

CAAMB NEWSLETTER

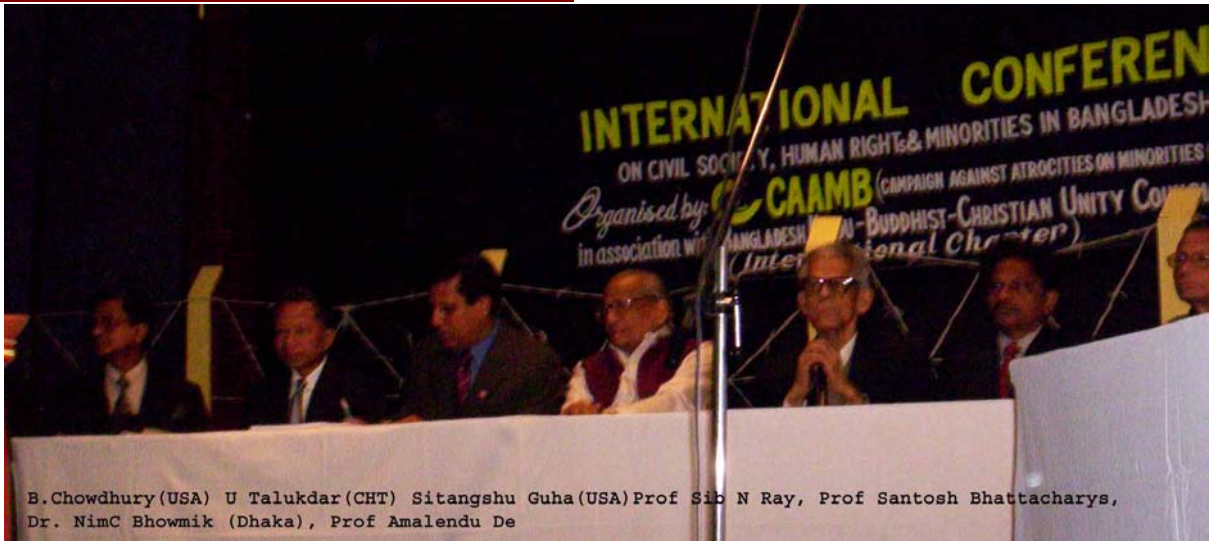
2005

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20 JANUARY 2005 - PRESS CONFERENCE AT KOLKATA PRESS CLUB

CAAMB (Campaign Against Atrocities on Minorities in Bangladesh) organized a press conference on 20 January, 2005, at Kolkata Press Club at 4 pm to announce the International Conference to be held on 22-23 January, 2005. Noted poet *Kamalesh Sen*, President CAAMB welcome the delegates from Bangladesh, UK and USA at the Press Conference and *Mohit Ray* of CAAMB, detailed about the International Conference and emphasized its significance to be held in Kolkata. *Sitangshu Guha* (International Co-Ordinator, Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council, USA). *Rosaline Costa* (Hotline Bangladesh), *Debabrata Chowdhury* (Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council, UK), *Thomas Dulu Roy* (Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council, USA), *Pranjalankar Bhikku* (Peace Campaign Group, Chittagong Hills), *Al Numan* (Actor, Bangladesh) addressed the conference highlighting the importance of first such conference in Kolkata and India. *Achinta Gupta* of CAAMB, thanked all.

22 - 23 JANUARY 2005 - INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CIVIL SOCIETY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND MINORITIES IN BANGLADESH



B. Chowdhury (USA), U Talikdar (Chattagram Hills), Sitangshu Guha (USA), Prof. Sib Naryan Roy, Prof. Santosh Bhattacharya, Dr. Nim Bhowmik (Dhaka) and Prof Amalendu Dey at International Conference

