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National News

Thousands of anti-corruption volunteers renew pledges to fight corruption

The day-long 8th national convention of TIB-inspired volunteer groups - the Committees of Concerned Citizens (CCC), Sawjan, Youth Engagement and Support (YES) and YES Friends was held at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre today, with the theme: 'Vigilant Conscience, Invincible Youth - Shall Surely Resist Corruption'. More than two and half thousand of volunteers, comprising both senior and youth from 45 locations in the country and the Capital Dhaka attended.

The day began with the national anthem and a choreography performance of TIB's theme song by YES members. Chair of TIB Trustee Board Advocate Sultana Kamal, administered an anti-corruption oath.

During the panel discussion, Advocate Sultana Kamal and Secretary General Ms. Selina Hossain shared their inspiring views on the Vigilant Conscience, Invincible Youth, Cultural Spirit and Anti-Corruption Movement. Iftekharuzzaman, ED, TIB emphasized on the effective role of the citizen and highlighted on the concerted efforts of the citizen to fight corruption. Ms. Nishat Majumder, Mountaineer, who conquered the Everest, Ms. Samira Zuberi Himika, a young entrepreneur and software expert and Mr. Sushanta Paul, a young civil servant, enthralled the audience with their inspirational experiences.

Later, Dr. Iftekharuzzaman distributed prizes among the YES members for Essay Competition organized on the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day 2015. The best four essay

winners from CCC- Patiya, Jessore and Sunamgonj and YES group- Institute of Social Welfare and Research Dhaka received cash, crest and certificate. 14 YES members also received awards in the "Special Mention" category which included cash and certificate.

A declaration was read out at the end of the Convention. Participants pledged and called for emphasizing combined efforts of the government, political leaders, civil society and citizens at large to strengthen anti-corruption movement for establishing



dreams of independence, democracy, good governance and human rights.

Earlier, in the morning session all participants deliberated on new ideas to fight corruption in Bangladesh, moderated by Iftekharuzzaman, Executive Director and Prof. Dr. Sumayia Khair, Deputy Executive Director of TIB.

12 CCCs and Dhaka YES put up stalls at various corners giving the venue a festive look.

The convention was rounded off through cultural performances by a dance troupe led by Munmun Ahmed, internationally famous singer Sabina Yesmin and musical band "Joler Gaan".

TI releases Global Corruption Report: Sport; TIB calls for taking preventive measures to maintain cricket's clean image

At the backdrop of incidences of match-fixing, political and commercial influences in arranging major events, the lack of good governance in administration and other risks of corruption in international sports, Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) today urged the Government to take necessary preventive measures to maintain clean image of cricket in Bangladesh. Releasing the 'Global Corruption Report: Sport' of Berlin-based Transparency International (TI), through a press conference in its Dhanmondi office this morning, TIB's Executive Director Dr. Iftekhharuzzaman underscored the need for enacting necessary laws for ensuring transparency in the Bangladesh's cricket's governance. He also hoped that all stakeholders involved with cricket matches and tournaments should comply with International Cricket Council's (ICC) anti corruption rules to avoid incidences of tainted images in the future. TIB's Deputy Executive Director Professor Dr. Sumaiya Khair, Director-Research and Policy Mohammad Rafiqul Hassan and Deputy Programme Manager-Research and Policy Mohammad Nure Alam were also present among others during the press conference. Dr. Zaman, Mr. Alam and Rumana Sharmin are the co-authors of 'Cricket in Bangladesh: Challenges of governance and match-fixing' incorporated in TI's GCR-Sport.

The Bangladesh report highlighted illegal activities of betting operators; punishment of a young cricketer and involvement of an umpire in match-fixing; a club's role in match-fixing in Bangladesh Premier League and various governance challenges Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB). Observing that there is no specific law in Bangladesh to deal with sports-related corruption, Dr. Zaman urged for formulating a long-term anti-corruption strategy to strengthen BCB's Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU).

TIB also urged to set up an independent and specialized Office of Ombudsman for Cricket.

It may be mentioned here that TIB has been advocating with BCB to address governance challenges in Bangladesh's cricket since 2014. With BCB's endorsement, Bangladesh's National Cricket Team joined a TIB-led 'Say NO to Corruption' campaign on the eve of the International Anti-corruption Day 2014. In January same year, TIB lodged strong protest against International Cricket Council's (ICC) attempt to establish two-tier system of test matches and money driven control mechanism.



The GCR Sport put forward some specific recommendations to initiate fundamental reforms to overcome governance challenges in Bangladesh cricket. These included, among others: the recruitment of skilled human resources, enhancing technical capacity, independence, professionalism and effectiveness of the ACU, creating legal provisions to effectively prevent match-fixing, spot-fixing and any other forms of cheating; and the oversight by the Parliamentary Standing Committee for ensuring good governance of the cricket management and administration of BCB.

ACU should function as unit of integrity and anti-corruption, consistent with the Government's National Integrity Strategy (NIS), TIB observed, adding that all stakeholders involved in cricket matches and tournaments, especially the franchises, managers, coaches, captains, players and media houses, whether national or international, should formally sign an agreement to uphold the ICC's Anti-Corruption Code. Individuals involved with BCB and their immediate family members, agents and gate-keepers should be subjected to the proactive disclosure of their income and wealth, TIB said. It also urged for taking specific programmes on information, education and communication to change the behavior of young cricketers.

