



REPORT

Conference

ON

**“International Recognition of 1971 Genocide
in Bangladesh”**

&

Screening of Documentary film, BLOCKADE

Saturday 23 March 2019

Venue: Het Nutshuis, Riviervismarkt 5

2513 AM The Hague, Netherlands



Background and Justification of the Conference

The 1971 Genocide in Bangladesh perpetrated by the Pakistan military and their local Bengali and Bihari collaborators is one of the worst mass atrocities that the world witnessed in the 20th century. The Pakistani occupation army in 9 months killed approximately 3 million people, violated over two hundred thousand women and forced 10 million people to cross the border and take shelter in India. This number of people killed by the Pakistani Army is the highest in such a short period, as the Second World War cost lives of 60 million people, but that War lasted for 6 years and spread over three continents. The 1971 Genocide by the Pakistan Army is well documented and reported in the international media including The Telegraph, The Times, The Sunday Times and The New York Times and also in the diplomatic correspondences during that period.

International silence: The international community has discriminated against the large-scale genocide in Bangladesh in the run up to its liberation in 1971. As per history, never so many people have been slaughtered in such a short time. But unfortunately, the international community on the whole has been silent in regard to 1971 genocide in Bangladesh.

Urgent need for UN Resolution: Without further delay, there needs to be an UN-sponsored Resolution condemnation against the Pakistanis. Then perpetrators must be brought to justice. The new generation must know what treatment was meted out to the Bengalis people who deserve to enjoy equal human rights. Unfortunately, Bangladesh GENOCIDE has today become a forgotten chapter in the history and we know the common phrase, 'Justice delayed, justice denied'.

Lack of International Recognition of the 1971 GENOCIDE: Due to lack of international recognition, the history of that horrific Genocide has become faded in the world context today. We feel that the 1971 GENOCIDE should get International Recognition to provide justice to the victims of the atrocities meted out by the Pakistan military junta, its political leadership and their local Bengali collaborators.

To draw the attention of the international community, the European community, its leadership and policy makers in particular, European Bangladesh Forum, a European Bangladeshi diaspora platform is organising a day-long program in the Hague, known as the City of Justice on 23 March 2019.

The Program includes:

1. Discussion
2. Screening of the Documentary Film titled, 'BLOCKADE'
3. Photo Exhibition

4. Demonstration in front of the International Court of Justice and the Language Monument in the Hague

PROGRAM

11:00-11:30	Registration -Tea/Coffee
11:30-13:30	Chair: Mr. Jakob de Jong, Director, The Hague Peace, The Netherlands Video Message from Dr. Nuzhat Chowdhury, Daughter of Martyred Intellectual, Dr. Alim Chowdhury Video Message from Dr. Meghna Guha Thakurta, Daughter of Martyred intellectual, Prof Jyotirmoy Guha Thakurta Opening remarks: Mr. Bikash Chowdhury Barua, Vice President EBF Mr. Chris Blackburn, Political Analyst & Journalist, U.K. – Recipient of ‘Friends of Bangladesh’ Award Ms. Shomi Kaiser, Daughter of Martyred intellectual, writer Shahidullah Kaiser, Dhaka Dr. Wolfgang-Peter Zingel, South Asia Institute (SAI), University of Heidelberg, Germany- Key Note Speaker Mr. Sheikh Mohammad Belal, HE the Ambassador of Bangladesh in the Netherlands Mr. Duncan Bartlett, British journalist and Editor, specialising in Asia, London-Summing up Q & A Session
13:30-14:30	Photo Session & Lunch
14:30-15:40	Screening of the Documentary Film, BLOCKADE
15:40-15:50	Mr. Arif Yousuf, Film Director, USA
15:50-16:00	Mr. Ansar Ahmed Ullah, President, EBF- Way Forward and Vote of Thanks Refreshment/Networking
17:30-18:00	Demonstration in front of the International Court of Justice, The Hague
18:30-19:00	Demonstration in front of Shahid Minar (Language Monument), The Hague
19:00 – 21:00	Reception & Cultural Program followed by dinner

SPEAKERS PROFILE

Chris Blackburn is a British political analyst. Chris started his career in the Middle East and moved his focus to South Asia in 2003. He helped setup the US National Intelligence Conference and Exposition (INTELCON) and The Intelligence Summits, both major conferences which were part of the 9/11 Commission's public outreach programs in 2005. His investigations into al-Qaeda's political and charity networks have proved invaluable to the reduction in the groups impact around the world. He has been a strong supporter of democracy and human rights in Bangladesh. He was a recipient of a 'Friend of Bangladesh' award by the Bangladesh government in 2010 for his work in counter-terrorism and supporting the need for war crimes tribunals. He's worked closely with Channel 4, BBC Panorama, Voice of America and other media outlets. Chris is currently working closely with award winning journalists covering Russian interference in the US Presidential elections.



Dr. Wolfgang-Peter Zingel is an Associate Member of the South Asia Institute (SAI) of Heidelberg University; has studied Economics, History and Law. Diplom-Volkswirt (M.A.



Economics), Dr. rer. pol. (PhD Economics). He joined the SAI in the Department of International Economics in 1971. Worked in the fields of agricultural, applied, development, regional and urban economics with a focus on South Asian countries. Representative of the SAI in Pakistan (1980-82) and India (1990-92). Visiting Fellow at the Academy of International Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, 2014-15. Visiting Fellow at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad and teaching at the National Institute of Pakistan Studies, NIPS. As a DAAD-fellow he taught public finance at Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla, in 1989 and economic history at the National Institute of Pakistan Studies (NIPS) of Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, in 2011. Working on food systems of Dhaka within the DFG programme “Megacities-Megachallenge”. Visiting Fellow at the Academy of International Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, 2014-15. Published widely on South Asian economic, social and political affairs, e.g. Economy and ecology as factors in South Asian cooperation. Presently working on regional cooperation in South Asia, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and its economic policy, and Sri Lanka: The first welfare state of the Global South.

Duncan Bartlett is the Editor of the monthly magazine Asian Affairs, which covers politics, economics and international relations. He was formerly a presenter on the BBC World Service and ITN. He has visited Bangladesh on a number of occasions and his recent articles have appeared in the Dhaka Tribune, The Diplomat, Shottabani, Our Time and the Daily Ittefaq. He also contributes to the Bengali-focused TV stations, Channel One and Channel Nine. Duncan visited Bangladesh before the national elections in December 2018 and published a number of articles/news on the experience of his visit and the elections.





Shomi Kaiser is the daughter of the martyred intellectual Shahidullah Kaiser, who was abducted and killed by the Pakistan army and their local collaborators during the 1971 liberation war in Bangladesh. Shomi well known as a leading actress is one of the Directors of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI). In January 2018, she was elected as the President of e-Commerce Association of Bangladesh (e-CAB). Her mother, Panna Kaiser is a writer and former Member of Parliament of Bangladesh.

Jackob de Jong is the founder and Director of The Hague Peace Projects, an NGO based in The



Hague, The Netherlands. The Hague Peace Projects is a collective of young professionals and human rights activists, mostly with a refugee or migrant background, who act as catalysts of peace all over the world. They try to reconstruct people's motivation and skills to deal with conflicts peacefully, using a wide range of tools such as research, advocacy, media, cultural events, education, training, journalism etc. Jakob has an MA in Religious Studies from Leiden University, Netherlands and studied Philosophy in Paris, France and Development Studies at the University of Amsterdam. He worked previously as Policy Officer at Justice & Peace Netherlands and Amnesty International. In both capacities he specialized in research and advocacy for the rights of

undocumented and irregular migrants and addressing the human rights concerns related to immigrant detention.

Arif Yousuf, Director and Producer, lives in New Jersey and works in New York as an IT



Executive. He has always been interested in Films and the South Asian history. The BLOCAKDE (he is the Director) documentary gave him the opportunity to combine two of his interests together and create a film. Encouraged by the success of his first film he is now planning several other documentary projects. Arif is also working on establishing a distribution company for documentary films from South Asia. He expects the company to support little-known documentary projects and introduce them to worldwide markets via the Internet.

REPORT

The Europe-based Diaspora organization European Bangladesh Forum (EBF) organized a day-long program on “international recognition of 1971 Genocide in Bangladesh” on 23 March 2019 in the Hague, the Netherlands to step up efforts to have Pakistan’s actions in Bangladesh in 1971 recognised as Genocide. Activists gathered outside the International Court of Justice with banners and placards and chanted slogans demanding justice of 1971 Genocide and punishment for the perpetrators for their misdeeds in 1971 in Bangladesh. They also staged a protest demonstration in front of the newly set up Language monument (Shaheed Minar) in the Hague calling for international action.

As a part of the day-long program an international conference on ‘international recognition of the 1971 Genocide in Bangladesh’ was organized where a number of experts with international reputation, working on this area from the UK, America, Germany, The Netherlands, Belgium, Finland and Bangladesh participated. A documentary film titled, Blockade which examined the response of the peace movement to Pakistan’s violence in the early 1970s was also screened in the day long program. The director of the film from the United States came to participate in the program.

EBF also organised a photo exhibition displaying the brutality and killings by the Pakistani army and their local collaborators during the Liberation War of Bangladesh in 1971. *(Photo: Speakers of the Day. From left are Dr. Wolfgang-Peter Zingel, Chris Blackburn, Bikash Chowdhury Barua, Duncan Bartlett, Arif Yusuf, Sheikh Mohammad Belal, Shomi Kaiser and Ansar Ahmed Ullah)*



EBF Vice President Writer and Journalist Bikash Chowdhury Barua opened the conference with his opening remarks and provided background of the thematic issue of the seminar. Jakob de Jong, Director of The Hague Peace, The Netherlands chaired the seminar, while Chris Blackburn, Political Analyst and Journalist, from the UK, Shomi Kaiser, daughter of martyred intellectual and writer Shahidullah Kaiser, Dr. Wolfgang-Peter Zingel, South Asia Institute (SAI), University of Heidelberg, Germany presented key note papers. Arif Yousuf, Film Director of BLOCAKDE from America and Duncan Bartlett, British journalist, Bangladesh Ambassador in the Netherlands Sheikh Mohammad Belal attended the seminar as honored guests and addressed while EBF President Ansar Ahmed Ullah moderated the panel discussion. Jahangir Chowdhury, AL Secretary of Belgium also spoke. Video

messages of Dr. Meghna Guha Thakurta and Dr Nuzhat Chowdhury from Dhaka were screened on the day. Both are the members of the martyred intellectual families.

Among others Diplomat from the South African Embassy in the Netherlands Andre Stammet, Member of the Executive Board of PEN Finland Dr Mojibur Doftori, IT expat Mahmud Hassan, EBF Secretary Bikash Roy, Coordinator of Global Solidarity for Peace Committee M M Morshed, community leaders Murad Khan, Daud Khan Sohel, Khokon Sharif, Dutch-Bangladeshi textile entrepreneur Jasim Uddin Litton, social worker Monowar Mohammad took part in the open discussion.

They said that more than three million people were killed when the Pakistani Army used force to suppress an independence campaign. They also said there was widespread sexual violence against women, including rape and gang rape. “Bangladesh cannot move forward until it faces its past,” said Shomi Kaiser, whose father was killed by the Pakistani army when she was a child. “The fight for justice is a long battle,” she said. Kaiser said, it was appropriate to focus the campaign in the Hague because it is regarded as “the city of justice” due to its history of court cases trying crimes against humanity.

Dr Wolfgang-Peter Zingel, from the University of Heidelberg in Germany, told the European Bangladesh Forum: “The genocide in Bangladesh was not an accident of history.” Drawing comparisons with the Holocaust of Jews by the Nazis, Dr Zingel warned, “If you want to prevent such atrocities happening again, you must look in detail at their causes and record them.”

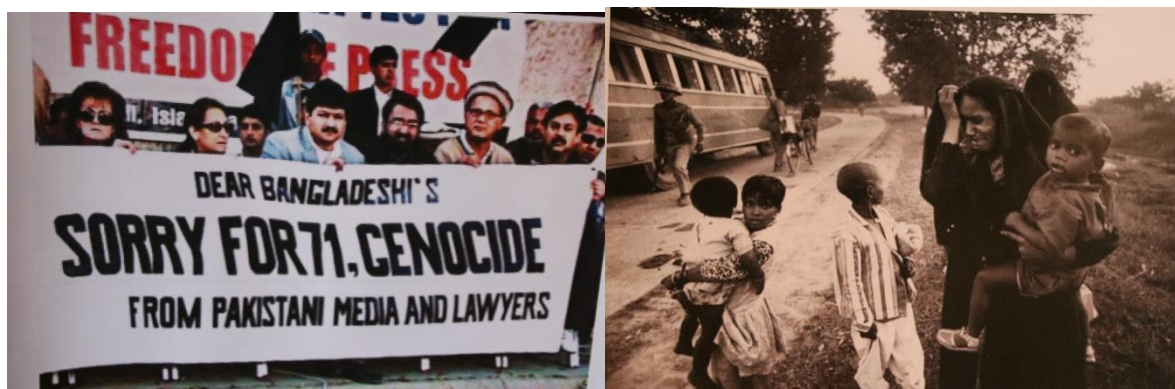
British political analyst Chris Blackburn said, international cooperation was the best way to respond to human rights violations and noted that many of the issues from 1971 are still relevant to South Asia. “Some people say, ‘let sleeping dogs lie’,” said Blackburn. “But these are not sleeping dogs – these are dogs which are still biting.”

The film’s director Arif Yousuf said, he wanted to highlight the support by the United States government for the Pakistani army at that time, which he said was part of President Nixon’s strategy to contain Communism in Asia.

The Bangladesh Ambassador to the Netherlands, Sheikh Mohammad Belal, said, “No other country should face the injustice and trauma that Bangladesh has endured.” Bangladesh’s Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, whose father Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was killed by soldiers loyal to Pakistan, has declared March 25th a national day to commemorate genocide. The date falls on the anniversary of the start of Operation Searchlight in 1971, which marked the start of military actions in what was then known as East Pakistan.

Photo Exhibition

A photo exhibition on the 1971 Genocide by the Pakistan Army and their local collaborators was organized on the day, depicting the horrific scenes of the killings of Bengalis in Bangladesh.



Demonstration and Protest in front of the International Court of Justice

After the conference, EBF organized a protest rally in front of the International Court of Justice demanding international recognition of the 1971 Genocide in Bangladesh by Pakistan army. They waved banners and placards demanding trial of the perpetrators responsible for the Genocide in Bangladesh in 1971 in the International Criminal Court in the Hague.

Protest in front of the Language Monument (Shaheed Minar) in the Hague

A similar demonstration was held in front of the Language monument (Shaheed Minar) at the Zuider Park in the Hague demanding international recognition of the 1971 Genocide in Bangladesh and trial of the perpetrators for the killings.

Post-Conference Reception

Following the conference, a reception was held for the visiting speakers and participants at the BASUG office in the Hague. The visiting speakers and participants of the conference from Bangladesh, U.K., Germany, Belgium, Finland and members of the diasporas in the Netherlands attended the reception. It was addressed among others by the daughter of the martyred intellectual, Shomi Kaiser, EBF Vice President Bikash Chowdhury Barua and President of EBF Ansar Ahmed Ullah.

CONFERENCE

The day-long program started with the screening of the video messages of Dr. Nuzhat Chowdhury and Dr. Meghna Guha Thakurta, both daughters of the martyred intellectuals, who were killed by the Pakistani army and their local collaborators in 1971 in Bangladesh.

Video Message of Dr. Nuzhat Chowdhury: “I am Dr Nuzhat Chowdhury. I am the daughter of martyred Dr Alim Chowdhury who was in the 70s a renowned eye specialist of our



country. He was killed during the intellectuals killing at the last part of our liberation war. He was taken from home on 15th December and possibly killed in morning on the day we get our freedom on the 16th. We found my father's body on 18th December in Rayerbazar mass grave yard (Dhaka). My father was not only one of the best eye specialists of our country, he was also politically and socially very active. He was a medical college student in 1952 during the language movement and he took active part in that movement and all subsequent movement for autonomy or for freedom of the country, the rights of Bengali people in Pakistan which was brutally trampled over by the West Pakistanis. He was an active political member. I'm sure all these activities were not unknown to the Pakistani regime.

Zia, Ershad whoever have come to power until now they are all aligned with the anti-liberation force. They never wanted Bangladesh. They keep on working against anything that benefit the poor people or people of Bangladesh or Bengali culture or progressive secular Bangladesh. And behind it all it is still the same international power that was against us during our liberation war namely Pakistan and it's secret service ISI. ISI still now funds and tries to help those groups. As we have seen in recent years as well, these are all funded by the same people, and the same international power that was behind the Pakistan Military ruler are still working against Bangladesh so that we can't get a secular and progressive Bangladesh.

During Bangabandhu's era, there were 72 special tribunals for trial of these criminals who committed war against humanity, who committed crime against humanity but after Bangabandhu, after Bangabandhu's brutal murder Zia stopped everything and for the next three decades my mother along with all the martyr families has been asking for the trial and finally Bangabandhu's daughter our honourable Prime minister Sheikh Hasina when she constituted a special tribunal again. I'm sorry to say, we see the West same powers who helped Pakistan during the war, the American, the Western Establishment again they are questioning the trial. Justice delayed is justice denied and we have been denied our rights. We are the one who were brutally murdered, our families left destitute, we are the victims but here again the West, in the name of human rights, questioning our rights to a trial. Capital punishment is also there in some states of the United States. They don't question them. We are not asking for capital punishment, we are only asking for a trial.

I want to thank **Bangladesh European forum** for organising such a program which highlights the need for the international recognition of Bangladesh Genocide. It is so sad to see when 3 million people were being killed and the world turned blind eye. Even after four decades we still have no recognition of that genocide. My appeal to the leaders, I understand that leaders, human rights activists from Europe and elsewhere are here today on the 23rd March. I appeal to you - when you think about Genocide please think about these people as human being not as people who belong to certain axis or certain group or them or us. No, it's not that, they are human being. Three million people were killed, we are proof, living proof of that. Please recognise the genocide. That was committed by Pakistani Military regime and their collaborators Al-Badar, Jamat, Muslim League, Razakars over here and please join with us. Please say these people should be tried, the Pakistani war

criminals should be tried. Please support our trial process. Please help us to get the Justice, that is so long has been denied to us”.

Video Message of Dr Meghna Guha Thakurta: 'My name is Meghna Guha Thakurta. In 1971 I was studying in the 10th grade at Holy cross School. My father was a professor of English literature at the University of Dhaka. He was also Provost of the residential Hall, Jagannath Hall. On the 25th of March, it was about 11 O'clock at night or even later that we heard a lot of gun fires and shootings. Usually, the students used to parade the grounds to prepare themselves for the struggle and often they used to carry some rifles. Very basic rifles. But that night the shooting was extra loud. And I was almost asleep and my father was checking his exam scripts; he called me up to say that it may be not safe to be in my room and asked us all to hide in another bedroom. After we heard some sounds outside and my mother, although we tried to restrict her but she went to the window and opened the curtains a bit to have a look. And she saw a convoy of army jeeps which came in and just stood at our gate and hordes of military; and we recognise the Pakistan military in uniform. Pakistani Military jumped down, opened our gate which was bound with a chain and they stormed inside our



apartment. It was six apartments, three storey high- two in each floor, we were on the ground floor. Soon as they entered the compound they started banging on our door. We went to open the door but we couldn't, because they bang so hard that the door was jammed.

We had a backyard garden. And one military officer and two soldiers came in through the kitchen door and they asked our household help to open it and she opened it out of fear and she was then just thrown aside and she ran for her life. And then they came in. As they came in we had fear that may be because of civil disobedience they have come and arrest a lot of teachers or students and that's what they have come for. They have come for my father and to arrest him but soon we went there- my mother went there first-

we just came in. They asked for my father and said in Urdu, 'where is the Professor'? and my mother said, 'he is here, why do you want him' and then they said, 'we want him'. My mother then went to my father. He was in his night clothes. She went to him with a shirt and asked him to put it on and said "they have come for you" and my father did not say anything. Then the officer went to my father and said in Urdu again that you have to come with us and he said in English "why?" and they did not answer. They grabbed his hand and dragged him out. Then on the way the officer asked us, "do you have any more boys?" My mother said, no, I have only one girl. And then they said, "you stay indoors and you don't need to be afraid of anything. Don't go outside." And as they were passing by the door that was jammed, the front door that was jammed, we said why don't you ask your people to stop banging the door because its jammed and we cannot open it. And then he said he called out a name Yakub (again in Urdu), 'Don't bang in the door, we are here' and then he forced the door open and it opened. As the door became open, they took my father through the back door. We saw through the front door, they brought another professor of statistics, Muniruzzaman who was living on the third floor, he was dragged along with other people, with his family. Especially the boys, they were relatives, cousins, nephews. Then along with them his eldest son, he was dragged down and the women in the family were trying to resist them from going. I heard some very big noise, sounds of bullets, I supposed gun fire. And soon as we turned around through our front door we saw Professor Moniruzzaman and his family members splattered with blood, lying on the floor. Some of them were dead immediately and others were growing. Someone from the family of the professor Muniruzzaman told my mother "look, they have shot your husband outside as well; he was calling for you. I have also given him some water". It was like a thunder of lightening. We would not imagine that they would shot him. We thought he would be arrested. So immediately we went again through the back door.

By this time the soldiers had left. We went to the front and saw my father lying in front of the house. He was totally in conscious but he was lying and he told us that they had brought him outside. They asked him his name, he gave his name, and then they asked him his religion and he said, Hindu. And immediately at that moment they gave the order to shoot. He turned his head around and one of the bullets entered in his neck. And other one went through his waist. Another one attacked his waist so he could not get up. He was paralyzed on below.

Immediately some people from other flats, other apartments in our building came down and helped us lift my father and we had to take him over the dead bodies of Moniruzzaman and his families. And through our front door of the house. We could not take him to any hospital that night because the military was patrolling. We saw the Jagannath Hall in fire and there were gun-shots all around and there was no way that we could take him to the hospital which were happened to be just across the street.

So we put him down on the floor so that any gun fire does not affect us and he was bleeding so my mother practiced some first aid and tried to stop the bleeding. On the 27th morning the curfew seemed to have a break. We took my father to the doctor to look at him and they said he is very critically injured, they think they couldn't do anything. He was still alive on the 27th and the 28th and 29th and he breathed his last on the 30th of March. In the meanwhile, we were in the hospital we had also heard the sound of dynamite through which the military had exploded the Shahid Minar. This is a monument for the Bengali Mother language movement and as at this place everyone was giving their allegiance to the independence movement, they (Pak army) have blown that up. My mother had said, 'we thought even during times of war hospital is a safe place to be' because they usually don't attack hospital but now, she did not know any safe place to be.