International Conference On Civil Society, Human Rights And Minorities In Bangladesh organised in association with Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council (*BHBCUC*, *International Chapters*) at Ballygunge Shiksha Sadan, Kolkata was inaugurated by *Prof Sibnarayan Ray*, the leading thinker in Bengal, at 10-30 am, 22 January 2005. The background of

the conference was presented by *Mohit Ray* of CAAMB stating the apathy in India and West Bengal about the minority problems in Bangladesh. Eminent historian *Prof Amalendu Dey (Ex-President Asiatic Society)*, chaired the first session. It was addressed by *Ushatan Talukdar, Secretary, Political Affairs, Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti* highlighting the struggle of Chakma people in Bangladesh. *Sitangshu Guha, International Co-ordinator, BHBCUC, NewYork* presented the international efforts on the issue. Rebel Poet in exile Ms Taslima Nasreen recited three of her poems. *Dr. Nim Chandra Bhowmik, General Secy, BHBCUC, Dhaka*, in his detailed speech spoke about failure of democratic system in Bangladesh and appealed to India to help Bangladesh in this regard. Prof Amalendu Dey then spoke on the continued persecution on the minorities in Bangladesh. *Eminent educationist Prof Santosh Bhattacharya* and Prof Sibnarayan Roy chaired other two sessions. Both of them expressed their concerns on Bangladesh. *Sanjib Drong, Secretary Bangladesh Adibasi Forum, Novelist Salam Azad, Pranjalanakar Bhikku of Peace Campaign Group, Chittagong Hills and Rana Dasgupta of BHBCUC, Chittagong* spoke.

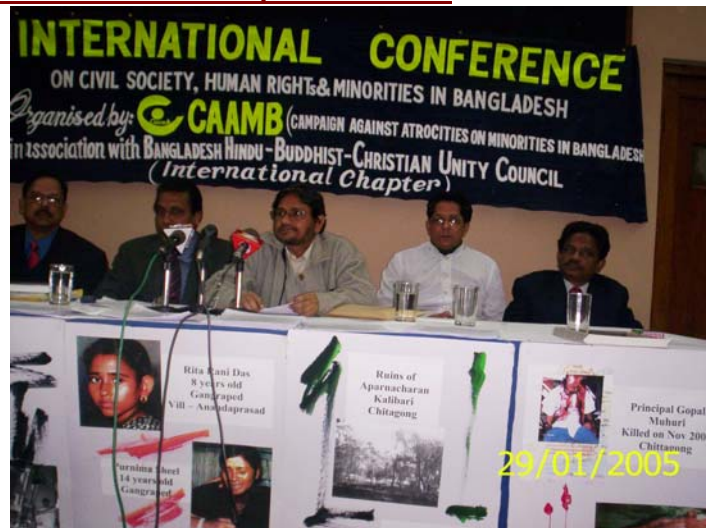


Second session was chaired by *Prof Saradindu Mukherjee of Delhi University. Rosaline Costa of Hotline Bangladesh and Rabindra Ghosh, President, Human Rights Congress of Bangladesh Minorities, Dhaka* spoke about atrocities on minorities. In a special session BHUBUC representative from England, USA, France and Canada spoke on the issue. In the evening audio-visual presentation on the atrocities on minorities were presented by Peace Campaign group and HRCBM. The programme ended at 6-45 pm.

The conference started at 1 pm on 23 January. *Bimal Pramanik, Director, Centre for Research in Indo Bangla Relations*, presented his detailed research on demographic change in West Bengal due to muslim infiltration from Bangladesh. *Dr. Easha Dey* spoke about Bangladesh government's influence on intellectuals in West Bengal which is harming the cause of minorities in Bangladesh. French journalist *Francois Gauttier* spoke about passivity of Indian majority to fight against Islamic Fundamentalism. *Prof Tathagatao Roy* appealed to spread information on atrocities in Bangladesh to raise the consciousness here. Shri *Bibhuti bhusan Nandy*, administrator, spoke about the apathy of Indian press on this issue. *Dr. Smriti Kumar Sarkar of Kalyani University* spoke about the impact of economic crisis in Bangladesh and its impact on Indian society. Poet *Kamalesh Sen* of CAAMB paid respect to the Bangladeshi intellectuals for their support to the minorities. *Mohit Ray* of CAAMB presented the vote of thanks. *Achinta Gupta* facilitated the whole conference. Off-stage support was provided by CAAMB members *Shankar Sengupta, Ahin Das, Chayan Roy, Sujit Chowdhury, Pankaj, Ritwik, Biplab Sinha, Ashok Ghosh, Praksh Das* and others

At the end a video of the play *Tamasa of a Avant Garde Theatre of Chitagong* was shown. HRCBM presented a video of *Banskhali massacre in Chitagong*. Conference ended at 8 pm.

