

Call to resist plots to foil war crimes trial

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday emphasised the need for national unity to resist conspiracies being hatched by the anti-liberation forces against the process of war crimes trial.

They said national, socio-political and professional organisations and common people should come under an umbrella to resist the plots unitedly.

They made the remark while speaking at a roundtable on 'Bid to foil trial of war criminals: Necessity of national unity' organised by the Samprodayikota-Jangibad Birodhi Mancha (SJB), a citizens' platform against militancy and communalism, at the Liberation War Museum auditorium in the city.

The speakers demanded ban on religion-based politics in the country to

establish a non-communal and democratic Bangladesh.

Terming the BNP-Jamaat alliance an anti-liberation force, Deputy Speaker Col (Retd) Shawkat Ali urged the pro-liberation forces to remain united so that the BNP-Jamaat force never can go to the state power.

He said the forces that opposed the War of Liberation always use religion in politics to hide their evil deeds and misguide the people. The forces have spread its roots across the country through different financial institutions like insurance and banks, he said, adding that the pro-liberation forces should aware the people of their activities.

Sector Commanders' Forum General secretary Lt Gen (Retd) Harun-ur Rashid said militancy and communalism would not be rooted out from the society if

Jamaat is not rooted out.

He demanded enacting law to ban businesses based on Islam immediately.

Academician Prof Syed Anwar Hossain said the people would not get rid of the poverty and religious fundamentalism until the trial of war criminals is held.

"As far as I know, a faction of Islamic Chhatra Shibir activists want to get rid of their top leaders who are charged with war crimes," he said.

Workers' Party of Bangladesh politburo member Bimol Biswas emphasised the need for strengthening the 14-party Grand Alliance to expedite the procedure of war crimes trial.

Gono Forum Presidium Member Pankaj Bhattacharjee, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad General Secretary Dr Maleka Banu also spoke at the roundtable with SJBMC Coordinator Ajoy Roy in the chair.



Green Voice and Jubo Nagorik Jote stage a demonstration in front of the National Press Club in the city yesterday demanding steps to save city's river flow zones and wetlands from the land grabbers and implement Detailed Area Plan (DAP). (Story on Page 16)



Deputy Speaker Col (Retd) Shawkat Ali speaks at a roundtable at the Liberation War Museum auditorium in the city yesterday.

4 BTMC mills to resume operation this month, create 10,000 jobs

UNB, Dhaka

Four mills under the state-owned Bangladesh Textile Mills Corporation (BTMC) will start production again from the end of the current month on "service charge basis" that is expected to create job opportunities for some 10,000 people.

The four mills are Sundarban Textile Mills in Satkhira (main unit and Nilkamol unit), Amin Textile Mills in Chittagong, Darwani Textile Mills in Syedpur and Kurigram Textile Mills, said a BTMC source.

The process of evaluation for floating tenders to award the mills has already been completed.

The source said there are some 24 units of 20 mills under BTMC, of which three mills are currently in operation.

Of the three mills, Bhalika Woolen Mills in Chittagong is run on rental basis while Rajshahi Textile Mills and Bengal Textile

Mills on service charge basis.

"Some 6,000 people are now employed in the three mills. Other BTMC mills can be made operative if the private entrepreneurs come forward on service charge basis," said a senior BTMC official.

Talking to UNB, he said new textile mills were set up under the BTMC after 1975 in Kurigram, Magura, Nilphamari and Rangpur to generate employment locally.

"But now it seems that it would be difficult for the Corporation to restart operation in its various mills, which went out of operation due to various reasons -- loan liabilities and old machineries."

He said the BTMC put forward a proposal to the jute and textile ministry in May this year to hand over such mills through lease, but the proposal was not approved.

After the 1990s, the BTMC mills fell under unfair competition with the mills set up in the private sector hav-

ing latest technology.

It is expected that if the existing problems can be addressed, the BTMC can play an important role in meeting the domestic demand as well as the demand of the export-oriented RMG sector and thus create employment opportunities for around 25,000 people.

The official said major problem of the mills under BTMC is decrease in production capacity due to old and dilapidated machineries.

Other problems include reluctance of the parties to run the mills on service charge basis as their contract tenures are not increased from the present two years, hindrance in marketing BTMC-produced cotton yarn due to availability of imported yarn and inability to pay the arrears of utility services of the mills.

Due to frequent losses, the production of the BTMC mills came to a

stalemate for lack of working capital. To come out of the situation, the production at the BTMC mills started again in 1997 through service charge system.

According to statistics provided by the Jute and Textile Ministry, the yarn production of BTMC mills fell sharply over the last decade (2000-10) -- 14.82 million kg yarn in 2000-01 fiscal to 0.60 million kg in 2009-10 fiscal.

The source said the current problems at the BTMC could be overcome if the mills are modernised through replacing the old machineries with the latest machineries. New textile mills could be set up with local and foreign joint venture with excess lands and infrastructure available in most of the BTMC mills.

Besides, there is an immediate need to stop entry of smuggled textiles and yarn into the country for protecting the interests of the BTMC mills and other textile mills in the private sector.

Linking Young Minds Together

The Daily Star offers campus based weekly magazine 'Star Campus' - the ultimate magazine for the young generation - a common platform for the college and university students and academicians - to share their ideas, thoughts, dreams, opinions and views. Star Campus is an endeavour to bring into the center stage the visionary aspects of our college and university students, alongside their lifestyle, cultural trends and their multidimensional talents. Star Campus is a magazine broadly based on campus life! It contains articles, academic news, achievements, travelogues, interviews, book reviews, quiz, milestones, academic tips, profiles of educational institutes, cultural and extra-curricular activities in campus, jokes, cartoons, photographs and much more. This is a magazine Of the Students, By the Students and For the Students. Star Campus helps link young minds together.



CCC mayor, councillors take oath tomorrow

BSS, Chittagong

The newly-elected mayor and ward councillors of Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) will take oath in two separate functions in Dhaka tomorrow.

According to official sources, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will administer the oath to mayor-elect M Manjurul Alam Manju in the Prime Minister's Conference Room at 10:00 am.

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Syed Ashrafur Islam will administer the oath to the 41 ward councillors and 14 female councillors in the LGED auditorium in Dhaka at 12:30 pm.

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