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National News

Bangladesh's score and position go down in CPI 2014

Corruption is still pervasive and remains as a major threat as Bangladesh's score has moved downward by 2 points than last year's position in the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) 2014 released on 3 December. Bangladesh has scored 25 points in a scale of 0-100 and has been ranked 145th from the top and 14th from below in a list of 175 countries. This score is much lower than the global average score of 43 and both in rank and score among seven South Asian countries, Bangladesh's position remains 2nd lowest - lower than all except Afghanistan. Against this backdrop, TIB has called upon the government to take a stricter position and effective measures in realizing its political commitment to prevent corruption.

In a press conference held on 3 December at the VIP Lounge of National Press Club in Dhaka, TIB Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman presented and explained Bangladesh's score and other matters related to it. The global launching of the CPI also took place simultaneously. Bangladesh is among the 121 countries out of 175 who scored below 50. From the bottom, the ranking is 2 steps worse in 2014 (14th) than it was in 2013 (16th) and from top it is nine steps lower (145th)

than 2013 (136th). Among South Asian countries Bhutan is on the top (score 65, rank 30 from top) while Afghanistan remained in the bottom scoring only 12 which is globally the third lowest after Sudan which is the 2nd lowest and North Korea and Somalia jointly being the lowest. Except Bhutan, all South Asian countries have received much lower than the global average of 43. Dr. Iftekharuzzaman in his briefing said, "According to CPI 2014, score of 92 countries has increased, while it remained same in 47 countries. Unfortunately Bangladesh is among the 36 countries whose score has declined." Other countries who scored the same with Bangladesh are Guinea, Kenya, Laos and Papua New Guinea.

Denmark topped in the ranking scoring 92 points followed by New Zealand in the 2nd position (score is 91) and Finland in the 3rd (score 89). It is to be noted that in the 0-100 scale countries scoring higher are perceived to be less corrupt while countries at the bottom are perceived to be exposed to higher level of corruption. The data used in the CPI 2014 have been collected from February 2011 to August 2014. The data for Bangladesh survey were taken from Economist Intelligence Unit – Country Risk Assessment, Global Insight Country Risk Ratings, International Country Risk Guide, World Bank – Country Policy and Institutional Assessment, World Economic Forum Executive Opinion Survey, World Just Project – Rule of Law Index, and Bertelsmann Foundation Transformation Index.



“There are many reasons for which Bangladesh’s CPI score went down this year and among these are: deficits of delivery of anti-corruption pledges, attempts to curtail independence of the ACC, deficits in bringing to justice those alleged of corruption e.g. Padma Bridge, Railway Scam, Stock Market, Hall Mark, Destiny, Sonali and other Banking Scams, Rana Plaza, disproportionate accumulation of wealth, denial syndrome, unabated grabbing of land, river & water bodies, loan default, contracting and recruitment business, politically linked business opportunities, weaknesses of institutions of accountability especially Parliament, conflict of interest issues, whitening of black money, and illicit financial transfers are important,” Dr Zaman added. He also underscored that because of lack of proper understanding about CPI people of the country are blamed to be corrupt which is not right. “Majority of the people here are not corrupt but rather victims of it and they cannot be blamed for the failure of our leadership,” TIB ED concluded.

TIB observes IACD 2014 with a demand to ensure punishment of the corrupts

To celebrate the International Anti-Corruption Day 2014, TIB organized two events on 9 December: a) distribution of prizes to six winners of investigative journalism awards 2014 and a discussion on the challenges of journalism in the current perspective of Bangladesh and b) distribution of prizes to cartoonists of anti-corruption cartoon competition 2014 and opening of the week-long cartoon against corruption exhibition. CCC-YES groups also organized rallies, discussions, human chain, cartoon exhibitions, street theater shows, anti-corruption oath-taking and various outreach activities in 45 locations in the country. Tens of thousands of people, public officials and representatives, professionals, civil society, media, business and students from schools, colleges and universities joined these IACD events.



In the capital, the lively discussion on ‘Contemporary journalism in Bangladesh’ by Mr. Khaled Mohiuddin, Head of News, Independent Television and Mr. Robayet Ferdous, Associate Professor, Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, University of Dhaka enthralled the audience. Three young journalists also shared their professional experiences highlighting the need for self-retrospection by the media leaders to improve the quality of journalism in the country. Professor Dr. Gowher Rizvi, International Affairs Adviser to the Prime Minister defended the significance of freedom of expression and also underscored the importance of objective journalism to promote good governance in the country.

This year’s winner in national print media category was Arup Roy of the Daily Prothom Alo for his report that unearthed how more than 1000 police constables secured jobs using fake address and identities. H M Alauddin of the Daily Purbanchal from Khulna won in the regional print media category for uncovering sorry state of health services in Khulna district. The award on electronic media category was won by Sajjad Parvez of Jamuna Television for exposing malpractices by unscrupulous associations in the name of human rights promotion. Three camerapersons involved with this documentary were also awarded. As prizes, all awardees received crest, certificate and taka 80,000 each, while three camerapersons also received crests, certificates and taka 20,000 each.

In the afternoon, prizes were distributed among the cartoonists who joined TIB's anti-corruption cartoon competition 2014. H.E. Mr Johan Frisell, the Swedish Ambassador and H.E. Ms Hanne Fugl Eskjaer, the Danish Ambassador in Bangladesh attended as Guests of Honour and distributed the prizes and also inaugurated the week-long cartoon exhibition at the DRIK Gallery, Dhanmondi, Dhaka. It may be mentioned here that as part of TIB's Youth Engagement & Support (YES) programme, these competitions and exhibitions are aimed at creating greater awareness and motivation among the young generation to Say No to Corruption. The Competition is organized in two age categories, Group A (Age 13-18), and Group B (Age 19-35). A jury board comprising eminent cartoonists of the country select cartoons from each group. Apart from the best 3 cartoons those who received prize money, crests and certificates, cartoonists were also selected as 'Special Mention' who were received token cash awards and certificates.

