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Civil Society Joint Voice on the eve Asia Ministerial on DRR Delhi November, People's Right Must Supersede State Concern

Demand for Cross Border Cooperation on Displacement and Basin wise River Management

Dhaka, 23rd October 2016. On the eve of Upcoming Asia Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) held in Delhi during 2 to 5th November 2016, today a seminar jointly organized by twenty one local, national and international civil society organizations at Cirdap auditorium, Dhaka, demanded cross border cooperation on displacement and joint regional river basin wise management from Asian leaders, especially in South Asia plus China. They also urged Bangladesh government delegates to raise the issue in the Delhi conference. The seminar were jointly organized by Action Aid, Brac, Christian Aid, Coast, Dun Church Aid (DCA), Deshari, Disaster Forum, Dwp Unnayan Sangsta, Gono Unnayan Kendra, Islamic Relief, Light House, Nirapod, Pidim Foundation, Oxfam, Plan International, Practical Action, SKS Foundation, Tearfund and World Vision. The seminar was moderated by Rezaul Karim Chowdhury of COAST. Mr Shaha Kamal Secretary Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDM&R) and Mr Reaz Ahmed Director General, Disaster Management Bureau (DMB) has attended and speaks as the chief guest and special guest. Other speakers of the seminar was Ms Hasina Inam of DCA, Mr. Shasanka Sadi of BRAC, Mr K Jakaria Khaled of Bangladesh Red Crescent, Mr Jashim Uddin of ADAB, Mr Aminul Kawser Dipu of ESC, Ms Wahida Basher Ahmed of Cordaid, Ms Kobita Bose of Help Age International, Mr Polash Kundu of SKS Foundation and Mr Banarjee of Pidim Foundation.

On behalf of the group Mr Sawkat Ali Tutul of COAST, presented six point demands from joint voice, which has prepared by these Bangladeshi civil society for this AMCDRR Delhi. These are (i) Government must listen to the people of region and consider basin wise joint management to reduce river erosion, flood and salinity intrusion especially in lower riparian countries, (ii) Countries must invest to build critical infrastructure to protect people from cyclone and monsoon tidal surge, saline water intrusion and also provide shelter to urban poor. They also said that getting official development assistance in this regard is the legitimate right of country like Bangladesh which is not at all responsible of climate catastrophes, (iii) Countries must respect dignity and rights of the disaster and climate induced displaced people, they must prepare internal and cross boarder displacement policy in view UN guidelines, (iv) Country must prepare and well equipped agencies for cross boarder deployment in respect crucial disaster, (v) Government must take participation of civil society in respect of planning and implementation of Sendai Frame Work in national level, and (vi) Urge all relevant stakeholders to uphold the spirit of WHS (world humanitarian summit) outcome, i.e., putting community, local and national NGOs in first.

Secretary of Ministry Mr. Saha Kamal said that government is committed to accommodate and facilitate the civil society representations. He also said the government will plea for international cooperation from development partners and countries in this regard. Director General Reaz Ahmed said that, all though there is a need of regional cooperation, but Bangladesh has to live with own effort and build up its own resilience. Hasina Inam of DCA said that, regional countries must consider the rights of people rather than rights of state, so people sovereignty should come first.

Reported by : Rezaul Karim Chowdhury, +8801711529792, Mostafa Kamal Akandha +8801711455591.