



INSIDE

National News

- Celebrating the Right to Know Day 2015
- Dr. Iftekharuzzaman elected to the International Board of Directors of Transparency International (TI) for the 3rd time
- Sign legally binding agreement to reduce carbon emission: TIB

CCC News

- Concerted efforts to improve the quality of health service
- Arankhola UP welcomes the way of people's participation
- Mother's role to improve quality of primary education
- Political commitment needed to strengthen democracy
- CCCs celebrate Right to Know Day

National News

TIB placed 10 point demands to ensure Transparency and Accountability in the use of Climate Fund

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) has appealed to the Bangladeshi delegates for playing proper roles in the Conference for signing international legally binding agreement to keep increasing rate of global warming at maximum 2 degrees Celsius following "Common but differentiated responsibility" principle and providing committed climate fund to the affected countries.

The demands came from the press conference on 15 October 2015 at TIB Office with a view to observe international conference on climate change (COP-21) which is going to be held at Paris on 30 November to 11 December 2015 by United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

In the press conference it is strongly demanded that Paris Conference will define unanimous definition of climate finance and determine road map of committed climate fund to affect countries till 2016 to 2030 by industrialized countries following the principle of "Polluter Pay the Compensation" and Climate Fund should be new and additional. On the other hand demands also rose to ensure transparency, accountability and citizen's participation in all level of national and international climate fund management in the conference.

In the conference Md. Zakir Hossain Khan, Senior Programme Manager, Climate Finance Governance (CFG) presented a position paper on this issue while Executive Director of TIB Dr. Iftekharuzzaman and Deputy Executive Director Dr. Sumaiya Khair were present.

Welcoming to the Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for winning the 'Champions of the Earth' award Dr. Iftekharuzzaman said "This award has created the context to lead Bangladesh in the conference for protecting the environment and interest the millions of people globally in climate affected countries including Bangladesh. So delegation from Bangladesh should uphold the demand and negotiate strongly with developed countries at COP-21 to be held at Paris".

Position paper stated "Required climate funds deficit for adaptation committed by industrialized countries will increase more if universal carbon reduction agreement is not done in upcoming COP 21 summit. In this situation, conducting adaptation activities for vulnerable countries like Bangladesh will be partially impossible". It is mentionable that, there is no legally binding provision in Paris draft agreement that only grant will be given priority for adaptation.

Illustrating the disbursement from Green Climate Fund (GCF) it is said in the press conference that although 34 industrialized countries announced to give only US \$10.2 billion in GCF till August 2015, they have provided only US \$2.38 billion among so far 50% committed fund. But till now no fund has been allocated from GCF in account of any project/program.

Other demands came from the conference are –provide committed climate fund including specific commitment/guideline in Paris declaration, include specific steps to ensure transparency and accountability of industrialized and emerging countries in Paris declaration for providing climate fund from GCF and others sources.

Celebrating the Right to Know Day 2015

TI Bangladesh celebrated the International Right to Know (RTK) Day by calling upon the government to effectively implement the proactive disclosures policy across all government offices. It also urged the government to refrain from formulating laws and policies that contradict the true spirit of Right to Information (RTI) Act 2009.

Observing that people are still largely unaware about the RTI Act 2009 even after six years of its enactment, Dr. Zaman in a statement to media on 28 September urged the authorities to update their websites by furnishing proactively disclosed information. Expressing concern that the true ideals of the Act, which was supposed to promote the constitutional right to freedom of expression, has been short-circuited by several harsher provisions as contained in the National Broadcasting Policy, Section 57 of the Information and Communication Technology Act and the draft Cyber Security Act. He urged the government to refrain from further curtailing the basic tenants of the freedom of speech and expression as contained in the RTI Act 2009.

Meanwhile, as part of its celebration, TIB also organised a series of public awareness, voice and demand campaigns throughout the country for enforcement of people's right to information, which centered around the day's theme: Janbo Janabo, Durnity Rukhbo (We want to know, We will let others know – we will prevent corruption). The Committees of Concerned Citizens (CCCs) and the Youth Engagement & Support (YES) groups working with TIB organised information fairs in several locations of the country. With full support of the local administration, which was made possible after TIB's sustained advocacy with the Cabinet Division, both government and non-government organizations set up stalls in information fairs. YES members also trained the enthusiastic visitors, mostly youth, on how to file request for information using the official format. TIB's pioneering RTI Fairs, which proved to be a powerful medium of strengthening both the demand and supply side in implementing RTI Act, are now being replicated by some NGOs.

The RTK Day campaign events in TIB's 45 project locations also included rallies, human chains, street theatres, advice and information desks, cultural programmes, seminars, discussion meetings and cartoon exhibitions.

For wider dissemination of the demand for people's right to information, TIB's four television commercials on health, education, local government and climate finance were broadcast for three days during prime time from 26-28 September on two popular television channels, while similar messages were also being broadcast by 15 community radio stations of the country. In addition, a large number of RTK-related cartoon stickers and posters were disseminated across the country to popularize the public's demand for information.



Information Minister attended as the chief guest.

