

'Ensure constitutional rights of indigenous people'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The parliamentary caucus on indigenous affairs has urged the government to ensure the constitutional rights of the indigenous people.

It has also called for terming them "indigenous" instead of "small ethnic groups" in the country's constitution.

"The government has moved to amend the constitution. We want it to recognise them in the constitution and also identify them as indigenous people," Caucus Chairman Rashed Khan Menon told reporters after a three-hour meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

The caucus placed a thirteen-point proposal that includes amendment to the constitution, constitutional recognition of indigenous people and formation of a separate land commission for the indigenous people living in the plains.

It also called upon the government to give traditional land rights to the indigenous people.

Menon, also president of the Workers' Party, said indigenous people now live in a miserable condition as they are deprived of constitutional rights.

Their rights regarding the use of land and forests have come under threat. The committee urged the government to formulate laws to allow them to enjoy their rights, said Menon, also chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on education ministry.



Conditions apply

30KW solar panel at DGFI headquarters

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A solar panel with a capacity of 30-kilowatt (KW) was formally inaugurated at the headquarters of Director General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI) yesterday in an effort to conserve non-renewable energy sources.

Director General of DGFI, Lt General Mollah Fazle Akbar activated the system by pressing the switches on the panel.

"Fossil fuels are dwindling in supply and are increasingly expensive, while sunlight is absolutely free. Solar energy can act as an effective power substitute which can help cut costs and boost our economy," Akbar told reporters.

He said the government's attempt to reduce dependency on fuel-generated electricity of the national power grid is an example of its effort towards change.

While briefing journalists, Wing Commander Aatur Rahman said the solar panel would act as the main power source of the DGFI headquarters. It will supply power for twenty-four hours but PDB supply will also remain standby.

"Therefore, we will never experience any load shedding," he said.

The installation work started on May 25, this year and was completed on July 20. It cost Tk 84 lakh, the lowest till now, when compared to the cost of other solar panels in the country.

Earlier this year, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and Bangladesh Bank (BB) also installed solar panels encouraging people to use renewable energy instead of carbon-emitting fossil fuels that contribute to global warming.

The capacity of the solar panels installed at the PMO is 20.16 KW cost Tk 99.50 lakh while the one set up at BB is 8 KW costing Tk 1.35 crore.

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