

Anti-corruption Youth Camp 2018 Transparency and accountability towards achieving sustainable development goals

To streamline the roles of youth with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and synchronize the new knowledge in the fight against corruption, TIB organized two two-day long anti-corruption Youth Camps in July 2018. Highlighting the theme 'Transparency and accountability towards achieving Sustainable development goals: Invincible Youth will resist corruption', More than 400 youths from TIB inspired anti-corruption Youth Engagement and support (YES) members and YES friends of 21 CCCs along with students from different educational institutions participated in the camps. The two camps were held at Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development – BARD, Cumilla on 10-11 July and at BRAC Learning Centre in Rangpur on 23-24 July 2018.



Diversified set of programmes and sessions were designed to educate the young force and facilitate space for group-based engagement in designing new action plans following four broad thematic areas 1. learning and sharing experiences 2. Motivational speeches 3. Skill development and developing action plan and 4. Games and entertainment.



Dr. Iftekharuzzaman, Executive Director of TIB, discussed the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and its relevancy with anti-corruption social movement in each camp which was the guiding discussion throughout the camp. In addition, number of inspirational talks on ethics education, human rights, UPR, women rights, uses of Information and Communication Technologies in resisting corruption by prominent personalities, human rights

activists and young entrepreneurs'. At the same time, youths got opportunity to contribute and share ideas, observation in regards to resist corruption.

Besides, different games and competitions (Quiz, Extempore Speech and Open book exam) were organized to strengthen issue based knowledge. Following the 70th anniversary of Universal Declaration on Human Rights, a Swiss movie *Sonita* was screened at one of the sessions in the camp jointly supported by Embassy of Switzerland in Bangladesh and United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.



Reflections by the participants

Iqbal Sani, a student of University of Chittagong and a participant at Cumilla camp said, 'I feel very lucky to participate here. This opportunity allowed me to get introduced to many other young mates who have been fighting actively against corruption. In the camp, we learnt a lot of new things and also applied the gathered knowledge to develop new action plans using new techniques and tools considering SDGs.'



Sompa Rani Dev, YES member of CCC, Gaibandha and participant at Rangpur Youth Camp expressed wishes to get opportunity next time also. She said 'this type of camp is very effective one to strengthen and mobilize youth. It built up a good relationship with youth of different regions of the country'. She thanked TIB and hoped that experience gathered in this camp would contribute a lot to her personal as well as civic life and would strengthen her fighting against corruption.

TIB provides investigative journalism training to the journalists of Gazipur

In the continuing effort to capacitate journalists with updated skills of investigative journalism, TIB hosted a daylong training for the journalists of both print and electronic media of Gazipur on July 24, 2018 at the Gazipur Club Limited in Gazipur. A total of 29 journalists participated in the training which was organized with the full support of the Committee of Concerned Citizens (CCC)- Gazipur.



Professor Md. Shahid Ullah, President of TIB-inspired Committee of Concerned Citizens (CCC)-Gazipur welcomed all the participants along with the esteemed trainers – experts in the field and thanked TIB for arranging the training for the journalists of Gazipur. He hoped that the training would certainly enhance the capacity of the journalists to produce more effective and important investigative reports that would help uncover the incidents of corruption and irregularities in the government service providing institutions in Gazipur. Mentioning that mass media and journalists have been playing an important role in curbing corruption in the country applying investigative journalism techniques and called on the journalists of Gazipur to be more active to play their role in establishing good governance, transparency and integrity especially in the service providing institutions.



Dhaka University Professor Robaet Ferdous discussed on 'general news versus investigative news' in his first session. He discussed the definition, characteristics and categories of both general news and investigative news. He projected investigative journalism from both practical and theoretical perspectives. In the second session titled 'the layers and strategies of investigative journalism' Mr. Ferdous provided a clear idea to the participants about planning or designing of an investigative report. The area of the selected report, feasibility test, impartiality,

investigation method, deadline, sources of information, information collection method, analysis, cross check, objectivity, ethics of journalism etc were discussed in the session. Professor Ferdous discussed some probable scopes of investigative journalism.

Mr. Julfikar Ali Manik facilitated a session titled 'Fields of investigative journalism and risks' in which he identified the probable sectors and institutions in Gazipur on which investigative reports might be produced. He highlighted the legal and other risks from different quarters for a journalist in case of conducting investigation for gathering information for a report. Mr. Manik also shared some of his professional experiences relating to investigative journalism with the trainees. At the end, Professor Md. Shahid Ullah handed away certificates among all the participants after his closing speech.

