

National News

COP-25: TIB Advocates to Ensure Climate Assistance as Grant instead of Loan

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) has called upon the government to ensure promised development assistance by climate polluters as 'additional' and 'new' grants in lieu of credit. Ahead of COP 25 Conference scheduled to be held in Madrid, Spain from 2-13 December 2019, TIB made the renewed call along with 11-points demand including an in-depth proposal containing identification of the challenges of the "Warsaw International Mechanism" in tackling the 'Loss and Damage' caused by Climate Change, to ensure transparency, accountability and integrity in the implementation of the mechanism.

In a press conference organized at its Dhaka office on 28 November 2019, the Anti-Graft watchdog, in addition to 11-points demands, has urged the representative team of the Government of Bangladesh to present the proposal with the world body as priority, realizing poor developments in compensating by the polluters- the responsible developed and developing countries.



Ahead of Cop-25 Conference, TIB placed the demands through its month-long various advocacy initiatives. To ensure that the ground realities from climate affected country like Bangladesh is heard loud and presented properly at the world stage in the upcoming conference, TIB developed a position paper containing the expectations from COP 25 Conference analyzing the ongoing uncertainty in global climate finance, challenges of green climate fund, setting up of coal-based

power projects by Bangladesh despite its commitment to reduce global carbon emissions, damage due to climate change and steps to address it. The position paper was then shared in a press conference organized at its Dhaka office.

"At the forthcoming COP-25 conference, the signatories to the Paris Agreement will discuss on pledged climate financing, as well as policies, procedures and action-plans regarding paying compensation for damage caused by various natural disasters under the Warsaw International Mechanism. This compensation should be 'additional' and 'new' of development assistance and it should come as compensation. Although polluting countries have pledged to pay 100 billion USD a year from 2020, no progress has been observed so far. Contrary to the promises made for climate finance, we see various delays and complications, as well as new conditions for receiving money, such as the introduction of new insurance arrangements, which is very worrying, and making it uncertain for the least promised countries, including Bangladesh." said TIB Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman at the press conference.

Dr. Iftekharuzzaman was also accompanied by Professor Dr. Sumaiya Khair, Advisor-Executive Management; M. Zakir Hossain Khan, Senior Program Manager - Climate Finance Governance program, and Mohammad Mahfuzul Haque, Program Manager - Climate Finance Policy Integrity program, of TIB.

At the beginning of the press conference, Zakir Hossain Khan and Md. Mahfuzul Haq presented an analytical report including the expectations from COP 25 Conference based on the ongoing uncertainty in global climate finance, challenges of green climate fund, setting up of coal-based power projects by Bangladesh despite its commitment to reduce global carbon emissions, damage due to climate change and steps to address it.

Dr. Zaman said, “Bangladesh has so far been approved with merely \$ 85 million from the Green Climate Fund (GCF), which has not been released yet.” Since the commencement of climate finance, Bangladesh has received only 350 million USD from various international sources.”

Recognizing the positive steps of the government of Bangladesh which contributed to strengthening transparency in climate finance, Dr. Iftekharuzzaman said, “The amount of money allocated to us nationally and spent on various projects is more than the amount received from international sources which deserves applause from one side. However, we are concerned that while Bangladesh needs \$2.5 billion a year for adaptation alone as per the National Determined Contribution, we are not getting the necessary funding from international sources.”

Dr. Zaman also pointed towards an international conspiracy against financing followed by withdrawal of USA from the Paris agreement. “Noting significant struggle of the affected countries to ensure the necessary funds following strict standards set by the GCF, various international financial institutions are increasingly registering with the GCFA. Such organizations are using climate funds as a lucrative investment and mean of business that is unethical and in violation of international commitments. Different Organizations with allegations of corruption and lack of integrity have also been registered as Accredited Entities of the GCF.”

Terming procedure of disbursement in various projects by GCF as hindrance for affected countries like Bangladesh, Dr. Zaman said “There are wide-ranging questions about transparency and accountability of GCF. Also, no guidelines or funds have yet been established to compensate for the damage caused by climate change.” Dr. Zaman called upon the Government of Bangladesh to raise the above issues the COP 25 conference individually and collectively with the affected countries through diplomacy.

