

Scrap provisions of police verification, attestation and testimonial to improve Passport service

To prevent corruption and reduce many types of irregularities in different levels of passport service, the existing provision of police verification and attestations of documents and photographs should immediately be cancelled as the systems under the provisions entails and encourages corruption and public sufferings, observed TIB in a research report titled Good Governance in Passport Service: Challenges and Way Forward.



The observations were made by TIB on 21 August 2017 in a Press Conference at its Dhaka Office organized to release the findings and observations of the study. In the Press Conference, TIB pointed out the prevailing challenges and irregularities in the passport services and proposed 12-point recommendations to overcome the challenges and improve the overall governance of the service.

Md. Shahnur Rahman, Program Manager, Research and Policy, TIB presented the report findings. Advocate Sultana Kamal, Chairperson and M. Hafizuddin Khan, Member, of TIB's board of Trustees; Dr. Iftekharuzzaman, Executive Director; Professor Dr. Sumaiya Khair, Advisor, Executive Management; and Mohammad Rafiqul Hassan, Director, Research and Policy, TIB were present.

According to the report, 55.2 per cent of the respondents of passport applicants (between September 2016 and May 2017) fell victim of irregularities, harassment and corruption while availing passport services in different levels and 35.3 per cent applicants were compelled to pay bribe. The survey found 76.2 per cent of the new passport applicants faced corruption and irregularities in securing police reports and 75.3 per cent of them had to pay bribe or money amounting Tk 797 on average. Analysis of types of harassment and corruption in the service show, 35.3 per cent had to pay bribe, 27 per cent experienced inordinate delay, 2.3 per cent faced negligence in duties, and 0.1 per cent faced deception. The average bribe mount transactions at passport offices through illegal means are estimated at Tk 2,221. Besides, 76.2 per cent of the applicants of new passports faced irregularities and corruption during police investigation, and 75.3 per cent of them had to pay bribe amounting Tk 797 on average.

The study also observed slight improvement in different levels of the service process compared to earlier findings of National Household Survey report 2015 where passport emerged as the top-most corrupt among 14 services sectors. The overall corruption has come down in passport offices. The study identified number of remedial

initiatives taken by the relevant offices introduced to reduce corruption, irregularity and public harassment which includes organizing public hearings to address clients complaints and improve service delivery, inclusion of five private banks for receiving passport fees online, observance of passport service delivery week to create awareness, introduction of client satisfaction register to record clients' complaints and satisfaction, installation of help desks for applicants etc.

**Good Governance
in Passport Services:**
Challenges and the Way Forward

- 55.2 percent of service recipients became victims of various irregularities and corruption.
- 76.2 percent people fell victim of bribery for going through police verification.
- A new passport applicant had to pay Taka 797 on average to bribe for police verification report.
- TIB recommends dropping police verification and documents attestation system.
- Eleven more recommendations to improve governance in passport service.

Despite slight improvement and decrease of corruption in the passport services, the study identified challenges and limitations in different levels of the process from collection of application to distribution of Passports. The study further identified a number of institutional limitations and challenges affecting the overall service delivery which includes workload and shortage of manpower, shortage of infrastructures and logistics supports, deficiency in monitoring offices, deficiency in skills and training of officials and employees, limitations in providing information on service and deficiency in enforcement of policies.

The study found that dominance of Dalals (middlemen) in Passport Offices and syndicate of Criminals further worsened the overall service delivery. The study observed significant dominance of Dalal in the Passport offices. According to the survey, 41.7 per cent applicants said they received services from dalals and 80 per cent of them took help from dalals. Of those who took such services, 61 percent did receive it in order to avoid hassles and harassment such as standing on long queue, and coming to the passport office more than once; 51.3 per cent took their services for lack of their knowledge on rules and regulation of passport; and 21.6 per cent could not submit the application forms without the mediation of the dalals.

The study revealed that the requirement of police investigation report for getting passport services particularly new passports has been one of the key means of making passport applicants victims of harassment and corruption. According to the survey, 76.2 per cent of the new passport applicants faced corruption and irregularities in securing police reports and 75.3 per cent of them had to pay bribe or money. On the other hand, there are complaints of harassment of the applicants by SB police in the name of preparing police reports.

Pointing to the study findings, Dr. Iftekharuzzaman said ``Although passport service saw some positive changes recently, the overall quality of the service could not yet reach the expected level. Syndicate of criminals is still active in the passport offices.” Besides, service recipients are being harassed in different levels of the service especially in the process of police verification and attestation of application. To simplify the process and save the applicants from the harassment, Dr. Zaman urged the government to drop the provisions of police verification and application attestation.