TIB slams illegal attacks on quota reform movement students and inactivity of law-enforcers

Expressing deep concern over the recent attacks on the participating students of quota reform movement, TIB vehemently condemned the inactivity of the law-enforcing agencies in this regard. TIB also demanded exemplary punishment of the attackers following proper legal procedure.

In a press statement released on July 2, 2018, TIB also urged for ensuring a stable academic atmosphere in the educational institutions by eliminating the anxiety of jobseekers and general students by reforming the quota system as per Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's declaration.

Executive Director of TIB Dr. Iftekharuzzaman said, "The assaults on general students of different educational institutions are inhumane, condemnable, illegal and subversive to basic human rights. The law-enforcing agencies' passive role during the assaults on the quota reform activists is adding fuel to the vicious move to repress a democratic and non-violent movement. Such inertia of the law-enforcing agencies is disgraceful and unconstitutional. The law-enforcing personnel should act promptly to restore people's faith on them by providing security to the activists."



Dr. Zaman underscored the need for ensuring exemplary punishment of the people involved in the attacks. The Prime Minister also legitimised the movement by assuring the reform activists of cancelling the quota system through her declaration, he noted. Following her declaration, even the student wing of the ruling party, vice

chancellors of different universities, and various teachers' platforms also supported the reform movement by publishing media statements.

“Since no visible progress has been made after several months of the PM's announcement, it is usual for the activists to become suspicious about the cordiality of a part of the government. The students and jobseekers would not have to go for further movement, had the government taken necessary steps within a considerable period following the PM's announcement”, Dr. Zaman added. TIB, in the statement, also requested all stakeholders to remain respectful to democratic values and behaviour.

The UN itself questioned its role on Rohingya issue by signing secret MoU with Myanmar: TIB demands transparency of the UN

TIB demanded to ensure transparency in all the issues related to Rohingya repatriation by institutionally disclosing full information of the secret memorandum of understanding (MoU) on Rohingya repatriation signed between Myanmar government and UNDP and UNHCR without delay.

In a press statement released on July 9, 2018, Executive Director of TIB Dr. Iftekharuzzaman said, “According to the news published in the international media, the MoU fully goes against the longstanding rational demand of the Rohingyas to have all the rights as independent citizens of Myanmar including their right of free movement in their own country, which are also the prerequisites to creating congenial environment for Rohingya repatriation. The MoU, really, is nothing but a part of the conspiracy to crush the possibility of Rohingya repatriation to put the displaced Rohingyas as a burden on Bangladesh forever. As full information of the secret MoU is not made public, the role of the UN over Rohingya repatriation and persecutions committed by the Myanmar authority, especially by the Myanmar army on the Rohingyas has been questioned, which has also been exposed through the recent speech of UN Special Rapporteur on human Rights in Myanmar Yanghee Lee.”



Dr. Zaman added, “The secret MoU and the UN’s dillydallying to disclose the MoU is conflicting and self-contradictory to the speech of the UN Secretary General in his recent visit to Bangladesh in which referring the Rohingyas as ‘aboriginal of Myanmar’ he demanded creation of right atmosphere for the dignified return of the Rohingyas and trial of the crimes carried out against

the Rohingyas. This self-contradictory, unethical and secret MoU exposes the UN’s failure in Rohingya repatriation and raises questions about the sincerity of the UN to protect human rights.”

Referring to the UN Myanmar Mission's deliberately hiding an expert report on a probable oppression and ethnic cleansing against the Rohingyas much earlier the recent Rohingya influx Dr. Zaman said, "When the UN plays the role of a silent audience instead of utilizing adequate scopes to prevent the incidents of human rights violation including ethnic cleansing like the Rohingya crisis it is very normal to raise questions as to whether the objective of the UN is to raise funds in the name of humanitarian assistance for the persecuted people. The UN should disclose full information of its MoU with Myanmar and the expert report with answers to all of the above questions without delay."

Torture against female domestic helps in ME is a cruel example of lack of governance: Call for government action

TIB expressed deep concern over the incident of recent return of scores of Bangladeshi female domestic helps from the Middle East (ME) countries in the face of torture. Torture against Bangladeshi female domestic helps in the ME countries is the outcome of the lack of governance in the overseas migration sector, observed TIB in a press statement released on July 1, 2018.

Mentioning that a total of 380 Bangladeshi women returned home from the ME countries in the face of repression by their employers during May and June, TIB expressed grave concern over the situation, and blamed the inaction of the authorities concerned for it. It also called for ensuring accountability of the recruiting agencies that are engaged in the migration process. Executive Director of TIB Dr. Iftekharuzzaman said, "The inaction of the concerned authorities is frustrating. It was expected that the government would take measures to ensure proper safety of the hundreds of Bangladeshi women, who went to work as domestic helps in the ME countries. But unfortunately the reality does not show reflection of any such measure."