Referring to Bangladesh's contradictory role in implementing coal-based power projects, Dr. Zaman suggested the government of Bangladesh to ensure transparent and accountable role in the process to strengthen its own moral position as a signatory of Paris agreement. “Bangladesh failed to fall back from its growing dependence on coal-fired power plants, rather its increasing. As a result, Bangladesh is slowly transforming itself into a polluting country. However, Bangladesh has promised to generate 50 percent of its total electricity demand from renewable sources by 2050, and various studies have shown that Bangladesh has the capacity to do so.” Dr. Zaman emphasized the importance of adopting renewable power projects without causing damage to the coastal areas and the environment, including the Sundarbans. “We must suspend various risky industrial activities, including coal-fired power plants at Rampal, Taltoli and Kalapara, and proceed towards setting up renewable energy based power plants according to an assessment of the impact of an internationally acceptable, neutral and conflict-free strategic environment in line with UNESCO's recommendations. At the same time, we need to ensure that this kind of environmental impact assessment is done by a non-profit organization and is internationally acceptable.” Dr. Zaman concluded.



TIB's 11-points demands also included timely and easy provision to release funds from GCF and other international organisations on priority basis; formulating and implementing a time-bound roadmap for providing climate-based grants based on demand, prioritizing the adaptation of developing countries; the necessary technology and resources from developed countries to implement the Paris Climate Agreement; establish an equity-based and inclusive effective board of trustees, including civil society representatives an

relevant authorities ; prioritize grants in adaptation activities of affected countries. Also, TIB demanded the creation of special funds to address damages and loss for the least developed countries; create and enforce a legal framework for recovering risk exchange costs by charging compensation from developed countries instead of insurance to address climate risk; ensure allocation of special funds from GCF and Adaptation Fund for rehabilitation, welfare and economic prosperity of climate-displaced people.

Along with the press conference, a policy brief from the position paper was shared with relevant government offices. At the advocacy events, the climate-affected citizens stressed on ensuring integrity, transparency and accountability framework in climate finance governance. The advocacy events involved grassroots people who are drastically affected on the front-line by climate change with a set of demands on ahead of Conference of the Parties (COP)-25 and the participants collectively raised voice demanding the guaranty of equality, integrity, transparency, accountability and citizen's participation in climate change grant fund, its accessibility, use and supervision.

Follow-up

Aligned with TIB's long-standing demand, Prime Minister of Bangladesh demanded in her speech in Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) during COP 25 Conference that 'climate finance must be new and additional and separate from other development assistance'. Consistent with TIB's position, the PM also urged developed nations to provide timely and sufficient climate finance to tackle climate change impact.

Later, TIB thanked to the Prime Minister for taking on as chairperson of CVF and noting the alignment of her speech with TIB's position. TIB also offered technical support to the government.

Beside national initiatives, TIB joined other TI chapters (TI Brazil, TI Maldives and TI Secretariat) and Brazil Climate Action Hub, where TIB presented report on corruption and governance challenges in climate finance in a side event during COP 25 in Madrid. TIB also joined in the project kick off meeting along with other participating TI chapters on 7 December 2019 in Madrid, Spain.

At the end of the COP-25 conference no specific progress has been made in long-term climate finance; On this context, In a press release TIB has expressed its concerns and disappointment plans to expand the private sector. TIB demanded to strengthen integrated climate diplomacy with the participation of all risky countries at the initiative of Bangladesh to ensure effective accountability in the proper implementation of the Paris Agreement.

Collaboration program Report

2nd Anti-Corruption Moot Competition Concludes: University of Dhaka Team emerged as the Champion

The 2nd DUMCS-TIB Anti-Corruption Moot Court Competition 2019 has come to the conclusion. Following a nail-biting finale in the courtroom, Team representing the University of Dhaka emerged as the champion seeing off BRAC University team in the final showdown. The competition, which has appeared as the largest national moot court competition ever in Bangladesh in terms of number of competing teams, ended with the lively arguments of the 26 teams from the different universities of the country through the semifinals, final round, award-giving and valedictory ceremony held on 30 November at the faculty of law, University of Dhaka.

The 3-day anti-corruption moot competition, second of its kind, was organized by Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) in collaboration with Dhaka University Moot Court Society (DUMCS), the Faculty of Law, University of Dhaka to enhance awareness among the students of law faculties across Bangladesh on the anti-corruption legal regime. Organized as part of a diverse set of programmes to mark

the upcoming international anti-corruption day on 9 December, a total of 104 participants including 78 students of law and 26 coaches attended the competition.