Bikash Chowdhury Barua, Vice President, EBF: After the screening of the two video messages the discussion on 'international recognition for 1971 Genocide in Bangladesh' started with the welcome address by the Vice President of EBF Bikash Chowdhury Barua. In his speech the EBF



Vice President said, 'Today we are going to discuss the issue of Genocide in 1971 committed by Pakistan, which the world community has not paid much attention till date. That is why we are here today at this international forum, in the Hague, the city which is known as 'the international city of Justice'. The Hague is a place where the international legal cases are tried in the courts and tribunals, such as the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court. For last 48 years we have been denied justice. When I say We, I mean, we the Bangladeshi people across the globe. And we want justice.

He added, in 1971 Bangladesh witnessed Genocide perpetrated by the Pakistan army which is the worst of all Genocides in the 20th century that cost 3 million people lives and violation of over 200 thousand women. Ten million Bangladeshis crossed the border and took shelter in India to escape the atrocity committed by the Pakistan soldiers and their local collaborators. Never so many people in the history have been slaughtered in such a short time, in 9 months period.

During the Nazi holocaust when thousands of Jews were exterminated in gas chambers, there was international outcry and it was universally condemned. But unfortunately, the international community has been silent in regard to 1971 genocide in Bangladesh. We demand justice and we demand that perpetrators are brought to justice before it is too late, as we know, Justice delayed, justice denied.



We have here today speakers who have expertise on the subject. We have here member of the martyred family from Bangladesh, Ms. Shomi Kaiser. You have already seen and listened to two other ladies, who are members of the martyred families. Both of them lost their fathers in the hands of Pakistan Army in 1971. Shomi Kaiser has a very sad episode. She is the daughter of martyred intellectual, Shahidullah Kaiser, a renowned novelist and writer of Bangladesh. At the end of Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971, the Pakistan Army and its local collaborators initiated a plan for killing the leading Bengali intellectuals. As a part of it, Shahidullah Kaiser was rounded up on 14 December 1971, just 2 days before Bangladesh became independent. Shahidullah Kaiser never returned, nor was his body ever found. It is assumed that he was executed along with other intellectuals. His brother, Zahir Raihan, a notable film-maker, also disappeared while searching for Shahidullah Kaiser.

Chris Blackburn, British Political Analyst and Journalist: First of all, I'd like to thank the European Bangladesh Forum for inviting me here to speak today. It's the first time I've given a speech for them. I wish the organisation all the best. I'm sure it will grow to become an important voice in helping to promote human rights and international law in Europe.



I started my career focusing on the US and the Middle East. However, Bangladesh is, and always will be, my first love. I'd also like to thank Bangladeshi activists from the Nirmul Committee, Mukto-Mona, the Sector Commanders Forum for all the work they have done over the years keeping the spirit of liberation alive. I'd like to single out Ansar for special praise he has helped unite lots of different political groups, Liberal and Conservative, and helped rally activists. He has been an important voice at the British and European parliaments. He has worked tirelessly for Bangladesh and human rights. He should be very proud of himself.

I'd like to remind everyone that we are rapidly approaching April. The start of the global **Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month**. So, thank you for inviting me to this event. It is very important part of that build-up. March 25th is also the anniversary of the start of **Operation Searchlight** the brutal crackdown by the Pakistani army in Bangladesh in 1971.

I'd like to begin by explaining why Genocide is so important for people who respect international order and human rights. Genocide isn't classed as a crime against humanity for no reason. It affects every one of us.

I recently watched a documentary on the late Christopher Hitchens, a famous British writer who was strong supporter of Bangladesh's liberation war. He was giving a talk on war crimes to students and explained that before the word genocide was coined. People in government, diplomats and politicians,

simply called it- race murder. **Race Murder**, it's a very visceral term, but doesn't shy away from reality of what crimes against humanity are.

The United Nations has been the main vehicle for preventing acts of genocide and ethnic cleaning since WW2. The UN have helped push international law on war crimes, helping to design treaties to make everyone know what is expected of them by the international community, but even after we heard the cries of 'never again,' the UN has often been forced to stand helpless on the side-lines especially in the Balkans and Africa. They missed Bangladesh.... It's a shame that people have been wary of the UN, especially as Bangladesh and its armed forces have been a key part of peace keeping operations.



We, as activists, need to empower the UN. We need to reaffirm our commitment to its ideals of cooperation, human rights, the rule of law and good governance. We must also support sister organisations like the International Criminal Court (ICC). **Especially in these uncertain times.** Humanity needs protecting, it's a constant battle. These organizations need to be emboldened. They work for all of us. The multipolar world can't become selfish. We will all lose as a result.

Crimes against humanity are an affront to international law and basic human decency. These crimes are committed by people driven by hate, ignorance, and dogma. When we study the pogroms of Europe, the Armenian genocide, the Holocaust, the war crimes committed during the Liberation War of 1971- we are looking at the worst of human behaviour. **The human being at its lowest ebb.** This is why we need to be the counter reaction to these crimes. We must aspire to be the best of humanity.

We should aim to become the **Anthony Mascarenhas**, who wrote about the genocide of 1971 in The Times of London- changing world opinion. We must become the George Harrison's who helped arrange The Concert for Bangladesh in Madison Square Gardens. We must become as brave as **Archer K. Blood** who led his diplomats to stand up to the Nixon White House, writing one of the strongest demarches in US diplomatic history.

War is often said to be state sanctioned murder, but most professional soldiers have codes and honour. They are taught to respect the Geneva conventions and follow rules of engagement. It would be naïve to think that sometimes mistakes don't happen or that crimes committed by men in uniform aren't often cynically covered up by Defence ministries. But when trained government killers use military tactics and maneuvers against unarmed civilians, it's the greatest crime of all.

When hot steel and lead rips into flesh and bone of defenseless civilians we should pause. We should not be naïve about the horrors of war. The simple physics- the kinetic force of bullets, fire, shrapnel, blades and bombs hitting human flesh and bone is horrific, **But this is the reality of war crimes.** When a war machines is turned on a civilian population, we should never ever let the perpetrators go unpunished or turn a blind eye. It sets a bad precedent for the world and it's toxic for humanity.

I believe most of us here, and we shouldn't be ashamed of it. Some of us have felt the sense of hopelessness and guilt as we waited 40 years for the war crimes tribunals. Watching Jamaat leaders being rehabilitated in public life while still promoting extremism and terrorism was an insult to their victims. It was awful. It was a crime for diplomats and politicians to argue to let sleeping dogs lie-it was bordering on genocide denial. The dogs in Jamaat kept biting.



I have seen grown men weep because of frustration and guilt caused by memories of '71. People have said to me-where is the justice? How can Jamaat and Pakistan get away with it? How can we stop this from happening again?

It was especially upsetting when the war crimes were denied. Sarmila Bose wasn't given a prestigious Oxford University position for editing a West Bengal newspaper or fawning praise from the Wilson Center for nothing. People began denying that crimes had taken place. They got backing from the US lobbying system. It was unnerving, but we rode through the Orwellian nightmare as Jamaat's money dried up and the reality of facing their crimes became reality.

When I started working on Bangladesh in 2003, I had begun by looking into South Asian ties to groups that were involved in

financing mass casualty terrorist events. Now, I'm a number cruncher, a cross checking analyst, who is often following money trails. I'm always buried in spreadsheets and profit and loss accounts. However, a major part of an analyst's work is to make predictions which means, I'm always having to empathise with some of the worst people to understand their behaviour.

Trying to understand and predict someone, or a group's, behaviour is a very difficult skill. But empathy does allow you to walk a mile in someone else's shoes. It can often be a liberating quality, but can be dangerous and depressing too.

As I looked at groups and charities that were engaged in supporting and financing terrorism, the behaviours reminded me of the same mindset that causes systematic acts of genocide. The same hatred and passions that drive horrific deeds are one in the same. It became clear that terrorism and genocide are closely linked. These groups are trying to force their will on others. They are doing it by trying to monopolise violence and fear. They want to destroy those they perceive as different, destroying their history and cultures, pushing it towards their ultimate aim- death and destruction of others.

As I started to look into the backgrounds of Jamaat leaders who had helped to setup the Al-Badr and al-Shams death squads in 1971. I was deeply saddened. Hearing the tales of students and academics being singled out on hit lists reminded me of the Nazis in Europe. It horrified me. But the atrocities weren't always so focused on the individual or as precise. During the liberation war we know about systematic sweeps by the Pakistani military through the Bangladeshi countryside. We know about the bloodbaths.

Whole villages were burnt by the Pakistani military and their collaborators. Residents either murdered or forced to flee. Young men were forced at gun point to show soldiers if they were Hindu or Muslim. Young women taken as slaves. Raped and murdered. We know that was widespread, these were not isolated pockets. We have Anthony Mascarenhas and others reporting to thank for that.

As my research was mainly focused on contemporary crimes of terrorist organisations. I couldn't help but wonder, if the UN and the international community had dealt with the crimes of 1971 and brought the perpetrators to justice- might history have been changed?

Pakistan's military had been butchers. All because of real politik, the most cynical word in international relations, Pakistan should have been forced to account for its behaviour in 1971. Real politik is word to describe diplomats and statesman ignoring the interests of the world population for selfish self-interest of the state. It's not always just amoral-it can often lead to evil. It allows people to not just paper over the cracks, buttry to gloss over canyons. It becomes unsustainable.

Perhaps, General Zia would not have been able to rise in Pakistan if Yahya Khan and Bhutto had accounted for their actions in Bangladesh. Jihadi groups built up in East Pakistan would have been placed under scrutiny. Perhaps Pakistanis would be revulsed at the crimes committed by Pakistani soldiers in their name.

So, we must look to history to keep the spirit of liberation alive.

It's said, 'to divine the future, we have to study the past.' If we had seen Pakistani and Jamaati leaders prosecuted in the 1970s. Would the world be a different place? I would like to think it would be.

What if the Hamidur Rahman Commission, which documented abuses by the Pakistani military hadn't been destroyed-suppressed, instead what if it had been published? What if textbooks in Pakistani schools hadn't contained lies. We all want South Asians to get along, but there are fundamental problems that are being deliberately being ignored.

Is it a pipe dream to think this way? I don't think so; Pakistan's military and government are never made accountable for their behaviour. Now that it has access to nuclear weapons, it makes empty threats about escalating conflicts when it is caught engaged in bad behaviour. They threaten to fire missiles and sabre rattle at its neighbours. The international community and the UN Security Council let justice and accountability slip through their fingers for real politik.

In conclusion, what can we do to raise awareness for the Bangladesh genocide of 71?

We can embrace Bengali culture. Genocide is a suppression of culture and histories. Bangladesh has learnt to deal with 1971 through a variety of mediums. The Shahbag movement filled me with hope for the future. The young generation went out onto the streets of Dhaka demanding justice. They also showed their love and passion for Bengali nationalism in a positive way.

Artists and film makers have explored the themes which came out of 1971.

We can educate. Give talks like this one, but we must aspire to widen the domain. Include schools, colleges and universities. Churches, Mosques and Synagogues. To warn people to not give up. To not turn a blind eye.

When the Muslim Council of Britain boycotted Holocaust Remembrance Day in UK they wanted all acts of genocide to be recognised. But Jamaat figured didn't want to recognise the Bangladesh



genocide of 1971. They tried to use Carter-Ruck, the famous British libel law to shut me up. **Denial of genocide must be confronted.**

We can leaflet, canvas and protest. Helping to educate politicians and other human rights activists. I know social media has been beaten to a pulp in the international press lately, but let's not forget. The information age is upon us and has been since the late 90's. A lot of us first met using Facebook, Twitter and Skype. Email didn't put the postman out of a job, we found Internet shopping. The internet has allowed us to communicate instantly across the globe.

We have written blogs, debated, got trolled, organised conferences and meetings. Social media and



the Internet are a mirror of society. We shouldn't be ashamed of the reflection. Yes, social media has

(Photo: British journalist Duncan Bartlet speaking in the Second session of the conference. On his left are film maker Arif Yusuf and Ansar Ahmed Ullah of EBF) allowed platforms for hate, but its also the platform to promote the opposite- friendship and greater understanding. We can translate documents in an instant, hold meetings, tweet and document war crimes. Barriers are being pushed over. We need to win it back. Make people know the positives and celebrate them.

We need to keep going making sure that these crimes and the tribunals aren't in vain. The international community owes Bangladesh, not the other way around. Human rights and democracy groups often talk about level playing fields in Bangladesh, but they never talk about how people are often moving the goal posts and pouring petrol on the field setting fire to the grass.

Bangladesh does need time to heal. South Asian nations need to cooperate. But behaviours only change through accountability and acceptance. We need to take a breath. But it doesn't mean we should stop. The powers that be in Europe and the United States, said we couldn't do it. The war crimes tribunals were a pipe dream by Old communists. We couldn't and shouldn't do it. They said the war crimes tribunals were not supported by the general population of Bangladesh. They were wrong. We succeeded. So, why stop when we have come so far? We have to keep moving forward don't settle for anything less than justice.

Ms Shomi Kaiser, Daughter of the martyred intellectual and writer Shahidullah Kaiser:

Thank you very much for inviting me and giving me the opportunity to share my experience and my insights from the point of view of a Bangladeshi and from my family viewpoint as a member of the

family of a martyred intellectual. I will try not to be very emotional, though it is a topic of my heart. This is a topic of something, which I grew up with and go with whatever I am standing here as a lady, it is my identity that I have grown up with.

We all know, we have seen the message of Dr Meghna Guha Thakurta, who is also a daughter of a martyred intellectual, about the Operation Searchlight, which took place at night on 25 March. Before



I go there, I like to say few words about my father. My father was only 42 years, when he was abducted on the 14th December, two days before the independence. He was one of the leading intellectuals of the country. He was a journalist. He was a writer, novelist and at the same time he was a politician. On the day of Operation Searchlight, I heard from my grandmother, that the whole night he was in the newspaper office and tried to make news and came back at about 4 O'clock in the morning. When he entered home, his white shirt was colored with red blood. My mother screamed seeing that shirt, immediately opened that and washed it. Still my mother regrets why she washed that shirt. That blood was the valuable blood of the martyred intellectuals, who were killed at that night on 25 March.

We grew up in Bangladesh with the feelings at one point, that what happened in 1971. There were political incidents after 1975 especially that, as if, the genocide that took place, the political leaders of Jamaat and Ziaur Rahman tried to strategize in a way of showing and showcasing 1971, as if something happened in 1971 was a simple thing. But it was not. Three Million people were killed. On 25 March Operation Searchlight started. Till 16 December the people were with target killed. It was a coordinated well-planned killing against the state.

The liberation of Bangladesh was based on secularism, based on the spirit of making a beautiful Sonar Bangla, to make a secular and democratic Bangladesh. But Bangladesh could not move forward at one point. When Pakistani army felt that they are going to lose the fight, they took the decision to kill the selected intellectuals. So that even if Bangladesh becomes independent, they cannot grow politically, socially and financially in all sectors. That was the core philosophy behind the killing of intellectuals, which took place for many years. We grew up in Bangladesh with this suppression.

On the 14th December Pakistani Army came and abducted my father Shahidullah Kaiser. They did not know who Shahidullah Kaiser was. It was the Jamaat, who helped the Pakistani Army to identify these intellectuals. The body was never found. I want to state one line, which my mother always says, the day of 16 December my mother went to find out the dead body of my father. She always says, I wish, it never happens in the life of a girl in the age of 23 looking for her husband's dead body all over Bangladesh. I wish no one experiences that. Today my mother is old. I pay respect to all the martyrs' wives, who have fought this fight from 1971, which was a bigger fight. It was a social fight, philosophical fight, cultural fight, financial fight, political fight in every aspect.



Even after 1975 it even more difficult. After the killing of the Father of our nation it was the same philosophy, the same strategy, which was taken in 1971 for the Pakistanis, it was the same collaborators, who strategically killed our Father of the Nation, where the sense of dignity was lost after 1975. Through the independence we got the freedom, not only the freedom, freedom of Bangladesh, freedom of being a country, freedom of being a dignified nation, which our Father of the Nation wanted to give us, which our fathers wanted to give us, if they were alive, may be the Bangladesh would have fought such a long fight for a justice. After 1975 it was all abducted and again these collaborators came to the power and the journey was more difficult. This is why we need to have a global recognition of genocide of 1971.

I am very thankful and grateful to our honourable Prime Minister, who has tried to give us the sense of dignity, which we lost, through the trial of the collaborators, through the trial of war criminals, because the trial of war crime is not out of vindictiveness or not out of taking revenge, it is of establishing the truth, establishing the justice, establishing the dignity of the nation, which was abducted and killed years after years, it is the re-establishing the history of Bangladesh, on which our nation grows up. I could never believe it, there might be developments in the nation, structural development, electricity, gas power. But if the values are not there, what nation we are going to be? Which was the dream of our fathers, which was the dream of the father of the nation.

I am grateful to our honourable prime minister. She has given back, she has reinstalled the sense of dignity, sense of pride again, through this trial of war criminals. This is why the trial of the war crimes was so much important. It is not taking revenge. It is about establishing the truth.

When there is no justice in the society, the culture of impunity continues. The culture of impunity was in Bangladesh for years and decades. For which we had the social cultural impunity – the corruption, corruption in the social value, in politics, in financial sectors, in cultural social values – everywhere there was a decline – just because of the culture of impunity – it had a huge impact. Moreover, for the culture of impunity, lot of people followed that we can make a crime and we can get a way without any punishment.

So today to all of you, I plea to the world, to the conscious people of the world, that we need to have the recognition of the genocide of the 1971 war. I am grateful again to our honourable Prime Minister, that she has declared 25 March as a Genocide Day in the nation.

This is the last word, I want to say. There is a song, where we always say – that is a famous song in Bengali – which says - *“We have bought or created the country Bangladesh with a precious value, namely blood/Not with the pity of anyone”*.

Dr. Wolfgang-Peter Zingel, Associate Member, South Asia Institute of Heidelberg University, Germany: In two years we shall celebrate the 50th anniversary of Bangladesh



independence. This year Bangladesh, the country that earned the verdict of the then US Foreign Security Advisor to be nothing more than a basket case, already exists since 48 years, twice as long as United Pakistan did. The country has developed into a success story, as The Economist tells us, doing better than what remained of Pakistan, and in some ways as India, the country that helped Bangladesh to free itself from the shackles of a more and more unloved twinning with the ‘western wing’. It is an opportunity to look back, but also to take stocks and to look into the future,

The topic of our discussion is the ‘international recognition’ of the cruelty and violence of the perpetrators what began with the ‘Operation Searchlight’ and led to mass killings and rape, ten million women, men and children fleeing the country, to hunger and disease that all makes it so difficult to assess the misery, i.e. what we now call the Bangladesh Genocide.

Certainly, we do not have to discuss any national recognition of what happened. It always will be part of the collective memory of the Bangladeshi, and – as we know now – such traumata live on, passed on to the next generations, even unknowingly, almost genetically. It also has become a matter of politics, especially in the context of international relations with shifting perceptions of friends and adversaries.

So do we need more ‘international recognition’? And if we do, recognition by whom and in what way? Wikipedia has a ‘List of genocides by death toll’, where one finds Bangladesh at position number 15. Is such a ranking not trivializing the horrors of genocide?

The number of people outside of Bangladesh who were old enough to remember the developments of 1971 is shrinking. To be honest, most people would have difficulty to locate Bangladesh on a map. They no longer associate Bangladesh with hunger, poverty and natural calamities. They rather know that garments they wear have been Made in Bangladesh, albeit under miserable working conditions and that the low lying country is threatened by global warming and a rising sea level.

Personally, my dealings with that part of the world was just coincidentally. I had just earned my Diplom-Volkswirt (MA in Economics), when a friend rang me up and told me of a young professor looking for people for a consultancy project of programming German development aid for Pakistan. Absolutely clueless I joined the South Asia Institute of Heidelberg University in early 1971, just in time to follow the horrors that developed over the next months. It was the time of the student revolution, the war in Vietnam and much sympathy for the nations of the ‘Third World’. It was Anthony Mascarenhas’ article in the Sunday Times with a huge headline reading ‘Genocide’ that really alarmed people around the world. With the Concert for Bangladesh in the Madison Square Garden world famous stars like George Harrison of the Beatles and Ravi Shankar started a trend that was followed by the Concert for Africa and others. In Heidelberg University there were discussions on Bangladesh in the biggest lecture hall, filled to the brim.

However, the war over and independence won, other catastrophes caught the attention: The Middle East, the Oil Shock, the Vietnam endgame, the Genocide in Cambodia, later the Islamic revolution in Iran, the Iran-Iraq and the Afghan wars. All of them with mass violence, millions of internally and internationally displaced persons.

As for our project, the emphasis shifted to look at the causes and consequences of Pakistan’s partition, and to find out, how to divide the debt of United Pakistan between the two follow-up states. After analysing the material, we came to the conclusion that around two thirds of all projects were located in West Pakistan and a bit less of one third in now Bangladesh. Some projects could not be attributed. Pakistan refused to take liability for all credits and loans of United Pakistan, and since no new funds were flowing, declared a unilateral moratorium and refused to honour any debt. After the unconditional surrender of the Pakistan Army in East Pakistan, General Yahya Khan handed over powers to Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who became the new Martial Law Administrator. He released Sheikh Mujibur Rahman from prison, who then became the first President of Bangladesh. While Bhutto was propagating an Islamic Socialism and successfully curried favour with the new rich oil states around the Gulf, Mujib faced the problem of little support coming from outside: It took until the Islamic Summit in Lahore in early 1974 that Bhutto accepted Bangladesh’s independence. The Muslim states slowly followed, Saudi-Arabia and China started diplomatic relations only after the murder of Mujib. As we know, Yahya had helped the United States to establish diplomatic relations with the Peoples Republic of China and, thus, allowed the US to withdraw from Vietnam. Mujib had to rely on Indian support at a time, when Indira Gandhi started a new wave of nationalization of industries, after having aligned with the Soviet Union before entering into war with Pakistan. South Asia, no longer was in the focus of US, nor of the rebellious youth and civil society in the west. President Nixon famously abhorred all South Asian leaders of the day. Bangladesh became a synonym for poverty and hunger and natural catastrophes. With the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan, Pakistan again became a close ally of the USA, and again after 9/11. The roller-coaster-relationship always has been the result of mutual misunderstanding, in any case with no place for sentiments for past actions.

