



SAPUAFAC Seminar in Kolkata

Call for regional and global resistance against Fundamentalism

Islamic extremism dubbed with political Islam derived from Wahabism, which has no root in Sufi Islamic tradition of Bengal, said writer journalist Shahriar Kabir.

While addressing a seminar at Kolkata Press Club auditorium on 1 December (07) the eminent Bangladeshi human rights defender and the keynote speaker of the seminar Shahriar Kabir said, political Islam propagated by Jamat-e Islami and Islamic militancy expanded its network in Bangladesh as a part of pan Islamic design of ISI of Pakistan and a few Islamic NGOs based in Middle East. Jamat-e Islami and most of the Islamic militant organizations are directly linked with global Jehadi network appeared as a severe threat to secular humane tradition of Bengal.

The theme of the seminar was 'Secular humane tradition of Bengal', which was organized by West Bengal chapter of 'South Asian People's Union against Fundamentalism and Communalism'. Prof. Amalendu Dey, President of the seminar said, we have to build up a regional and global network in order to fight back religious extremism, communalism and terrorism. Ideologically there is no difference between Muslim fundamentalism, Hindu fundamentalism or

Christian fundamentalism. Fundamentalism is opposed to secularism, democracy, pluralism, tolerance and humane values.

Comrade Bikashranjan Bhattachariya, the Mayor of Kolkata City Corporation and Chief Guest of the seminar thanked Shahriar Kabir for his brilliant presentation, welcomed formation of 'South Asian People's Union against Fundamentalism & Communalism' in West Bengal and assured all kind of co-operation from his end.

The seminar was also addressed by historian Dilip Banarjee and social activist Bidyut Debnath.

Earlier 31 member executive committee of 'South Asian People's Union against Fundamentalism & Communalism' West Bengal Chapter was formed in Kolkata. Prof. Amalendu Dey and Bidyut Debnath are respectively the President and General Secretary of this forum, while Hashim Abdul Halim, Speaker of the WB Assembly was elected as the President of 15 members' advisory committee.

It is to be mentioned that 'South Asian People's Union against Fundamentalism & Communalism' (SAPUAFAC) was formed in Dhaka at a two day long conference (1-2 June 2001) attended by the leaders of civil society of five South Asian countries, i.e. Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Prof. Kabir Chowdhury and Shahriar Kabir were elected as President and General Secretary of SAPUAFAC's central body.

Sumanta Bose, Kolkata, 2 December 2007