The team from University of Dhaka, comprising of Ali Mahraf and Sal Sabil Chowdhury as Oralists and Md. Azhar Uddin Bhuiyan as Researcher emerged as the champion of the competition. BRAC University team comprising of Rakibul Islam Bhuiyan and Md. Mosabbir Hossain as Oralists and Ayan Rahman Khan as the Researcher became the Runner-Up of the competition. Ali Mashraf from the University of Dhaka became the Best Mooter, while Tahsin Bin Zafar from the University of Rajshahi and Sal Sabil Chowdhury from the University of Dhaka were the second and third best mooters respectively. Md. Azhar Uddin Bhuiyan from the University of Dhaka became the Best Researcher, while Muhammad Sajid Hasan from Jagannath University and Rabeya Dewan from Jahangirnagar University became the second and third best researchers



respectively. The University of Dhaka also won the best memorial award while Jahangirnagar University and the University of Chittagong won the second and third best memorial awards respectively. The spirit of the moot award was presented to Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University, Trishal, Mymensingh.

The grand finale was adjudged by Honorable Mr. Justice Md. Abdul Matin, former Judge, Appellate division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh; and Honorable Mr. Justice Shamim Hasnain, former Judge, High Court division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh. Honorable Judges of the subordinate courts, academicians and other legal professionals adjudicated in the preliminary round and quarter-finals held on 29 November.

At the valedictory ceremony, Honorable Mr. Justice Md. Abdul Matin and Honorable Mr. Justice Shamim Hasnain, former Judges of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh; Prof. Dr. Md. Rahmat Ullah, Dean, Faculty of Law and President, Dhaka University Moot Court Society (DUMCS); and TIB's Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman handed away the awards and certificates of participation at the competition to the winning participants teams and individuals. Among others, Prof. Dr. Sumaiya Khair, Adviser-Executive Management, TI Bangladesh, and Prof. Dr. Nazmuzzaman Bhuiyan, Moderator, DUMCS were also present at the ceremony.

The distinguished guests praised the depth of research and articulate oral submissions of the teams during the competition and counseled the participants to stay in the process of continuous learning. Mentioning different instances of corruption in Bangladesh, they conveyed their gratitude towards TIB for their actions towards fighting corruption and bringing these experiences to light to ensure justice. They underscored the necessity of honesty, integrity, moral strength along with legal knowledge for the legal professionals and lauded the legal knowledge, strategies of arguments and oratory skills of the participants and hoped of their effective role in preventing corruption.

Dr. Iftekharuzzaman observed that the successful completion of the competition point towards a bright future of the anti-corruption judiciary in Bangladesh. Dr. Zaman hoped that the clinical legal knowledge gathered in the competition will help the participants immensely to ensure the successful conviction of the corrupt people. He also thanked the faculty of Law, University of Dhaka for extending collaborative support for

organizing such innovation competition, which is considered to be first among more than 100 chapters of Transparency International.

The participants at the competition experienced practical courtroom experiences and challenges by participating in the competition. Furthermore, it allowed them to widen their horizon of legal and analytical knowledge. With their articulate rhetoric and well-analyzed arguments and counter arguments, they made arguments against corrupt practices and sought solutions via legal means on such corruption.

Earlier, the 2nd National Anti-Corruption Moot Court Competition 2019 commenced on 28 November with the participation of 26 teams among which 13 teams from out of capital and 13 participated from the capital.

Considering that the competition will enrich the clinical legal knowledge of the students, TI Bangladesh pioneered such innovative competition among more than 100 other chapters of Transparency International back in 2017, to harness the argumentative skills of young law students across the country and encourage the students of law in acquiring knowledge on anti-corruption laws to ensure successful prosecution of corruption



At the inauguration ceremony, Prof. Naima Haque, Chairperson, Department of Law, DU. Dean of the Faculty of Law and President of DUMCS Prof. Md. Rahmat Ullah, DUMCS moderator Professor Mohammad Nazmuzzaman Bhuiyan, TIB executive director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman and Adviser-Executive Management Professor Dr. Sumaiya Khair were present at the ceremony.

Thanking TIB, Prof. Md. Rahmat Ullah in his welcome address said, “As a result of TIB's collaboration, young students have been able to gain a better understanding of the country's main challenge, corruption. The knowledge gained from the competition will play an important role in their future practice of law. I believe TIB will continue to organize such events.”

Dr. Iftekharuzzaman said, “TIB is proud to organize this for the second time with DU Moot Court Society. In order to rid the country of corruption, TIB conducts various anti-corruption activities by involving the people. Such actions require political commitment, including anti-corruption laws, institutions and anti-corruption laws. Through this competition, TIB wants to create awareness among the youth about anti-corruption laws. We believe this will increase their skills and interest in anti-corruption legislation.”

