

## ICRC book depicting humanitarian actions in photos launched

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INTERNATIONAL Committee of the Red Cross on Thursday launched a photo book, '150 Years of Humanitarian Action in 71 photos: Marking, Milestones and Celebrating Memories.'

The book contains 71 emblematic, historical and contemporary photos depicting 150 years of humanitarian actions worldwide and in Bangladesh in particular.

Prime minister's political affairs adviser Md Imran attended the launching ceremony as chief guest while Bangladesh Red Crescent Society chairman Hafiz Ahmed Mazumdar as special guest.

Head of delegation, ICRC, Dhaka, Ikhtiyar Aslanov was also present at the launching ceremony.

The photos from both global and local contexts in the book reflect the fact that the ICRC, although truly international in its presence and composition are yet consistently local in its approach.

These photos are snapshots of momentous relief and hope for those caught in the environment of strife and suffering that the ICRC is mandated to assist and protect.

In addition to reflecting on the ICRC's history and evolution over the past 150 years, the opening of book ceremony is also an occasion to highlight and engage in current humanitarian challenges, according to ICRC officials here.

ICRC helped the repatriation of 118,070 Bengalis to Bangladesh and 117,727 people to Pakistan between 1973 and 1974.

### Staff Correspondent

PRAGATISHIL Bangladesh, a newly founded civil platform, on Thursday claimed that UNESCO's report on the controversial Rampal power plant was not credible, rather it was influenced by a section of environmental activists.

At a press conference in the city, Kazi Bayzid Kabir, a chemical engineering teacher at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, said that the UNESCO team visited the country for a very short time which was not adequate to prepare a credible report.

The press conference supporting the government's move to set up a 1,320MW coal fired power plant, 14 km off the Sunderbans, is the first programme of the newly formed platform consisting of Awami-backed professionals and businessmen.

Last month, UNESCO sent a report to the environment ministry expressing concern about the potential damages to the Sunderbans, one of the World Heritage Sites.

Hot water and chemicals to be discharged into water bodies from the proposed Rampal power plant would cause significant damages to aquatic life in the river and canal networks in the Sundarbans, the UNESCO report said and asked for explanations about the government's specific measures in this regard.

Reiterating the government's stance, Pragatishil Bangladesh president Md Kabir Ahmed Bhuiyan said that the government had rightly selected the site at

Rampal to set up the coal-fired power plant as natural facilities would be favourable to handle and transport coal to the power plant.

Besides, he suggested to study the UNESCO report carefully to examine whether or not UNESCO had prepared the report independently.

There are technical solutions available to curb harmful emissions from Rampal power plant, said BLET former pro-vice chancellor, Md Habibur Rahman.

Dhaka University pro-vice chancellor Md Akhtaruzzaman, Realfo businessman and RBHAF leader Lakaat Ali Bhuiyan, Realfo Rabiul Haque and businessman Nagibur Islam Dipu attended the press conference.

The UNESCO report raised concerns about the impact the power plant might have on aquatic resources, ecology, biodiversity and wildlife in and around the mangrove forest.

The UNESCO requested the government to examine and verify the issues.

The UNESCO prepared the report following the visit of its three-member team to Bangladesh in May.

The report called for conducting a specific assessment of probable impacts of the thermal power plant and the dredging of the Passur river near the Sunderbans.

The UNESCO expressed concern about the Sunderbans thrice in last two years.

Bangladesh India Friendship Power Company Ltd, a 50-50 joint venture of Bangladesh Power Development Board and India's National Thermal Power Corporation, is implementing the project.