
TIB signs MoU with Information Commission for effective implementation of RTI Act 2009

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) and Information Commission will work jointly to increase people's awareness and boost stakeholders' capacity to ensure effective implementation of the Right to Information (RTI) Act 2009. The two organizations signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on 11 October 2017 at Information Commission office at Agargaon in Dhaka, under which they will extend mutual supports in several fields including youth engagement programmes for promotion of the effective use of the RTI Act, media communication and campaign through mass media, capacity building training of information officers and celebration of the International Right to Know Day.



According to the MoU, TIB and Information Commission will jointly organize capacity building training programmes for the designated officers of both the public and private institutions on maintaining proper methods of collection and preservation of information. The two organizations will also organize trainings for the students of different educational institutions who will promote peoples' capacity to filing application for information according to RTI Act 2009. Besides, TIB and Information Commission will organize RTI related essay and debate competitions through engaging Rover Scouts, Girls Guide, National Cadet Corps, Youth Engagement and Support (YES) Groups of TIB and other youth platforms of different organizations under the MoU. RTI related animation videos and news/advertisement/programmes will be broadcast in national media and community radios.

Besides, the two organizations will jointly celebrate the International Right to Know (RTK) Day nationally through awareness rally, seminar, discussion and information fair. Information Commission will also organize rally, discussion and information fair at local level in cooperation with the TIB's 45 Committees of Concerned Citizens (CCCs) across the country.

The effectiveness of the MoU will expire on 30th of September, 2019 which can be extended on the basis of the two organizations' consent.

After signing the MoU, Chief Information Commissioner Prof. Dr. Golam Rahman said, "It is possible to consolidate



democracy and good governance through lessening the magnitude of corruption and empowering people by applying RTI Act. We hope, our partnership with TIB will help ensure the peoples' right to information through the effective implementation of the Right to Information Act 2009."

Executive Director of TIB Dr. Iftekharuzzaman said, "Coming towards the culture of openness from the culture of confidentiality is a must to prevent corruption and establish good governance. This is an important step for TIB to have the scope of institutional cooperation and partnership with

Information Commission." The effective implementation of the RTI Act 2009 is TIB's one of the most prioritized work, he added. Dr. Zaman thanked the chief information commissioner for signing the MoU with TIB. Some officials of Information Commission and TIB were present at the signing ceremony among others.

TIB condemns UN failure to act upon an expert report that could prevent massacre of Rohingyas: Demands accountability for failing to practice what they preach

TIB strongly condemned the UN failure to take into cognizance and act upon a report of an independent expert it commissioned before the military crackdown in Myanmar's Rakhain state. TIB expressed the condemnation in a press statement released on October 8, 2017.

In the statement, TIB expressed deep disappointment that the UN not only suppressed the report it received in May 2017 but also ignored the prediction of the report that security forces were going to be "heavy-handed and indiscriminate" in dealing with the Rohingyas, which came true in August-September. TIB termed it an unacceptable offense that the global body deliberately shelved the recommendation to be coherent and undertake serious contingency plan against the impending violation of human rights.

Executive director of TIB, Dr. Iftekharuzzaman said, "we call upon the UN to explain this inaction, particularly the inability of UN to practice what it preaches. No one, not least the UN, can be above accountability. The report must be disclosed for public information and those responsible for the failure to act in a manner that could have prevented the worst possible form of preplanned and massive violation of human rights must be brought to justice".

Dr Zaman further said that the UN should now have the courage to explain the reasons behind suppressing such a hugely important report and deliberately missing the opportunity to prevent what UN itself later described a "textbook

case of ethnic cleansing" and human rights organizations called crime against humanity or at least gross violation of fundamental human rights of over half a million people.

TIB voices concern over WB's loan offer to Bangladesh to deal with challenges of Rohingya refugees

TIB voiced concern over the World Bank's loan offer to Bangladesh to deal with the challenges emerged after Rohingya refugees took shelter in Bangladesh amid persecution in the Rakhine State of Myanmar. In a statement on October 26, 2017, TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman said it has been learnt from newspaper reports that the World Bank is trying to provide loan assistance, instead of grant, to Bangladesh for addressing different needs of Rohingya refugees, which is unethical, unacceptable and a matter of concern as well.

Dr. Zaman said taking advantage of the human catastrophe, the World Bank's such initiative to increase loan burden on Bangladesh in the name of assistance is nothing but the expansion of its interest business. He said if the global bank has good intention to help Bangladesh deal with Rohingya crisis, it must refrain from increasing loan burden on Bangladesh. Rather, the World Bank should utilize its position as a donor agency to mount pressure on Myanmar to repatriate their displaced people within the shortest possible time.

Dr. Iftekharuzzaman also called upon the government to strengthen diplomatic efforts to get interest-free financial assistance from international agencies, including the World Bank, to address the necessities of Rohingya refugees.