Later, Hon'ble Justice of the High Court Division Mr. Md. Rezaul Hasan who was present as a judge in the competition thanked TIB in a letter. Praising the research, analysis, presentation and knowledge of English of the participants of the competition, He wished that the clinical legal knowledge gathered in the competition will help the participants immensely to ensure the successful conviction of the corrupt people.

Bangladesh at Risk of Coal-powered Carbon Catastrophe, Study Reveals

A new report titled, “Choked by Coal: The Carbon Catastrophe in Bangladesh” shows that 63-fold coal power expansion is going to take place in Bangladesh, which will add 115 million of tonnes of carbon dioxide emission annually. The coal-based energy production plan will dramatically increase coal power capacity of Bangladesh from the current level of one coal plant generating 525 MW to twenty-nine coal plants generating 33,250 MW. It will catastrophically worsen climate vulnerability Bangladesh, the report produced and published by Market Forces and 350.org in collaboration with Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), Waterkeepers Bangladesh and Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon suggested.

To present the report findings, the organizations organized press conference on November 8 2019 at the Dhaka Reporters Unity where Waterkeepers Bangladesh’s Coordinator Sharif Jamil summarized the report. In addition, the general secretary of the Bangladesh paribesh Andolan (BAPA) Md. Abdul Matin, TIB



Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman, and BRATI Chief Executive Officer Ms. Sharmeen Murshid, and Legal Economist M. S Siddiqui were also present at the press conference

The report shows that

under the current plan, with increasing foreign funding, the number of coal-fired power plants will be increased from 1 to 30, while the existing 525 MW coal power generation will be increased to 33,250 MW. This will produce an additional 115 million metric tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere annually. And it is truly a carbon explosion that will pose a serious threat to the very existence of Bangladesh's vulnerable population as a result of the adverse effects of climate change. Analysis of the impact of climate change show that rising sea levels will cause Bangladesh to lose 11 percent of its land area and increase the risk of cyclones of magnitude four and five by 130 percent, threatening the lives and livelihoods of 15 million people living along the coast.

According to the report, the plan to build a large-scale coal-fired power plant is largely dependent on foreign loan assistance, which will multiply Bangladesh's external debt burden overall and make the foreign trade balance more pronounced. If the proposed projects are implemented, Bangladesh will have to import 61 million metric tons of coal worth \$ 200 million annually. This will trap Bangladesh in importing high-value coal for decades, which could lead to new economic catastrophes.

According to the report, foreign funding has been the biggest influence behind the construction of 29 new power plants, which has raised Bangladesh from 12th to sixth position in terms of construction of coal power plants in just three years. UNICEF has already warned that the future of 19 million children in Bangladesh is at risk due to various natural disasters, including floods and cyclones caused by climate change and environmental disasters. And in this case, the proposed coal-based power plants will put Bangladesh in a deep crisis.

The study also suggests that Chinese banks and companies are playing a major role in the construction of the proposed coal-fired power plants. The Chinese are financing half of the proposed projects. While the United Kingdom and Japan have encouraged the establishment of eco-friendly power plants in their respective countries, each of them is financing the establishment of three coal-based power plants in Bangladesh. However, the UK has announced a complete withdrawal from coal-based power generation by 2025. On the other hand, India is setting up the highly controversial coal-fired power plant at Rampal, not far from the World Heritage Sundarbans.

Summarized the report Sharif Jamil said, "It will have a negative impact on Bangladesh's climate, economy and environment as a whole,"

Md. Abdul Matin said, "While the whole world is stopping the use of coal in power generation, Bangladesh is doing the opposite through moving towards coal. And there is no need for any kind of fossil fuel to meet the energy demand of Bangladesh; everything can be met from renewable energy."

Dr. Iftekhruzzaman said, "Bangladesh does need huge investments to meet growing energy needs, but we can't afford the unprecedented coal boom at our own peril. We seem to have given in to investment aggression of some foreign financial entities and governments without duly considering the environmental implications of the projects which are set to convert Bangladesh from a worst affected country by climate change to a fastest expanding climate polluter."