29 JANUARY - PRESS CONFERENCE, NEW DELHI



Mohit Ray addressing the Press at New Delhi with Thomas D Roy, Sitangshu Guha, Nim Bhowmik, Fr J Gomes

On successful completion of International Conference at Kolkata, a Press Conference was organized at Constitution Club, New Delhi. Press conferences was addressed by Dr. Nim Chandra Bhaumik (Gen Secy, BHBCUC), Sitangshu Guha (International Coordinator, BHBCUC), Thomas Dulu Roy (BHBCUC, USA), Praggalankar Bhikkhu (Peace Campaign Group), Father Jiban Gomes (BHBCUC) Achinta Gupta (CAAMB) and Mohit Ray (CAAMB).

KOLKATA DECLARATION, 2005

At the end of the International Conference, following **Kolkata Declaration 2005** has been adopted.

- 1) Stop all violence against Hindus Buddhists and Christians in Bangladesh immediately.
- 2) Civil society all over the world should take note of the continued ethnic cleansing and pogrom in Bangladesh and lodge their protest to Bangladesh Government.
- 3) Government of India should apply its moral clout on Bangladesh if ethnic cleansing and pogrom continues.
- 4) Bangladesh Government should repeal the black law Vested Properties Act and return the properties already taken over.
- 5) Muslims of West Bengal should voice their opposition to the atrocities on minorities in Bangladesh.
- 6) West Bengal should be made free from infiltration from Bangladesh.
- 7) Peace accord at Chitagong Hill Tract should be implemented immediately.
- 8) Ensure constitutional safeguards to the tribals and indigenous people of Bangladesh
- 9) Provide adequate protection for the progressive and secular voices from the onslaught of Muslim fundamentalists
- 10) Bangladesh Government should take steps to design a "Permanent Solution" to the minority problem.
- 11) All human rights organizations should raise the issue in all international forums to create pressure from international community.

Adopted by:

Campaign Against Atrocities On Minorities In Bangladesh (CAAMB, Kolkata)
Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council (Bangladesh)
Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council (USA, UK, Canada and France)
Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (Bangladesh)

Human Rights Congress of Bangladesh Minorities (USA & Bangladesh)
Hotline Bangladesh (Dhaka)
Peace Campaign Group (Chittagong Hills)
Bangladesh Adibasi Forum

14 MARCH 2005 - PRESS STATEMENT DEMANDING SECURITY FOR TWO BANGLADESHI JOURNALISTS

Mr. Samaresh Baidya, Senior Reporter (Chittagong), Daily Bhorer Kagoj and Ms Sumi Khan, Correspondent, Chittagong Weekly 2000, both are in grave danger for reporting against the Islamic fundamentalists. Samaresh Baidya has been threatened and directly ordered not to write any more against Jamat-Shibir. Sumi Khan who won the Amnesty International Prize just in February has been threatened to be killed and her office and home destroyed by grenade attack. Both the journalists attended CAAMB's International Conference. CAAMB issued a press statement and also informed international organizations about it.

29 MARCH 2005 - DEMONSTRATION AT CALCUTTA HIGH COURT IN SUPPORT OF TASLIMA NASRIN



CAAMB demonstrating at Calcutta High Court

CAAMB protesting at Calcutta High court in support of Taslima Nasrin

CAAMB is the first organisation which came on the street to support Taslima Nasrin and to protest against Islamic fundamentalists' design in West Bengal. The case dealing with the banning of Taslima Nasrin's book *Dwikhandita* is being heard at the High Court. During two previous hearings, Islamists demonstrated at High court and harassed Taslima Nasrin. Even they ridiculed the court by wearing Arab Sheikh dresses inside the court room.

On 29 th March, on another hearing day, CAAMB supporters gathered with placards to show support for Taslima and opposing the islamisation of West Bengal. CAAMB also distributed a leaflet. CAAMB's effort has been praised in all quarters. It may be noted after this the Islamists have not come during the later hearings.

8 April 2005 -PRESS CONFERENCE BY EMINENT INTELLECTUALS AT KOLKATA PRESS CLUB



The eminent citizens of Kolkata signed a statement appealing to grant Indian citizenship to the libertarian writer Ms Taslima Nasrin. Prof Sib Narayan Ray took the initiative to collect signatures for granting Indian Citizenship to Taslima Nasrin. CAAMB put its full effort to make it a success.