Mentioning syndicate of brokers at passport offices a barrier to access to smooth service for the people, Advocate Sultana Kamal said “the brokers couldn’t have operated inside the passport offices without the lenience of the in-house officials. Corruption in the passport offices will decrease if access of the brokers can be banned. Besides, the biggest reason behind the irregularities in the sector is different types of barrier to accessibility of general people to the service.”

To improve governance in the service, the twelve points recommendation of the study also includes, among others, increasing manpower in the department of immigration and passport, introducing mobile banking in deposit of application fee, ensuring adequate human resources, infrastructure and supply of logistics in offices, eradication of brokers activity, ensure smooth access to information, develop, upgrade and link ‘Bio-metric Data bank’, and ‘Criminal Database’ with Passport Offices and Immigration Check posts, increase in passport validity up to 10 years etc.

Call for active participation of Youth in establishing good governance and anti-corruption movement

To achieve sustainable development goals (SDGs), TIB urged the young generation to participate in called to ensure active participation of youth in the planning and implementation of good governance activities and anti-corruption movement. In a human chain organized at the Teacher-Student Centre of the university of Dhaka on 9 August 2017 marking International Youth Day 2017, TIB and its youth stakeholders further presented number of recommendations demanding achievement of SDGs through building a corruption-free and well-governed society.



In participation of TIB staff, members and members of YES groups, formed with students of different universities of Dhaka at the human chain, TIB Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman said, “achieving sustainable development goals is not possible without establishing good governance and suppressing corruption. Alongside considering all equal to laws, political will is a must to control corruption and this commitment should be implemented as there's no alternative to political will to control corruption.” He further said, the government earlier expressed its firm commitment to eradicate corruption by announcing its election manifesto, ratifying the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), and taking five-year plan and the National Integrity Strategy.

"The government and its high-ups must implement these pledges (not keeping those in papers only) in combating corruption and establishing governance," he also added.

During the human chain programme, TIB called upon youths to get them involved in anti-corruption movement and implementation of governance activities aiming to help achieve the SDGs.



During the human chain programme, TIB called upon youths to get them involved in anti-corruption movement and implementation of governance activities aiming to help achieve the SDGs. TIB also put forward seven recommendations including, among others, taking necessary steps to implement 'National Youth Policy 2017'; implementing significant activities to explore leadership qualities alongside creating demand of corruption prevention through adopting anti-corruption programmes for youth; ensure level playing field in the recruitment process of jobs in government and private sectors by keeping them corruption free so that the intelligent and capable can prevail etc.

To mark the International Youth Day (IYD) on 12 August, TIB has organized number of anti-corruption awareness raising programmes including human chains, rallies, seminars, anti-corruption cartoon shows and dramas at the national and 45 CCCs across the country with participation of Youth.

Significant governance deficit unearthed in BWDB climate projects: TIB stresses on effective accountability and citizen-led monitoring

A TIB study identified significant deficiencies such as 'unethical influence' in approval, illegal implementation of the projects by politically influential sub-contractors, absence of meaningful participation of stakeholders and lack of coordination among them in implementing climate projects by Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB). Besides, arbitrary selection of project areas, inadequate knowledge of officials concerned and indifferences of authorities in addressing the irregularities were contributing to the weak governance in the projects, the study revealed.

The study recommended establishing grievance redressal mechanism and independent citizen-led monitoring and evaluation, involving community in project implementation and ensuring proactive information disclosure of the projects for bringing transparency.

Climate Finance and Governance in Project Implementation:

The Case of Bangladesh Water Development Board

- ❑ **BWDB's six climate projects have significant deficits in transparency, accountability, integrity and participation**
- ❑ **TIB recommends for establishing grievance redress mechanism and independent citizen-led monitoring & evaluation**
- ❑ **Involve community in project implementation to create ownership of the project**
- ❑ **Promote transparency by proactively disclosing project information to community**

A study titled 'Climate Finance and Governance in Project Implementation: The Case of Bangladesh Water Development Board' by TIB examined six BWDB projects funded by Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund (BCCTF). The study found serious governance deficits in BWDB climate projects, which was unveiled through a Press Conference on 23 August, 2017 at TIB's Dhaka office. Aimed at exploring the governance challenges in BWDB projects funded by climate finance, the study analyzed the collected data on the basis of four indicators: transparency, accountability, integrity and participation during March 2015 to July 2017.