Dr. Zaman also said "Our coal dependence is contradictory to Government commitment under SDGs. It is alarmingly self-defeating not only environmentally, but also socially, economically and in terms of human security,". He called upon the government to abandon this suicidal course and move faster and more strategically to renewable energy. According to the report, it is possible for Bangladesh to generate environmentally friendly, safe and sustainable electricity without coal to meet future demand. Bangladesh has the capacity to generate up to 53 GW of electricity using solar energy. Therefore, Bangladesh can achieve its required power generation capacity if it wants by using solar energy or alternative methods at low cost instead of the proposed and ongoing coal power projects. After the press conference the report send to the different ministry and. relevant authorities.

TIB Members Calls for Effective Implementation of "No One will be Spared" in the ongoing anti-corruption campaign

TIB members reaffirmed to resist corruption individually and collectively from their positions to build a well-governed and democratic Bangladesh during the Annual Meeting of TIB Members 2018-19. TIB also demanded for effective implementation of the prime minister's declaration of "no one will be exempted" in order to secure the real benefits of the ongoing anti-corruption campaign of government.

In the annual meeting of TIB members, organized at TIB office on 7 November 2019, members renewed their pledges to strengthen the anti-corruption social movement in national and local level by engaging citizens. The meeting also placed 11-point demands in the declaration to establish corruption-free and well-governed Bangladesh.

Moderated by TIB Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman, the meeting was presided over by the representative of TIB members in the General Assembly of TIB, Kazi Md. Mortuza Ali. About 51 TIB members and professionals of different sectors have participated in the meeting. At the meeting, the members expressed their satisfaction over the research, advocacy and civic engagement activities of TIB as well as appreciated the financial audit report of TIB.

However, the members expressed concern and worries over some recent issues including the government's failure in maintaining discipline in the universities' campuses and inaction of law enforcement agencies in preventing ongoing student violence, allegations of massive corruption and other irregularities. They urged the authorities to refrain from taking measures against students and teachers who were peacefully

protesting against the universities' authorities including that of Jahangirnagar University. They also urged the authorities to ensure proper investigation into the corruption allegations against the universities' authorities.

Expressing solidarity to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's zero tolerance policy against corruption, the members suggested to make all the relevant accountable, irrespective of their social status, for the irregularities. Besides, they expressed deep concern over the incidents of bullying on students and torture on female workers in Middle Eastern countries. Members welcomed the government decision of initiating to form banking commission in a bid to bringing reform in the banking sector, already plunged into default loan and irregularities. They, however, called upon to form an independent commission instead of under Bangladesh Bank as that comes with risk of short-sightedness

The meeting released a declaration containing 11-point demands. The declaration includes among others, extensive implementation of ongoing anti-corruption campaign; ensure corruption, irregularities and violence-free educational institution; strict implementation of Road Transport Act, 2018 to curb road accidents and bring discipline to the road transport sector of Bangladesh; strengthening Anti-Corruption Commission to prevent and control corruption effectively; take initiative to gain public trust on the decaying banking sector with scrapping option of whitening black money; ensure freedom of expression and media.

TIB Statement

TIB to ACC: Investigate allegations of scam in development activities at JU

TIB has called on the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) to investigate the alleged irregularities in the development activities of Jahangirnagar University (JU). At the same time, the anti-graft watchdog has urged the Vice-Chancellor (VC) of the elite public university to step away temporarily after the allegations of involvement in illegal transactions, to make room for a fair and effective investigation in the allegations.



Amid a widespread protests by the students grew at the Jahangirnagar University, TIB in a statement released to media on 7 November 2020, also expressed grave concern over the various reports of harassment of the agitators surfaced in the media on the ongoing anti-corruption movement.

TIB Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman said, "Removal of the two top leaders of the ruling party's student body was a positive step in the wake of allegations of irregularities and corruption in the development activities at the university. However, this initiative is not enough to ensure transparency and accountability as the removed leaders were not subjected to accountability in the applicable legal process; also the VC and his family members have not yet been brought under investigation regarding alleged involvement in illegal transactions. The ACC has also not yet taken any initiative in this regard. We urge the ACC to conduct a thorough investigation into the allegations of corruption from its legal standpoint and demand that their investigation be brought to light if anyone is found guilty in the process."

Stating that no one can be convicted a criminal until any allegation is proved, Dr. Zaman said, therefore, if the involvement of the VC is not proved, she could be reinstated in the post. As we have stated earlier, ensuring

transparency and accountability in all development activities, including the University, is essential and its main responsibility is upto the VC as the top level authority. Therefore, it is unethical and embarrassing to not undertake a proper investigation in the wake of this level of corruption allegations."