It may be mentioned here that TIB played a pivotal role in the enactment of the Right to Information Act 2009 adopted in the Parliament on 29 March 2009, which became operational in July 2009. TIB has been observing the RTK Day since 2006, the first organization to do so in Bangladesh. Earlier, from 2003, TIB started a local level campaign called Advice & Information Desk to inform the members of the public about their basic rights and entitlement. As part of its RTI advocacy, TIB in 2014 urged for government's official recognition of RTK Day and observe it nationally.



Dr. Iftekharuzzaman elected to the International Board of Directors of Transparency International (TI) for the 3rd time

Dr. Iftekharuzzaman, Executive Director of Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) has been elected to the International Board of Directors of Transparency International (TI), the Berlin based global civil society coalition against corruption for a three-year period from September 2015.

This is for the third term that Dr Zaman has been elected to the TI International Board. He earlier served the TI Board during 2008-2011 and 2012-2015.

In his reaction after the election, held on 01 September in the Annual Membership Meeting of TI in Malaysia, Dr Zaman said, “this reflects a global recognition of the work TIB has been doing over the years, especially as the pioneer in engaging people in TIB’s campaign and advocacy against corruption based on research and knowledge. I consider this as an opportunity and responsibility for me to bring to the global level TIB’s expertise and experience in shaping the policy priorities of TI and the international anti-corruption movement as well as national chapters of TI all over the world.”

“Credit for this recognition goes to everyone involved in TIB including the Board, staff, members, CCC, YES, YES Friends, YPAC, TIB members and all stakeholders, especially everyone who consider corruption as an evil to be fought with courage and credibility”, he said.

Sign legally binding agreement to reduce carbon emission: TIB

TIB has appealed to sign legally binding agreement for industrialized and emerging countries for reducing carbon emission following ‘Common but Differentiated Responsibility’ principle of UNFCCC to tackle detrimental effect of climate change. Demand also to ensure transparency and accountability in the management of climate fund also came from the press conference on 02 September 2015 at the Chittagong Press Club ahead of COP-21 which is going to be held on 30 Nov to 11 December 2015 at Paris.

In the same day Committees of Concerned Citizens (CCC), Chittagong Metropolitan and Chittagong University Debating Society (CUDS) and TIB jointly formed a human chain at Patenga sea beach with same demands. Along with this a three day long ‘Inter-university Debate Competition 2015’ was also organised at Chittagong University with a slogan ‘Transparency in Climate Finance: Awaken Conscience, Invincible Youth, Will Impede Corruption’.

At the press conference a position paper was presented by M. Zakir Hossain Khan, Senior Programme Manager-Climate Finance Governance of TIB while Engineer Md. Delwar Hossain Majumdar, CCC President of Chittagong Metropolitan presided over the program. Jesmin Sultana Paru, Convener-CFG Sub-committee, Associate Professor Dr. A. B. M. Abu Noman, Associate Moderator of CUDS; Jubayer Ahmed, President of CUDS were also present the program.

At the conference TIB also raised ten point demands including “Polluter Pay the Compensation” principle considering grants as ‘new’ and ‘additional’ as well as to determine unanimous definition of climate finance. In the same time demand to determine long-term road map of climate financing under the Copenhagen accord. Formulate adaptation scheme and give priority in adaptation while providing grant ‘new’ and ‘additional’ fund quickly for all vulnerable countries due to climate change; Bring up precise and effective proposition for ensuring proper management in climate fund from GCF and other funds and desire transparency, accountability and justice in developed and developing countries.

CCC News

Concerted efforts to improve the quality of health service

Mohammed Elias, MP of Cox’s Bazar-01, made a commitment to take actions for repairing the X-ray machine of the Chakaria Upazila Health Complex immediately. Answering to a service recipient, he made such commitment in an Opinion Sharing Meeting organised by CCC, Chakaria. Addressing as chief guest, he also said, ‘Overall development is becoming slowly down for corruption. We need to combat against corruption to make Bangladesh as a middle income country.

CCC, Chakaria organised the meeting in participation the authority of Chakaria Upazila Health Complex to improve the services of the hospital based on a slogan ‘Transparency and accountability in health sector’. Abdus Salam, Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer, presided over the program. Sontash Kumer Sushil, Convener of the CCC’s Health related sub-committee, delivered the welcome speech. The meeting was held on 20 September 2015 at the Chakaria Health Complex Auditorium. Abdus Salam said, ‘Collective participation and cooperation of all of us need to improve the quality of hospital services’. The participants in the meeting raised different service related issues.

Arankhola UP welcomes the way of people's participation

CCC, Madhupur and Arankhola Union Parishad jointly organised a Face the Public program on 29 September 2015 in front of the Union Parishad Complex. Humayan Kabir Sarkar, chairman of Arankhola Union Parishad addressed the questions of the participants in the program while Dr. Mir Farhadul Alam Moni, president of CCC, Madhupur presided over the program. UP chairman also mentioned the limitations of the union parishad in the meeting.