Dr. Zaman further said, "Torture against female workers in the ME countries is a well-known phenomenon, and so, many countries have stopped sending their workers there. In this context, our government should take tough measures to protect the right of Bangladeshi women. These measures may include temporary suspension on sending Bangladeshi women to the ME countries unless proper safety for them is guaranteed."

In the statement, TIB also demanded proper compensation for all the women, who returned home in the face of repression in their workplaces in the ME. TIB urged the government to ensure safety of the female workers through signing bilateral agreements with the countries concerned. There should be provision in the agreements for bringing the perpetrators to the book as well as for ensuring the rights of the workers, TIB opined.

Call for immediate appointment of CAG

TIB demanded that the government immediately appoint new comptroller and auditor general (CAG) of the country as the absence of CAG has been hampering audit activities. TIB also expressed deep concern that the government has not yet appointed new CAG after the post fell vacant on April 27 this year.

In a press statement released on July 11, 2018, TIB also sought intervention of the president for an immediate appointment of a highly qualified and acceptable person as CAG to pave the way for establishing transparency, accountability and good governance. Executive Director of TIB Dr. Iftekharuzzaman said, “CAG is a constitutional post. Remaining the post vacant for so long is not consistent with the government’s commitment at local and international levels to strengthen institutional framework to establish good governance and contain corruption.”

Dr. Zaman hoped that the government would become more active to make the CAG office effective. The office of CAG cannot finalise audit reports in absence of the head of the constitutional body, which also creates stagnation in the decision-making process, TIB said.

TIB also demanded formulation of a time-bound plan and its implementation to avoid such situation in future. TIB said, absence of the CAG also creates a negative impact in international cooperation in this field as the CAG, as an institution, is involved with various working groups of the Asian Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions and International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions.

Call for implementation of national integrity strategy and clarity in LR fund

TIB called upon the government to take realistic measures on handling Locally Raised (LR) fund under the supervision of district administrations after reviewing the issue at the DC conference.

TIB in a statement released on July 23, 2018 also urged the government to take similar measures to ensure effective implementation of the National Integrity Strategy 2012 at local level as per the government’s promise and policy priority. Earlier, it sent a letter to the cabinet secretary on July 22 requesting him to include the above issues in the agenda of the three-day DC conference.

Executive Director of TIB Dr. Iftekharuzzaman said, “Shedding light and exchanging views on the progress, possibility and challenge to implement the Shonar Bangla Gorar Prottoy: Jatiya Shuddhachar Koushol 2012 during the DC conference and taking the next course of action based on this will play a vital role to ensure good governance.”

He also termed a Cabinet Division circular, issued on August 10, 2016, on collecting, managing and using LR fund under the supervision of the district administration a positive step.

TIB calls for strict enforcement of laws to curb lawlessness in transport sector

TIB called for strict enforcement of the relevant laws to help curb road accidents in the country. TIB also demanded termination of conflict of interests among transport sector’s stakeholders, as the foremost step in this regard.

In a press statement released on July 31, 2018, TIB also called for measures to ensure good governance and transparency of agencies concerned, including Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA), Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges, and transport sector related-associations.

Executive Director of TIB Dr. Iftekharuzzaman, in the statement, said, “The country's road transport sector is now stricken with numerous irregularities, including negligence by the related entities, poor law enforcement, lack of good governance in authorities concerned, and high level of syndication.”

He also said, “Not only the conflict of interests among the transport owners and workers' organisations, but also intervention by a responsible position like the government's minister have put the sector in trouble. Under such circumstances, some transport owners with profiteering attitude are creating anarchy in the sector by employing unskilled drivers to run unfit vehicles. Such malpractices are causing loss of many lives in roads every day.”



“Relevant government agencies like ministries and BRTA cannot avoid their liability for the lawlessness by any means,” he said, adding that the first step is to make the sector free from conflict of interests. Quoting a study on road transport conducted by TIB, Dr. Zaman said, “BRTA played no role to administer motor vehicles running on the streets in the last 10 years, despite their declarations.” It appears that the authorities like BRTA have become hostages to negative influences of various transport owners and workers' associations, he added.



Training on Video Documentary Making held

As part of regular activities, two different YES groups from Dhaka YES has organized a Training on Anti-Corruption Video Documentary Making. On 5 July 2018, YES group- Stamford University Bangladesh has organized the training on video documentary making at the Meghomala Conference Room of TIB, where 47 YES members and friends has

participated. Another training has taken place at the same premises on 12 July 2018 where 27 members and friends from the YES group of the Department of Development Studies, University of Dhaka has participated.