Expressing concern over recent conflicts between the agitators and the opposition supporters in favor of administration in the media, Dr. Zaman also said, "TIB calls upon the relevant various government agencies for maintaining neutrality and to refrain from any kind of intimidation, unwanted harassment and discriminatory behavior."

Dr. Zaman also urged upon all to refrain from initiating any further of controlling steps in the peaceful movement of teachers and students against corruption and to take effective steps in ensuring proper justice in the due process of irregular corruption. Moreover, TIB renewed its call to the government and its agencies for ensuring accountability of all those accused of corruption by maintaining strict neutrality, to reduce the ongoing disorder of the university to bring back a conducive environment for education at this important institution.

Later, a group of Teachers of JU jointly issued a letter to TIB claiming the allegations by the agitators as false and suggested to withdraw TIB's statement. In a reply letter, TIB stated that the investigation demanded by TIB is necessary as it will ensure the truth and false, thus contribute to ending the crisis. TIB also clarified that it is not on any side of the situation; rather TIB's efforts are strictly dedicated towards the end of the problem which is causing damage to the enabling environment of education. Therefore, VC should resign temporarily to ensure that a neutral investigation is carried out.

"BB-led banking commission will not be fruitful" TIB demands an independent and conflict of interest-free commission

The decision of formation of Banking Commission to reform the banking sector plagued by growing defaulted loans and massive irregularities is positive. However, TIB believes that the much-anticipated commission would be a meaningless and irrational decision if it is formed under Bangladesh Bank. Such decision would bar commission to act neutrally and objectively in reviewing the banking situation and providing recommendations to way out due to conflict of interests, observed TIB.

In the circumstances, TIB called for the formation of a completely independent commission, saying it would not be possible for the commission to review the banking situation impartially and formulate effective recommendations due to conflict of interest.

Citing media reports on a government decision to form a banking commission to reform the banking sector., TIB Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman in a press release published on November 08, 2019 said, "The decision is positive in view of the long-standing demands of various quarters, including TIB, for the reform of this sector, however we think that the formation of such commission under Bangladesh Bank would be a meaningless and irrational decision. Because on one side, Bangladesh Bank fails to play such an effective role in regulating the banking sector which is on the verge of collapse; on the side, it also seemed to be affected in many cases by those identified responsible for the crisis."

Expressing fear that the central bank and the banking sector as a whole have been taken hostage by vested interests, Dr. Zaman emphasized that the commission for the desired reforms in the banking sector must be an independent one which should be formed by a combination of impartial, highly regarded and acceptable experts in this sector; those who will present short, medium and long term plans in a completely unbiased and unaffected manner in terms of reality, and the central bank and the government will implement them rising above the vested interests. Otherwise, the formation of such a kangaroo commission will be of no use."

Stressing on the importance of an independent commission, Dr. Zaman said, "In contrast to the high growth rate, any such failure to take the necessary steps through an objective and impartial analysis by an independent commission to reform the banking sector to ensure the country's macroeconomic stability would be disastrous in the midst of this banking crisis, including the acute liquidity crisis." Dr. Zaman hoped that the government will realize the significance of this situation and immediately form an independent banking commission consisting of neutral, properly qualified, impartial and non-partisan experts."

Sundarbans is one; Essential to Save Sundarbans for Our Own protection from natural disasters like Bulbul

Stating that Sundarbans has helped minimizing the intensity of the devastating cyclone 'Bulbul' as well as the extent of damage in the coastal belt, TIB) has demanded immediate steps to protect the Sundarbans in the interest of Bangladesh itself. It also called for an immediate halt of the construction of the Rampal coal-based power project and other anti-environment industrial activities, which endangered the world's largest mangrove forest and the environmental degradation of the Sundarbans.



In a statement on 11 November 2020, TIB Executive Director Iftekhharuzzaman said, "The contributions of the Sundarbans towards protecting this region from most of the storms and tidal surges as a shield are undeniable. The Sundarbans has been protecting the lives and resources of Bangladesh, one of the world's most disaster-prone regions, for years being an impenetrable protection belt. The mangrove forest reduced the intensity of very severe cyclone Bulbul, which later weakened into a severe one, before it made landfall in Bangladesh, which was acknowledged by the authorities concerned, including the Bangladesh Meteorological Department." Adding that the mangrove forest prevented

extensive damages during natural disasters like Sidr and Aila in the past, too, Dr. Zaman said that the Sundarbans not only acts as a shield from natural disasters, but also protects the biodiversity and geological features of the region and the livelihood of people. That's why Bangladesh has to take highest measures to protect the forest.