I was reminded of all that, when I listened to a talk on ‘The Forgotten Holocaust’. Zoni Weisz is one of the last survivors of the Holocaust, and – befittingly since we meet in Den Haag – is a Dutch citizen from Zupthen, not so far from here. Toni Weisz escaped the transport to the concentration camps as a child, survived somehow German occupation, became the leading florist in the Netherlands and worked, as he proudly tells, for four Queens of the Netherlands. He wrote a book, titled "Zoni: De vergeten holocaust. Mijn leven als Sinto, ondernemer en overlevende", i.e. Zoni: The forgotten Holocaust. My life as Sinto, entrepreneur and survivor. It is available also in German (Toni Weisz: Der vergessene Holocaust), but not in English. He had accepted the invitation by the Rector of Heidelberg University, not only Germany’s oldest and one of the most esteemed universities, but also



one with a deep brown Nazi past (Josef Goebbels got his doctorate here). *(Photo below: EBF Vice President speaks while Bangladesh ambassador looks on)*

He talked in the Alte Aula, after also having talked to the Deutsche Bundestag and the United Nations. He lost most of his family, for no other reasons than that they were ‘gypsies’, despite being a Dutch citizen and belonging to the ‘Aryan race’. What touched me so much was that he talked not only of his happy childhood and the dark past, but also about people who helped him and his love for flowers and music. He is proud of his achievements and despite his age gives public talks also in Germany, especially to the younger generation.

For our Conference in Heidelberg in 2013, I prepared a review of genocides in Bengal history that was published by the Liberation War Museum. There were a number of events during the last three centuries that earned the attribute ‘genocide’, a term that has been defined as ‘deliberate extermination of a nation or race of people’ by the Oxford and Webster dictionaries. Similarly the UN conditions for ‘genocide’, as

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;

- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

The 1971 genocide stands out in Bengal history. But its singularity bears also the danger of being qualified as ‘accident of history’. To the contrary: Genocides are not a once-in-a-lifetime events. Mass killings happen again and again in all parts of the world, even today. If we really want to avoid genocides to happen, we have to study their history in detail. There are examples enough to prove the danger of victims turning into perpetrators. An easily overlooked point is the dynamics of any developments and their unintended consequences. In the Bangladesh example: Even if Operation Searchlight was a limited project, as described by Pakistani press officer Siddiq Salik, the ‘selective genocide’ as initially described by US General Consul Blood, was a monstrous crime. But it was facilitated by bystanders and opportunists, who always would insist that nobody could have seen it coming, that they only obeyed orders, that they could not have done anything without risking their lives and endangering their families, that they did not know anything, or that simply things never happened. (*Photo: screening of Blockade*)



Such denial is the last of the eight stages of genocide presented by Gregory H. Stanton, the founder of Genocides Watch, in a briefing paper at the US State Department in 1996, ‘where he drafted the United Nations Security Council resolutions that created the International Criminal

Tribunal for Rwanda, the Burundi Commission of Inquiry, and the Central African Arms Flow Commission’ (Wikipedia: Gregory Stanton). The eight stages and their characteristics (summarized here) are:

1. Classification (us and them) by ethnicity, race, religion, or nationality;
2. Symbolization by giving names or other symbols to the classification;
3. Dehumanization by denying ‘the humanity of the other groups; their members are equated with animals, vermin, insects or diseases’.
4. Organization, ‘usually by the state, often using militias to provide deniability of state responsibility’;
5. Polarization by driving groups apart. Laws may forbid intermarriage or social interaction;
6. Preparation: ‘Victims are identified and separated out because of their ethnic or religious identity’;
7. Extermination ‘begins and quickly becomes the mass killing legally called “genocide”’;
8. Denial ‘always follows a genocide. It is among the surest indicators of further genocidal massacres. The perpetrators of genocide dig up mass graves, burn the bodies, try to cover up the evidence and intimidate the witnesses ... blame what happened on the victims.’ (Stanton 1996).¹

Not to forget the indirect effects like hunger and disease, resulting in premature death, as Mike Davis writes in his *Later Victorian Holocaust. The Great Bengal Famine of 1943* would be a perfect later example.

Once the main perpetrators are no longer in power and archives are open to research, we get to know how mass killings could evolve. Today, after travel has become so much easier, crises are sending more refugees overseas and more and more refugees are reaching the shores of the rich countries, we are forced to witness how such disasters evolve. There is also an increased interest in past developments like the Bangladesh Genocide of 1971. Prominent among the new studies are 'The Blood Telegram' by G. J. Bass, 'Just War Theory and India's Intervention in East Pakistan, 1971' by N. Goswami, '1971. A Global History of the Creation of Bangladesh' by S. Raghavan, or 'The colonel who did not repent. The Bangladesh war and its unquiet legacy.' by S. Tripathi.

Coming back to my initial questions: (1) The first thing is to find out what really happened, have it well documented and make the results available to everyone. As people get older, it becomes more difficult to find eye witnesses. It is still time to talk to them. Interviews can easily be recorded, but have to be documented. There should be precise translations, especially if people are to be addressed in Pakistan, who do not speak Bangla and have little command of English. Emphasis has also to be on training translators and controlling translations. (2) The study of similar events elsewhere would be helpful to find common patterns. Bangladesh could help victims of other genocide and try to help to avoid new ones. (3) Stories like those of Zoni Weisz help to understand how genocides evolve and give people hope. (4) Joint history commissions help to clear textbooks from misconceptions and jingoism. German historians together with French and Polish colleagues together have been writing history textbooks for our students. (6) Following the media, in particular the new, so called social media.

In the case of Pakistan, the first step would be to find out what the younger generation knows about the events of 1971. When teaching in Pakistan I found some interest, but little knowledge. K.K. Aziz's book 'The Murder of History' (Aziz 1993:154-156) provides a good introduction into the sorry state of history teaching in Pakistan and the reasons, why text books are written in such a deplorable way.

Sheikh Mohammed Belal, Ambassador of Bangladesh in the Netherlands: Chair of the event Mr Jakob de Jong, Director, The Hague Peace, Mr Arif Yousuf, Director of the film "BLOCKADE", Mr Ansar Ahmed Ullah, President of European Bangladesh Forum, Dr. Wolfgang-Peter Zingel, University of Heidelberg, Germany,

I would like to begin by thanking Mr Arif Yousuf for directing the documentary film "BLOCKADE".



The film is surely a testimony of a powerful reminder of the fact that ordinary people around the world went on to stop the genocide committed against our people during the War of Liberation of Bangladesh in 1971. I also take the opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to the European Bangladesh Forum for organizing this important event. I would also like to thank the distinguished speakers for their shedding lights on the genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by the occupying Pakistan military and their local collaborators against innocent people of Bangladesh in 1971. *(Photo: Bangladesh ambassador speaks)*

I came from a country, which is made as resilient, we took it upon us as a duty not only for Bangladesh, but for all, that we will speak for all of those people, so that the wound, the injury, the torture, the brutalities that we faced do not need to be endured by anyone else. Out of that convictions I stand here.

When I came here in this city of peace and justice to represent my country in 2014, I came to see that we have a very small embassy. I had only one officer at that time. We had hardly any working relation with international organizations like International Criminal Court, International Court of Justice, Permanent Court of Arbitration, International Court of Tribunals for Yugoslavia, Ruanda or so on. As I am from such a country, who experienced this genocide, I took it upon me that it is my human duty

to do my utmost to remain engaged with the International Criminal Court. After all these years I can say with some amount of confidence, that Bangladesh features quite prominently in the International Criminal Court and we became one of the members of the 21-member elite-bureau. I think I also somehow made them convinced and they elected me unopposed one of the board members for the trust fund for the victims from the Asian Region. When I was asked to take upon this job, I thought that my place is already more than full. I represent a country of more than 170 million of people. I think it is more than enough to remain occupied with my bilateral engagement, but still I could not say 'no' to it. Ever since we have been working with International Criminal Court. I thought that I was not there at the time to do anything to save the lives of Madam Shomi's father and all those intellectuals, but I will do utmost so that anyone in the future do not have to experience that kind of torture that they did.



This is why the issue of Rohingya – honest to God, if you go and believe Bangladesh, the first thing it will come to mind that how on earth a crowded country like Bangladesh dare to do something like hosting a million plus people. Our honourable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina decided to give shelter to these people. It was that memory that she endured during her lifetime our experience during our independence. That was one of the motivations, that was one of the reasons to not to say 'no'. After all of these days we do not see anything from the government of Myanmar, which may give us minimal hope there could be a better day for Rohingya. We do not see it there. If you have noticed, on the 20th of March in this city of peace and justice this tribunal decided to give life sentence from 40 years sentence to Mr Karadic. There was a guy far away from here in New Zealand, who was listening to a song, a music commemorating Karadic and shooting people in a mosque. This did give us a lesson, that if we cannot do justice to this kind crime, there will be people like him, who will try to enjoy this kind of brutalities. So it is our moral duty, it is our human duty, that we stand up and give our voice and say that international recognition of 1971 genocide in Bangladesh is needed to be done without further delay.

(He said in Bengali):

'This is not the duty of Bangladesh government, or Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina or EBF only, rather it is the duty of every Bengali and Bangladeshi people. It is our human duty. If we forget the Genocide of the past or if we ignore them, the worse brutality may happen in future. So, we have to move forward together and I thank you all for your solidarity.'

One last sentence before I go, in February this year in the Munich security conference in Germany, Chancellor Angela Merkel said something which really touched my heart. Very often we say that you have to put into the shoes. But in that security conference she said, you have to put yourselves into the shoes and walk a mile, so that you realize how it feels.

I like to conclude with the sentence, what Madam Shomi Kaiser said about her mother, which really touched my heart. I want to go back home thinking of this statement, that how on earth we should do our human best to see that not a single mother at her age of 23 will have to look for the body of her husband or even worse her younger son in the graveyards anywhere in the world. Let humanity

prevail and hope that world could be graced enough to recognize the genocide in Bangladesh in the near future.

(From here below is the written speech of Bangladesh Ambassador):

The month of March is very eventful in our history. The 7th March commemorates the day of the historic 7th March 1971 speech of our Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The UNESCO recognized the speech as part of the world's documentary heritage. The 17th March is the Birth Anniversary of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman; 25th March is the Genocide Day and the 26th March is our Independence and National Day. Therefore, I would like to pay our profound tribute to the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who led the Bengali nation to victory in our Liberation War in 1971.

I would also like to pay homage to the memory of the three million innocent Bengali civilians and the freedom fighters who embraced martyrdom in our Liberation War. I also like to pay profound respect to the 200,000 Bengali women who were subjected to sexual and gender-based crime by the Pakistani Army and its collaborators during the course of our Liberation War. My homage also goes to those who suffered the crime of genocide throughout history.



Ladies and Gentlemen,

You all may know that in our War of Liberation, we endured an extreme form of genocide along with war crimes and crimes against humanity. In the 9-month-long war, 3 million innocent civilian population were brutally killed and more than 200,000 women were subjected to rape by the Pakistan military and their Bengali collaborators. The Pakistan military launched the heinous ‘operation searchlight’ in the night of 25 March 1971 beginning the genocide and killing around 100,000 – 200,000 innocent people. During the War, 10 million of our people fled to India for their lives and around 30- 40 million people got internally displaced. At the very last phase of the war, fearing imminent defeat, the Pakistani Army and their local collaborators killed approximately 1,000 Bengali intellectuals and professionals to create an intellectual vacuum for the future. Out of 1,000 intellectuals and professionals, more than 200 intellectuals were abducted, tortured and killed in the first 2 weeks of December 1971, based on a hit list of Pakistan army general.

The 1971 genocide in Bangladesh is one of the gravest tragedies of the human history. The horrors of 9-month long war still remain vivid through the accounts of eye-witnesses, official records of various governments, especially the US State Department as well as, research works of renowned historians.

The 2013 investigative book on Bangladesh genocide “The Blood Telegram: Nixon, Kissinger and a Forgotten Genocide” written by Princeton University Professor Garry J Bass; Journalist Anthony Mascarenhas’ report ‘GENOCIDE’, published on 13 June 1971 in The Sunday Times; the 22 May

1971 editorial of the US publication Saturday Review titled 'Genocide in East Pakistan'; the 'Testimony of Sixty on the Crisis in Bengal' published in 1971 by the eminent international personalities including Mother Theresa and US Senator Edward Kennedy; the British magazine, The Spectator's article of 19 June 1971 'Another Final Solution'; US author and historian Robert Payne's 1973 book 'Massacre: The tragedy at Bangla Desh and the phenomenon of manslaughter throughout history'; a 1972 legal study report by the Geneva-based International Commission of Jurists "The Events in East Pakistan, 1971"; the 1972 Report of the Hamoodur Rahman Commission on inquiry into the 1971 war (set up by the then President of Pakistan Zulfikar Ali Bhutto primarily to look into the circumstances of their defeat and eventual surrender on 16 December 1971); and various judgments pronounced by the International Crimes Tribunal, Bangladesh, among others, have numerous accounts of genocide committed in Bangladesh in 1971.

These records have the solid ground for international recognition of 1971 Bangladesh genocide. We believe such recognition would heal the past pains and help the people of Bangladesh renew their vow to fight against genocide anywhere anytime.

Distinguished Guests,

The 1971 genocide in Bangladesh included targeted elimination of individuals on the ground of religion, race and political belief. Bangladesh Parliament in 2017 declared the 25th March as the Genocide Day to commemorate the genocide conducted by the atrocious Pakistani forces on the black night of 25 March 1971 and with a view to having the Day recognized internationally.

Bangladesh is also in solidarity with the adoption of 9 December by the UN as the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime. The Bangladesh Genocide is no different than the other recognized genocides in the world; and if anything, it is a much grave example of the act of genocide. Therefore, we would urge the international community to extend support for the official recognition of 1971 Bangladesh Genocide and express sympathy for the victims of the atrocious crime. We believe recognition of past tragedies like the 1971 Bangladesh Genocide would guide the humanity to achieve 'never again' to the commission of such heinous crime.

Jahangir Chowdhury Ratan, General Secretary, Belgium Awami League:

On behalf of my organization I appreciate the initiative of European Bangladesh Forum for organizing such an important event. Before the valuable speech of the guests we have seen the video messages from two members of the victim families and the speech of Ms Shomi Kaiser, the daughter of the martyred intellectual Shahidullah Kaiser on 1971 genocide. In the line of the messages of the victim family members and the speakers I like to draw your kind attention to few points.

25 March is declared as National Genocide Day in Bangladesh, which is a big recognition of what happened in 1971 in Bangladesh. As you have heard from the speakers, that 2 to 3 hundred thousand women were violated and tortured by Pakistani army and three Million people were killed in that war and estimated ten Million people were displaced and became refugee and took shelter in India during the war, I like to mention that we, the Bangladesh Awami League are with the campaign, what EBF is doing to have the international recognition of Bangladesh genocide of 1971. This is also addressed by our honourable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the General Assembly session in 2017 that such a massive genocide and crime against humanity should be in the list of United Nations, as UN has the Genocide Day for Bosnia-Herzegovina, Genocide Day for Ruanda, so Bangladesh Genocide Day also should be listed there, as this is a crime against humanity and the world people should know what happened in 1971.

Following the message from the Dr Peter-Zingel from the University of Heidelberg I want to reiterate that the Bangladesh massacre, the crime against humanity, where so many people were victim of massacre and two hundred thousand women were raped, violated and mishandled by the Pakistani Army did not come to the focus of the world media unlike we see in the war of Rwanda or what we have seen in the media about the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. But the massacre and genocide in

Bangladesh came in to the scene, when Bangladesh got free, when Bangladesh was liberated on 16 December 1971. So complying with the message of Dr Peter-Zingel, I like to stress that we have to focus in the media by giving documentation and by interviews and by taking delegation from experts and journalists from Europe to Bangladesh, where the violation took place, where the genocide took place. That is the way, we have to start. We are also with you for the campaign and movement for the international recognition of Bangladesh genocide. Today that our voices are heard in front of the Peace Palace (International Court of Justice), we are with you.

Questions & Answers and Open Discussion

Shomi Kaiser: There are two points, which have already been mentioned that we have to also in at the same time work on the Genocide Denial Act. We need talk about Jamaat and Jamaat's political history – the technical way they have been actually denying the genocide. So, it is very crucial at the moment when we are working the government as martyred family as a civil society to have Genocide Denial Act very soon. And the second point, which I like to stress on, is that, it is very important and high time for Pakistan also to compensate those distressed families, as they are responsible for. And for that they must seek formally forgiveness from Bangladesh, if they are looking for bilateral, professional or foreign relationship with Bangladesh. That is very important and for which we are again working with the government to put global advocacy pressure on Pakistan that this is very important for Pakistan to compensate the distressed and martyred families, who have been suffering last 48 years.

Andre Stammet, Legal Counselor in the South African Embassy: The question of international recognition is also related to the tribunal, that has been established. I see it as a problem as death penalty is a penalty for the crime. That may be a bar to international recognition. We have just seen the judgment for Karadic on the appeal that he got the life long sentence instead of forty years, the sentence is extended. But international tribunals and international trials do not have death penalty. So that may be a bar before the movement for the international recognition of the Genocide. I just want to know what the views are.



Monwar Mohammad: In 1971 I was nine to ten years old and I saw with my own eyes killing of six my own family members. My family was also involved in the war of independence. My father was captured for nine months by Pakistani military. So, my point is that for the international recognition of 1971 Genocide in Bangladesh we should raise the voice. My suggestion to the organizers that we should do it independently, because if the political parties are much involved with this issue, then it may not get the real picture. So, I want to see it totally independent. Because after the second world war through the Nuremberg Trial the action was taken just immediately after the war independently.



Mahmud Hassan, ICT Expert: My question goes to His Excellency Ambassador. We have heard remark that to get the recognition of the genocide in Bangladesh, first we need to establish the facts. We have seen some write-ups in some books also that about three million people died during the liberation war of Bangladesh. But we also have lot of people in Bangladesh, especially after the

incident of 1975 killing of our father of the nation, a lot of people of Bangladesh denied this. So, my question: do we have any step from the government to have Bangladesh Liberation War as a subject in any university, where students can do research to have doctoral degree and to publish their research paper in the internationally recognized journals? In that case that will be the facts of the 1971 genocide.

Sheikh Mohammad Belal, Bangladesh ambassador: First of all, I cannot speak for sure truly on behalf of the government, as there are many initiatives have been undertaken by the government, I am not adequately aware of. But what I am aware of is that the current government has taken a view on the whole concept in a kind of pragmatic view. The government thinks that for the issue of crime like genocide why should we shout for the recognition. The crime itself is grave enough for the humanity to come forward and to solace us at least with a little bit of recognition. From that sense we have taken it as a view that if we want to go and plea for the recognition, that means we are not doing enough respect to the dignity we have already lost because of this. So, we leave it to the good minds and to the conscience of humanity to decide and to do what is need to be



done, because it is already late.

On our part what the government is doing, is trying to collect all the resources that we need like archives, all the materials, like in embassies we are being asked to collect these kinds of documents, to send it back home in Bangladesh. The government is also providing resources to some of the intelligentsia to do their research. But I can tell you that it is not the job of the government. It is my job, it is your job. It is human duty of each and every person to recognize, what is ought to be recognized and for what we are already late.

Coming back to the question of Mahmud Hassan, I think, I partially answered to your question. But now I would also like to request you and those of you from Bangladesh, who live here, I think when you come across the intelligentsia like Mr Jakob and other experts here, you should have a dialogue and discussions and let them know that it is already late and seek their professional help so that we can do some justice for those who lost their souls.

Shomi Kaiser: I just would like to add that a small strategy has been taken by the Education Ministry, honourable Ambassador has rightly mentioned. Moreover, in the primary and secondary school level, but not in the university level, there has been a policy taken that there would be a separate subject on the happenings of the liberation war in 1971 with 100 marks. This is in the process, so that the children from the primary school till class X, they will learn it.

M M Morshed, Global Solidarity for Peace, Belgium: Why do not we make a body or a committee, where international intellectuals would be there, Government representatives should

be there, social activists like leaders of EBF and some other organisations should be there? So that we can work together, though it is already late, and we can reach our goal.

Jasim Uddin Litton, Businessman, The Netherlands: Thanks to EBF. I import garments products from Bangladesh. I have actually no question. Ms Shomi Kaiser has lost her father in 1971. Also, in December 1971 I lost my father, mother, one brother and two sisters in one day. The Pakistani Army and their collaborators Razakars threw a grenade in our house while we were having dinner and all five persons were killed. That is why I like to say that I will extend my help and cooperation to this organization EBF and Bikash Da, if they can take more initiatives on this issue.

Jakob de Jong, Director of The Hague Peace, The Netherlands: I am very sorry for your loss, Sir and thank you for sharing with the audience. There is the question of forming some international collective body on making a strategy how to get this Genocide recognized and there is the sensitive question on the death penalty, because I know that the Shahbagh Movement started, exactly because there was no death penalty for those who committed genocide.

Chris Blackburn, Political Analyst and Journalist, UK: I think the death penalty is a contentious issue. I went to Bangladesh ahead the tribunal, when United Nations said, we would help. But as the legal counselor of the South African Embassy mentioned, the tribunal can get the international support, if it does not issue death penalty. As being lobbyist and activist, I cannot support the death penalty. Many people say that Jammatt committed murder, but death penalty may be too good for them for what they committed. I think at that time lot of European organizations and also, I could not support the death penalty. Later as the tribunal issued death penalty United Human Rights Commission could not support it and I also cannot support the death penalty. So if in future for the international recognition of the genocide, Bangladesh might say, we want justice and then they



can deal with the death penalty.

Shomi Kaiser: Very briefly, death penalty has been a big discussion and debate since the war crime tribunal started. I just want to give you an emotional perspective. When Jamaat was killing people and when it was a crime against the state, if the trial does not go for the death penalty, it might be contextual/contentious. I am not against death penalty, I am for the death penalty, because it is very contextual. Again, I am saying that, there has to be some kind of punishment, because they killed

people. When they were killing people, not one or two, millions of people, how can they get a way without having a proper justice? So, we have to see from that perspective.

Jakob de Jong, Director of The Hague Peace, Netherlands: This is not far not enough to delve in to the dark after days and years since the existence of Bangladesh as a state. It will not remain in this way. But still I think it is a good introduction. I hope we can do something with the suggestions. Many suggestions have been mentioned. I think more collaboration needs to be put, like you suggested. We need to have a deeper connection with the intellectuals from Bangladesh and international collaboration through the Ambassador in the Hague also with international institutions to bring close to this very dark chapter of the Bangladesh history.



Sheikh Mohammad Belal, Bangladesh ambassador: You know after lunch there will be screening of a documentary named 'Blockade'. Since I am one of the fortunate people, who watched it before, I strongly recommend you not to leave after lunch, as it is worth watching.