TIB expresses concern over stance against poll candidates' affidavits

TIB expressed grave concern over a certain political party's opinion of cancellation of a regulation that makes submission of candidates' affidavits ahead of elections mandatory by law. In a press statement on October 13, 2017 TIB urged the political parties to reconsider its current stance on candidates' affidavits, alerting such a stance goes against transparency and accountability of the entire election process.

In the statement, Dr Iftekharuzzaman, Executive Director of TIB said, the provision was included in the Representation of the People Order (Amendment) Act, 2009, as a means for the public representatives to show transparency and accountability, which became a crucial symbol of democracy in Bangladesh. It is disappointing that a certain political party, in a discussion held with the Election Commission on October 8, voiced support for cancellation of the provision. He added that when the candidates submit their information to the Election Commission under oath, they and their party gain more acceptability, which in turn empowers the people. However, when a candidate refuses to submit any information, it generates suspicion and distrust among the people.

Dr. Zaman urged the Election Commission not to consider the proposal, and recommended cancellation of candidature of those who do not provide accurate information. He also urged in favor of releasing the candidates' information submitted through the affidavits before the public through the Election Commission website after scrutinizing the information.

Local Journalists pledge to work together against corruption at Chakaria

CCC, Chakaria organized a meeting with local journalists at Chakaria titled 'Role of local Journalists in the Social Movement Against Corruption' on 19 October 2017 at CCC Office. CCC President A K M Shahabuddin presided over the meeting while Assistant Manager of TIB Md. Abdul Gaffar gave a presentation on activities of CCC-TIB.

In the discussion, the journalists termed corruption as the main constraint of development in our country. They stated that to resist corruption, it has become necessary to make TIB's social movement against corruption effective and successful. Supports of all walks of people are with this movement. No impediment can stop this ongoing social movement. The journalists pointed out that there are a number of success cases in many institutions where CCC-TIB is working. They also suggested that CCC-TIB could amplify this in other institutions. The journalist emphasized on working comprehensively on land and health issues. They pledged to work together with CCC in order to strengthen the social movement against corruption.



Correspondents who spoke in the meeting were: M. R. Mahmud of Daily Samakal, Mohammad Zahed of Bangladesh Betar, Manir Ahmed of Daily Khabarpatra and Cox'sbazar Bani, M. Mansur Alam of Daily Sangbad and Sanghu, Omar Ali of Daily Dinkal and Rupali Saikat, Abul Hossain of Daily Apankantha and B. M. Habib Ullah of Daily Alokito Bangladesh. Besides Vice-President of CCC, Chakaria Hure Jannat Mili, CCC Member Mohabbat Chowdhury and Area Manager of TIB A G M Jahangir Alam also spoke.

The correspondent of Daily Ajanta, Bangladesh Protidin, Daily Sangram, Daily Doinondin, Daily Desher Katha, Daily Noya Diganta, Daily Kalbela, Daily Desh Bidesh, Daily Inqilab, Somoyer Sangbad and Daily Amader Orthoniti also attended the meeting.

Workshop on Integrity Management Toolbox

Education Authority promised to work for Improvement of Integrity in Primary Education

'It is important to address the existing problem first in order to achieve improvement of integrity management,' stated Panchanan Bala, District Primary Education Officer of Munshiganj while addressing as Chief Guest in a workshop jointly organized by Munshiganj Upazila Education Office and CCC, Munshiganj titled Integrity Management with the slogan 'Sustainable Development-Need Transparency, Accountability and successful implementation of Integrity' on 18 October 2017 at Muktiyoddha Complex. He also promised to work jointly with CCC-TIB for the improvement of integrity management in primary education sector.



Sadar Upazila Education Officer Taslima Begum, Assistant Upazilla Education Officer Md. Abdul Matin, Md. Asaduzzaman, Sanjida Aktar, Shirin Aktar, CCC President Advocate Md. Humayun Kabir Shahin and Convener of CCC's Education Sub-Committee Md. Fazlur Rahman also among others attended the workshop.

A presentation titled 'Our responsibilities for the improvement of integrity management in education sector in light of national integrity strategy' was presented in the workshop. Senior Program Manager of TIB Fojila Khanom, Md. Hasan Ali, Kazi Shafiqur Rahman, Manager-Training Nadira Parvin, Programme Manager-Civic Engagement of Comilla Cluster Karuna Kishore Chakrabarty facilitated different sessions in the workshop.

In the workshop, Ms. Taslima Begum emphasized the need of coordinated efforts for achieving any success. She recognized that two schools where CCC, Munshiganj is working have significant success. She promised to work more efficiently for the improvement of Integrity Management in primary education.

In the workshop the participants pointed out few challenges and limitations in education management at local levels. They also requested TIB for national advocacy to address these issues. The participants also planned few specific activities to overcome the risks in implementing the integrity management in primary education sector. They also decided to assess the progress after a certain period and take necessary measures following their assessment findings.

In addition, Integrity Management Toolbox workshops were also held with three different institutions i.e. Ujangram Union Parishad, Sadar, Kushtia on 14 October 2018, Bangladesh Water Development Board, Dinajpur on 25 October 2017 and General Hospital, Chittagong on 30 October 2017.