Noting that multiple risky industrialisation process, including coal-based power plants at Rampal, Taltali and Kolapara, is on around the Sundarbans ignoring concerns which is putting the mangrove forest on the brink of destruction, Dr. Zaman also said, "These multipurpose risky industries are still being operational ignoring internationally accepted strategic environmental surveys along with global and local concerns, driven by the drug lure towards coal-based mechanisms. Meanwhile, the World Heritage Committee has already threatened to include Sundarbans in the 'Dangerous World Heritage' list. Yet this process of 'development in exchange for the Sundarbans' has not stopped yet."

Reminding sustainable development goals (SDGs), Dr. Zaman added, "Carrying on with such risky projects to the world heritage like Sundarbans is contrary to the government's national and international commitment to achieve SDGs. To achieve the government's target of attaining minimum of 5 percent renewable power generation within 20 years, Dr. Zaman stressed on halting such various risky industrial activities, including coal-based power plants in Rampal, Taltali and Kalapara, and called upon to take immediate steps in

formulating a roadmap aiming renewable energy-based projects through long, medium and short-term implementation plans.

CCC News

Joint Activity Plan to Strengthen Transparency & Accountability at Mymensingh lower judicial services

A joint activity plan has been developed for strengthening transparency and accountability in lower judicial services at Mymensingh. The proposed plan has segregated for its effective implementation into three parts: short-term, mid-term and long-term. The District and Session Judge Court of Mymensingh and Committee of Concerned Citizens (CCC), Mymensingh Sadar jointly developed the plan which was then shared in an opinion sharing meeting on 04 November 2019 to receive feedback on the drafted plan.



Md. Helal Uddin, District and Session Judge of Mymensingh presided over the meeting held at the conference room of the District Judge Court of Mymensingh. The plan has been prepared based on the recommendations of the workshop titled 'Lower Judicial Court System in Bangladesh: The Challenges of good governance and way forward' which was previously organized by the CCC and TIB. Mr. Chitta Ranjan Roy, Programme Manager-Civic

Engagement of TIB shared the draft plan in the opinion sharing meeting.

The plan includes set-up of Information Display Board and Suggestion & Complaint Box at the court premises, introduce mechanism to redress complaints, Ethics education and motivational training for judicial & service staffs, set-up Help Desk, introduce Monitoring Cell to increase supervision of transparency & accountability for judicial and support staffs, and drive satellite campaign. The participants provided their expert opinion and feedback to make the plan successful.

At the meeting, Md. Helal Uddin stressed on collective efforts to make effective implementation of the activity plan for strengthening transparency and accountability at lower judiciary services. He sought supports from all level of stakeholder's and proposed to include the fundamental laws of Bangladesh to the Secondary and Higher Secondary curriculum.

Among others, the District Judge, Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal, Mymensingh Mr. S. M. Ershadul Alam, Special Judge (District Judge) Md. Ahsanul Haque, Chief Judicial Magistrate Md. Rejaul Karim, Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Mr. Abdul Hai, Additional District Judge Md. Nurul Amin Biplob and Joint District Judge Mr. Shahriar Arafat provided their valuable feedback and comments on the draft activity plan. Mr. Mir Golam Mostafa, Vice President of CCC, Mymensingh Sadar thanked all for their effective participation at the meeting. Other members of the CCC were present at the meeting too.

Madaripur Municipality initiating Anti-Corruption Activities for Transparency & Accountability

To make transparent and accountable local government institutions, Madaripur Municipality and Committee of Concerned Citizens (CCC), Madaripur has been continuing joint efforts. Under the collaboration, actors of both the sides recently renewed their pledges to forward the agenda in an opinion sharing meeting on 20 November 2019, held at the Madaripur Municipality.

Vice-President of the CCC Mr. Amir Hossain presided over the meeting while Md. Khalid Hossain Iyad, Mayor of the municipality was present as the Chief Guest. Mr. Enayet Hossain Nannu, convener of the CCC's sub-committee regarding LG moderated the sessions.

At the meeting, Mr. Khalid Hossain Iyad said, "with the limited resources available, authority of the municipality tries to be a model by fulfilling citizen's demand and implementing development projects right way. We are working with the CCC for a long time to make the municipality transparent and accountable. We achieved significant progress with cordial cooperation of citizens in this regard." He requested CCC to provide support for implementing anti-corruption activities under the budget of 2019-2020 fiscal year.



