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### National News

#### TIB releases Parliament Watch report on 2-6 sessions of the 10th Parliament

Despite of standard average duration of sessions, increase average time spent on per bill and decrease the time lost for quorum crisis, the so-called 'main opposition party' have demonstrated deficits in playing the expected role in the 2-6 sessions of the 10th Parliament. Flattering rather than criticisms of government's decisions and limitless sycophancy of the opposition is assembling questions on the effectiveness of the Parliament.

A monitoring and analysis based research study titled 'Parliament Watch' was revealed at a press conference at TIB office while proposing twelve recommendations. Juliet Rossette, Programme Manager; Fatema Afroz and Morsheda Aktar, Deputy Programme Manager of Research & Policy division of TIB presented the findings of the study. Executive Director Iftekhharuzzaman, Deputy Executive Director Professor Dr. Sumaiya Khair and Director, Research and Policy Mohammad Rafiqul Hassan, TIB were also present in the event.



From June 2014 to August 2015's (10th Parliament, 2nd – 6th Session) qualitative and quantitative data were incorporated in the research report. Information for this study has been collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary source of data includes proceedings of 2nd to 6th session of the 10th Parliament broadcast live by the state-owned national television channel 'Sangsad TV' (Parliament TV Channel). The secondary sources include bulletins published by the Parliament Secretariat, government gazettes, parliament website, newspapers, books and articles.

According to the study, leader of the House and leader of the opposition were present in the sessions respectively 83 and 57 percent. In the five sessions included in the study, the total time lost due to quorum crisis is estimated to be 48 hours and 41 minutes. According to another estimate, the cost involved for running the Parliament session per minute is around Tk 0.11million. Thus, considering theses estimates the monetary value for the total time lost in these sessions due to quorum crisis is estimated at Tk. 326.2 million.

The report highlights a few positive changes including increase in the average time spent per bill and decrease in the time lost for quorum crisis compared to the comparable period of the 9th Parliament. However, having been formed in the wake of a controversial election, the so-called 'main opposition party' that is simultaneously also a part of the government, have demonstrated deficits in playing the expected role. Members of the Parliament indulged in criticizing the political opponents that are not in the parliament in unprecedented number of times often using indecent and un-parliamentary language. Similarly, praising the government dominated the proceedings with high intensity, often without relevance. Notably, both the treasury bench and the so-called 'main opposition party' jointly engaged in such discourse. On the other hand, there was much to be desired with regard to the possible role that could be played by the Honorable Speaker to control these.

The report also brings into focus low level of participation of the members in law making, notices and question-answer sessions. Potential effectiveness of the Standing Committees were undermined by conflict of interest of members in some cases. Besides those, limited participation of female members in different motions, conflict of interest in case of some of the committee members, lack of access to the information in parliamentary business, irregular meeting of the standing committees are mentionable.

While commenting on the findings TIB's Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman said, "Merely 6 percent time spent for enacting laws and only 29 MP participated in the discussion during enactment of law. This parliament becomes an institutional forum to defeat heavily the political opponents that are not in the Parliament. On the other hand, the sycophancy culture of the so-called opposition party became gigantic."

The study proposed twelve recommendations, among which included were, The Speaker should play a strong role to stop the use of unparliamentary behavior and language; the Main Opposition should be more proactive to play their role as the 'real opposition'; steps should be taken to re-table and enact the 'MPs' Code of conduct Bill'; provisions should be included in recognizing the highest attendee and declare the name of those members who have the minimum attendance in the session; Participation of the people should be ensured in various phases of framing and reforming laws; the Petition Committee should be made effective to establish direct relationship with citizens; The information of the members must be verified during the formation of the committees if any conflict of interest exists. In relevant cases steps should be taken to withdraw the membership in committee subject to investigations and proof; updated information of business and financial relevance of the Chair and members of the committees should be disclosed to the public every year; public access to the information related to parliamentary activities including the attendance of the MPs should be published in parliamentary website in time and proceedings of the standing committees should be accessible to the public and electronic and print media.

## CCC News

### Call for organizing Public Hearing at least once in a month

The Commissioner of Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Dr. Nasiruddin Ahmed called for organizing Public Hearing Program at least once in a month if not week to abide by the government circular in order to prevent harassment of mass people and ensure transparency and accountability. ACC Commissioner was addressing as a chief guest at an Information Fair Inauguration ceremony and a public hearing program at Chakaria. He also emphasized the coordinated effort for implementing Right to Information Act effectively. The program was jointly organized by CCC, Chakaria and DUPROK in cooperation with Chakaria Upazila Administration on 14 October 2015. ACC Commissioner also added that proper and effective implementation of RTI act can help to reduce corruption and ensure good governance. He also advised to follow up the commitments offered by different authorities in this public hearing program.



The Director of ACC (Prevention and Mass Awareness) Md. Maniruzzaman delivered welcome speech in the Information Fair and Public Hearing Program that was chaired by Upazila Nirbahi Officer Mohammed Sahedul Islam. Mohammed Ilias, MP of Cox's Bazar, Directorate General of ACC (Prevention and Mass Awareness) Dr. Md. Samsul Arefin, Deputy Commissioner of Cox's Bazar Mohammad Ali, Superintendant of Police Shamol Kumar Nath, Director of ACC, Chittagong Division Abdul Aziz Bhuiyan, CCC President Alhaz Farid Uddin Chowdhury and Most. Fojila Khanom, SPM-CE of TIB delivered speeches. The inauguration session was moderated by CCC Vice-President Ms Nasima Akhtar and CCC Member Huree Jannat Mili. Representatives of Chakaria Upazila Health and Family Planning Office, Chakaria Land Office, Sub-Registry Office and Palli Biddut Samiti took part in the Public Hearing Program. They answered the questions raised by mass people and pledged immediate solutions. A number of 31 organizations participated in the information fair.