TIB's Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman, Adviser, Executive Management of TIB Professor Dr. Sumaiya Khair, Senior Programme Manager of the Climate Finance Governance (CFG) unit of TIB M Zakir Hossain Khan were present while Ghulam Mohiuddin, Programme Manager, the Climate Finance Governance, TIB presented the findings.

According to the study, the governance scenario in the selected six projects were found inadequate and insufficient, information was not disclosed upon demand and community approach shunned in favour of corruption. The study also found severe lack of accountability in the BWDB's working system. According to the report, climate projects drew less attention from the management because of low budget, coupled with irregularities by a nexus of the project stakeholders. Furthermore, it was also found that none of the projects were evaluated and audited by the Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED) and Comptroller and Auditor General's office. It was also found that no monitoring and evaluations were even conducted by the central monitoring and evaluation team of the water board and Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund (BCCTF). And no project monitoring was done by the inspection teams of water resources ministry or IMED of planning ministry.

The study also found an absence of any proactive system to settle complaints regarding project implementation. It further observed that although the e-tendering system is considered the best method in public procurement, its effectiveness in ensuring transparency and integrity is limited as the system only confined to tendering process; not in tender evaluation and the selection.

The report found that the BWDB undertook 141 projects with an allocation of Tk 11.30 billion, which was 40 per cent of the total Bangladesh Climate Change Trust (B CCT) fund during the period from fiscal year (FY) 2009-10 to July 2017. Around 92 per cent of the local people, surveyed in the study, did not know about the projects being implemented for them while the information board was not properly installed in most of the projects violating the rules, the study revealed.



TIB Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman said “Although some positive initiatives were seen in the implementation of climate projects by Water Development Board, irregularities, lack of good governance as well as integrity were found there in an overall assessment.” Although there is a legal binding for information openness, the rules were violated and the projects were not implemented for ensuring quality, he added. He further said the absence of meaningful participation of stakeholders in curbing irregularities and corruption made the overall governance system weak. Dr Zaman urged the Water Resources Ministry and the BWDB to accept TIB’s recommendations positively, and take steps to initiate necessary reforms.

The 14-point recommendations included, among others, specific instructions about the contents of information to be incorporated in existing law/policies, provisions for establishing grievance redress mechanism and independent third party monitoring and evaluation should be included in the existing legal framework. It also recommended involving community people in project implementation and need to capacitate local people for raising voices, sharing all relevant information (project proposal, monitoring reports, evaluation reports, audit report, tender, project design, implementation area, budget etc.) through the websites, need to assess climate vulnerabilities properly including activation of ethics committee.

Youth pledges to act against corruption on International Youth Day



In the spirit of patriotism, youth pledged to build a well-governed and accountable Bangladesh with no compromise with corruption and irregularities. They also vowed to participate actively in building corruption-free society in an effort to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in workshop titled ‘Youth in Corruption prevention, good governance and sustainable development’ organized by TIB on 10 August 2017 at its Head office. 67 youth members of 14 YES groups formed under TIB’s inspiration with young students from different education institutions in Dhaka participated at the workshop.

The workshop kicked off with the inaugural speech of Professor Dr. Sumaiya Khair, Advisor- Executive Management, TIB in the morning. Dr. S. M. Rezwan-ul-Alam, Director, Outreach and Communication, TIB discussed on SDG 16 related to governance.

Mr. Sazid Iqbal, Founder, CHANGE and awarded by the Queen of Britain for contributing to environment protection; Ifreet Zahan Kunjo, Chairperson, HelpAid Foundation; and Mr. Sohag Howlader, student of Dhaka Medical College participated at the inspirational speech and open discussion part of the workshop. The participants later joined in team work on four issues- corruption, bribery, accountable and transparent institution and right to information.



Later in the evening, Dr. Iftekharuzzaman handed away certificates to participants. He said “there is strong prospect for the youth society to play significant role in achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) alongside other stakeholders. I hope, the youth will come forward to achieve especially the SDG 16”. He further urged policy-makers and decision makers to ensure active participation of youth in the planning and implementation part of governance activities and anti-corruption movement to achieve SDGs.

Head Teachers and SMC Presidents Together to Improve the Quality of Primary Education

Head Teachers and School Management Committee (SMC) Presidents of 21 Government Primary Schools under Munsiganj Sadar Upazila Cosba Cluster put forward a number of recommendations to improve transparency,

accountability and quality of education both at the local and central level. The recommendations were presented in a program titled 'Measures to be taken at the local level to improve transparency and accountability in primary education sector' organized by Committee of Concerned Citizens (CCC), Munshiganj with cordial support from Sadar Upazila Education Office of Munshiganj on 28 August 2017.