Meeting with Union Parishad Authority: Assurance to increase exercise of Transparency and Accountability

With an aim to strengthen governance at Union Parishad (UP) through establishing transparency, accountability and



people's participation, a sharing meeting with 9 No. Ranagacha Union Parishad of Jamalpur Sadar was held on 25 October 2017 at UP Office. The meeting was jointly organized by Ranagacha Union Parishad and CCC, Jamalpur. UP Chairman Alhaj Md. Abdul Jalil presided over the meeting where CCC Vice-President Shamima Khan, UP Member Alhazz Abdus Salam, Most. Shamsunnahar Ruma, UP Secretary Md. Fajlul Karim also spoke at the event.

In the meeting, the discussants vowed to establish the practice of good governance in Ranagacha Union Parishad of Jamalpur district through establishing transparency and accountability. It was shared in the meeting that CCC, Jamalpur is undertaking different activities for the improvement of local government services i.e. meeting with UP Authority, Ward Shova, Open Budget, Face the Public, Publication of Information Sheet, Updating of Information Board etc.

In the meeting, Alhazz Md. Abdul Jalil said, Ranagacha Union Parishad has undertaken various activities in cooperation with CCC-TIB through which people of UP are getting the opportunity to learn about UP services through Open Budget programs and Ward Shavas. Opinion of mass people placed in the Ward Shova are being taken into consideration prior to planning any development project which are being included in the UP budget. Besides, these opportunities have been allowing people to make the UP authority accountable through Face the Public program

which creates free flow of information. The Chairman promised to build Ranagacha Union Parishad as an ideal one. He also thanked TIB for supporting the development plan of UP.

CCCs initiatives ahead of COP-23

Calls for ensuring equality, integrity, transparency, accountability and mass participation in climate change grant fund, accessibility, disbursement and supervision



Ahead of COP 23, the Committees of Concerned Citizens (CCCs) across the country organized series of advocacy activities involving grassroots people who are affected by climate change. The activities included human chain, rally, boat chain, discussion meeting, signature campaign, youth gathering and press conference etc. Thousands of participants collectively raised voice demanding the guarantee of equality, integrity, transparency, accountability and mass participation in climate change grant fund, its accessibility, use and supervision.

CCCs disseminated messages through leaflets, placards, banners which helped creating awareness among mass people about Climate Finance Governance (CFG) issues including climate change, its causes & effects. Participants also received messages about upcoming COP-23 Bonn Summit and Climate Finance issues. In these events, CCCs raised a number of demands for climate justice which included ensuring transparency, accountability and participation in climate finance management especially in disbursement and use of climate funds, ensuring a legally binding status to the Paris Agreement, faster and transparent delivery of grants as pledged, rather than loan in compensation for adverse effects of climate change upon the people of Bangladesh.



Members of CCC, Swajan, YES, YES Friends groups, students, journalists and representatives of civil society, NGOs and local peoples were also present in these events.

UU-YES organized seminar on Cybercrime and Social Media

YES Group-Uttara University organized a seminar titled 'Secure User in Virtual World' on 9 October at their university. Mr. Tamzid Rahman Leo, Cyber Security Specialist of eGeneration Ltd. facilitated the seminar. He focused on different kinds of cybercrimes and how to be safe in using social media.



Mr. Masum Billah, Deputy Programme Manager, TIB also facilitated a session on the scope of citizen journalism in anti-corruption social movement. He was, indeed, requested to offer the session in the seminar by Uttara University Authority as Mr. Billah facilitated the same session earlier at Uttara University. Besides, an interview session was also held to recruit new members/friends in the group in the same day.

Youth Debaters stressed to ensure good governance for sustainable development



Youth debaters vowed to prevent corruption and urged to ensure good governance for sustainable development. Youth debaters gathered in the "Intra Hall Parliamentary and Inter Club Public Speaking Competition 2017" jointly organized by YES Group - Ruqayyah Hall and Ruqayyah Bitarka Angan on 16th October 2017 at their hall lounge.

Topic of the Parliamentary style debate was “Right to Information, power of information, tools of good governance, Freedom from corruption”. Mr. Rabiul Islam Rob, Ex-Convener, Dhaka University Debating Society (DUDS), facilitated the final debate as the Speaker of the Parliament. A total of 30 debaters from Ruqayyah Hall competed in the parliamentary-styled debate and 60 debaters from various debate clubs of the capital participated in the Public Speaking Competition. Dr. Nazma Shaheen, Provost of Ruqayyah hall attended the Public Speaking Competition and handed away the prizes to the debate winners. Professor Dr. Mahbuba Nasrin, Moderator of DUDS; Mahamud Abdullah Bin Munshi, Secretary of DUDS; and Noman Sumon, General Secretary of DUDS presented the program as Special Guest. YES, Advisor & Moderator of Ruqayyah Bitarka Angan Dr. Rumana Islam, and Dr. S M Rezwan-Ul-Alam, Director, Outreach and Communications division of TIB were also present at the event.

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