ensure economic emancipation and empowerment of the members of the communities to remove their age-old misery and suffering.

Representatives from Dalits, Harijans (untouchables), Hijras (hermaphrodites), Disabled and other marginalised communities said they are repressed and have been facing discrimination for eras in society, though they have been providing some important services.

They said this at a programme organised by Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) and its associate bodies at the National Press Club in the city marking the World Dignity Day on Saturday.

A total of 45 students of different communities who have come out SSC and HSC examinations successfully with Grade Point Average (GPA) A+ and A this year were also honoured at the programme.

Dipali Das of Bangladesh Dalit Parishad said members of the Dalit community have been bearing the main brunt of discrimination for years.

Pinki Shikder, a member of Badhan, an organisation working for Hijra community, said Hijras are deprived of their basic human rights.

"We want our dignity like others in the society," Pinki demanded.

Milan Das, director of Paritiran, an organisation of Dalits, demanded separate quota for the students of Dalit community in higher education.

Nirmal Chandra Das, secretary general of Bangladesh Harijan Oikya Parishad, said the families of 11 freedom fighters in Harijan community do not get any facilities like those of other freedom fighters in the country.

Though the members of Harijan communities have been clearing cities and towns years after years, they never find permanent jobs in the institutions, he said, adding that they have been living in their colonies in inhuman conditions.

Speaking as the special guest, Chairman of Bishwa Sahitya Kendra Prof Abdullah

Abu Sayeed stressed the need for framing a law to remove miseries and discrimination against the members of marginalised communities.

State Minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Jahangir Kabir Nanak Speaking as the chief guest termed the present government a friendly one for marginalised communities, saying: "I am not ready to hear the news of repression and discrimination against you people."

Moderating the function, Shaheen Anam, executive director of MJF, congratulated the awardees for achieving good results in public examinations in spite of living in various crises.

The members of the marginalised communities have the constitutional rights of receiving equal rights, she added.

Earlier in the morning, members of the communities brought out a colourful procession in the city.

Mosharraf Hossain of Action on Disability and Development (ADD), Dr Mesbah Kamal of Dhaka University and Jahurul Alam of Jatiya Protibandhi Forum expressed their solidarity with the programme.

People pay last respects to Swadesh Bose
DU CORRESPONDENT

People from all walks of life paid their last respects to Dr Swadesh Bose, a renowned economist and organiser of the Liberation War, at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city yesterday.

Dr Bose, also a language movement veteran and communist leader, passed away at his residence in the city on December 3 at the age of 81. He had long been suffering from Parkinson's disease.

Hundreds of people thronged the Shaheed Minar to pay their last respects to Dr Bose when his body was kept there in the morning.

Leaders of socio-political organisations, cultural activists, economists, teachers, students and other professionals placed wreaths and bouquets on his coffin.

Finance Minister AMA Muhib, LGRD State Minister Jahangir Kabir Nanak, lawmaker Rashed Khan Menon, Awami League presidium member Obaidul Kader, Dhaka University Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, Prof Muntasir Mamun, Prof MM Akash, and acting president of Ekattorer Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee Shahriar Kabir paid their last respects to Dr Bose at the Shaheed Minar.

Awami League, Communist Party of Bangladesh, Nijera Kari, Bangladesh Trade Union, Workers Party of Bangladesh, Sechasebok League, Bangladesh Chhatra Moitree, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, Gono Forum, Liberation War Museum and Bangladesh Chhatra Union also placed wreaths on the coffin.

At a brief discussion there, speakers paid glowing tributes to Dr Bose and recalled his contribution to the development of the country's economy.

The police also presented a guard of honour for Dr Bose at the Central Shaheed Minar.

Later, he was cremated at Sabujbagh crematorium in the city.

2001 POST-POLL VIOLENCE

Govt yet to form probe body as per HC order

May face a contempt of court charge

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The government is likely to face a contempt of court charge, as it has not yet constituted an inquiry commission as per the High Court verdict to investigate the post-poll violence in 2001.

On May 6 this year, the High Court in a verdict directed the government to form an enquiry commission within two months of receiving the copy of the verdict to probe violence and criminal offences against the opposition activists and minority communities across the country soon after the 2001 parliamentary elections.

The court also said that the enquiry commission should submit the investigation report to the government within next six months.

The copy of the verdict was published in July and the government received it in August this year, sources said.

The court came up with the verdict upon a public interest writ petition moved by advocate Manzill Murshid, a lawyer of the Supreme Court.

Manzill Murshid told The Daily Star on Saturday that he received the copy of the verdict on July 29 and he sent the copy to the government.

ment authorities in the first part of August.

He said the government has violated the High Court directives, as it has not yet constituted the commission as per the directives.

"I will serve within a day or two a legal notice asking the government to form the inquiry commission within a very short time as per the High Court verdict. If the government does not respond to the legal notice, I will move a contempt of court charge," he said.

When contacted, Law Minister Shafique Ahmed said the government would constitute the inquiry commission very soon.

Attorney general Mahbey Alam said that the home ministry has already taken steps to form the inquiry commission.

Seven lawyers of Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB) had filed the writ petition with the High Court in February this year, stating that although hundreds of criminal offences, including killing, torture and looting, against the opposition men took place across the country after the 2001 polls, the law enforcement agencies did not take any appropriate action to save lives and properties of the people.



PHOTO: STAR
Policemen form a guard of honour for Dr Swadesh Bose, as his body was kept at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city yesterday for the people to pay their last respects.

For me, work is important. But it's a distant second to life.

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