In the meeting the participants figured out some to be implemented at local and national levels which ensuring classrooms and teachers for pre-primary taking initiatives to make SMC more functional, of political influence-free SMC, recruitment of required teachers against sanctioned post within a very short time, the use of mobile phone during class time by the improvement of infrastructure of school, recruitment of employees at schools, taking extra care while evaluating sheet, seek opinion of respective Education Officer and Nirbahi Officer while selecting the place of WASH Block, organizing SMC meeting at regular basis and ensuring participation of women in the meeting etc.



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The discussants told the meeting that despite having 100% school enrolment and success rate of students, qualitative improvement is not up to the expected level. They urged the teachers, SMC members and other concerned to join hands together for the qualitative improvement of education. The discussants also praised the initiatives taken by CCC-TIB for the improvement of primary education. They recommended CCC to continue such activities. Karun Kishore Chakrabarty, Programme Manager-CE of TIB shared CCC-TIB's expectation towards school and educational authority in this regard. In the meeting it was decided that the issues raised will be put forward for advocacy with authority. In response to the request of CCC, most of the schools agreed to amplify the good practices at their schools to improve the quality of education.

Vice-President of CCC Tanvir Hasan moderated the meeting while Additional Deputy Commissioner (General Education and ICT) was present as chief guest and Sadar Upazila Nirbahi Officer Ms. Suraiya Jaman, District Primary Education Officer Panchanan Bala and Upazila Education Officer Ms. Taslima Begum were present as Special Guest. Among others District and Upazila level Assistant Education Officer, journalists of different media and CCC, YE members attended the meeting.

Ensuring transparency and accountability is important to design a project and its implementation in order to face risk of climate change

CCC, Chakaria organized a sharing meeting titled 'The Roles of Union Disaster Management Committee to face the risk of Climate Change' with the participation of Union Disaster Management Committee members on 28 August 2017 at CCC Office. CCC, President A. K. M. Shahabuddin presided over the meeting where representatives of 14 Union Parishads of Chakaria were present.

In the meeting the discussants pointed out that besides receiving foreign grants capacity should be achieved to face the risks of climate change. Combined effort and opinion of victim of climate change, people's representatives and civil society are needed in project designing and implementation process.



The discussants criticized that it is very pitiable that some projects approved in comparatively less vulnerable areas after political consideration. They demanded priority of most vulnerable areas while implementing any projects, opinion of victim of climate change, public representatives and civil society and to ensure transparency and accountability in all sorts of financing. Among others Union Parishad (UP) members, Secretaries of UP and CCC members spoke in the meeting.

Sharing meeting with Hospital authority: Initiative to Ensure Quality Health Services to People



With a view to improve the quality of health services a sharing meeting with the authority of Jessore 250 Bedded General Hospital was held on 16 August 2017 organized by CCC, Jessore. Superintendent of the hospital Dr. A K M Kamrul Islam Benu presided over the meeting while President of CCC, Jessore M. R. Khairul Umam was the moderator. Convener of CCC's Health Committee Md. Abu Saleh Tota shared on the activities implemented by CCC and the present situation of the hospital in the meeting.

In welcome speech Dr. AKM Kamrul Islam praised YES members' activities. He requested CCC to implement YES activities at least once in a week in the hospital. He assured to take disciplinary action immediately if anyone gives information with evidences against any wrong doing of doctors who are alleged to be providing visiting cards to patients for visiting his/her private practice chamber. He also pointed out the issues of the influence of broker, shortage of medical instruments and medicines in the hospital etc. Senior Consultant Dr. Abdur Rahim stated that if we could increase awareness through micking and distribution of information sheet, the influence of broker will be reduced gradually.

Some problems were raised in the meeting which included non-availability of medicines required by the patients according to prescription, overcrowding of patients and their relatives, lack of use of ID Cards by most of the employees, lack of facilities of ultrasonography etc. In the meeting recommendations also embraced the issues of taking initiatives for reducing the influence of broker, ensuring the availability of prescribed medicines, taking awareness raising initiatives to reduce the overcrowding of the relatives of patients at the hospital, ensuring that all employees must get and use their ID Cards, increasing the facilities of ultrasonography, to write clearly the room number in the tickets for outdoor patients etc.