The GCR Sport revealed corruption not only in football but also in cricket, cycling, badminton, ice hockey, handball, athletics and other sports. The GCR includes 60 articles from a broad range of contributors, including the International Olympic Committee, players' organisations, and athletes past and present supporters groups and academics.

Ways to improve land sector governance in Bangladesh

A day-long consultation on 'Governance challenges and the way forward in land sector' was held in TIB's Dhaka Office on 29 February 2016. Anti-corruption fighters and civil society activists attending the consultation urged for more concentrated efforts to reduce governance challenges in land-related services in the country.

Despite being so important in daily lives and economic activities, land sector in Bangladesh has been replete with numerous anomalies and corruption. According to TIB's National Household Survey on Corruption 2012, 59% households experienced corruption while receiving services and nationally estimated total amount of bribe given by Bangladeshi households was found to be Tk. 22610 million.

Over the decades, the government has taken numerous policy measures to reform land administration and management to make land services accessible and people oriented. In this context, the government has identified land as one of its priority areas in the 7th Five Year Plan. Given the paramount importance of land sector, TIB decided to work on land sector and pursue advocacy campaign both at local and national level to bring necessary policy changes to fight against corruption and improve governance in land sector. Some 48 participants representing Presidents, Conveners of Land Committees and land related CSO partners from (Bagerhat, Barisal, Chandpur, Gazipur, Khagrachori, Chapainababgonj etc) attended the consultation.

During consultation it emerged that service recipients encounter inconvenience, corruption or harassment while seeking services. Major constraints included, among others, the lack of co-ordination among land authority and management, deficit of skill and experience of Assistant Commissioners (Land), additional duties of AC (Land) other than land management, lack of regular inspection in local land offices, absence of field level monitoring of reports, inadequate budget and skilled human resource, dearth of training, deficit of logistics and infrastructure and the manual record keeping system.

During question-answer session, participants urged for undertaking extensive research on exploitations of indigenous people's land. Topics such as land development tax, mutation, registration, record management, distribution and management of Khas land also came up in the discussion. Women are more at risk of corruption in this sector as they do not have much access to information regarding this, they observed.

After group works, participants presented their insights and suggested concrete steps to ease the sufferings of the public. Their suggestions included the digitalization of land services, one-stop local level center, special awareness campaigns in local level, organizing public hearing and setting up of complain boxes, ensuring access to information according to Right to Information Act and involving local people in the taxation process.

TIB's Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman, Deputy Executive Director Professor Dr. Sumaiya Khair and four other Directors were present in the consultation.

The consolidated findings of this consultation, along with TIB's land sector study findings will be turned into a policy brief later to undertake sustained advocacy with the government to bring positive reforms and changes in land sector governance.

TIB observed International Mother Language Day

TIB Staffs and Yes members along with family members paid respect to the language martyrs on 21 February 2016. The day started with a barefoot march towards Shaheed Minar in the University of Dhaka and laying flower wreath on the monument. TIB's executive director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman was present there. The day was commemorated by wearing black badge and singing the Amar Ekushey Anthem 'Amar bhaiyer rokto rangano Ekushe February'. Areas around the monument and Dhaka University (DU) wore a festive look with murals, graffiti and street paintings comprising Bangla alphabets and verses on mother languages.

To observe the day, TIB also published a special card with the message 'Corruption is antithetical to the cognition of Ekush'.



TIB in Ekushey Book Fair

TIB participated in month-long Ekushey Book Fair organized by Bangla Academy with about 50 research publications, among which three were published this year. Many IEC materials like flyers and booklets were also there. TIB's stall number was 41. Almost fifteen thousand visitors came to the stall around the month of February, TIB's record indicated.

Workshop on Climate Finance Governance held in Koitta, Manikganj

TIB arranged a workshop with journalists on Climate Finance Governance at Proshika Training Center in Koitta, Manikganj. The workshop titled 'Good Governance in Climate Change Adaptation and Finance' was held from 25 to 27 February.



Some 34 journalists from different media attended the workshop. First day of the workshop started with the discussion on 'Governance in Climate Finance: National and International Perspective'. TIB's Senior Programme Manager, Climate Finance and Governance M Zakir Hossain Khan presented this segment. On second day, Pavel Partho, Coordinator, BARCIK reviewed on 'Climate Change and its Impact on Environment'. Later that day, Dr. Sheikh Towhidul Islam, Professor, Jahanginagar University presented his paper on 'Climate Change Adaptation Principles and Practice'. The day ended with experience sharing of COP 21. Journalists who visited the conference in Paris this year exchanged views.

The third and final day of the workshop set in motion with a group activity. Participants identified some scopes of investigative reporting on Climate change and climate finance governance. After that, Dr. Mizan R Khan, Professor, North South University explained on 'Transparency and Accountability in Climate Finance'. The workshop ended with the speech by Dr. Iftekharuzzaman, Executive Director, TIB.