Nazma Begum and Helal Uddin, Upazila Vice Chairman of Madhupur Upazilla, were present as special guests in the program. Abdul Awal, secretary of the Arankhola Union Parishad, shared the Annual Activity plan of 2015-16 fiscal year. Shahidul Islam, vice president of CCC, Madhupur moderated the program. The UP chairman said, 'this type of program will contribute a lot to increase transparency and accountability in union parishad's activities. We will organize this event in future in association with CCC'. Members of the CCC urged to increase women's participation in preparing UP budget and development plan.

Mother's role to improve quality of primary education

CCC, Barisal organised a training workshop on 'Role of mothers to increase transparency and accountability in primary education'. The workshop was held on 12 September 2015 in Batna Govt. Primary School under Barisal Sadar upazila.

The facilitators and the participants of the workshop discussed the issues including the characteristics of a model primary school, roles and responsibilities of teachers, SMC members and mothers of the students as well as guardians. The workshop also found the challenges and mitigation strategies to ensure transparency and accountability in primary education sector. Principal Gazi Zahid Hossain, vice-president of CCC, Barisal inaugurated the workshop in the morning while TIB staffs facilitated the program. Earlier on 23 August 2015, an 'Active Mothers Group' was formed in participation with the mothers of the students of Batna Govt. Primary School. The group consists of 21 members.



Political commitment needed to strengthen democracy

Speakers at different meetings urged to ensure transparency and accountability for strengthening democracy in Bangladesh. They also made importance on political commitment to achieve such goal. The meetings were held in Jamalpur and Nalitabari separately in participation with local civil society members, elected representatives, government officials, journalists, teachers, multi-level stakeholders and members of CCC, Swajan, YES and YES Friends. Jamalpur and Nalitabari CCCs organised these meetings on September 13 & 14, 2015 respectively titled 'Social movement against Corruption at the local level: Opportunities and Challenges'. The meetings were organised with a view to strengthen good governance and amplify anti-corruption social movement engaging multi-level stakeholders and cross section people of the society.

Jamalpur: As the key speaker Dr. Iftekhharuzzaman, Executive Director of Transparency International Bangladesh, addressed that, social movement against corruption contributes a lot to strengthen democracy and to achieve the goal of Independence movement. In 1975, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman also asked citizens to fight against corruption. Dr. Zaman argued to fight against corruption jointly with local civil society members, service holders, journalists and young people.

Mohammad Anwar Hossain, Deputy Commissioner (In Charge) of Jamalpur District, was present as chief guest while A.A.K. Mahmudul Hasan, president of the CCC, Jamalpur presided over the program on 13 September 2015. Anwar Hossain said, 'political commitment is needed to ensure good governance, in addition to this, combined efforts of administration and citizens to implement the political decision is also very important'.

However, a total number of 181 participants were present in the meeting. In open discussion session, Dr. Zaman answered various questions of the participants regarding different issues including social movement against corruption. Adv. Shameem Ara and A.K.M. Ashrafuzzaman, members of the CCC, moderated the sessions in the meeting.

Nalitabari: As the chief guest, Anjan Chandra Pal, Deputy Commissioner (In Charge) of Sherpur district, said, 'we need to prohibit corruption in the initial stage when it's going to be happened'. He asked to the service recipients to come directly to the responsible person of the service provider agency, not through the brokers. If there is any complaint against the responsible person, the chief guest requested to inform the complaint to the higher authority of the position.

In this meeting, Dr. Iftakharuzzaman said, 'Every person has responsibility to combat corruption as a citizen of the country. Including the political parties, we should also obey our citizenships responsibility'. Kohinur Ruma, member of the CCC, moderated the sessions while Sarkar Golam Faruk, president of the CCC, Nalitabari presided over the program. Among others, Anwar Hossain, the mayor of the Nalitabari Municipality and Mohammad Abu Sayeed Mollah, Upazila Nirbahi Officer of Nalitabari Upazilla, participated the program.

CCCs celebrate Right to Know Day

Committees of Concerned Citizens across the country celebrated the 28 September Right to Know Day with great enthusiasm on the theme 'Janbo Janabo, Durnity Rukhbo (We want to know, we will let others know – we will prevent corruption)'. At local level, rallies, discussion meetings, information fair, anti-corruption cultural programs, RTI application procedure and different medium of campaign were organised to encourage proactive disclosure of information and to aware the people on their rights to get information at ease.

All CCCs, its YES, YES Friends and Swajan members joined hands the local administration to celebrate the day. 18 CCCs organised two days long Information Fairs where different government agencies, departments and NGOs installed stalls and provided service related information to the visiting people. Bir Bahadur Ushwi Sing, State minister for Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs, inaugurated the programme in Khagrachari while Kujendra Lal



Tripura, local Member of the Parliament, was also present at the event. Similarly in Barguna, Advocate Dharendra Debnath Shambhu, Member of the Parliament, inaugurated the fair. Beside these, senior officials like Divisional Commissioner, Deputy Commissioners, Additional Deputy Commissioners, Superintendent of Police, Upazila Nirbahi Officers and local elected representatives including Mayor of Municipalities, Upazila Chairman and Vice Chairman and senior officers of TIB attended in the local celebration. Different awareness raising materials like Right to Know day issue based leaflets and posters were distributed among the participants and visitors in the fair.

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