The appeal was signed by whos who of Bengali intellectuals including known anti Taslima writers. The signatories include *Sib Narayan Ray, Amlan Dutta, Mahasweta Debi, Pratibha Basu, Amalendu De, Santosh Bhattacharya Amitabha Chaudhuri, Buddhadeb Guha, Shrishedu Mukhopadhyay, Sunil Gangopadhyay, Sankha Ghosh, Joy Goswami, Bibhas Chakrabarty, Dibyebdu Palit, Prakash Karmakar, Shanu Lahiri, Isha Muhammad, Maitrei Chatterjee, Wasim Kapoor, Kamalesh Sen, Tarun Sanyal* and many others.

A Press Conference was held on 8 April 2005 at Kolkata Press Club at 5 pm. Achinta Gupta (CAAMB) proposed and Mohit Ray (CAAMB) seconded the proposal for Sib Narayan Ray to conduct the proceeding. Amlan Dutta, Amalendu De, Isha Muhammad, Maitrei Chatterjee, Tarun Sanyal, Jahar Dasgupta addressed the Press. Taslima Nasrin also spoke.

14 MAY 2005 - FILM SHOW ON BANGLADESH MINORITIES BY SHARIAR KABIR

CAAMB had successful programme on 14 May showing Shariar Kabir's film first time in India at Students' Hall, College Square, Kolkata. A full capacity auditorium saw the horrors in Bangladesh. There was a number of requests for a copy of the film. Bimal Pramanilk of Centre for Studies in Indo-Bangla Research, Mohit Ray of CAAMB, Prof Rabiranjana Chattopadhyay of Gana Mukti Parishad, Bibhuti Bhusan Nandy and Advocate Ratneswar Sarkar of All India Refugee Front spoke. Writer Buddhadev Guha could not attend but sent a written speech which was read. Then the film was shown.

9 JUNE 2005 - OBSERVANCE OF MINORITY DAY IN FRONT OF BANGLADESH DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSION



CAAMB PROTEST MEETING IN FRONT OF BANGLADESH DY HIGH COMMISSION, KOLKATA
9 June is observed as Minority Day in Bangladesh. On this day in 1988, Bangladesh constitution was amended (known as 8th Amendment) to declare Islam as state religion. Before in 1977, the constitution adopted in 1972 after liberation war was amended (known as 5th Amendment) to include “Absolute trust and faith in Allah as guiding priciples of all state activities” in Fundamental Priciples Clause 8 (1). Also the whole Clause 12 on Secularism was removed.

To protest against islamisation of Bangladesh CAAMB organised a demonstration opposite to Bangladesh Deputy High Commission at Kolkata on 9 June at 2 pm. Deputy High Commission closed all its acitivity for the day for this demo. There was much police presence and they wanted us to shift the venue. Anyway we carried on and it was a succesful meeting. Chayan Roy and Sujit Chowdhury presented a memorandum to B"desH Govt through Dy High commission. A number of speakers spoke at the gathering. Shri Subrata Chowdhury, Kolkata representative of BHBCUC was present.

Similar meting was held at Dhaka, New York, Paris, London and Geneva.

1 OCTOBER 2005 - INTERFACE ON INFILTRATION , DEMOGRAPHY AND MINORITIES OF BANGLADESH AT ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS, KOLKATA

An unique interaction between eminent intellectuals of West Bengal and Bagladesh took place on the issue of infiltration, demography and minorities in Bangladesh. Women’s movement leader Maitreyi Chattopadhyay, writer Esha Dey, Philosopher-economist Amlan Dutta, historian Prof Jayanta Roy, poet Kmalesh Sen and Shariar Kabir from Bangladesh took part. Mohit Ray from CAAMB fecilitated the discussion. Achinta Gupta welcomed all. A fact sheet on the subject was published.



**10 DECEMBER 2005 - INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY AT TRIPURA
HITASADHINI HALL, COLLEGE SQUARE, KOLKATA**

CAAMB, being a human rights organisation, is observing this important day for last 4 years. On this day Debajyoti Roy (writer), Gopal Saha (Indian Nationalist Forum), Biren Bhowmik (OBC leader) and other spoke on human rights of minorities in Bangladesh.



WE WANT YOUR SUPPORT FOR THIS CAMPAIGN. IF MINORITIES IN BANGLADESH ARE NOT SAVED WEST BENGAL WILL BECOME ANOTHER ISLAMIC BANGLADESH.