CCC suggested engaging CCC & YES group for driving anti-corruption campaign at the municipality on predetermined selected areas. CCC, Madaripur also urged to share the progress of implementation of the budget for 2019-2020 fiscal year to its citizens.

Among others, Panel Mayor, Counselors of the Municipality, Secretary of the Municipality, members of CCC and SWAJON were also present at the meeting.

Chakaria Land Authority to Initiate for Citizen-centric services

Land authority of Chakaria Upazila under Cox's Bazar district will take different initiatives to make land related services citizens' orientated. Mr. Tanvir Hossain, Assistant Commissioner (Land) of Chakaria Upazila made the assurances in an opinion sharing meeting with CCC, Chakaria on 18 November 2019 held at Chakaria Upazila Land Office.



At the meeting, CCC representatives led by the President of CCC, Chakaria Prof A. K. M. Shahabuddin suggested to speedy implementation of planned initiatives for making the Upazila Land Office transparent, accountable and corruption-free. CCC also raised issues like ensuring services by the defined fees, organize regular public hearing in participation with service recipients, monitor the movements of service seekers/recipients for purpose of prohibiting brokers, priority services to female service seekers, provide

proper information to the service seekers and registered them accordingly, and expand best practices at Union Land Offices.

In reply, Md. Tanvir Hossain said that the authority will take initiatives to speed up the service delivery of Upazila Land Office. Good initiatives have all ready been expanded to the Union Land Offices. The authority has made a plan to arrange opinion sharing meeting with local citizens at union level to better delivery of its services, he added. He also urged citizens to expand their cooperation for making the initiatives successful. Among others, Vice-President of the CCC Bulbul Jannat Sahin and members of the CCC, SWAJON and YES groups were present at the meeting.

YES News

Seminar on Good governance in Traffic System and Role of Youth held

YES group East West University organized a seminar on Good Governance on Traffic System and Role of Youth on 3 November 2019 at their campus. To aware the student about the road safety and traffic YES group organized this program. At the event, Asst. Commissioner of the Traffic Police and Associate professor, Department of Urban & Planning, BUET made presentations which highlighted on the law and safety of the road. Adviser of the YES group, Teacher, YES members, YES friends and student of the university attended the seminar.



In the opening, YES adviser welcomed the guests. The different sessions included session on on traffic law and police activities, session on traffic system and development.

During the sessions, the panelists stressed on the importance of the role of the general people specially youth to obey the traffic law. The event concluded with an anti-corruption oath by all the participants.





Along with the seminar, YES group also organized a day-long Anti-corruption cartoon and game show to aware the student about the effect of corruption. Inaugurated by the YES group adviser, students, teachers of the university visited the exhibition and took part in the game show.

SAU YES group observe the Agricultural Day



To observe the Agricultural Day, YES group Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University (SAU) organized a Day long Anti corruption Cartoon Exhibition and Game show on 15 November 2019 in SAU Campus, organized by the University authority. The program was formally

inaugurated by the Vice-Chancellor Professor Dr. Kamal Uddin Ahamed. Student Adviser, Proctor, Teachers and students of the university were also present at that time.

After the inauguration, the VC and other guest visited the stall. At the YES stall, guests visited the cartoon exhibition and attended the game show. Anti corruption stickers, badges and wrist bands were distributed from the stall to visitors and game participants.

ULAB-YES group participated in UPAB Club Fair

During a Club Fair, YES Group-University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB) has conducted a daylong Anti-Corruption Campaign in its permanent campus on 28 November 2019. On the occasion, ULAB-YES launched a set of events including Anti-Corruption Dart Board and Lottery Competitions. YES Group also made an Anti-Corruption Snow Man to attract visitors. Many of them were seen eagerly taken pictures and selfies with the Anti-Corruption replicas put in front of the stall. Approximately six hundred students visited the YES Group stall and had access to various messages of anti-corruption social movement. To sensitize the students on THE TIB-inspired social movement against



corruption, YES members informed the interested about the activities of TIB and YES groups and they distributed various IEC materials among the visitors.

Newly Recruited ISWR YES members Oriented



YES group Social Welfare and Research (ISWR), DU organized an orientation program for the newly-recruited student of the Institute to the social movement against corruption on 20 November 2019 in their campus. Md. Masum Billah from TIB oriented the members with the history, mission and vision of TIB. YES group leader shared their activities with the student. Chairperson of the Inst. Adviser of the YES group, Teacher, YES members, YES friends and student of the Inst. were present at the program.

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