CCC President requested for creating free flow of information regarding hospital services and improvement of gender friendly services. The hospital authority pledged to work for each other to solve the problems. In the meeting the civil society of Jessore were requested to come forward to solve the problems of the hospital services. Among others Ex-President of CCC Professor Dr. Md. Mustafizur Rahman, Vice-President Sukumar Das, CCC Members Advocate Masuma Begum, Dr. Md. Abdur Rahim, Dr. ABM Saiful Alam, Ward Master Obaidul Islam spoke at the meeting.

Zero tolerance against corruption: ACC Commissioner says in Chittagong

Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Commissioner Dr. Nasir Uddin Ahmed advised all government offices to take measures against the complaints raised in the public hearing while addressing as chief guest in a public hearing program held at Anowara Upazila of Chittagong. On 23 August 2017 CCC, Chittagong Metropolitan in cooperation with Anowara Upazila Administration jointly organized the program.

Earlier of the public hearing, an anti-corruption rally visited the main roads of the city and a human chain was also organized. ACC Commissioner said the rally and human chain were organized in order to create mass awareness against corruption. He urged all to join hands in this anti-corruption social movement.



Upazila Social Services Office, Upazila Project Implementation Office, Directorate of Drug Control and Water Development Board took part.

In the public hearing representatives of different offices of Anowara Upazila –Upazila Land Office, Upazila Sub-Registrar Office, Upazila Health Complex, Upazila Palli Bidyut Samity, Upazila Accounts Office, Upazila Cooperative Office, Upazila Secondary Education Office, Upazila Primary Education Office,

In the main session the service recipients raised 26 questions and their concerns regarding services of government institutions. A total of 9 questions were raised on land issue in the program. Major complaints raised by the victims included fake registration of land, demand extra money for mutation by Upazila land office; illegal demand of money by electricity officials, additional electricity bill, delay to connect electricity line etc. The concerned official of different offices addressed the questions and queries raised by the citizens and assured to take necessary action to solve the issues immediately.

A discussion meeting was held after public hearing presided over by Upazila Nirbahi Officer Gautom Baroi while Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Jillur Rahman, Chittagong Divisional Director of ACC Md. Abu Sayed, Anowara Upazila Chairman Md. Tawhidul Haque Chowdhury, President of CCC, Chittagong Metropolitan

Advocate Akhtar Kabir Chowdhury and Deputy Director of ACC Sayed Ahmed spoke as special guests in the meeting. Among others members of DUPROK, representatives of ACC Head Office, Divisional Office, Upazila Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Chairman & Members of different Union Parishad and different government officials attended the meeting.

In the discussion meeting, ACC Commissioner stated that zero tolerance will be applicable for all corrupt people whatever the positions they hold. We all are here to warn them, he added. ACC Commissioner advised to assigned Designation Officer in all government offices. DC of Chittagong gave instruction to Upazila Nirbahi Officers for providing protection to the people who raised complaints. He also advised to the concerned for organizing Public Hearing in every month.

A sharing meeting on Public Hearing was held on 24 August 2017 organized by CCC, Chittagong Metropolitan and ACC where ACC Commissioner was present as Chief Guest. In the meeting ACC Commissioner placed 15 recommendations in order to ensure corruption and harassment free government services.

IER-YES showcases quality education on wall-magazine

Education empowers people and quality education is the foundation to improving people's lives and sustainable development. To reach the goal of helping students of the Institute of Education & Research (IER) of University of Dhaka achieve a clear understanding about SDG Goal-4, YES Group-IER prepared a wall magazine titled 'Education in Sustainable Development: Progress and Reality' on 24 August 2017.



YES members posted their articles on different aspects of education including the barriers of ensuring quality education for all.

Anti-corruption awareness campaign at Dhaka Anirban School

Dhaka YES Friends group organized an anti-corruption oath taking, cartoon exhibition and art competition event at Dhaka Anirban School, Mohammadpur on 3 August 2017 to aware children about corruption from an early age. The day-long anti-corruption campaign was inaugurated by Vice-principal of the school. Followed by taking oath against corruption, the students participated in an art competition dividing into two groups- 'Group A (Grade KG-IV)' and 'Group B (Grade V-VIII)'. Theme for 'Group A' was 'Clean Dhaka' and 'Group B' was 'Natural Calamity'.

Prizes were given to three winners from each group. Meanwhile, students ardently enjoyed the daylong campaign and vowed to be vigilant against corruption.



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