## Ensure the proper utilization of hospital facilities

‘Hospital authority should ensure the proper utilization of the existing facilities. CCC-TIB could monitor whether transparency and accountability are maintained in the hospital’ stressed Swedish Ambassador Mr. Johan Frisell while delivering chief guest’s speech in a joint meeting organized by CCC Jessore. The Ambassador praised CCC and YES activities in social movement against corruption. The meeting comprising of 250 Bedded Jessore General Hospital staffs and service recipients was held on 21 October 2015 was presided over by Superintendent of Jessore General Hospital Dr. Shamal Krishna Saha where CCC President Md. Abu Saleh Tota briefed the aim of the meeting. CCC Member S. M. Tauhidur Rahman moderated the meeting and CCC member Advocate Moazzem Hossain Chowdhury Tulu shared CCC activities, success, challenges and way forward plan of CCC Jessore on health issues.



The meeting discussed the issue of ensuring transparency and accountability in the health services of the hospital. Moreover issues were raised concerning the scarcity of digital x-ray machine, cleanliness of toilets, lack of coordination between hospital authority and medical college, shortage of manpower and instruments, shortage of specialist doctors, presence of touts, set up of makeshift shops, presence of outsiders’ ambulance in the hospital etc. Superintendent of the hospital answered the questions raised by the participants in the meeting. He shared that the digital x-ray machine will be provided in the hospital very shortly. Only seven days ago, mobile court had evicted vehicle and peddler’s of makeshift shops and outsiders ambulance from the entrance of the hospital. Unfortunately the situation returned on the same afternoon, he added. The Superintendent sought cooperation from CCC-TIB to address this problem. Renowned educationist Tarapada Das, Banche Shekha’s Executive Director Angela Gomes, other doctors of the hospital, journalist, service recipients, patients and their attendants spoke in the meeting. The meeting was attended, among others, by Swidesh Intern Kajsa Aldstedt, Program Officer Ms. Rehana Khan, Senior Program Manager of TIB Kazi Shafiqur Rahman, hospital staffs, attendants of the patients, journalists, other CCC and YES members.

## Meeting with Education Authority for Improvement of Primary Education

With an aim to establish transparency and accountability in education sector and improve the quality of primary education CCC, Muktagacha organized a meeting with education authority on 27 October 2015. CCC President Principal Md. Akhlasur Rahaman Jewel presided over the meeting. The meeting discussed the progress and way



forward plan for the improvement of education services. Upazila Education Officer Md. Mustafizur Rahman conveyed special thanks to concerned persons specially to CCC members as the quality of education of 93 No Sayedgram Government Primary School has marked visible improvements. Area Manager of TIB shared some progress of this school which included set up of a Tin Shed room supported by Upazila Administration, allocated 20 benches for classrooms and installed a tube-well in the school by Union Parishad etc. SMC President Raihan Kabir Lablu informed that construction work of toilets is going on with the cooperation of education authority.

The activities with education authority for the second year of BIBEC was shared in the meeting. CCC also shared that if any school showed interest CCC will assist to amplify these activities. In this connection Upazila Education Officer requested TIB to amplify these works in more schools. He added there is no alternative but to engage the local people in solving these problem. In a question regarding initiatives for ensuring good governance he responded that it is a continuous process and without the participation and monitoring of local citizens it is not possible to gain achievements. In the meeting all Upazila Assistant Education Officers, head teacher and SMC President of 93 No Govt. Primary School, CCC, Swajan and YES members were present. The meeting was moderated by CCC’s education related Sub-Committee’s Convener Professor Md. Abdus Sobur.

## **Ensure local citizens participation to implement Costal Climate Resilient Infrastructure Project**

A baseline survey report sharing meeting on Climate Finance Governance was held on 26 October 2015 at Barguna LGED Auditorium organized by CCC, Barguna where Executive Engineer of LGED Md. Anwarul Islam was present as chief guest. In the meeting a survey report on Costal Climate Resilient Infrastructure Project (CCRIP) implemented by LGED Authority was presented by Md. Zakir Hossain Khan, Senior Manager-CFG of TIB. The baseline survey was conducted at Amtoli Bazar, Dhalua Union, and Amtoli Union of Barguna Sadar where there are Cyclone Shelters being constructed. The study showed that about 73 percent of the respondents doesn't know that the project was aimed to meet the challenges of climate change. 86 percent of the respondents told that the beneficiaries were not apprised of the benefits of the project and the cost involved. No boards containing the project information was visible in the project site. 47 percent of the respondents opined that the project was not being implemented properly. The study proposed a proper analysis climate risk and ensuring the participation of local citizens and concerned experts. It stressed the need to form committees comprising local people to ensure



the quality of the constructions works, proper assesment of the capacity of the cyclone shelter and ensuring the stay of the people during natural disaster.

Deputy Assistant Engineer of CCRIP Project Md. Hafizur Rahman, Field Monitoring Officer of LGED Md. Alamgir Hossain, Upazila Engineer S M Tayebur Rahman, CCC member and TIB representative spoke in the open discussion session. Other Engineers of Upazila and District level, among others, attended the meeting. The meeting was presided over by CCC Vice-President Advocate Md. Muniruzzaman Munir while CCC Member Monir Hossain Kamal delivered welcome speech.

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