In the interest of sharing you the full perspective of what Mr Jasim Uddin Litton said, the fact is that his whole family was taking their dinner in their house and a grenade was thrown and the whole family was perished. So, if those of us are discussing about some issues like death penalty and others, we need to consider about the death of own that created in our society. Again, we have to walk in that truth. But it should not be used as an excuse not to give us, what we duly deserved, that is recognition.

Another point came from the floor by Mr Morshed about the international committee, thanks for this proposal and I think this is something that we really need to discuss and see that something like that we can shape it up in future. Because we think that it is a duty for all.

-Second Session-

After the lunch the Documentary film 'Blockade' had been screened.

About the Documentary film, 'BLOCKADE': The 'BLOCKADE' captures the story of how Bangladeshi expats and Quaker Peace activists joined forces to stop US military aid to Pakistan in 1971. Armed with just canoes and kayaks, they blockaded Pakistani freighters carrying ammunition. In cities across the US, they organised peaceful demonstrations. The lobbyists among them put pressure on the Congress to ban military aid to Pakistan. Together, they kept stories about Bangladesh alive in the media till public opinion began to sway. In the process, they saved thousands of lives halfway across the world.

Through the narratives of Richard Taylor, Sultana Alam and others, the documentary provides a moving insight on the power of non-violent resistance. It recounts how young Americans from different faiths and backgrounds, stood up against their government and coalesced to support Bangladesh's cause. Many of them risked getting arrested and even death as they took on the freighters carrying ammunition. Together, they kept stories about Bangladesh alive in the media till public opinion began to sway. In the process, they saved thousands of lives halfway across the world.

Arif Yousuf, New Jersey is the film maker. Arif Yusuf was present in the conference and addressed the Second Session.

Ansar Ahmed Ullah, EBF President: Welcome to the second session namely panel discussion and I request Mr Arif Yousuf, the Film Maker of the Blockade from the USA and Mr Duncan Barlett, Editor of Asian Affairs, UK to the podium. In this session we will continue the discussion from the first session and we may take some questions and comments from the audience.

Dr. Mojibur Doftori, Member, Executive Board and Chair, Writers at Risk Committee, PEN Finland: It is a wonderful documentary film. I really liked it. I would like to ask the question: where did you get the inspiration to make this documentary?

Arif Yousuf, Film Maker of 'Blockade', USA: About the inspiration for the film it is primarily like you and everyone else like all of us are very interested to the 1971 war and the history. Especially the generation that grew up right after 1971 and onwards. This has been the biggest part of our history. So I have been interested in the history of 1971 and how everything came together. At the same time, when I read about it I was interested to explore the theme of non-violence in the context/contrast of extreme-violence that we saw. How does it really work? So all the things that I read before this or I learnt, was either responses to extreme violence or about the violence itself. So over here there is different approach to the whole issue. So, I think that is what inspired me to make a film about this.

Duncan Barlett, Editor of Asian Affairs, UK: I think many resources came to my mind while I was watching the film. It is very interesting. How Pakistan has used its alliances in 1971 is actually clear that there was an allegiance between Pakistan and the United States. Now what interesting is Pakistani intelligent deals with China. Last few weeks there has been a big debate about whether or not Pakistan should prescribe Jayash-e-Muhammad or United States as a terrorist group with an international terrorist leader. And it is China who is now standing up for Pakistan in United Nations blocking that being passed by the security council. So in a sense the questions about Pakistan also becoming very pertaining global issue, because of the alliances that Pakistan has.



Arif Yousuf, Film Maker of 'Blockade', USA: Of course, this is one side that we do not often talk about it, how the international politics was at that time. What led people abroad to understand that these are the super powers divided and they were supporting this group or that group. Why a power is taking a side to explore that as well. Because when we talk about 1971 we often forget about the international context of it in a broader sense as part of the cold war which started with another cold war episode taken as hen or chicken in the nuclear powers. That what was happening in 1971 like in the end of December. The Russian nuclear submarines verses USA enterprises that kind of game face to face. That is people forget about that part of story. This is a part of the cold war and international politics at that time.

Monwar Mohammad, Community Leader and Peace Activist: Firstly, I give a big salute to



you to make this kind of film, which we Bangladeshis know that there are lot of activities in that war time like Beatles, George Harrison and Bhupen Hazarika did in India. So, this is our very different kind of experience, which we saw today. It is brilliant, because those people in Pennsylvania in the USA, they organized this peaceful demonstration. That is why the ship could not take the weapons to Pakistan. So I request you to broadcast internationally and especially in Bangladesh TV channels every person in the new generation can come to know the history.

Ansar Ahmed Ullah, EBF President: I think also it is very interesting to see how non-violent activity could prevent violence. It is also an inspiration for future campaigners.

Bikash Chowdhury Barua, Vice President, EBF: I have a point to Mr Duncan Barlett. I would like to know – what is the role of British government in this regard? Do you think that they are doing sufficient? Because when we see that some killers – known killers – especially who were involved in the killing of intellectuals are now having shelter in UK. Your government is aware of that and when we met the British MPs and politicians, we did not get really correct answer. What do you think about that?

Duncan Barlett, Editor of Asian Affairs, UK: The sensitive issue, isn't it? I think the first thing I see the British foreign policy is very much focused on the European question. That makes it difficult for the House of Commons to find time to debate on other foreign policy issues including things to do with Asia. Of course, there are divided opinions within the House of Commons and within the government on South Asian ones like on European issues. I think the question really is what would the British government be expected to do, will it be expected to extradite people in Bangladesh that will create problem. Would it be expected to take sides between different South Asian countries? Again, this is a problematic decision for any government to do. So, I think it is really question of putting the request carefully what it is expected to do. I mean providing a justification for the government's action.

I think one of the questions which came up in the morning's panel is, what will be the implications, if there was international recognition of genocide for the people who are on the trial for war crime. One of the phrases particularly came up in my mind as a journalist, people will say war criminals should be put on trial – people will say that and I totally understand people's emotion who will say that. But in a sense people putting them on the trial rather take the presumption of innocence I think the



government with democracy will be reluctant to extradite people. Again, I should say that it will be a process in which this allegation will be investigated.

Arif Yousuf, Film Maker of 'Blockade', USA: If I can explain a little bit. We are now in the Hague right now, the seat of the International Court of Justice. So, to bring some of those perpetrators at this venue

for a trial even though it is very late and stage has limitation that does not allow it. But I think you guys what you are doing over here to raise the awareness or at least talk about for this forgotten genocide. I think that has a lot to this conversation. People back home can at least say that yes, we have been raising in international arenas and then I know that the Ambassador Mr Sheikh Belal Ahmed has worked on this effort with the community and Bikash and you, others are also there. So, I think that is important. That ties everything together in one place. I think we are doing small things but I think we have to keep doing that.

Jahangir Chowdhury Ratan, Community Leader, Belgium: I like to know from the journalist that international war crimes tribunal in Bangladesh is continuing to try the perpetrators and who committed genocide in 1971. It is a continuous process. But the ring leaders the world saw in that were tried. In that process when the international war crimes tribunal in their investigation and in their research found the people, that the perpetrators and there are people who involved in this and they are living in the UK. Now what is the conflict in the UK government that the European human rights values and the country from where he comes who committed genocide and the crimes against humanity and then how and in which way the UK sees it. When they see that there is a question of human rights protection on international humanitarian law or whatever European values to give him shelter and on the other side, he was a perpetrator, he was a war criminal and there is a sufficient evidence on that. And that evidence was submitted by the international war crimes tribunal for example now working in Bangladesh in future what/if they do?

Duncan Barlett, Editor of Asian Affairs, UK: I do not speak on behalf of the British government and neither am I a human rights lawyer. But you have raised an interesting question. I think the context we are looking at this is Bangladesh is getting a bad press. I had a meeting in the House of Commons just before the election in December 2018. There was a wide spread view among the campaigners there that the election will not be in a democratic way and there are restrictions in respect to the freedom of press in Bangladesh. That was a meeting which was supported by MPs from a variety of different political parties. When I went to Bangladesh few weeks later, I picked up a different set of opinions. In which people said there is a more press freedom and the political situation is allowing different parties to take part in the debate and to nominate their candidates. But as far as the political mood in the UK is concerned, there is not a great deal of warmth to look at the current administration in Bangladesh. I think that is great difficulties in saying that the current government is



cooperating over sensitive issues like who are Britain at the moment.

Sheikh Mohammad Belal, Bangladesh Ambassador: First of all, huge appreciation from our heart for you documentary, which was not much easy to pick up all those small pieces of the history. I have primarily two comments that this is 2019, not 1971. Had you had the social media presence at that time in 1971, how the situation would have been? Now we have social media. How can we use this platform to achieve our goal of the international recognition? What is the idea do you have?

My other question is to my colleague from the UK. Mr Arif Yousuf brought to us some things that happened on the other side of the Atlantic. But we know there are also that kind of stories all around Europe. What can we do to put those things into one place and let this community, this humanity

knows about the universal character? Because at the end of the day I am one human being, I have one life to lead and there should be one human rights for all, there should not be double standard in this case. So, what can we do pick up the European contribution to our independence?

Arif Yousuf, Film Maker of 'Blockade', USA: First of all, I dare to say, yes, the social media was not present, but the international media actually covered it very well. Even the international intellectual community during 1971 either through correspondence or through conversation came up with the testimony of sixties, in which sixty leading intellectuals of whole western world have signed a petition and published it in international media in October or November in 1971. That tells us that people were even without the help of social media contacting each other and they were concerned, they were trying to do something to protest the genocide or the refugee condition that was going on. But in this day and age we can actually do more, just like I have attempted to this documentary with the help of just few friends and my own effort. I did research on the topic, I made interview of the people, I found the archival footages and photographs from the activists themselves and put together the stories. This is what happened. It was total 20 to 30 hours of interviews to cut together in a story format. That is the format that I chose, but I think much more can be done also with the social media we can inform more people about this kind of effort and what we can do now.



You saw the primary events of blocking the ships in the film. But two or three other programs this group did and that is the last part of the film, which was, they actually pressure the US congressmen and senators to talk about it and to be vocal about it. They also worked with the laborers, the dock workers, who upload the ships with arms and everything. They actually worked with them to have them a strike on that loading of the ships. That stopped the shipmen to make it happen. You can see that this was not only one effort, they actually kept doing it. So just like us, we have to keep going at what we are doing and then do more. And then find more stories and tell.

Bikash Chowdhury Barua, Vice President, EBF: My question is to Mr Duncan Barlett, since you are a journalist of mainstream media based in UK and Europe. Why the European media does not highlight this grave issue, while the Western media from the very beginning focused the issue of the Holocaust? In my intervention I said that during the time of second world war the number of deaths was huge, but if you compare with the time period between the second world war and the Bangladesh liberation war in 1971, the number in 1971 is much bigger than what happened in the second world war, which continued for six years and spreading over the whole Europe. So why is the European Media so oblivion to this issue?

Duncan Barlett, Editor of Asian Affairs, UK: In the European media it is not particularly interested in reporting the activities of President Nixon in 1971. It is not particularly interested in reporting what happened in South Asia in 1971. It is interested in current event. It is interested in Trump. Of course, there was lot of coverage of the attack in Kashmir few weeks ago, when 44 members of the Indian military were killed by a suicide bomb. So, the role of the media is to highlight news and current events. *In that context I think we can expect the media to put its focus on present danger associated with Pakistan and indeed it has been something that is greatly debated.* In the other aspect here, Imran Khan is trying to improve Pakistan's international image and he made considerable diplomatic effort. I am sure that the Ambassador knows it that Pakistan is very active diplomatically in trying to rebuild relationships with former friends like the British, the Americans and so on. There has been real effort on their part. But of course, it has been undermined. *But the allegation is there that Pakistan still makes sponsor to terrorism.* So, I think it is not that the media is brushing aside previous events, but the focus in average is on current events.

Arif Yousuf, Film Maker of 'Blockade', USA: To this point I like to add just a little. I think, media covers it, when there is a news. So, there was a news about the Serbian massacre, the war of Bosnia and Herzegovina, that somebody was tried and that became a news, though it was a small news or a blip of news, but it came. And also, something with the Cambodia massacre, some little



news came. But to your point, it is not in the public discussion, not being highlighted or not in a way to highlight the importance of it. So why should it be a headline? It is an important topic, because people forgetting this will do it again. That is why we need to know about it, need to talk about it and we need to be informed, what went on at that time.

Shomi Kaiser: I just want to make a comment. What Mr. Duncan Barlett was saying, each news media has its own strategy. But what I feel, honourable Ambassador is here, when the war crime trial took place that is when actually our genocide was focused by the world. Because it was forgotten for many years. So, when the war crime trial started, then the whole world was focusing Bangladesh and asking about the death penalty and talking how right or wrong that is. What I feel, at this moment, what the Ambassador said, as a nation, because this is a continuous process as we understand. It is also our responsibility from our perspectives through the social media how consciousness we can create being abroad, not sitting in Bangladesh, being abroad, when you are getting contact with international experts here, everybody has our own role. But do not forget that we are Bangladeshi. So, I think that is where we should look at through the social media. I also like to thank the organizers for this wonderful journey, we could not finish it. Rather it is a good start. You should come to Bangladesh also to showcase to young generation and especially to the university students, they should know about it.

Ansar Ahmed Ullah, EBF President: I should clarify that this is one of the ways to create awareness. In terms of well-known truth, that Bangladesh has enacted its own tribunal and has been prosecuting since 2010. But I think so far, we only prosecuted local collaborators. Those accused/alleged within the Pakistani forces have been beyond our reach. This is why it is important to get recognition of Bangladesh genocide, because without the assistance of UN or world community, we will not be able to put the Pakistanis war criminals on trial. Hence, we are campaigning across Europe, within the Bengali Diaspora as well as European policy makers, we do have this event in other places with your hands to go long way and we have heard from the members of the martyred families this morning. They have spoken emotionally and there has been some graphic description how their loved ones were taken away and never to be seen again or never to be found. So, we do hope that you will continue to support us in this campaign.

Dr. Mojibur Doftori, Member, Executive Board and Chair, Writers at Risk Committee, PEN Finland: We have certain elements within Pakistani society, what we can use for our purpose. For example, Hamudur Rahman Commission in Pakistan, that report was never published, but one part of the report was published in 12 different copies. Eleven copies were destroyed and one copy was submitted to the then Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. After Zulfikar Ali Bhutto it went to Ziaul Hoque, but no step was taken regarding this. Justice Hamudur Rahman himself talked about it first with Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and then with Ziaul Hoque. He asked them: what happened? You are



doing nothing about it. Both of them replied earlier and later that it is missing. This report was highly critical of its military and it called for the trial of the army officials who were deployed in Bengal and at that time there was a military regime and that military regime controlled everything. So, I think we have some supporters within Pakistan itself.

Duncan Barlett, Editor of Asian Affairs, UK: I think what today's event has shown the depth of feeling that still remains among the Bangladeshi community in Europe and equally true among the people in Bangladesh as well. Somebody was saying in the film that it is difficult to move on. And I think that is equally true, when there is such enormous trauma. But whatever happened in terms of trial, it is clearly the time to begin local voice to move on. I am struck of course that the event in Christchurch has reminded us that another generation has been traumatized by terrorism. It was not just people of Pakistani origin or people of other South Asian heritage including Bengali were killed in the attack. So in a sense, yes dealing with the past, as Dr Peter-Zingel from the University of Heidelberg said, is a very important process, because by identifying the causes, we can then try to prevent such things happening again. We also have question how we prevent the threat of terrorism in a changed way in today's world.



Arif Yousuf, Film Maker of 'Blockade', USA: I like to continue this process. I am working on several other projects. But one of the projects that I am really interested in is what happened to the collaborators right after 1971, how did they go under cover for such a long time and resurfaced twenty years later. So, I am trying to research on that time. So, if you have any links or anything that you can help me with, that will be really appreciated. This kind of research or this I can turn into a book or another documentary. But I think it will be helpful for the next generation to come to understand what happened in many missing periods in our history. So, I like to address them.

And my biggest goal will be to learn ourselves from 1971. Sometime we show that we have not really learnt from 1971. Why this killing was brought to us, it was a political event. But it was also deep racism or communal feeling that was there and we have to learn from that and we have to learn not to be that way anymore in the future.

Sheikh Mohammad Belal, Bangladesh Ambassador: I express my gratitude for this important but very unlikely event, I would say, because I have been here for almost five years, but I have not seen event like this. So, let us say, this is quite unique. We are really true to the cause of humanity. This is an issue for what we all should be part of it. From the part of the Bangladesh government I hope that they will continue to help us to provide resources, so that we can go deeper with the facts and figures and with the facts we have to try that what happened at that time, may not happen again.

I like to take at least one lesson from every event and occasion and for my take away, the lesson is the statement of Ms Sultana Alam from the documentary film Blockade, that she said, I decided to call 100 persons to mobilize the persons concerned for the movement. So, we do not need to call 100 persons now, but I will try to remind myself once every day that it is our incomplete duty, to pay due respect to those martyred of 1971 through achieving international recognition. This recognition is not something like an award or trophy, rather it will be justice and taking liability. I am with you in this effort.

MEDIA COVERAGE

The conference, demonstrations in front of the International Court of Justice and Shaheed Minar (Language Monument) in the Hague got wide print and electronic media coverage in Bangladesh, Netherlands, U.K. and New York. The Bangladesh TV channels – NTV and ATN Bangladesh, Joytara tv telecast the news with video footages on the conference and the protests. The German Radio, Deutsche Welle (DW) gave wide coverage in their news program and on line with separate interviews of the speakers from Bangladesh, Germany, America, Netherlands and U.K.

Below are the published Reports in different newspapers:

The Daily Star

08:20 PM, March 26, 2019 / LAST MODIFIED: 08:30 PM, March 26, 2019

Families of Bangladesh genocide victims call for justice in Netherlands



The Bangalee community in Europe steps up efforts to have Pakistan's actions in Bangladesh in 1971 recognised as genocide by demonstrating in Netherland's Hague on Saturday, March 23, 2019. Photo: Collected

Star Online Report

The Bangalee community in Europe stepped up efforts to have Pakistan's actions in Bangladesh in 1971 recognised as genocide by demonstrating in the Netherlands' Hague.

Activists gathered outside the International Criminal Court on March 23rd in demand of international action, reads a press release issued in this regard.

“Bangladesh cannot move forward until it faces its past,” said Shomi Kaiser, whose father was killed by the Pakistani army when she was a child. “The fight for justice is a long battle,” the press release quotes her as saying.

Kaiser also said it was appropriate to focus the campaign on the Hague because it is regarded as “the city of justice” due to its history of court cases trying crimes against humanity.

More than three million people were killed when the Pakistani Army used force to suppress an independence campaign. There was widespread sexual violence against women, including rape.

Dr Wolfgang-Peter Zingel, from the University of Heidelberg in Germany, told the European Bangladesh Forum: “The genocide in Bangladesh was not an accident of history.”

Drawing comparisons with the Holocaust of Jews by the Nazis, Dr Zingel warned: “If you want to prevent such atrocities happening again, you must look in detail at their causes and record them.”

British political analyst Chris Blackburn said international cooperation was the best way to respond to human rights violations and noted that many of the issues from 1971 are still relevant to South Asia.

“Some people say, ‘let sleeping dogs lie’,” said Blackman. “But these are not sleeping dogs – these are dogs which are still biting.”

The event in Hague included the screening of a documentary film entitled “Blockade” which examined the response of the peace movement to Pakistan’s violence in the early 1970s.

The film’s director, Arif Yousuf, said he wanted to highlight the support by the United States government for the Pakistani army at that time, which he said was part of President Nixon’s strategy to contain Communism in Asia.

Following the screening, campaigners marched on the International Criminal Court, holding up banners calling for justice.

The Bangladesh Ambassador to the Netherlands, Sheikh Mohammad Belal, said: “No other country should face the injustice and trauma that Bangladesh has endured.”

<http://www.observerbd.com/details.php?id=190339>

Families of Bangladesh genocide victims call for justice in The Hague

Published : Wednesday, 27 March, 2019 at 12:00 AM

Staff Correspondent

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THE HAGUE, Mar 26: The Bengali community in Europe is stepping up efforts to have Pakistan's actions in Bangladesh in 1971 recognised as genocide.

Activists gathered outside the International Criminal Court and permanent Shaheed Minar in The Hague in the Netherlands on March 23, calling for international action. This was part of the day long program of the Europe-based diaspora organization European Bangladesh Forum (EBF) on "international recognition of 1971 genocide in Bangladesh' in the Hague. A number of experts with international reputation, working on this area from the UK America, Germany, The Netherlands, Belgium, Finland and Bangladesh participated in the conference.

EBF Vice President Writer and Journalist Bikash Chowdhury Barua opened the conference with his opening remarks and provided background of the thematic issue of the seminar. Jakob de Jong, Director of The Hague Peace, The Netherlands chaired the seminar, while Chris Blackburn, Political Analyst and Journalist, from the UK, Shomi Kaiser, daughter of martyred intellectual and writer Shahidullah Kaiser, Dr. Wolfgang-Peter Zingel, South Asia Institute (SAI), University of Heidelberg, Germany presented key note papers. Arif Yousuf, Film Director of BLOCAKDE from America and Duncan Bartlett, British journalist, Bangladesh Ambassador in the Netherlands Sheikh Mohammad Belal attended the seminar as honored guests and addressed while EBF President Ansar Ahmed Ullah moderated the panel discussion. Jahangir Chowdhury, AL Secretary of Belgium also spoke. Video messages of Dr. Meghna Guha Thakurta and Dr Nuzhat Chowdhury from Dhaka were screened on the day. Both are the members of the martyred intellectual families.

They said that more than three million people were killed when the Pakistani Army used force to suppress an independence campaign. They also said there was widespread sexual violence against women, including rape and gang rape.

"Bangladesh cannot move forward until it faces its past," said Shomi Kaiser, whose father was killed by the Pakistani army when she was a child. "The fight for justice is a long battle," she said.

Kaiser said, it was appropriate to focus the campaign in the Hague because it is regarded as "the city of justice" due to its history of court cases trying crimes against

humanity.

Dr Wolfgang-Peter Zingel, from the University of Heidelberg in Germany, told the European Bangladesh Forum: "The genocide in Bangladesh was not an accident of history." Drawing comparisons with the Holocaust of Jews by the Nazis, Dr Zingel warned, "If you want to prevent such atrocities happening again, you must look in detail at their causes and record them."

The event in The Hague included the screening of a documentary film entitled "Blockade" by Arif Yousuf which examined the response of the peace movement to Pakistan's violence in the early 1970s.