CCC News

Citizens participation for a transparent and effective Union Parishad

'Joint efforts from citizens and local government is required for effective, transparent and accountable local government institutions' - with this spirit, a Face the Public programme with representatives of Ujangram Union Parishad of Kushtia Sadar Upazila was jointly organized by CCC, Kushtia and Ujangram Union Parishad on 23 February 2016. The programme was moderated by CCC President Md. Rafiqul Alam Tuku while UP Chairman and Freedom Fighter Md. Sabu Bin Islam presided over the programme. Union Parishad Chairman along with the members answered the questions raised by the local people during the programme.

People from all strata attended Face the Public programme. Among them 20 local citizens asked questions directed to Union Parishad Authority which touched the topic of construction and repairing roads, building culverts, setting up tube well, distribution of VGD & VGF Cards, prevention of early marriage, service of community clinics, training on stitching, getting information from Union Parishad, development and management of local markets etc. The citizens opined that the presence of Chairman and members is an indication that the UP Authority is willing to be accountable to the people. Chairman Md. Sabu Bin Islam told that he believed in the culture of accountability. Where there is no accountability there is corruption and irregularity, he added. Chairman pointed out that the budget allocation for the Union Parishad is limited. With this limited resources they are trying to serve the people best.

CCC President Md. Rafiqul Alam Tuku said that with great effort of the Chairman and all members, Ujangram Union Parishad became a role model in Kushtia. He added that the Face the Public Programme will create a bridge between Union Parishad and the local citizens which will help develop the union. Members of the Ujangram Union Parishad, CCC Members, YES members, YES Friends members, and a number of people of Ujangram Union attended the program.

Initiative to Ensure Quality Health Services to People

Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Jhenaidah Md. Mahbub Alam Talukdar advised to organize training on stress management for the doctors and nurses immediately. He offered all sort of cooperation in organizing this and promised to be present in the training.

The advice came in a joint meeting with Jhenaidah Sadar Hospital authority and service recipients where the issues of behavior of doctors and nurses were discussed strongly. With an aim to improve the quality of services of the hospital, CCC, Jhenaidah organized this meeting on 18 February 2016 in the hospital premises where DC of Jhenaidah was present as chief guest and Superintendent of Police Md. Altaf Hossain and Municipality Mayor Saydul Karim Mintu were present as special guest. The DC added that this stress management training will help the doctors and nurses to handle large number of patients at a time.

In the meeting, the service recipients pointed out some problems of healthcare services of the hospital and came up with suggestions, i.e. taking necessary measures regarding good gestures from the authority, timely presence of doctors, filling vacant positions, crisis management, arrangement for separate toilets for male and female on the outdoor floor, setting up information board, avoiding treatment of poisoning patient in open space etc. Responding to the suggestions the hospital authority remarked that, though the hospital is now 100 bedded, the facilities did not extend beyond the 50 bedded capacity. There are 24 vacant positions in the hospital till date. They are serving the people despite these limitations. Hospital authority welcomed the recommendations that came out in the meeting and assured to meet the demands of the recipients. Special guest Municipality Mayor requested the Deputy Commissioner and Civil Surgeon for taking necessary initiatives to fill up the vacant positions. Besides, he suggested organizing this type of activity in important places of the city for creating mass awareness. Hospital authority, CCC and all participants demanded effective initiatives from the relevant authority immediately.

The meeting was presided over by CCC President Md. Abu Taher. Among others, Civil Surgeon Dr. Md. Abdus Salam, Superintendent of the hospital Dr. Md. Ayub Ali and Residential Medical Officer Dr. Swapan Kumar Kundu were present in the meeting and shared their views and commitments. The meeting was moderated by CCC member Md. Muhabbat Hussain while CCC member N. M. Shahjalal delivered welcome speech.

Mothers are playing important role in Enhancing Quality Education

With an aim to improve quality education through mother's participation, CCC Kurigram in cooperation with School Management Committee (SMC) of Jatinerhat Govt. Primary School jointly organized a Mothers Gathering on 25 February 2016 at the school premises. Around 200 mothers pledged to contribute in the improvement of the quality of the education of this school. They also promised to be more careful and attentive for their children's education. This type of program is helping them a lot to communicate with the school authority, the mothers added. They also pointed out some problems of the school such as scarcity of sufficient classrooms, benches, shortage of educational materials, unhygienic environment due to a chicken farm near the school, necessity of supply of safe drinking water etc. The Head Teacher pointed out that if the parents give at least two hours to their children it will definitely help improve the quality of education of their child. He also requested the parents to send their children at school timely. The Head Teacher assured to discuss the issue of scarcity of classrooms and recruitment of teachers with the relevant higher authority.

The event was presided over by SMC President Mahendra Nath Sarker while CCC President ATM Enamul Haque Chowdhury was present as chief guest. Motivational speech was delivered by Head Teacher of Jatinerhat Govt. Primary School Bishanath Sarker, CCC's Education Related Sub-Committee's Convenor Nandita Chokroborty where SMC Vice-President, other CCC members and teachers of this school also spoke.

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