Both the training sessions were conducted by Mr. Barkat ullah Babu, Programme Manager of TIB. The participants were educated with necessary skills and tools to make a short video documentary using mobile phone camera and primary video editing software on the PC or Laptop. The training was aimed to enhance capacity of the YES members and friends to combat against corruption using AV media. According to the participants, the training will assist the youth in responding with short videos on social issues against corruption and be of a great knowledge.



After completion of the training, the participants were divided into different groups to apply the learned skills in making some video documentary on 'corruption in social life'. To weld together the skills learned in the training, a competition will be organized for the capacitated Youth on anti-corruption issues.

CCC News

Active Mothers Forum will be formed at all primary schools in Kushtia

Active Mothers Forum, an initiative by TIB to ensure participation of mothers of students at primary schools in decision making processes, will be replicated at all primary schools in Kushtia district. Anondo Kumar Saha, District Primary Education Officer (DPEO) of Kushtia district shared the news in an opinion sharing meeting with CCC, Kushtia on 30 July 2018.

Anondo Kumar Saha said, 'for delivering quality education, it's important to make aware the guardians as well as mothers of students along with local level authorities. For ensuring progress in education, it's necessary to implement inclusive process.' He advised all Upazila Education Officers who were present in the meeting to take initiatives for forming Active Mothers Forum at their schools.

Beside these, according to CCC's recommendation, the DPEO also advised to assign Information Officers according to Right to Information Act 2009 by 15 September 2018, introduce Register for lodging complaints, set up information board at school premises and ensure separate toilets for female students. He suggested Upazilla Education Officers to convey these message and necessary guidance in next monthly coordination meeting with Head Teachers. The DPEO made importance on monitoring visits to the schools and student's home. Md. Rafiqul

Alam Tuku, president of CCC, Kushtia presided over the meeting where Upazilla Education Officers of Kushtia attended. Members of CCC, SWAJON, YES and YES Friends were present in the meeting.

Authority to create space for patients to provide feedback

Mymensingh Medical College Hospital authority will create space for patients and service recipients to provide their feedback and comments on quality of its services. The authority tries to meet full requirements of patients with medicine and other logistics received from the government. Deputy Director of the hospital Mr. Lakshi Narayon Majumder shared these in an opinion sharing meeting with CCC, Mymensingh Sadar on 26 July 2018.



CCC, Mymensingh Sadar recommended and placed some suggestions to improve the services of the hospital. CCC requested authority to restrict Medical Representatives at Outdoor on pick-hours who behave unpleasantly with patients by taking snaps of prescriptions, interrupt doctors and patients discussion, to bear ID cards when employees on duty, to take care of the Brest Feeding Corner regularly and to update service related information in website etc.

The hospital authority informed that few initiatives have already been taken for delivery of better services and assured CCC to take measures on the rest of their recommendations. Deputy Director thanked CCC and TIB for working with Mymensingh Medical College Hospital. Vice President of the CCC Mir Gulam Mustafa moderated and Mr. Lakshi Narayon Majumder presided over the meeting. Doctors, Nurses, officers of the hospital and members of CCC & SWAJON were present in the meeting.

Citizen's participation will ensure proper management in water sector



With an aim to ensure transparency, accountability and citizen's participation in water sector, a public hearing was organized by Patuakhali Water Development Board (WDB) in association with CCC, Patuakhali at Amkhola Union Parishad of Golachipa Upazilla in Patukhali. Beneficiaries of Blue Gold project of the WDB, Patuakhali participated in the public hearing held on 25 July 2018 while Executive Engineer of WDB, Patuakhali Muhammad Hasanuzzaman presided

over the programme. Abul Hossain Arafat, Panel Chairman of the Union Parishad was the chief guest in the public hearing. Abdur Rab Akon, convener of CCC's sub-committee regarding Climate Finance Governance (CFG) welcomed the attendees on behalf of CCC. Md. Aminul Islam, member of SWAJON of the CCC moderated the programme.

Participants thanked WDB for the implemented project titled 'Programme for integrated sustainable development by improving the water and productive sectors in selected polders'. However, they observed that implemented activities of the project were insufficient against demand in the community. There needs to build more culverts, repair sluice gates etc. Mr. Abul Hossain, chief guest of the public hearing, said, 'local citizens and elected representatives should be engaged to design and implement any project. By this engagement, the goal of the project will be well defined and priority works will be identified.' He thanked CCC for organizing such event with the aim to ensure transparency and accountability.

Engineers and Officers from WDB, Patuakhali and members of CCC, SWAJON, YES and YES Friends were also present in the event.

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