<https://www.dhakatribune.com/world/europe/2019/03/24/activists-gather-at-the-hague-calling-for-justice-for-liberation-war-victims>

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Thursday, Mar 28, 2019
• Last Update : 05:59 pm

Dhaka Tribune

Activists gather at The Hague calling for justice for Liberation War victims

Activists gathered outside the International Criminal Court at The Hague, in the Netherlands on March 23, calling for international action on war crimes perpetrated during the Bangladesh Liberation War



European Bangladesh Federation activists gather outside the International Criminal Court at The Hague in the Netherlands on March 23, 2019 calling for international action **Courtesy**

The Bengali community in Europe has been stepping up efforts to have Pakistan's actions in Bangladesh in 1971 recognized as genocide.

Activists gathered outside the International Criminal Court at The Hague in the Netherlands on March 23 calling for international action, read a press release, issued by the European Bangladesh Federation.

The statement said more than three million people were killed when the Pakistani Army used force to suppress an independence campaign, which was coupled with widespread sexual violence against women, including rape.

"Bangladesh cannot move forward until it faces its past," said Shomi Kaiser, whose father was killed by the Pakistani army when she was a child. "The fight for justice is a long battle," she said.

She stated that it was appropriate to focus the campaign at The Hague, because it is regarded as "the city of justice" due to its history of holding trials for crimes against humanity.

Dr Wolfgang-Peter Zingel from the University of Heidelberg in Germany, told the European Bangladesh Forum: "The genocide in Bangladesh was not an accident of history."

Drawing comparisons with the Holocaust of Jews by the Nazis, Dr Zingel warned: “If you want to prevent such atrocities from happening again, you must look in detail at their causes and record them.”

British political analyst, Chris Blackburn, said international cooperation was the best way to respond to human rights violations and noted that many of the issues from 1971 are still relevant to South Asia.

“Some people say ‘let sleeping dogs lie,’ Blackburn said. “But these are not sleeping dogs. These are dogs which are still biting.”

The Hague also saw the screening of a documentary film, “Blockade,” which examined the response to the peaceful movement resulting in Pakistan’s course of violence in early 1970.

The film’s director, Arif Yousuf, said he wanted to highlight the support the United States government gave to the Pakistani army at that time, which he said was part of President Nixon’s strategy to contain Communism in Asia.

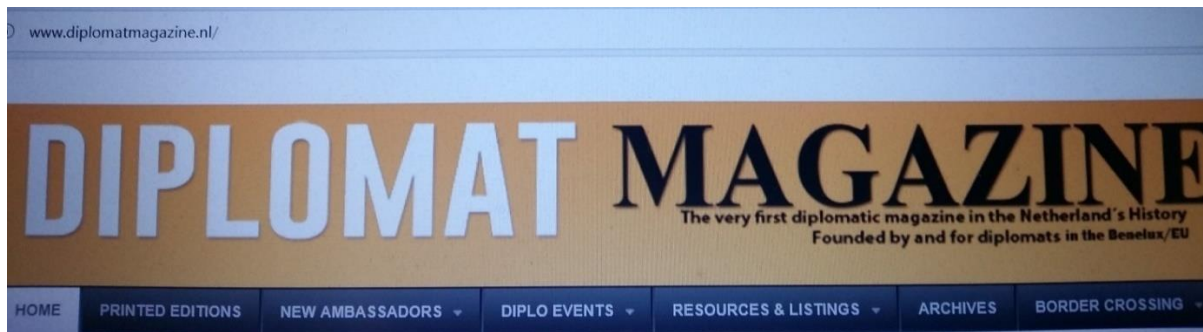
Following the screening, campaigners marched to the International Criminal Court, holding up banners calling for justice.

The Bangladesh Ambassador to the Netherlands, Sheikh Mohammad Belal, said: “No other country should face the injustice and trauma that Bangladesh has endured.”

Father of current Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who was assassinated on Aug 15 in 1975, had declared March 25 as a national day to commemorate the genocide.

The date falls on the anniversary of Operation Searchlight in 1971, which marked the start of military action in what was then East Pakistan.

The nation was renamed Bangladesh, after independence was declared the very next day on March 26 of 1971. Independence was finally won on December 16, 1971, following the War of Liberation for nine months.



<http://www.diplomatmagazine.nl/>

Families of Bangladesh genocide victims call for justice in the Hague

Posted by [Editor](#) on Wednesday, March 27, 2019 · [Leave a Comment](#)



The Hague, March 23: The Bengali community in Europe is stepping up efforts to have Pakistan's actions in Bangladesh in 1971 recognised as genocide.

Activists gathered outside the International Court of Justice and permanent Shaheed Minar in The Hague the Netherlands on March 23, calling for international action.

This was part of the day-long program of the Europe-based diaspora organization **European Bangladesh Forum (EBF)** on international recognition of the 1971 genocide in Bangladesh' in The Hague.

A number of experts with an international reputation, working on this area from the UK America, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Finland and Bangladesh participated in the conference.

EBF Vice President Writer and Journalist **Bikash Chowdhury Barua** opened the conference with his opening remarks and provided background of the thematic issue of the seminar.

Jakob de Jong, Director of The Hague Peace, chaired the seminar, while **Chris Blackburn**, political analyst and journalist, from the UK, **Shomi Kaiser**, daughter of martyred intellectual and writer **Shahidullah Kaiser**, **Dr. Wolfgang-Peter Zingel**, South Asia Institute (SAI), University of Heidelberg, Germany presented keynote papers. **Arif Yousuf**,

Film Director of BLOCAKDE from America and **Duncan Bartlett**, a British journalist, Bangladesh Ambassador in the Netherlands **Sheikh Mohammad Belal** attended the seminar as honoured guests and addressed the public while EBF President **Ansar Ahmed Ullah** moderated the panel discussion. **Jahangir Chowdhury**, AL Secretary of Belgium also spoke. Video messages of Dr. **Meghna Guha Thakurta** and Dr. **Nuzhat Chowdhury** from Dhaka were screened on the day. Both are the members of the martyred intellectual families.



Among others Diplomats from South African Embassy in the Netherlands **Andre Stammet**, Member of the Executive Board of PEN Finland **Dr. Mojibur Doftori**, **Mahmud Hassan**, EBF Secretary **Bikash Roy**, Coordinator of Global Solidarity for Peace Committee **M. M. Morshed**, community leaders **Murad Khan**, **Daud Khan Sohel**, **Khokon Sharif**, Dutch-Bangladeshi Industrialist **Jasim Uddin Litton**, Social Worker **Monowar Mohammad** took part in the open discussion.

They said that more than three million people were killed when the Pakistani Army used force to suppress an independence campaign. They also said there was widespread sexual violence against women, including rape and gang rape. “Bangladesh cannot move forward until it faces its past,” said Shomi Kaiser, whose father was killed by the Pakistani army when she was a child. “The fight for justice is a long battle,” she said.

Kaiser said, it was appropriate to focus the campaign in The Hague because it is regarded as “the city of justice” due to its history of court cases trying crimes against humanity.

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States government for the Pakistani army at that time, which he said was part of President Nixon's strategy to contain Communism in Asia.



The Bangladesh Ambassador to the Netherlands, **Sheikh Mohammad Belal**, said, "No other country should face the injustice and trauma that Bangladesh has endured." Bangladesh's Prime Minister **Sheikh Hasina**, whose father **Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman** was killed by soldiers loyal to Pakistan, has declared March 25th a national day to commemorate genocide. The date falls on the anniversary of the start of Operation Searchlight in 1971, which marked the start of military actions in what was then known as East Pakistan. EBF had also organised a photo exhibition displaying the brutality and killings by the Pakistani army and their local collaborators during the Liberation War of Bangladesh in 1971.

Following the seminar, a reception was held for the guests and participants in BASUG office, where **Shomi Kaiser**, **Shyamol Shil**, **Simu Nahar**, **Shompa Bala** and German-Bangladeshi Singer **Abdul Munim** rendered musical soiree. Poets **Monwar Mohammad**, **Mir Zabeda Yeasmin Imi** and **Hossain Abdul Hai** recited their self-composed poems.

<http://www.migrationnewsbd.com/news/view/32073/38/International-recognition-of-1971-genocide-in-Bangladesh-sought>

MIGRATION
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International recognition of 1971 genocide in Bangladesh sought

Mar. 27, 2019, Dhaka



Bangladeshi Diaspora in Europe, intellectuals, academics and family members of the martyrs sought international recognition of 1971 genocide in Bangladesh.

They came up with the demands while speaking at an International conference on "International recognition of 1971 Genocide in Bangladesh" held in the Hague, Netherlands on 23 March 2019.

The conference organized by European Bangladesh Forum (EBF) was presided over by the Director of The Hague Peace Jakob de Jong, according to press release.

Dr. Wolfgang-Peter Zingel of South Asia Institute (SAI), University of Heidelberg, Germany was the key note speaker at the conference.

The conference was also addressed by Shomi Kaiser, daughter of martyred intellectual Shahidullah Kaiser, British political analyst and journalist Chris Blackburn, British journalist and editor Duncan Bartlett, Vice President of EBF Bikash Chowdhury, Director of the documentary film, BLOCKADE Arif Yusuf, Jahangir Chowdhury, Secretary, Awami League Belgium and President of EBF Ansar Ahmed Ullah.

Bangladesh ambassador in Netherlands Sheikh Mohammad Belal also addressed the conference as guest of honour.

BASUG handed over a crest to Bangladesh ambassador for his outstanding contribution to Bangladesh and the Bangladeshi community in the Netherlands.

Migrationnewsbd.com/ob Dhaka

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[HTTPS://WWW.DW.COM/BN/একাত্তরের-গণহত্যার-স্বীকৃতি-জরুরি/A-48052647](https://www.dw.com/BN/একাত্তরের-গণহত্যার-স্বীকৃতি-জরুরি/A-48052647)

‘একাত্তরে গণহত্যার স্বীকৃতি জরুরি’

বচিরহীনতার সংস্কৃতি থকে বশ্বকে বরেয়ি আসতে হলে একাত্তরে বাংলাদেশে য়ে গণহত্যা হযছে, তার আন্তর্জাতকি স্বীকৃতি ও দোষীদরে বচিররে আওয়া আনতে হবে বলে মনে করনে দর্শে ও বদিশে বশ্বলযেক ও কর্মীরা।



দু'বছর পর স্বাধীনতার সুবর্ণ জয়ন্তী পালন করতে যাচ্ছে বাংলাদেশ। একাত্তরে মহান মুক্তযুদ্ধে সময় পাকিস্তানি সনোবাহিনী তাদরে স্থানীয় দোষের রাজাকার, আল বদরদরে সঙ্গে মলি পূর্ব পাকিস্তানে গণহত্যা চালয়িছে। কনিতু প্রায় পঞ্চাশ বছর পরেয়ি গেলেও এই গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতকি স্বীকৃতি মলেনো।

বরং বাংলাদেশে একটি ট্রাইব্যুনালে স্থানীয় যুদ্ধাপরাধীদরে বচির শুরু হবার পর এ নয়ি বশ্বজুড়ে এর স্বচ্ছতা ও মানদণ্ড নয়ি বতিরক তোলা হযছে। এমনকি গণহত্যা কত মানুষ শহদি হযছেন তার সংখ্যা নয়ি বারবার প্রশ্ন তোলা হযছে। দর্শে ও আন্তর্জাতকি মহলে।

নানাভাবে ১৯৭১-এর ঐতিহাসিক সত্যগুলোকে প্রশ্নবদ্ধ করার প্রচেষ্টা গত পাঁচ দশক ধরে চলেছে বলে মনে করেন বিশ্লষেকরা।

নদোরল্যান্ডসরে হুগে শহরে 'ইউরোপিয়ান বাংলাদেশে ফোরাম' আয়োজিত এক সাম্প্রতিক সমেনিারে শহদি পরবিারর সদস্য, গবষেক, সাংবাদিক ও কূটনীতিকিদরে সঙ্গে কথা হয় ডয়চে ভলেরে।

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ভডিডি দেখুন 00:48

‘৫০ বছর পর কঠনি হবে’

গগহত্য়ার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতি

বাংলাদেশে যে গগহত্য়া হয়ছে, তাতে কননো সংশয় নই বলে মনে করেন জার্মানরি হাইডলেব্য়ারগ বশ্ববদিঘালয়রে দক্ষিণ এশিয়া ইনসটিটিউটরে অধ্যাপক ড. ভল্ফগাঙ পটোর সঙ্গিলো। ‘‘আমার মনে হয় না, বাংলাদেশে পক্ষ থেকে কননো ঘাটতি আছে। সমস্য়া হচ্ছে, বাংলাদেশে যটি পাচ্ছে না তা হলো আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতি,’’ ডয়চে ভলেকে বলেন তিনি।

ভল্ফগাঙ আরো বলেন যে, বাংলাদেশে গগহত্য়া সর্বজনস্বীকৃত। ‘‘আপনি সোশ্যাল মিডিয়ায় যান, বা গুগলে যান এবং সথানে গয়ি লখুন বাংলাদেশে জনোসাইড অথবা শুধু জনোসাইড। তখন আপনি দখেবনে যে, এখানকার গগহত্য়া স্বীকৃত। যসেব গগহত্য়ার নাম আসবে সথানে দখেবনে ১৯৭১ সালরে বাংলাদেশে গগহত্য়া তার অন্যতম,’’ বলেন তিনি।

কন্তু কনে মলিছে না আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতি? এর জন্য অনেকেই বাংলাদেশে পক্ষ থেকে যথায়ত তপরতার অভাবকে দায়ী করেন। আর ভল্ফগাঙ-এর মতে, ৫০ বছর পর এই স্বীকৃতি পাওয়া কঠনি হবে। ‘‘আপনি কননো আন্তর্জাতিক ট্রাইব্যুনালে যতে পারনে এবং এর প্রতিকার চাইতে পারনে। কন্তু ৫০ বছর পর এই স্বীকৃতি কঠনি হবে,’’ ডয়চে ভলেকে বলেন তিনি। যোগ করেন, ‘‘আরকেটি বিষয় হতে পারে আপনি বিষয়টি সাধারণরে চতেনায় আনতে পারনে। শুধু আন্তর্জাতিক সম্প্রদায় নয়, যে দেশে এই অপরাধ করছে, সদেশে মানুষরে চতেনায়, এক্ষত্রে পাকিস্তান।’’

সংখ্যার রাজনীতি

মুক্তযুদ্ধে কতজন শহীদ হলেন, কতজন মা-বোনরে সম্ভ্রমহানি হলো, সেই সংখ্যা নিয়ে আজও ভিন্মমত পাওয়া যায়। এ নিয়ে রাজনৈতিক মহল থেকে শুরু করে সাধারণ জনগণের ভেতরেও দ্বিধাবিক্তি কাজ করে। এই সংখ্যার খলোক একটা গণহত্যা়র ভয়াবহতা কমিয়ে দেখানোর রাজনীতি বলে মনে করেন অনেক বিশ্লেষক।

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ভিডিও দেখুন 00:55

‘সংখ্যার রাজনীতি এখনো আছে’

এ বিষয়ে ‘বাংলাদেশের বন্ধু’ খতাবপ্রাপ্ত ব্রিটিশ রাজনীতি বিশ্লেষক ও সাংবাদিক ক্রিসি ব্ল্যাকবার্ন ডয়চে ভলেকে বলেন, “সংখ্যার এই রাজনীতি বরাবর ছিলই। অনেক মার্কনি লবস্টিও চেষ্টা করেছেন সংখ্যা কমিয়ে দেখাতে।”

একাত্তরে শহীদ বুদ্ধিজীবী ও লেখক শহীদুল্লাহ কায়সারের কন্যা শমী কায়সার বলেন, এই [অস্বীকারের রাজনীতি](#) আসলে জামায়াতের।

‘‘জামায়াতে ইসলামের রাজনীতি হলো অস্বীকার করা,’’ ডয়চে ভলেকে বলেন তিনি। ‘‘তারা অস্বীকার করে আসছে যে বাংলাদেশে গণহত্যা হয়েছে। আমরা শহীদ পরিবার ও সুশীল সমাজের পক্ষ থেকে সরকারের সঙ্গে কাজ করছি যেনে একটা জনোসাইড ডনিয়াল অ্যাক্ট করা হয়।’’

হাইডলেবার্গ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের গবেষক ভল্ফগাঙ মনে করেন যে, বিশেষ করে গণহত্যা়র মতো অপরাধের পর এ নিয়ে যতাবে ‘অস্বীকার’ করার রাজনীতি শুরু হয় তা খুবই অনাকাঙ্খতি।

‘‘গণহত্যা়র সবচেয়ে কবুণ পরিণতি হলো, যখন একে অস্বীকার করা হয়, এটা কাম্য নয়,’’ বলেন তিনি।

বাংলাদেশের গণহত্যার স্বীকৃতি নিয়ে গলে ক'বছর ধরে কাজ করছেন নদোরল্যান্ডসে বাংলাদেশের রাষ্ট্রদূত শখে মণঃ বলোলা। 'সংখ্যার রাজনীতি এখনো আছে। এটা আমি অস্বীকার করতে পারব না। আমাদের দেশে এখনো অনেকে মানুষ আছে, যারা এই গণহত্যার জন্য প্রত্যক্ষভাবে দায়ী। কিন্তু 'সরি' এই কথাটি বলার মতো সাহস তাদের নেই," ডয়চে ভেলেকে বলেন তিনি।

'যারা নাম্বার্স গমে খলে তাদের আমি বলব, ওদের জায়গা থেকে বিবেচনা করে দেখুন যে বদেনাটুকু কত বড়। আমি সবসময় মনে করি, ওয়ান ডথে ইজ টু মনো। সে দৃষ্টিকোণ থেকে বলব আর কত হলে এটাকে আপনি গণহত্যা বলবেন? বাংলাদেশের আনাচে কানাচে আপনারা কি দেখেন না? সে কষ্ট যদি আত্মস্থ করতে পারি, তাহলে নাম্বার বা সংখ্যা অত্মন্ত গণো। সত্যিকার অর্থে আমি বলতে পারি যে, যে নাম্বারটা বলা হচ্ছে তাও হয়তো যথেষ্ট নয়," বলেন বলোলা।

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'জামায়াতে ইসলামের রাজনীতি হলো অস্বীকার করা'

মৃত্যুদণ্ডের বধিান বতির্ক

বাংলাদেশের আইনে মৃত্যুদণ্ডের বধিান থাকায় তা নিয়ে ববাবরই আপত্তি জানিয়েছে। আন্তর্জাতিক মানবাধিকার সংগঠনগুলো। বিশেষ করে আন্তর্জাতিক অপরাধ ট্রাইব্যুনাল প্রসঙ্গে এই বতির্ক বারবার ওঠানো হয়েছে।

ব্রিটিশ রাজনীতি বিশ্লষেক ও সাংবাদিক ক্রিসি ব্ল্যাকবার্নের মতে, আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতি পাবার ক্ষেত্রে এটি একটি বাধা। 'আমার মনে হয়, সবাই জানেন যে বাংলাদেশে গণহত্যা হয়েছে। পাকিস্তানি সাংবাদিক অ্যান্থনি মাসকারনেহাস থেকে শুরু করে অনেকে মার্কনি টিভি এটা কাভার করেছে। তবে আমি মনে করি যে কারণে বাংলাদেশে এখনো আন্তর্জাতিক সম্প্রদায়ের সমর্থন পায়নি তা হলো মৃত্যুদণ্ডের বধিান।"

তবে তিনি মনে করেন, এই বধিান 'কনটক্‌সটচুয়াল' বা ঘটনাপ্রাসঙ্গিক। এর ব্যাখ্যা দিয়েছেন শহিদি পরিবারের সদস্য শমী কায়সার। '‘ডথে পনোল্‌টি হলো কনটক্‌সটচুয়াল। আমি এর পক্ষো যারা একজন নয়, দু'জন নয় লাখো মানুষকে হত্যা করেছে, তাদের ক্ষত্রে কনে এটা প্রযোজ্য হবে না? তারা কনে যথাযথ বচিরে মুখোমুখি হবে না?’’

