Novak dedicates new library at Notre Dame College

The American religious philiosophere Michael Novak Monday dedicated a new library at Dhaka Notre Dame College in memory of his younger brother, father Richard Novak, reports UNB.

Richard, a Holy Cross Missionary, was a teacher of Notre Dame College and studied in Arabic at Dhaka University. He was killed at the age of 27 in Hindu-Muslim riots in 1964.

Michael Novak, who received the Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion in 1994, was the chief guest at the ceremony. He donated a portion of the prize money to the library fund in honour of his brother.

"The chief resource of Bangladesh—of any country—is its people. It's main capital is human capital. It's primary causes of wealth is the knowledge, skills, habits And inventiveness of its citizens," said Novak, known for pioneering a new "Theology of Economics."

He said Bangladesh has been a place of both happy and sad memories for him and his family.

His brother, Richard, came to Dhaka in early 1960s to study Arabic while teaching at the Notre Dame Collge. "It was my brother's dream to study Arabic and become a specialist in Islam-Christian relations," Novak recalled.

Novak's another brother, James, lives in Bangladesh for a decade, working with the Asia Foundation.

For many years after his brother death, Michael Novak sent books to the Notre Dame College Library. "The heart of a university is its library, the library is its bank of knowledge of the past," Novak said.

He hoped that students of different religions would come in touch through the proper utilisation of the library.

State Minister for planning Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan and Mrs Novak attended the function as special guests.

Presided over the Chairperson of the college governing body Archbishop Michael Rozario, the function was addressed, among others, by Father Richard W Timm, Father Benjamin Costa and the college Principal father JS Peixotto.

The progrmme was followed by a cultural functions.