

Call to save Atir Khal, Haikkar Khal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Environmentalists yesterday formed a human chain in the city with a call to save two canals in and around the city - Haikkar Khal and Atir Khal - from the grip of encroachers.

"We are very worried about Haikkar Khal, as the encroachers have put up signs at different points of the canal to claim ownership to lands," said Save the Environment Movement Chairman Abu Naser Khan at the human chain in front of the National Press Club.

Atir Khal, which was flowing by the third Buriganga Bridge, has also become a dying canal, as encroachers continue to fill up different parts of the canal, he added.

Other canals of the city also fell victim to encroachers, he said, adding that a city without canals and water bodies is highly vulnerable to natural disasters like earthquake.

Once the city had 47 canals and most of which were over 150-foot wide, but 25 canals have already disappeared, other speakers said.

The encroachers are filling up the canals taking advantage of negligence of the authorities concerned, they said.

They also demanded immediate action against the encroachers.

Secretary general of Peace Ifma Hossain, secretary general of Citizen Rights Movement Tushar Rehman, project official of WBB Trust Ziaul Haque Litu, President of Nagarbasi Shangathan Haji Ansar Ali, Hafizur Rahman Mayna and Gazi Lutful Kabir Suman also spoke.



PHOTO: STAR

Save the Environment Movement forms a human chain in front of the National Press Club in the city yesterday with a call to save Haikkar Khal and Atir Khal from the grip of encroachers.

'Regional cooperation vital to fight militancy'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Effective cooperation among the governments in the region is vital to combat militancy, which is a major problem, former foreign secretary Faruk Chowdhury said yesterday.

He also called on all not to use religion in politics.

Faruk Chowdhury said this while delivering a lecture on 'Foreign policy of Bangladesh in light of the charter of change' at Sufia Kamal Auditorium of the National Museum in the city. Bangladesh Foundation for Development Research (BFDR) organised the Shah AMS Kibria Memorial Lecture to mark the 5th death anniversary of the former finance minister.

Faruk Chowdhury also called for sharpening political professionalism of the leaders to resolve problems with a neighbouring country.

"There are a lot of problems with India and it cannot be said that newer problems will not arise in future. Political professionalism of the leaders should be enhanced to resolve the problems," he said.

He also called for open discussion among the parties in order to take bipartisan approach to resolving the problems.

The former foreign secretary said, "Both Bangladesh

and India should work together sincerely to ensure that the bilateral relationship is a win-win situation."

The recent visit of the prime minister to India is a milestone in the bilateral cooperation between the two countries, he added.

Bangladesh should take coordinated steps along with India, Nepal, Bhutan and Myanmar not only in the power sector, but also in environment, water and forest resources development, Faruk Chowdhury said.

A regional network should be built to deal with the climate change, he suggested.

Faruk Chowdhury urged the government to urge the developing and least developed countries in the era of globalisation.

Chairing the session, Prof Kabir Chowdhury said, "I hope that Bangladesh will become a secular country and free from militancy as soon as possible and the present government should take actions to this end."

Monayem Sarkar of BFDR delivered the welcome speech.

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