প্রতশিোধ নয়, বচির

বাংলাদেশে যুদ্ধাপরাধীদের বচির করে একটি ঐতিহাসিক দায়বদ্ধতা পূরণ করেছে বলে মনে করেন বিশ্লেষকরা। বাংলাদেশের গণহত্যার বচির শুধু বাংলাদেশেরে জন্য নয়, বরং পৃথিবীতে যে বচিরহীনতার সংস্কৃতি দখো যায়, তার বিরুদ্ধে বুখে দাড়াবার জন্য এর স্বীকৃতি ও আন্তর্জাতিক বচির প্রয়োজন বলে মনে করেন তাঁরা।

নদোরল্যান্ডসে বাংলাদেশের রাষ্ট্রদূত শখে মোঃ বলোল বলেন, "আমাদের প্রথমত দখেতে হবে নৈতিকতার দিক থেকে। আইনের দৃষ্টিকোণ থেকে। মানবিকতার দৃষ্টিকোণ থেকে। বাংলাদেশে সরকার প্রথমে যে কাজটি করা দরকার ছিল, সে কাজটিই করেছে। সটো হলো, বচিরহীনতার সংস্কৃতির বিরুদ্ধে বচিরেরে সংস্কৃতি চালু করা।"

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'বচির কন্তি প্রতশিোধ থেকে নয়'

'ইউরোপিয়ান বাংলাদেশ ফোরাম' এই স্বীকৃতির বিষয়টি ইউরোপের নীতিনির্ধারণদের কাছে তুলে ধরার উদ্যোগ নিয়েছে। সংগঠনটির প্রসেডিন্ট আনসার আহমেদে উল্লাহ ডয়চে ভলেকে বলেন, "আমরা চাচ্ছি, ইউরোপের বাঙালদেরে নিয়ে আমরা ইউরোপীয় পলিসিমিকোরদেরে সঙ্গে বসবা বাংলাদেশে যে গণহত্যা হয়েছিল সটো নিয়ে আমরা তাদেরে জানাব," বলেন তিনি। '‘কারণ, বাংলাদেশেরে গণহত্যা যদি আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতি পায়, তাহলে ২০১০ সালে যে যুদ্ধাপরাধীদের বচির শুরু হয়েছে, সে বচিরে কবেল স্থানীয়ভাবে যারা অপরাধেরে সঙ্গে জড়তি তাদেরে বচির হয়েছে, যারা মূল পরকিল্পনাকারী ও হত্যাকারী সেই

পাকিস্তানদিকে আমরা বচারে আওতায় আনতে পারব। এজন্য আন্তর্জাতিক সম্প্রদায়ের সমর্থন দরকার।"

তবে কোনো প্রত্যাশাপরায়ণতা থেকে এই বচার চাইছেন না বলে জানান তিনি। "বচার কিন্তু প্রত্যাশা থেকে নয়, বচার চাওয়া হচ্ছে যেন আগামীতে এ ধরনের অন্যায় না হয় এবং এটা কালচার অফ ইমপউনিটি বন্ধ করার জন্য কারণ একটা লোক যদি অন্যায় করে পার পয়ে যায় তখন সেটা এনকারজে করে আরো অন্যায়ের জন্য," বলেন আনসার।

শমী কায়সার বলেন, "পাকিস্তানের জন্য এখনই উপযুক্ত সময় বাংলাদেশে যসেব পরিবার তাদের কারণে ক্ষতিগ্রস্ত হয়েছে, তাদের ক্ষতিপূরণ দাওয়া এবং বাংলাদেশের কাছে আনুষ্ঠানিক ক্ষমা চাওয়া। যদি তারা বাংলাদেশের সঙ্গে সুসম্পর্ক, পশোদার সম্পর্ক চায় তাহলে তাদের এটা করা উচিত।"

পাকিস্তানে ১৯৭১-এর বিষয়ে সচেতনতা তৈরি ওপর গুরুত্ব দেন অধ্যাপক ভল্ফগাঙ। উয়চা বলেছেন, "সমস্যা হলো, পাকিস্তানের নতুন প্রজন্ম এই বিষয়ে প্রায় কিছুই জানেন না। যতটুকু জানে, তা ভুল এবং তাদের ইতিহাসের বিষয়ে যতটুকু লেখা হয়েছে।"

হাইডেলবার্গ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে এই গবেষক যোগ করেন, "তাহলে যেটা প্রয়োজন তা হলো, একটি আলোচনা শুরু করা, যে আলোচনায়, পাকিস্তানের ইতিহাসবিদরা থাকবেন এবং আন্তর্জাতিক ইতিহাসবিদরা থাকতে পারেন, যমেন জার্মানি ও ফ্রান্স বা জার্মানি ও পোল্যান্ডের ইতিহাসবিদদের জয়েন্ট কমিশন আছে। তারা ঠিক করবেন ইতিহাস কীভাবে লেখা হবে। এখন হয়তো এটা কিছুটা অসম্ভব মনে হচ্ছে, কিন্তু দীর্ঘমেয়াদে ভালোর জন্য এটাই দরকার।"

(To see detailed Report of DW with video interviews go to the following link of Deutsche Welle)

<https://www.dw.com/bn/একাত্তরের-গণহত্যার-স্বীকৃতি-জরুরি/a-48052647>

যুগান্তর

নেদারল্যান্ডসে একাত্তরে গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতির দাবি

বিকাশ চৌধুরী, হল্যান্ড থেকে ২৮ মার্চ ২০১৯, ১৩:৩৮ | অনলাইন সংস্করণ

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একাত্তরের গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতির দাবিতে নেদারল্যান্ডের হেগ নগরীতে শনিবার ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরামের উদ্যোগে অনুষ্ঠিত হয়েছে আন্তর্জাতিক সেমিনার।

সেমিনারে একাত্তরের গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতি এবং এর জন্য দায়ী ব্যক্তি ও গোষ্ঠীকে বিচারের আওতায় আনতে দল, মত, জাতি, ধর্ম ও ভৌগলিক অবস্থান নির্বিশেষে বাংলাদেশি ও আন্তর্জাতিক মানবাধিকার আন্দোলনের কর্মীদের ঐক্যবদ্ধভাবে কাজ করার আহ্বান জানানো হয়।

এমন নৃশংস হত্যাযজ্ঞের ঘটনার দ্রুত এবং দৃষ্টান্তমূলক বিচার না হলে শুধু বাংলাদেশ, পাকিস্তান কিংবা এশিয়ায় নয়, বরং বিশ্বের নানা প্রান্তের স্বৈরাচারী রাষ্ট্রীয় শক্তি ও তাদের দোসররা বারবার নিরীহ ও নিরস্ত্র নারী-পুরুষ ও শিশুদের উপর ঘণ্য বর্বর গণহত্যা চালাতে উৎসাহিত হবে। তাই বাংলাদেশ থেকে ও ইউরোপের বিভিন্ন দেশ থেকে আসা গবেষক, রাজনীতিক, কূটনীতিক এবং বিশেষজ্ঞরা একত্রে কাজ করার প্রত্যয় ব্যক্ত করেন।

সেমিনারে ১৯৭১ সালে বাংলাদেশের মুক্তিযুদ্ধের স্বপক্ষে আমেরিকা প্রবাসী বাংলাদেশি অভিবাসী এবং বিদেশীদের যৌথ আন্দোলন এবং আমেরিকার বন্দরে

পাকিস্তানের জন্য অস্ত্রবাহী জাহাজ রুখে দাঁড়ানোর ঐতিহাসিক বীরত্বপূর্ণ ঘটনার উপর ভিত্তি করে নির্মিত তথ্যচিত্র 'ব্লকেড' দেখানো হয়।

সেমিনারের শুরুতে স্বাগত বক্তব্য রাখেন ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরামের ভাইস প্রেসিডেন্ট বিকাশ চৌধুরী বড়ুয়া। কর্ম অধিবেশনে সভাপতিত্ব করেন নেদারল্যান্ডস ভিত্তিক আন্তর্জাতিক সংগঠন দ্য হেগ পিসের পরিচালক ইয়াকব দে ইয়ঙ্গে। অন্যান্যের মধ্যে বিষয়ভিত্তিক প্রবন্ধ উপস্থাপন করেন এবং আলোচনায় অংশ নেন 'বাংলাদেশের বন্ধু' খেতাবপ্রাপ্ত ব্রিটিশ রাজনৈতিক বিশ্লেষক এবং সাংবাদিক ক্রিস ব্ল্যাকবার্ন, একাত্তরের শহীদ বুদ্ধিজীবী এবং লেখক শহীদুল্লাহ কায়সারের কন্যা শমী কায়সার, জার্মানির হাইডেলবার্গ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের দক্ষিণ এশিয়া ইন্সটিটিউটের অধ্যাপক ড. ভোলফগাং পেটার সিঙ্গেল, ব্রিটিশ সাংবাদিক এবং সম্পাদক ডানকান বারলেট, নেদারল্যান্ডস এ বাংলাদেশের রাষ্ট্রদূত শেখ মোহাম্মাদ বেলাল, বেলজিয়াম আওয়ামী লীগ সাধারণ সম্পাদক জাহাঙ্গীর চৌধুরী রতন এবং ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরাম ইবিএফের প্রেসিডেন্ট আনসার আহমেদ উল্লাহ।

এছাড়া শহীদ বুদ্ধিজীবী পরিবারের সদস্য ড. মেঘনা গুহ ঠাকুরতা এবং ড. নুজহাত চৌধুরীর ভিডিও বার্তা দেখানো হয় সেমিনারে। সেমিনারের পাশাপাশি একই দাবিতে শনিবার হেগ নগরীতে আন্তর্জাতিক বিচার আদালতের সামনে এবং হেগ নগরীতে অবস্থিত স্থায়ী শহীদ মিনারের সামনে বিক্ষোভ প্রদর্শন করা হয়। এছাড়া সেমিনারস্থলে ১৯৭১ সালে পাকিস্তানী সেনাবাহিনীর এবং তাদের দোসরদের চালানো হত্যাযজ্ঞ ও নির্মম নির্যাতনের উপর একটি চিত্র প্রদর্শনী আয়োজন করা হয়।

উন্মুক্ত আলোচনায় অংশনেন গ্লোবাল সলিডারিটি ফর পিস কমিটির সমন্বয়কারী এম এম মোর্শেদ, ডাচ-বাংলাদেশি শিল্পপতি জাসিম উদ্দিন লিটন, সমাজসেবী মনোয়ার মোহাম্মদ, দক্ষিণ আফ্রিকার ডাচ দূতাবাসের কূটনীতিক আন্দ্রে স্টামেট, পেন ফিনল্যান্ডের কার্যকরী বোর্ডের সদস্য ড. মজিবুর দপ্তরী এবং মাহমুদ হাসান। উপস্থিত ছিলেন আমস্টার্ডামের রেডিও লা বেনেভলেন্সিয়া এইচটিএফের প্রতিষ্ঠাতা এবং পরিচালক জর্জ ভাইস এবং সমাজকর্মী দাউদ খান সোহেল এবং সর্ব ইউরোপীয় আওয়ামী লীগ নেতা খোকন শরীফ।

সেমিনারের পরে সংক্ষিপ্ত সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠানে বাংলাদেশের স্বাধীনতা যুদ্ধের সময়ের পরিবেশন করা হয়।



স ম য়ে র সা থে স ত্যে র স স্কা নে



হেগ সেমিনারে একাত্তরের গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতির দাবি

By GBnews|| London

দ্য হেগ, ২৩ মার্চ ||

১৯৭১ সালে পাকিস্তানী সেনাবাহিনী এবং তাদের দোসরদের চালানো নির্মম গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতির দাবিতে নেদারল্যান্ডের হেগ নগরীতে ২৩ মার্চ ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরাম এর উদ্যোগে অনুষ্ঠিত হয়েছে আন্তর্জাতিক সেমিনার। সেমিনারে একাত্তরের গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতি এবং এর জন্য দায়ী ব্যক্তি ও গোষ্ঠীকে বিচারের আওতায় আনতে দল, মত, জাতি, ধর্ম ও ভৌগলিক অবস্থান নির্বিশেষে বাংলাদেশী ও আন্তর্জাতিক মানবাধিকার আন্দোলনের কর্মীদের ঐক্যবদ্ধভাবে কাজ করার আহ্বান জানানো হয়।

এমন নৃশংস হত্যাযজ্ঞের ঘটনার দ্রুত এবং দৃষ্টান্তমূলক বিচার না হলে শুধু বাংলাদেশ, পাকিস্তান কিংবা এশিয়ায় নয়, বরং বিশ্বের নানা প্রান্তের স্বৈরাচারী রাষ্ট্রীয় শক্তি ও তাদের দোসররা বারবার নিরীহ ও নিরস্ত্র নারী-পুরুষ ও শিশুদের উপর ঘৃণ্য

বর্বর গণহত্যা চালাতে উৎসাহিত হবে। তাই বাংলাদেশ থেকে ও ইউরোপের বিভিন্ন দেশ থেকে আসা গবেষক, রাজনীতিক, কূটনীতিক এবং বিশেষজ্ঞরা একত্রে কাজ করার প্রত্যয় ব্যক্ত করেন।

সেমিনারে ১৯৭১ সালে বাংলাদেশের মুক্তিযুদ্ধের স্বপক্ষে আমেরিকা প্রবাসী বাঙালি অভিবাসী এবং বিদেশীদের যৌথ আন্দোলন এবং আমেরিকার বন্দরে পাকিস্তানের জন্য অস্ত্রবাহী জাহাজ রুখে দাঁড়ানোর ঐতিহাসিক বীরত্বপূর্ণ ঘটনার উপর ভিত্তি করে নির্মিত তথ্যচিত্র “ব্লকেড” দেখানো হয়।

সেমিনারের শুরুতে স্বাগত বক্তব্য রাখেন ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরামের ভাইস প্রেসিডেন্ট বিকাশ চৌধুরী বড়ুয়া। কর্ম অধিবেশনে সভাপতিত্ব করেন নেদারল্যান্ডস ভিত্তিক আন্তর্জাতিক সংগঠন দ্য হেগ পিস এর পরিচালক ইয়াকব দে ইয়ঙ্গে। অন্যান্যের মধ্যে বিষয়ভিত্তিক প্রবন্ধ উপস্থাপন করেন এবং আলোচনায় অংশ নেন “বাংলাদেশের বন্ধু” খেতাবপ্রাপ্ত ব্রিটিশ রাজনৈতিক বিশ্লেষক এবং সাংবাদিক ক্রিস ব্ল্যাকবার্ন, একাত্তরের শহীদ বুদ্ধিজীবী এবং লেখক শহীদুল্লাহ কায়সার এর কন্যা শমী কায়সার, জার্মানির হাইডেলবার্গ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের দক্ষিণ এশিয়া ইন্সটিটিউট এর অধ্যাপক ডঃ ভোলফগাং পেটার সিঙ্গেল, ব্রিটিশ সাংবাদিক ডানকান বার্টলেট, নেদারল্যান্ডস এ বাংলাদেশের রাষ্ট্রদূত শেখ মোহাম্মাদ বেলাল, বেলজিয়াম আওয়ামী লীগ সাধারণ সম্পাদক জাহাঙ্গির চৌধুরী রতন এবং ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরাম এর প্রেসিডেন্ট আনসার আহমেদ উল্লাহ।

এছাড়া শহীদ বুদ্ধিজীবী পরিবারের সদস্য ডঃ মেঘনা গুহ ঠাকুরতা এবং ডঃ নুজহাত চৌধুরীর ভিডিও বার্তা দেখানো হয় সেমিনারে। সেমিনার এর পাশাপাশি একই দাবিতে শনিবার হেগ নগরীতে আন্তর্জাতিক বিচার আদালতের সামনে এবং হেগ নগরীতে অবস্থিত স্থায়ী শহীদ মিনারের সামনে বিক্ষোভ প্রদর্শন করা হয়। এছাড়া সেমিনারস্থলে ১৯৭১ সালে পাকিস্তানী সেনাবাহিনীর এবং তাদের দোসরদের চালানো হত্যাযজ্ঞ ও নির্মম নির্যাতনের উপর একটি চিত্র প্রদর্শনী আয়োজন করা হয়।

আনসার আহমেদ উল্লাহর সভাপতিত্বে উন্মুক্ত আলোচনায় অংশ নেন গ্লোবাল সলিডারিটি ফর পিস কমিটি এর সমন্বয়কারী এম এম মোর্শেদ, ডাচ-বাংলাদেশী

শিল্পপতি জসিম উদ্দিন লিটন, সমাজসেবী মনোয়ার মোহাম্মদ, দক্ষিণ আফ্রিকার ডাচ দূতাবাসের কূটনীতিক আন্দ্রে স্টামেট, পেন ফিনল্যান্ড এর কার্যকরী বোর্ড এর সদস্য ডঃ মজিবুর দপ্তরী এবং মাহমুদ হাসান। উপস্থিত ছিলেন সাপোর্ট ট্রাস্ট ফর আফ্রিকা, দি হেগ ইউনিভার্সিটি অফ অ্যাপ্লায়েড সাইন্সেস, বসনিয়া এন্ড হের্জেগোভিনার প্রতিনিধি সহ আমস্টারডাম এর রেডিও লা বেনেভলেন্সিয়া এইচটিএফ এর প্রতিষ্ঠাতা এবং পরিচালক জর্জ ভাইস এবং সমাজকর্মী দাউদ খান সোহেল এবং সর্ব ইউরোপীয় আওয়ামী লীগ নেতা খোকন শরীফ।

সেমিনারের পরে সংক্ষিপ্ত সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠানে বাংলাদেশের স্বাধীনতা যুদ্ধের সময়ের নানা উদ্দীপনামূলক সঙ্গীত পরিবেশন করা হয়।



http://our-voice-online.com/families-of-bangladesh-genocide-victims-call-for-justice-in-the-hague/?fbclid=IwAR029XFYZooF5O3VRAdk9140d0KIXJLjHiB6CRbaHBM_ZPNDIHrDMY4fSIY

Bangladesh genocide victims call for justice in the Hague

By **ourvoice** March 25, 2019



ছবি: এএইচ/ওভি

The Hague, March 23 (OurVoice): The Bengali community in Europe is stepping up efforts to have Pakistan's actions in Bangladesh in 1971 recognised as genocide.

Activists gathered outside the International Criminal Court and permanent Shaheed Minar in the Hague in the Netherlands on March 23, calling for international action.

This was part of the day long program of the Europe-based diaspora organization European Bangladesh Forum (EBF) on ‘international recognition of 1971 genocide in Bangladesh’ in the Hague.

A number of experts with international reputation, working on this area from the UK America, Germany, The Netherlands, Belgium, Finland and Bangladesh participated in the conference.

EBF Vice President Writer and Journalist Bikash Chowdhury Barua opened the conference with his opening remarks and provided background of the thematic issue of the seminar. Jakob de Jong, Director of The Hague Peace, The Netherlands chaired the seminar, while Chris Blackburn, Political Analyst and Journalist, from the UK, Shomi Kaiser, daughter of martyred intellectual and writer Shahidullah Kaiser, Dr. Wolfgang-Peter Zingel, South Asia Institute (SAI), University of Heidelberg, Germany presented key note papers. Arif Yousuf, Film Director of BLOCAKDE from America and Duncan Bartlett, British journalist, Bangladesh Ambassador in the Netherlands Sheikh Mohammad Belal attended the seminar as honored guests and addressed while EBF President Ansar Ahmed Ullah moderated the panel discussion. Jahangir Chowdhury, AL Secretary of Belgium also spoke. Video messages of Dr. Meghna Guha Thakurta and Dr Nuzhat Chowdhury from Dhaka were screened on the day. Both are the members of the martyred intellectual families.

Among others Diplomat from South African Embassy in The Netherlands Andre Stammet, Member of the Executive Board of PEN Finland Dr MojiburDoftori, Mahmud Hassan, EBF Secretary Bikash Roy, Coordinator of Global Solidarity for Peace Committee M M Morshed, community leaders Murad Khan, Daud Khan Sohel, Khokon Sharif, Dutch-Bangladeshi Industrialist Jasim Uddin Litton, Social Worker Monowar Mohammad took part in the open discussion.



Photo: AH/OV

They said that more than three million people were killed when the Pakistani Army used force to suppress an independence campaign. They also said there was widespread sexual violence against women, including rape and gang rape. "Bangladesh cannot move forward until it faces its past," said Shomi Kaiser, whose father was killed by the Pakistani army when she was a child. "The fight for justice is a long battle," she said.

Kaiser said, it was appropriate to focus the campaign in the Hague because it is regarded as "the city of justice" due to its history of court cases trying crimes against humanity.

Dr Wolfgang-Peter Zingel, from the University of Heidelberg in Germany, told the European Bangladesh Forum: "The genocide in Bangladesh was not an accident of history." Drawing comparisons with the Holocaust of Jews by the Nazis, Dr Zingel warned, "If you want to prevent such atrocities happening again, you must look in detail at their causes and record them."

British political analyst Chris Blackburn said international cooperation was the best way to respond to human rights violations and noted that many of the issues from 1971 are still relevant to South Asia. "Some people say, 'let sleeping dogs lie'," said Blackburn. "But these are not sleeping dogs – these are dogs which are still biting."

The event in the Hague included the screening of a documentary film entitled "Blockade" which examined the response of the peace movement to Pakistan's

violence in the early 1970s. The film's director Arif Yousuf said, he wanted to highlight the support by the United States government for the Pakistani army at that time, which he said was part of President Nixon's strategy to contain Communism in Asia.

The Bangladesh Ambassador to the Netherlands, Sheikh Mohammad Belal, said, "No other country should face the injustice and trauma that Bangladesh has endured." Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, whose father Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was killed by soldiers loyal to Pakistan, has declared March 25th a national day to commemorate genocide. The date falls on the anniversary of the start of Operation Searchlight in 1971, which marked the start of military actions in what was then known as East Pakistan.

EBF had also organised a photo exhibition displaying the brutality and killings by the Pakistani army and their local collaborators during the Liberation War of Bangladesh in 1971. Following the seminar, a reception was held for the guests and participants in BASUG office, where Shomi Kaiser, Shyamol Shil, Simu Nahar, Shompa Bala and German-Bangladeshi Singer Abdul Munim rendered musical soiree. Poet Monwar Mohammad, Mir Zabeda Yeasmin Imi and Hossain Abdul Hai recited their self composed poems.



