



Press Release

25 March Gonohottya Dibosh (Genocide Day) 29 March 2017

Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) organised a Seminar on 29th March, 2017 commemorating **25 March- Ganohottya Dibosh (Genocide Day)** in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The seminar was divided into three sessions – Inaugural, Working and Concluding. **Mr. Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali, MP**, Honourable Minister for Foreign Affairs, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh inaugurated the Seminar as the Chief Guest. **Mr. Shahriar Kabir**, President, *Ekattorer Ghatak-Dalal Nirmul* Committee made a keynote presentation in the inaugural session. **Major General AKM Abdur Rahman**, ndc, psc, Director General, BISS delivered the address of welcome while **Ambassador Munshi Faiz Ahmad**, Chairman, Board of Governors, BISS presided over the inaugural and concluding sessions and delivered his vote of thanks. The working session was presided over by **Mr. Mahub Uz Zaman**, Secretary (Asia & Pacific), Ministry of Foreign Affairs while **Dr. Syed Anwar Husain**, Supernumerary Professor, Department of History, University of Dhaka and **Mr. Julian Francis**, Social Worker made presentations in the session respectively. **Mr. Anisul Huq, MP**, Honourable Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh delivered his address as the Chief Guest in the concluding session while **Professor Payam Akhavan**, McGill University and Member of the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague, delivered his address as the Special Guest of the session.

On 11 March 2017, Bangladesh Jatiya Sangsad (National Parliament) unanimously adopted a resolution to observe 25th March as Ganohottya Dibosh (Genocide Day) in remembrance of the three million victims of mass killing during the nine month long Bangladesh liberation war in 1971. The Pakistani occupation forces unleashed a barbaric genocide on the unarmed Bengalis in the darkness of night on 25 March 1971, codenamed "Operation Search Light". This forced Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to proclaim independence of Bangladesh in the early hours of 26 March 1971, launching the Bengali nation into the war of liberation. During the nine months of the war of liberation, the Pakistani occupation forces unabatedly perpetrated the genocide and crimes against humanity that they started on 25 March 1971. They brutally killed 3 million Bengalis and tortured and raped over 200,000 women during this period. Due to the brutality of the Pakistani forces, 30 million Bengalis were internally displaced and 10 million were forced to take refuge in India. The Pakistani forces started the genocide by targeting the teachers, students, members of Police and Paramilitary on 25th March. When the defeat of the Pakistani forces was inevitable, they methodically rounded up and killed large numbers of professionals such as professors, doctors, journalists, writers, cultural activists. All these carnage was committed with a well thought out plan and in cold blood aiming to destroy the Bengali nation. The Seminar on 29th March, 2017 commemorating 25 March- *Ganohottya Dibosh* (Genocide Day) played a key role to instigate discussions

regarding finding out possible strategies in order to achieve international recognition for the 25 March.

Officials from different ministries of Bangladesh, representatives from different national and international organisations, current and former ambassadors, representatives of different embassies, Bangladeshi freedom fighters, media and academia, actively participated in the open discussion and expressed their valuable opinions, observations, questions and suggestions on how Bangladesh should proceed for successfully gaining international recognition of the atrocities committed during 1971 as genocide.