This year's winners of the cartoon competitions in Group A: S M Asif Bin Gaffar, 1st position and Mahamudul Hasan Imon, 2nd position. In group B: Md. Faridur Rahman Rajib, Arafat Karim and Mehedi Haque won the 1st, 2nd and 3rd position respectively.

Earlier, on 8 December, TIB organized a human chain at the TSC premises, University of Dhaka with the theme 'Vigilant conscience, invincible youth, shall surely resist corruption'. A large number of YES including network members joined the human chain where Professor Nasrin Ahamad, Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University of Dhaka attended as the chief guest. TIB's Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman called upon the Prime Minister to recognize and observe the IACD officially in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh National Cricket Team Says No to Corruption

On the eve of the International Anti-Corruption Day on 9 December, the Bangladesh National Cricket Team expressed solidarity with a campaign of Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) pronouncing 'Say NO to Corruption' during the 5th international one day match against Zimbabwe held on 1 December at Mirpur Sher-E-Bangla National Cricket Stadium.

Fourteen Bangladeshi cricketers posed for a photo session before starting the match holding up a banner with the slogan 'Say No to Corruption' and demonstrated their commitment to fight corruption.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has also put up two permanent display boards with the same message in the stadium grounds to affirm their commitment to weed out corruption from the Bangladesh cricket arena. It may be mentioned here that together with Transparency International, chapters in 12 cricket-playing nations, have been advocating with the International Cricket Council (ICC) to initiate necessary reforms for strengthening



transparency in cricket and address the many corruption risks that threaten the game. In this connection, TI-Bangladesh had written to the BCB President on 13 November 2013 reiterating the urgent need for undertaking governance reforms to protect Bangladesh's reputation in this regard.

TIB demands a permanent ban of the all water routes through the Sundarbans

TIB urged the government to permanently ban all the water routes through Sundarbans. It also expressed concern over the recent Shipping Ministry's decision to reject the Environment and Forest Ministry's recommendations and the demand of the civil societies to permanently ban all water routes through the Sundarbans.

In a statement circulated to the media on 15 December, Executive Director of TIB Dr. Iftekharuzzaman expressed his concern that the recent capsizing of the oil tanker showed how risky the water routes inside the Sunderbans are. Plying motorized vehicles inside the forest violates national and international rules and standards. He added that, the people involved in permitting vessel operations through the Sundarbans had to be made accountable for the mishap.

Besides, the lack of manpower and modern equipment during such a national disaster reveals terrible forest management on the government's side. Without government initiative, the forest would not only lose its honor of being a world heritage site but also face the threat of extinction.

He also added that as the government did not take proper measures to protect the Sundarbans, and the accident occurred despite the demand for save the Sundarbans from the citizens group and the international organizations including UNESCO and Ramsar Convention. If necessary, the government should take technical support from the international community to remove oil slick from the rivers and also take effective measure to cancel river routes in order to save the world's largest mangrove forest.

On December 9, 2014 an oil tanker was hit by a cargo vessel in Shela River, as a result 350,000 liters of oil spilled and severely damaged the environment of the Sundarbans.

TIB office has moved to MIDAS Centre

TIB office has moved to the MIDAS Centre (4th & 5th floors), House No# 05, Road# 16 (new) 27 (Old), Dhanmondi, Dhaka-1209 from the previous office of Banani on 28 December. Telephone numbers of the new office are: 9124788, 9124789, 9124792 and Fax number is: 9124915. All cell phone numbers and e-mail addresses will remain unchanged. TIB is requesting to all Government-Non Government offices, Mass media, Civil Society, Well-wishers and stakeholders to communicate with new address and new phone number.

CCC News

Meeting with District Primary Education Authority: Commitment of deploying teachers

With an aim to improve the quality of education a meeting with District Primary Education Authority was organized by CCC Dinajpur on 24 December at the office of District Primary Education Officer (DPEO). The meeting was moderated by CCC President Md. Shafiqul Haque Chhutu while District Primary Education Officer (DPEO) Md. Ekramul Haque attended as Chief Guest. Participants of the meeting discussed on areas of progress and limitations of Barail Govt. Primary School where CCC Dinajpur has undertaken different programs. The meeting also discussed different governance challenges including less functional SMC, attendance of teacher's in due time, quality of teaching



method, asking additional fees from the students and the overall mal practice and lacking of the school.

The DPEO expressed high level of satisfaction with CCC's initiatives towards the improvement of the school. He emphasized on strong monitoring of school activities by Upazila Primary Education Officer. It was shared in the meeting that the Purba Ramnagar Primary School is suffering from a shortage of teacher to which the DPEO said he would recruit two teachers immediately.

YES News

Special Anti-Corruption Campaign by YES Members

Youth Engagement and Support (YES) group of Patiya CCC successfully conducted a day-long anti-corruption satellite campaign on 8 December 2014 which was inaugurated by CCC President S. M. A. K. Jahangir while CCC Officials and YES Members were present. The campaign started from CCC Office and ran through Upazila, Amzur Hat, Badamtola, Pachuria, Shantir Hat, Noya Hat, Budhpura, Monsa, Thanar More, Dakbanglo, Busstand, Kamal Munsir Hat, Vatiar Dighi and other venues and ended at CCC Office premises.

The campaign was operated through distributing anti-corruption leaflets and songs against corruption were performed by YES members as a part of the campaign. People were invited to join to fight against corruption through all presentations. CCC and YES Friends group members attended the campaign. Thousands of teachers, students and common people attended the event.



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