<https://www.pbd.news/expatriate/99863>

হেগ সেমিনারে একাত্তরের গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতির দাবি

প্রকাশ: ২৮ মার্চ ২০১৯, ১২:৫৬



১৯৭১ সালে পাকিস্তানী সেনাবাহিনী এবং তাদের দোসরদের চালানো নির্মম গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতির দাবিতে নেদারল্যান্ডের হেগ নগরীতে ২৩ মার্চ ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরাম এর উদ্যোগে অনুষ্ঠিত হয়েছে আন্তর্জাতিক সেমিনার।

সেমিনারে একাত্তরের গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতি এবং এর জন্য দায়ী ব্যক্তি ও গোষ্ঠীকে বিচারের আওতায় আনতে দল, মত, জাতি, ধর্ম ও ভৌগলিক অবস্থান নির্বিশেষে বাংলাদেশী ও আন্তর্জাতিক মানবাধিকার আন্দোলনের কর্মীদের ঐক্যবদ্ধভাবে কাজ করার আহ্বান জানানো হয়।

এমন নৃশংস হত্যাযজ্ঞের ঘটনার দ্রুত এবং দৃষ্টান্তমূলক বিচার না হলে শুধু বাংলাদেশ, পাকিস্তান কিংবা এশিয়ায় নয়, বরং বিশ্বের নানা প্রান্তের স্বৈরাচারী রাষ্ট্রীয় শক্তি ও তাদের দোসররা বারবার নিরীহ ও নিরস্ত্র নারী-পুরুষ ও শিশুদের উপর ঘৃণ্য বর্বর গণহত্যা চালাতে উৎসাহিত হবে। তাই বাংলাদেশ থেকে ও ইউরোপের বিভিন্ন দেশ থেকে আসা গবেষক, রাজনীতিক, কূটনীতিক এবং বিশেষজ্ঞরা একত্রে কাজ করার প্রত্যয় ব্যক্ত করেন।

সেমিনারে ১৯৭১ সালে বাংলাদেশের মুক্তিযুদ্ধের স্বপক্ষে আমেরিকা প্রবাসী বাঙালি অভিবাসী এবং বিদেশীদের যৌথ আন্দোলন এবং আমেরিকার বন্দরে পাকিস্তানের জন্য অস্ত্রবাহী জাহাজ রুখে দাঁড়ানোর ঐতিহাসিক বীরত্বপূর্ণ ঘটনার উপর ভিত্তি করে নির্মিত তথ্যচিত্র “ব্লকেড” দেখানো হয়।

সেমিনারের শুরুতে স্বাগত বক্তব্য রাখেন ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরামের ভাইস প্রেসিডেন্ট বিকাশ চৌধুরী বড়ুয়া। কর্ম অধিবেশনে সভাপতিত্ব করেন নেদারল্যান্ডস ভিত্তিক আন্তর্জাতিক সংগঠন দ্য হেগ পিস এর পরিচালক ইয়াকব দে ইয়ঙ্গে। অন্যান্যের মধ্যে বিষয়ভিত্তিক প্রবন্ধ উপস্থাপন করেন এবং আলোচনায় অংশ নেন “বাংলাদেশের বন্ধু” খেতাবপ্রাপ্ত ব্রিটিশ রাজনৈতিক বিশ্লেষক এবং সাংবাদিক ক্রিস ব্ল্যাকবার্ন, একাত্তরের শহীদ বুদ্ধিজীবী এবং লেখক শহীদুল্লাহ কায়সার এর কন্যা শমী কায়সার, জার্মানির হাইডেলবার্গ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের দক্ষিণ এশিয়া ইন্সটিটিউট এর অধ্যাপক ডঃ ভোলফগাং পেটার সিঙ্গেল, ব্রিটিশ সাংবাদিক ডানকান বার্টলেট, নেদারল্যান্ডস এ বাংলাদেশের রাষ্ট্রদূত শেখ মোহাম্মাদ বেলাল, বেলজিয়াম আওয়ামী

লীগ সাধারণ সম্পাদক জাহাঙ্গির চৌধুরী রতন এবং ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরাম এর প্রেসিডেন্ট আনসার আহমেদ উল্লাহ।

এছাড়া শহীদ বুদ্ধিজীবী পরিবারের সদস্য ডঃ মেঘনা গুহ ঠাকুরতা এবং ডঃ নুজহাত চৌধুরীর ভিডিও বার্তা দেখানো হয় সেমিনারে। সেমিনার এর পাশাপাশি একই দাবিতে শনিবার হেগ নগরীতে আন্তর্জাতিক বিচার আদালতের সামনে এবং হেগ নগরীতে অবস্থিত স্থায়ী শহীদ মিনারের সামনে বিক্ষোভ প্রদর্শন করা হয়। এছাড়া সেমিনারস্থলে ১৯৭১ সালে পাকিস্তানী সেনাবাহিনীর এবং তাদের দোসরদের চালানো হত্যাযজ্ঞ ও নির্মম নির্যাতনের উপর একটি চিত্র প্রদর্শনী আয়োজন করা হয়।



আনসার আহমেদ উল্লাহর সভাপতিত্বে উন্মুক্ত আলোচনায় অংশ নেন গ্লোবাল সলিডারিটি ফর পিস কমিটি এর সমন্বয়কারী এম এম মোর্শেদ, ডাচ-বাংলাদেশী শিল্পপতি জসিম উদ্দিন লিটন, সমাজসেবী মনোয়ার মোহাম্মদ, দক্ষিণ আফ্রিকার ডাচ দূতাবাসের কূটনীতিক আন্দ্রে স্টামেট, পেন ফিনল্যান্ড এর কার্যকরী বোর্ড এর সদস্য ডঃ মজিবুর দপ্তরী এবং মাহমুদ হাসান। উপস্থিত ছিলেন সাপোর্ট ট্রাস্ট ফর আফ্রিকা, দি হেগ ইউনিভার্সিটি অফ অ্যাপ্লায়েড সাইন্সেস, বসনিয়া এন্ড হের্জেগোভিনার প্রতিনিধি সহ আমস্টারডাম এর রেডিও লা বেনেভলেন্সিয়া এইচটিএফ এর প্রতিষ্ঠাতা এবং পরিচালক জর্জ ভাইস এবং সমাজকর্মী দাউদ খান সোহেল এবং সর্ব ইউরোপীয় আওয়ামী লীগ নেতা খোকন শরীফ।

সেমিনারের পরে সংক্ষিপ্ত সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠানে বাংলাদেশের স্বাধীনতা যুদ্ধের সময়ের নানা উদ্দীপনামূলক সঙ্গীত পরিবেশন করা হয়।

হেগ সেমিনারে একাত্তরের গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতির দাবি



দ্য হেগ, ২৩ মার্চ - ১৯৭১ সালে পাকিস্তানী সেনাবাহিনী এবং তাদের দোসরদের চালানো নির্মম গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতির দাবিতে নেদারল্যান্ডের হেগ নগরীতে ২৩ মার্চ ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরাম এর উদ্যোগে অনুষ্ঠিত হয়েছে আন্তর্জাতিক সেমিনার। সেমিনারে একাত্তরের গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতি এবং এর জন্য দায়ী ব্যক্তি ও গোষ্ঠীকে বিচারের আওতায় আনতে দল, মত, জাতি, ধর্ম ও ভৌগোলিক অবস্থান নির্বিশেষে বাংলাদেশী ও আন্তর্জাতিক মানবাধিকার আন্দোলনের কর্মীদের একত্ববদ্ধভাবে কাজ করার আহ্বান জানানো হয়।

এমন নৃশংস হত্যাযজ্ঞের ঘটনার দ্রুত এবং দৃষ্টান্তমূলক বিচার না হলে শুধু বাংলাদেশ, পাকিস্তান কিংবা এশিয়ায় নয়, বরং বিশ্বের নানা প্রান্তের স্বৈরাচারী রাষ্ট্রীয় শক্তি ও তাদের দোসররা বারবার নিরীহ ও নিরস্ত্র নারী-পুরুষ ও শিশুদের উপর ঘৃণ্য বর্বর গণহত্যা চালাতে উৎসাহিত হবে। তাই বাংলাদেশ থেকে ও ইউরোপের বিভিন্ন

দেশ থেকে আসা গবেষক, রাজনীতিক, কূটনীতিক এবং বিশেষজ্ঞরা একত্রে কাজ করার প্রত্যয় ব্যক্ত করেন।

সেমিনারে ১৯৭১ সালে বাংলাদেশের মুক্তিযুদ্ধের স্বপক্ষে আমেরিকা প্রবাসী বাঙালি অভিবাসী এবং বিদেশীদের যৌথ আন্দোলন এবং আমেরিকার বন্দরে পাকিস্তানের জন্য অস্ত্রবাহী জাহাজ রপ্তা দাঁড়ানোর ঐতিহাসিক বীরত্বপূর্ণ ঘটনার উপর ভিত্তি করে নির্মিত তথ্যচিত্র “ব্লকেড” দেখানো হয়।

সেমিনারের শুরুতে স্বাগত বক্তব্য রাখেন ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরামের ভাইস প্রেসিডেন্ট বিকাশ চৌধুরী বড়ুয়া। কর্ম অধিবেশনে সভাপতিত্ব করেন নেদারল্যান্ডস ভিত্তিক আন্তর্জাতিক সংগঠন দ্য হেগ পিস এর পরিচালক ইয়াকব দে ইয়ঙ্গে। অন্যায়ের মধ্যে বিষয়ভিত্তিক প্রবন্ধ উপস্থাপন করেন এবং আলোচনায় অংশ নেন “বাংলাদেশের বন্ধু” খেতাবপ্রাপ্ত ব্রিটিশ রাজনৈতিক বিশ্লেষক এবং সাংবাদিক ক্রিস ব্র্যাকবার্ন, একাত্তরের শহীদ বুদ্ধিজীবী

এবং লেখক শহীদুল্লাহ কায়সার এর কন্যা শমী কায়সার, জার্মানির হাইডেলবার্গ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের দক্ষিণ এশিয়া ইন্সটিটিউট এর অধ্যাপক ডঃ ভোলফগ্যাং পেটার সিঙ্গেল, ব্রিটিশ সাংবাদিক ডানকান বার্টলেট, নেদারল্যান্ডস এ বাংলাদেশের রপ্তাদূত শেখ মোহাম্মাদ বেলাল, বেলজিয়াম আওয়ামী লীগ সাধারণ সম্পাদক জাহাঙ্গির চৌধুরী রতন এবং ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরাম এর প্রেসিডেন্ট আনসার আহমেদ উল্লাহ। এছাড়া শহীদ বুদ্ধিজীবী পরিবারের সদস্য ডঃ মেঘনা গুহ ঠাকুরতা এবং ডঃ নুজহাত চৌধুরীর ভিডিও বার্তা দেখানো হয় সেমিনারে। সেমিনার এর পাশাপাশি একই দাবিতে শনিবার হেগ নগরীতে আন্তর্জাতিক বিচার আদালতের সামনে এবং হেগ নগরীতে অবস্থিত স্থায়ী শহীদ মিনারের সামনে বিক্ষোভ প্রদর্শন করা হয়। এছাড়া সেমিনারস্থলে ১৯৭১ সালে পাকিস্তানী সেনাবাহিনীর এবং তাদের দোসরদের চালানো হত্যাযজ্ঞ ও নির্মম নির্যাতনের উপর একটি চিত্র প্রদর্শনী আয়োজন

করা হয়। আনসার আহমেদ উল্লাহর সভাপতিত্বে উন্মুক্ত আলোচনায় অংশ নেন গ্লোবাল সলিডারিটি ফর পিস কমিটি এর সমন্বয়কারী এম এম মোর্শেদ, ডাচ-বাংলাদেশী শিল্পপতি জসিম উদ্দিন লিটন, সমাজসেবী মনোয়ার মোহাম্মদ, দক্ষিণ আফ্রিকার ডাচ দূতাবাসের কূটনীতিক আন্দ্রে স্টামেট, পেন ফিনল্যান্ড এর কার্যকরী বোর্ড এর সদস্য ডঃ মজিবুর দস্তগীর এবং মাহমুদ হাসান। উপস্থিত ছিলেন সাপোর্ট ট্রাস্টি ফর আফ্রিকা, দি হেগ ইউনিভার্সিটি অফ অ্যাপ্লায়েড সাইন্সেস, বসনিয়া এন্ড হের্জেগোভিনার প্রতিনিধি সহ আমস্টারডাম এর রেডিও লা বেনেভলেসিয়া এইচটিএফ এর প্রতিষ্ঠাতা এবং পরিচালক জর্জ ভাইস এবং সমাজকর্মী দাউদ খান সোহেল এবং সর্ব ইউরোপীয় আওয়ামী লীগ নেতা খোকন শরীফ। সেমিনারের পরে সংক্ষিপ্ত সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠানে বাংলাদেশের স্বাধীনতা যুদ্ধের সময়ের নানা উদ্দীপনামূলক সঙ্গীত পরিবেশন করা হয়।

হেগে একাত্তরের গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতি দাবি

দ্য হেগঃ ১৯৭১ সালে পাকিস্তানী
সেনাবাহিনী এবং তাদের দোসরদের
চালানো নির্মম গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক
স্বীকৃতির দাবিতে নেদারল্যান্ডের হেগ
নগরীতে ২৩ মার্চ শেয়াংশ ৪২ পাতায়

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অনুষ্ঠানে মোহাম্মদ এন মজুমদার ও নজরুল হককে প্রত্নমেশন প্রদান।



অনুষ্ঠানে এম ইসলাম মামুন ও জালাল চৌধুরীকে সন্মাননা প্রদান।



অনুষ্ঠানে বক্তব্য রাখেন মোঃ এন মজুমদার।



অনুষ্ঠানে বাংলাদেশী কমিউনিটির নেতৃবৃন্দ।



অনুষ্ঠানে বাংলাদেশী কমিউনিটির নেতৃবৃন্দ।

হেগে একাত্তরের গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতি দাবি

শনিবার ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরামের উদ্যোগে অনুষ্ঠিত হয়েছে আন্তর্জাতিক সেমিনার। সেমিনারে একাত্তরের গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতি এবং এর জন্য দায়ী ব্যক্তি ও গোষ্ঠীকে বিচারের আওতায় আনতে দল, মত, জাতি, ধর্ম ও ভৌগোলিক অবস্থান নির্বিশেষে বাংলাদেশী ও আন্তর্জাতিক মানবাধিকার আন্দোলনের কর্মীদের একত্ববদ্ধভাবে কাজ করার আহ্বান জানানো হয়। বিচারে দীর্ঘসূত্রিতা বিচারহীনতার শামিল উল্লেখ করে বক্তাগণ বলেন, ১৯৭১ সালের হত্যামঞ্চ বিশ্বের ইতিহাসে খুব অল্প সময়ে রেকর্ডসংখ্যক হত্যা ও নির্যাতনের ঘটনা হওয়া সত্ত্বেও মুক্তিযুদ্ধের এত বছর পরেও এখনও আন্তর্জাতিকভাবে জাতিসংঘ এবং অন্যান্য বিশ্ব সম্প্রদায় এর সাথে জড়িতদের বিচারে কোন ধরনের পদক্ষেপ গ্রহণ করেনি। তাই এ ব্যাপারে আর কালক্ষেপণ না করে এখনই সবাইকে একসাথে জোর প্রচেষ্টা চালাতে হবে। এমন নৃশংস হত্যাকাণ্ডের ঘটনার দ্রুত এবং দৃষ্টান্তমূলক বিচার না হলে শুধু বাংলাদেশ, পাকিস্তান কিংবা এশিয়ায় নয়, বরং বিশ্বের নানা প্রান্তের হৈরাচারী রাষ্ট্রীয় শক্তি ও তাদের দোসররা ব্যবহার



নেদারল্যান্ডের দ্য হেগে বাংলাদেশীরা একাত্তরের গণহত্যার স্বীকৃতি দাবিতে হাঙ্গলি করে।



নেদারল্যান্ডের দ্য হেগে একাত্তরের গণহত্যার স্বীকৃতি দাবিতে আয়োজিত আলোচনা অনুষ্ঠান।

নিরীহ ও নিরস্ত্র নারী-পুরুষ ও শিশুদের উপর ঘৃণ্য বর্বর গণহত্যা চালাতে উৎসাহিত হবে। বাংলাদেশ থেকে ও ইউরোপের বিভিন্ন দেশ থেকে আসা গবেষক, রাজনৈতিক, কূটনৈতিক এবং বিশেষজ্ঞরা একত্রে কাজ করার প্রত্যয় ব্যক্ত করেন।

সেমিনারে ১৯৭১ সালে বাংলাদেশের মুক্তিযুদ্ধের পক্ষে আমেরিকা প্রবাসী বাংলাদেশী ইমিগ্রান্ট এবং বিদেশীদের যৌথ আন্দোলন এবং আমেরিকার বন্ধুর পাকিস্তানের জন্য অস্ত্রবাহী জাহাজ রুখে দাঁড়ানোর ঐতিহাসিক বীরত্বপূর্ণ ঘটনার ওপর ভিত্তি করে আরিফ ইউসুফ নির্মিত তথ্যচিত্র রুকে দেখানো হয়। একাত্তরের গণহত্যার ওপর আলোচনায় অংশ নেন তথ্যচিত্রটির নির্মাতা আমেরিকা প্রবাসী বাংলাদেশী প্রকৌশলী আরিফ ইউসুফ। এছাড়া যুক্তরাজ্য, যুক্তরাষ্ট্র, জার্মানি, নেদারল্যান্ডস, ফিনল্যান্ড এবং বাংলাদেশ থেকে বিশেষজ্ঞরা বিষয়ভিত্তিক আলোচনায় অংশ নেন।

সেমিনারের শুরুতে স্বাগত বক্তব্য রাখেন ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরামের ভাইস প্রেসিডেন্ট বিকাশ চৌধুরী বড়ুয়া। কর্ম অধিবেশনে সভাপতিত্ব করেন নেদারল্যান্ডস ভিত্তিক আন্তর্জাতিক সংগঠন দ্য হেগ পিসের পরিচালক ইয়াকব দে ইয়ঙ্গে। অন্যদের মধ্যে বিষয়ভিত্তিক প্রবন্ধ উপস্থাপন করেন এবং আলোচনায় অংশ নেন বাংলাদেশের বন্ধু খেতাবপ্রাপ্ত ব্রিটিশ রাজনৈতিক বিশ্লেষক এবং সাংবাদিক ক্রিস ব্র্যাকবান, একাত্তরের শহীদ বুদ্ধিজীবী এবং লেখক শহীদুল্লাহ কায়সারের কন্যা শামী কায়সার, জার্মানির হাইডেলবার্গ ইউনিভার্সিটির দক্ষিণ এশিয়া ইন্সটিটিউটের অধ্যাপক ডঃ জোলফগাং পেটার সিঙ্গেল, ব্রিটিশ সাংবাদিক এবং সম্পাদক ডানকান বারলেট, নেদারল্যান্ডসে বাংলাদেশের রাষ্ট্রদূত শেখ মোহাম্মদ বেলাল, বাংলাদেশী ডাচ বিশিষ্ট সমাজকর্মী জাহাঙ্গীর চৌধুরী রতন এবং ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরাম ইরিএফ-এর প্রেসিডেন্ট আনসার আহমেদ উল্লাহ। এছাড়া শহীদ বুদ্ধিজীবী পরিবারের সদস্য ডঃ মেঘনা চন্দ্র ঠাকুরতা এবং ডঃ নুজহাত চৌধুরীর ভিডিও বার্তা দেখানো হয় সেমিনারে। সেমিনারের পাশাপাশি একই দাবিতে শনিবার হেগ নগরীতে

শেয়াংশ ৪২ পাতায়

চেয়ারম্যান মোহাম্মদ এন মজুমদার, সাবেক কাক্সি চন্দ্র মো. আলগাউদ্দিন এবং পল্লব

একাত্তরের গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতির জন্য ঐক্যবদ্ধ প্রচেষ্টা জরুরি

হল্যান্ড — মার্চ ২৪, ২০১৯ – Europe



হেগ সেমিনারে একাত্তরের গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতির দাবি

দ্য হেগ, ২৩ মার্চ: ১৯৭১ সালে পাকিস্তানী সেনাবাহিনী এবং তাদের দোসরদের চালানো নির্মম গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতির দাবিতে নেদারল্যান্ডের হেগ নগরীতে শনিবার ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরাম এর উদ্যোগে অনুষ্ঠিত হয়েছে আন্তর্জাতিক সেমিনার। সেমিনারে একাত্তরের গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতি এবং এর জন্য দায়ী ব্যক্তি ও গোষ্ঠীকে বিচারের আওতায় আনতে দল, মত, জাতি, ধর্ম ও ভৌগলিক অবস্থান নির্বিশেষে বাংলাদেশী ও আন্তর্জাতিক মানবাধিকার আন্দোলনের কর্মীদের ঐক্যবদ্ধভাবে কাজ করার আহ্বান জানানো হয়।

বিচারে দীর্ঘসূত্রিতা, বিচারহীনতার শামিল উল্লেখ করে বক্তাগণ বলেন, ১৯৭১ সালের হত্যাযজ্ঞ বিশ্বের ইতিহাসে খুব অল্প সময়ে রেকর্ডসংখ্যক হত্যা ও নির্যাতনের ঘটনা হওয়া সত্ত্বেও মুক্তিযুদ্ধের এতো বছর পরেও এখনও আন্তর্জাতিকভাবে জাতিসংঘ এবং অন্যান্য বিশ্ব সম্প্রদায় এর সাথে জড়িতদের বিচারে কোন ধরনের পদক্ষেপ গ্রহণ করেনি। তাই এব্যাপারে আর কালক্ষেপণ না করে এখনই সবাইকে একসাথে জোর প্রচেষ্টা চালাতে হবে।

এমন নৃশংস হত্যাযজ্ঞের ঘটনার দ্রুত এবং দৃষ্টান্তমূলক বিচার না হলে শুধু বাংলাদেশ, পাকিস্তান কিংবা এশিয়ায় নয়, বরং বিশ্বের নানা প্রান্তের স্বৈরাচারী রাষ্ট্রীয় শক্তি ও তাদের দোসররা বারবার নিরীহ ও নিরস্ত্র নারী-পুরুষ ও শিশুদের উপর ঘৃণ্য বর্বর গণহত্যা চালাতে উৎসাহিত হবে। তাই বাংলাদেশ থেকে ও ইউরোপের বিভিন্ন দেশ থেকে আসা গবেষক, রাজনীতিক, কূটনীতিক এবং বিশেষজ্ঞরা একত্রে কাজ করার প্রত্যয় ব্যক্ত করেন।

সেমিনারে ১৯৭১ সালে বাংলাদেশের মুক্তিযুদ্ধের স্বপক্ষে আমেরিকা প্রবাসী বাংলাদেশী অভিবাসী এবং বিদেশীদের যৌথ আন্দোলন এবং আমেরিকার বন্দরে পাকিস্তানের জন্য অস্ত্রবাহী জাহাজ রুখে দাঁড়ানোর ঐতিহাসিক বীরত্বপূর্ণ ঘটনার উপর ভিত্তি করে নির্মিত তথ্যচিত্র “ব্লকেড” দেখানো হয় এবং একাত্তরের গণহত্যার উপর আলোচনায় অংশ নেন তথ্যচিত্রটির নির্মাতা আমেরিকা প্রবাসী বাংলাদেশী প্রকৌশলী আরিফ ইউসুফ। এছাড়া যুক্তরাজ্য, যুক্তরাষ্ট্র, জার্মানি, নেদারল্যান্ডস, ফিনল্যান্ড এবং বাংলাদেশ থেকে বিশেষজ্ঞরা বিষয়ভিত্তিক আলোচনায় অংশ নেন।

সেমিনারের শুরুতে স্বাগত বক্তব্য রাখেন ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরামের ভাইস প্রেসিডেন্ট সাংবাদিক ও লেখক বিকাশ চৌধুরী বড়ুয়া। কর্ম অধিবেশনে সভাপতিত্ব করেন নেদারল্যান্ডস ভিত্তিক আন্তর্জাতিক

সংগঠন দ্য হেগ পিস এর পরিচালক ইয়াকব দে ইয়ঙ্গে। অন্যায়ের মধ্যে বিষয়ভিত্তিক প্রবন্ধ উপস্থাপন করেন এবং আলোচনায় অংশ নেন “বাংলাদেশের বন্ধু” খেতাবপ্রাপ্ত ব্রিটিশ রাজনৈতিক বিশ্লেষক এবং সাংবাদিক ক্রিস ব্ল্যাকবার্ন, একাত্তরের শহীদ বুদ্ধিজীবী এবং লেখক শহীদুল্লাহ কায়সার এর কন্যা শমী কায়সার, জার্মানির হাইডেলবার্গ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের দক্ষিণ এশিয়া ইন্সটিটিউট এর অধ্যাপক ডঃ ভোলফগাং পেটার সিঙ্গেল, ব্রিটিশ সাংবাদিক এবং সম্পাদক ডানকান বারলেট, নেদারল্যান্ডস এ বাংলাদেশের রাষ্ট্রদূত শেখ মোহাম্মাদ বেলাল, বাংলাদেশী ডাচ বিশিষ্ট সমাজকর্মী জাহাঙ্গির চৌধুরী রতন এবং ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরাম ইবিএফ এর প্রেসিডেন্ট আনসার আহমেদ উল্লাহ।

এছাড়া শহীদ বুদ্ধিজীবী পরিবারের সদস্য ডঃ মেঘনা গুহ ঠাকুরতা এবং ডঃ নুজহাত চৌধুরীর ভিডিও বার্তা দেখানো হয় সেমিনারে। সেমিনার এর পাশাপাশি একই দাবিতে শনিবার হেগ নগরীতে আন্তর্জাতিক বিচার আদালতের সামনে এবং হেগ নগরীতে অবস্থিত স্থায়ী শহীদ মিনারের সামনে বিক্ষোভ প্রদর্শন করা হয়। এছাড়া সেমিনারস্থলে ১৯৭১ সালে পাকিস্তানী সেনাবাহিনীর এবং তাদের দোসরদের চালানো হত্যাযজ্ঞ ও নির্মম নির্যাতনের উপর একটি চিত্র প্রদর্শনী আয়োজন করা হয়।

উন্মুক্ত আলোচনায় অংশ নেন গ্লোবাল সলিডারিটি ফর পিস কমিটি এর সমন্বয়কারী এম এম মোর্শেদ, ডাচ-বাংলাদেশী শিল্পপতি জসিম উদ্দিন লিটন, সমাজসেবী মনোয়ার মোহাম্মদ, দক্ষিণ আফ্রিকার ডাচ দূতাবাসের কূটনীতিক আন্দ্রে স্টামেট, পেন ফিনল্যান্ড এর কার্যকরী বোর্ড এর সদস্য ডঃ মজিবুর দপ্তরী এবং মাহমুদ হাসান। উপস্থিত ছিলেন আমস্টারডাম এর রেডিও লা বেনেভলেন্সিয়া এইচটিএফ এর প্রতিষ্ঠাতা এবং পরিচালক জর্জ ভাইস এবং বক্তাগণ একাত্তরের মুক্তিযুদ্ধের প্রেক্ষাপট তুলে ধরে বলেন, পাকিস্তানী সেনারা বাংলাদেশের মুক্তিযুদ্ধ চলাকালীন নয় মাসে প্রায় তিন মিলিয়ন মানুষকে হত্যা করে এবং দুই লাখেরও বেশি নারীকে ধর্ষণ ও নৃশংস নির্যাতন করে। এছাড়া ১০ মিলিয়ন মানুষকে দেশ ছেড়ে ভারতে গিয়ে শরণার্থী শিবিরে আশ্রয় নিতে হয়েছিল। এমন অল্প সময়ে এতো বেশি সংখ্যক মানুষ হত্যার ঘটনা এটিই বিশ্ব ইতিহাসে সবচেয়ে বেশি, কেননা দ্বিতীয় বিশ্বযুদ্ধে প্রায় ৬০ মিলিয়ন মানুষ মারা গেলেও, সেই যুদ্ধের ব্যাপ্তি ছিল প্রায় ছয় বছর এবং ছড়িয়ে পড়েছিল প্রায় তিনটি মহাদেশে। অথচ ১৯৭১ সালে মুক্তিযুদ্ধ শেষ হওয়ার পর থেকে আন্তর্জাতিক সম্প্রদায় এত বড় গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতি না দিয়ে বরং বড় ধরনের বৈষম্য করেছে। এটি ঐতিহাসিকভাবে সত্য যে, এতো অল্প সময়ে আর কখনও কোথাও এতো মানুষ হত্যা করা হয়নি। কিন্তু অত্যন্ত দুঃখজনক যে, ১৯৭১ সালের গণহত্যার ব্যাপারে আন্তর্জাতিক গোষ্ঠী এখনও নিশ্চুপ রয়েছে।

সেমিনারের পরে সংক্ষিপ্ত সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠানে বাংলাদেশের স্বাধীনতা যুদ্ধের সময়ের নানা উদ্দীপনামূলক সঙ্গীত পরিবেশন করেন জার্মানির বিশিষ্ট সঙ্গীত শিল্পী আব্দুল মুনিম এবং স্বরচিত কবিতা আবৃত্তি করেন মনোয়ার মোহাম্মদ, হোসাইন আব্দুল হাই এবং মীর জাবেদা ইয়াসমিন ইমি।



একাত্তরের গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতির দাবি

একাত্তরের গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতির দাবি



হাবিবুল্লাহ আল বাহার, দ্যা হেগ, নেদারল্যান্ডস (২৩ মার্চ, ১৯): ১৯৭১ সালে পাকিস্তানি সেনাবাহিনী এবং তাদের দোসরদের চালানো নির্মম গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতির দাবিতে নেদারল্যান্ডসের হেগে আন্তর্জাতিক সেমিনার অনুষ্ঠিত হয়েছে। শনিবার ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরাম এই সেমিনারের আয়োজন করে। সেমিনারে একাত্তরের গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতি এবং এর জন্য দায়ী ব্যক্তি ও গোষ্ঠীকে বিচারের আওতায় আনতে দল, মত, জাতি, ধর্ম, বর্ণ নির্বিশেষে সবাই মিলে এবং বাংলাদেশি ও আন্তর্জাতিক মানবাধিকার আন্দোলনের কর্মীদের ঐক্যবদ্ধভাবে কাজ করার আহ্বান জানানো হয়। সেমিনারে যুক্তরাজ্য, যুক্তরাষ্ট্র, জার্মানি, নেদারল্যান্ডস, ফিনল্যান্ড এবং বাংলাদেশ থেকে বিশেষজ্ঞরা বিষয়ভিত্তিক আলোচনায় অংশ নেন।

সেমিনারের শুরুতে স্বাগত বক্তব্য রাখেন ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরামের ভাইস প্রেসিডেন্ট,



সাংবাদিক ও লেখক বিকাশ চৌধুরী বড়ুয়া। কর্ম অধিবেশনে সভাপতিত্ব করেন নেদারল্যান্ডস ভিত্তিক আন্তর্জাতিক সংগঠন দ্য হেগ পিসের পরিচালক ইয়াকব দে ইয়ঙ্কে। অন্যান্যের মধ্যে বিষয়ভিত্তিক প্রবন্ধ উপস্থাপনা এবং আলোচনায় অংশ নেন ‘বাংলাদেশের বন্ধু’ খেতাবপ্রাপ্ত ব্রিটিশ রাজনৈতিক বিশ্লেষক ও

সাংবাদিক ক্রিস ব্ল্যাকবার্ন, অভিনেত্রী শমী কায়সার (শহীদ বুদ্ধিজীবী শহীদুল্লাহ কায়সারের মেয়ে), জার্মানির হাইডেলবার্গ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের দক্ষিণ এশিয়া ইনস্টিটিউটের অধ্যাপক ড. ভোলফগাং পেটার সিঙ্গেল, ব্রিটিশ সাংবাদিক এবং সম্পাদক ডানকান বারলেট, নেদারল্যান্ডসে বাংলাদেশের রাষ্ট্রদূত শেখ মোহাম্মাদ বেলাল, বাংলাদেশি ডাচ বিশিষ্ট সমাজকর্মী জাহাঙ্গীর চৌধুরী রতন এবং ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরাম ইবিএফের প্রেসিডেন্ট আনসার আহমেদ উল্লাহ।

এছাড়া শহীদ বুদ্ধিজীবী পরিবারের সদস্য ড. মেঘনা গুহ ঠাকুরতা এবং ড. নুজহাত চৌধুরীর ভিডিও বার্তা দেখানো হয় সেমিনারে।

সেমিনারে উন্মুক্ত আলোচনায় অংশ নেন গ্লোবাল সলিডারিটি ফর পিস কমিটির সমন্বয়কারী এম এম মোর্শেদ, ডাচ-বাংলাদেশি শিল্পপতি জসিম উদ্দিন লিটন, সমাজসেবী মনোয়ার মোহাম্মদ, দক্ষিণ আফ্রিকার ডাচ দূতবাসের কূটনীতিক আন্দ্রে স্টামেট, পেন ফিনল্যান্ডের কার্যকরী বোর্ড সদস্য ড. মজিবুর দপ্তরী এবং মাহমুদ হাসান।

বক্তারা একাত্তরের মুক্তিযুদ্ধের প্রেক্ষাপট তুলে ধরে বলেন, পাকিস্তানি সেনারা বাংলাদেশের মুক্তিযুদ্ধ চলাকালীন নয় মাসে প্রায় ৩০ লাখ মানুষকে হত্যা এবং দুই লাখেরও বেশি নারীকে ধর্ষণ ও নৃশংস নির্যাতন করে। এছাড়া এক কোটি মানুষকে দেশ ছেড়ে ভারতে গিয়ে শরণার্থী শিবিরে আশ্রয় নিতে হয়েছিল। এমন অল্প সময়ে এতো বেশি সংখ্যক মানুষ হত্যার ঘটনা এটিই বিশ্ব ইতিহাসে সবচেয়ে বেশি। কেননা দ্বিতীয় বিশ্বযুদ্ধে প্রায় ৬ কোটি মানুষ মারা গেলেও, সেই যুদ্ধের ব্যাপ্তি ছিল প্রায় ছয় বছর এবং ছড়িয়ে পড়েছিল প্রায় তিনটি মহাদেশে।



তারা বলেন, অথচ ১৯৭১ সালে মুক্তিযুদ্ধ শেষ হওয়ার পর থেকে আন্তর্জাতিক সম্প্রদায় এতো বড় গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতি না দিয়ে বড় ধরনের বৈষম্য করেছে। এটি ঐতিহাসিকভাবে সত্য যে, এতো অল্প সময়ে আর কখনো কোথাও এতো মানুষকে হত্যা করা

হয়নি। কিন্তু অত্যন্ত দুঃখজনক যে, ১৯৭১ সালের গণহত্যার ব্যাপারে আন্তর্জাতিক গোষ্ঠী এখনো নিশ্চুপ রয়েছে।

পরে সংক্ষিপ্ত সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠানে বাংলাদেশের স্বাধীনতা যুদ্ধের সময়ের নানা উদ্দীপনামূলক সঙ্গীত পরিবেশন করেন জার্মানির বিশিষ্ট সঙ্গীত শিল্পী আব্দুল মুনিম। স্ব-রচিত কবিতা আবৃত্তি করেন মনোয়ার মোহাম্মদ, হোসাইন আব্দুল হাই এবং মীর জাবেদা ইয়াসমিন ইমি।

সেমিনারের পাশাপাশি একই দাবিতে শনিবার হেগ শহরে আন্তর্জাতিক বিচার আদালত এবং স্থায়ী শহীদ মিনারের সামনে বিক্ষোভ প্রদর্শন করা হয়।



একাত্তরের গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতির দাবি

হাবিবুল্লাহ আল বাহার নেদারল্যান্ডস

প্রকাশিত: ১২:৩৮ পিএম, ২৪ মার্চ ২০১৯, GERMANY



১৯৭১ সালে পাকিস্তানি সেনাবাহিনী এবং তাদের দোসরদের চালানো নির্মম গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতির দাবিতে নেদারল্যান্ডসের হেগে আন্তর্জাতিক

সেমিনার অনুষ্ঠিত হয়েছে। শনিবার ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরাম এই সেমিনারের আয়োজন করে।

সেমিনারে একাত্তরের গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতি এবং এর জন্য দায়ী ব্যক্তি ও গোষ্ঠীকে বিচারের আওতায় আনতে দল, মত, জাতি, ধর্ম, বর্ণ নির্বিশেষে সবাই মিলে এবং বাংলাদেশি ও আন্তর্জাতিক মানবাধিকার আন্দোলনের কর্মীদের ঐক্যবদ্ধভাবে কাজ করার আহ্বান জানানো হয়।

সেমিনারে যুক্তরাজ্য, যুক্তরাষ্ট্র, জার্মানি, নেদারল্যান্ডস, ফিনল্যান্ড এবং বাংলাদেশ থেকে বিশেষজ্ঞরা বিষয়ভিত্তিক আলোচনায় অংশ নেন।

সেমিনারের শুরুতে স্বাগত বক্তব্য রাখেন ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরামের ভাইস প্রেসিডেন্ট, সাংবাদিক ও লেখক বিকাশ চৌধুরী বড়ুয়া। কর্ম অধিবেশনে সভাপতিত্ব করেন নেদারল্যান্ডস ভিত্তিক আন্তর্জাতিক সংগঠন দ্য হেগ পিসের পরিচালক ইয়াকব দে ইয়ঙ্গে।

অন্যান্যের মধ্যে বিষয়ভিত্তিক প্রবন্ধ উপস্থাপনা এবং আলোচনায় অংশ নেন 'বাংলাদেশের বন্ধু' খেতাবপ্রাপ্ত ব্রিটিশ রাজনৈতিক বিশ্লেষক ও সাংবাদিক ক্রিস ব্ল্যাকবার্ন, অভিনেত্রী শমী কায়সার (শহীদ বুদ্ধিজীবী শহীদুল্লাহ কায়সারের মেয়ে), জার্মানির হাইডেলবার্গ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের দক্ষিণ এশিয়া ইনস্টিটিউটের অধ্যাপক ড. ভোলফগাং পেটার সিঙ্গেল, ব্রিটিশ সাংবাদিক এবং সম্পাদক ডানকান বারলেট, নেদারল্যান্ডসে বাংলাদেশের রাষ্ট্রদূত শেখ মোহাম্মাদ বেলাল, বাংলাদেশি ডাচ বিশিষ্ট সমাজকর্মী জাহাঙ্গীর চৌধুরী রতন এবং ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরাম ইবিএফের প্রেসিডেন্ট আনসার আহমেদ উল্লাহ।

এছাড়া শহীদ বুদ্ধিজীবী পরিবারের সদস্য ড. মেঘনা গুহ ঠাকুরতা এবং ড. নুজহাত চৌধুরীর ভিডিও বার্তা দেখানো হয় সেমিনারে।



সেমিনারে উন্মুক্ত আলোচনায় অংশ নেন গ্লোবাল সলিডারিটি ফর পিস কমিটির সমন্বয়কারী এম এম মোর্শেদ, ডাচ-বাংলাদেশি শিল্পপতি জসিম উদ্দিন লিটন, সমাজসেবী মনোয়ার মোহাম্মদ, দক্ষিণ আফ্রিকার ডাচ দূতাবাসের কূটনীতিক আন্দ্রে স্টামেট, পেন ফিনল্যান্ডের কার্যকরী বোর্ড সদস্য ড. মজিবুর দপ্তরী এবং মাহমুদ হাসান।

বক্তারা একাত্তরের মুক্তিযুদ্ধের প্রেক্ষাপট তুলে ধরে বলেন, পাকিস্তানি সেনারা বাংলাদেশের মুক্তিযুদ্ধ চলাকালীন নয় মাসে প্রায় ৩০ লাখ মানুষকে হত্যা এবং দুই লাখেরও বেশি নারীকে ধর্ষণ ও নৃশংস নির্যাতন করে। এছাড়া এক কোটি মানুষকে দেশ ছেড়ে ভারতে গিয়ে শরণার্থী শিবিরে আশ্রয় নিতে হয়েছিল। এমন অল্প সময়ে এতো বেশি সংখ্যক মানুষ হত্যার ঘটনা এটিই বিশ্ব ইতিহাসে সবচেয়ে বেশি। কেননা দ্বিতীয় বিশ্বযুদ্ধে প্রায় ৬ কোটি মানুষ মারা গেলেও, সেই যুদ্ধের ব্যাপ্তি ছিল প্রায় ছয় বছর এবং ছড়িয়ে পড়েছিল প্রায় তিনটি মহাদেশে।

তারা বলেন, অথচ ১৯৭১ সালে মুক্তিযুদ্ধ শেষ হওয়ার পর থেকে আন্তর্জাতিক সম্প্রদায় এতো বড় গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতি না দিয়ে বড় ধরনের বৈষম্য করেছে। এটি ঐতিহাসিকভাবে সত্য যে, এতো অল্প সময়ে আর কখনো কোথাও এতো মানুষকে হত্যা করা হয়নি। কিন্তু অত্যন্ত দুঃখজনক যে, ১৯৭১ সালের গণহত্যার ব্যাপারে আন্তর্জাতিক গোষ্ঠী এখনো নিশ্চুপ রয়েছে।

পরে সংক্ষিপ্ত সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠানে বাংলাদেশের স্বাধীনতা যুদ্ধের সময়ের নানা উদ্দীপনামূলক সঙ্গীত পরিবেশন করেন জার্মানির বিশিষ্ট সঙ্গীত শিল্পী আব্দুল মুনিম। স্ব-রচিত কবিতা আবৃত্তি করেন মনোয়ার মোহাম্মদ, হোসাইন আব্দুল হাই এবং মীর জাবেদা ইয়াসমিন ইমি।

সেমিনারের পাশাপাশি একই দাবিতে শনিবার হেগ শহরে আন্তর্জাতিক বিচার আদালত এবং স্থায়ী শহীদ মিনারের সামনে বিক্ষোভ প্রদর্শন করা হয়।

4 April 2019

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বাংলাদেশ প্রতিদিন

ইউরোপ সংস্করণ

যুক্তরাজ্যের খবর

BANGLADESH



হেগ সেমিনারে একাত্তরের গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতি দাবি

বিশেষ সংবাদদাতা

১৯৭১ সালে পাকিস্তানি সেনাবাহিনী এবং তাদের দোসরদের চালানো নির্মম গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতির দাবিতে নেদারল্যান্ডসের হেগ নগরীতে ২৩ মার্চ ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরামের উদ্যোগে অনুষ্ঠিত হয়েছে আন্তর্জাতিক সেমিনার। সেমিনারে একাত্তরের গণহত্যার আন্তর্জাতিক স্বীকৃতি এবং এর জন্য দায়ী ব্যক্তি ও গোষ্ঠীকে বিচারের আওতায় আনতে দল, মত, জাতি, ধর্ম ও ভৌগোলিক অবস্থান নির্বিশেষে বাংলাদেশ ও আন্তর্জাতিক মানবাধিকার আন্দোলনের কর্মীদের ঐক্যবদ্ধভাবে কাজ করার আহ্বান জানানো হয়। এমন নৃশংস হত্যাকাণ্ডের ঘটনার দ্রুত এবং দৃষ্টান্তমূলক বিচার না হলে শুধু বাংলাদেশ, পাকিস্তান কিংবা এশিয়ায় নয়, বরং বিশ্বের নানা প্রান্তের স্বৈরাচারী রাষ্ট্রীয় শক্তি ও তাদের দোসররা বারবার নিরীহ ও নিরস্ত্র নারী-পুরুষ ও শিশুদের ওপর ঘৃণ্য বর্বর গণহত্যা চালাতে উৎসাহিত হবে। তাই বাংলাদেশ থেকে ও ইউরোপের বিভিন্ন দেশ

থেকে আসা গবেষক, রাজনীতিক, কূটনৈতিক এবং বিশেষজ্ঞরা একত্রে কাজ করার প্রত্যয় ব্যক্ত করেন।

সেমিনারে ১৯৭১ সালে বাংলাদেশের মুক্তিযুদ্ধের পক্ষে আমেরিকা প্রবাসী বাঙালি অভিবাসী এবং বিদেশিদের যৌথ আন্দোলন এবং আমেরিকার বন্দরে পাকিস্তানের জন্য অস্ত্রবাহী জাহাজ রকথ দাঁড়ানোর ঐতিহাসিক বীরত্বপূর্ণ ঘটনার ওপর ভিত্তি করে নির্মিত তথ্যচিত্র 'ব্লকেড' দেখানো হয়। সেমিনারের শুরুতে স্বাগত বক্তব্য রাখেন ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরামের ভাইস প্রেসিডেন্ট বিকাশ চৌধুরী বড়ুয়া। কর্ম অধিবেশনে সভাপতিত্ব করেন নেদারল্যান্ডসভিত্তিক আন্তর্জাতিক সংগঠন দ্য হেগ পিসের পরিচালক ইয়াকব দে ইয়স্কে। অন্যদের মধ্যে বিষয়ভিত্তিক প্রবন্ধ উপস্থাপন করেন এবং আলোচনায় অংশ নেন 'বাংলাদেশের বন্ধু' খেতাবপ্রাপ্ত ব্রিটিশ রাজনৈতিক বিশ্লেষক এবং সাংবাদিক ক্রিস ব্ল্যাকবার্ন, একাত্তরের শহীদ বুদ্ধিজীবী এবং লেখক শহীদুল্লাহ কায়সারের কন্যা শমী কায়সার, জার্মানির হাইডেলবার্গ

বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের দক্ষিণ এশিয়া ইনস্টিটিউটের অধ্যাপক ড. ভোলফগাং পেটার সিসেল, ব্রিটিশ সাংবাদিক ডানকান বার্টলেট, নেদারল্যান্ডস এ বাংলাদেশের রাষ্ট্রদূত শেখ মোহাম্মাদ বেলাল, বেলজিয়াম আওয়ামী লীগের সাধারণ সম্পাদক জাহাঙ্গীর চৌধুরী রতন এবং ইউরোপীয় বাংলাদেশ ফোরামের প্রেসিডেন্ট আনসার আহমেদ উল্লাহ। এ ছাড়া শহীদ বুদ্ধিজীবী পরিবারের সদস্য ড. মেঘনা গুহ ঠাকুরতা এবং ড. নুজহাত চৌধুরীর ভিডিও বার্তা দেখানো হয় সেমিনারে। সেমিনারের পাশাপাশি একই দাবিতে শনিবার হেগ নগরীতে আন্তর্জাতিক বিচার আদালতের সামনে এবং হেগ নগরীতে অবস্থিত স্থায়ী শহীদ মিনারের সামনে বিক্ষোভ প্রদর্শন করা হয়। এ ছাড়া সেমিনারস্থলে ১৯৭১ সালে পাকিস্তানি সেনাবাহিনীর এবং তাদের দোসরদের চালানো হত্যাকাণ্ড ও নির্মম নির্যাতনের ওপর একটি চিত্র প্রদর্শনীর আয়োজন করা হয়। সেমিনারের পরে সংক্ষিপ্ত সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠানে বাংলাদেশের স্বাধীনতা যুদ্ধের সময়ের নানা উদ্দীপনামূলক সংগীত পরিবেশন করা হয়।

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Links of TV channel News Coverage

1. ATN News: <https://youtu.be/oX1RQKVwhWc>
2. NTV broadcast the video report with interviews of some experts and participants
<https://bit.ly/2YFeVU0>
3. Joyjatra TV broadcast the Video Report with Interviews of some Experts
<https://bit.ly/2CLxNaw>
4. SA TV also broadcast the video report of the seminar, but the link is not yet available

(Report: Prepared for EBF by A H M Abdul Hai, Media expert & senior Journalist, Bonn, Germany)



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