

National News

TIB observes Int'l Anti-Corruption Day 2020, demands stern execution of 'Zero Tolerance' policy against corruption

International Anti-Corruption Day 2020

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) calls for effective implementation of the political pledge of 'Zero Tolerance' policy against irregularities and corruption in all sectors, including the health sector during the Corona Virus-led pandemic. To offset the socio-economic damage caused by the crisis, the anti-graft watchdog has urged all the relevant organizations including the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) to come out of the culture of chasing for 'small fishes' while the big fishes remain scot-free and take effective institutional and administrative initiatives.

Marking the International Anti-Corruption Day (IACD) 2020 on 9 December, TIB has made the calls in a media statement issued on the eve of IACD, reminding that the establishment of rule of law and accountability are critical to building a democratic country. "Therefore, all democratic institutions, especially law enforcement agencies, the administration, the judiciary, the Election Commission and the Human Rights Commission must ensure the impartiality, objectivity, efficiency, and professionalism," TIB observed in the statement, with a strong demand that the constitutional right of freedom of speech must be ensured for the media and the people of the country.

In the statement that focused on widespread corruption exposed in the times of Corona crisis, overwhelming scale of irregularities and corruption, trending culture of impunity, failure of policy implementation, and arbitrary abuse of laws restricting access to information, freedom of expression and media freedom thus hindering anti-corruption mitigation measures, TIB Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman said, "The unexpected events that have unfolded in the midst of the Covid-19 crisis, portray that Corruption has become a ubiquitous form in the country which is an unpleasant fact."



“In this trying situation, the question now arises what to do other than expressing frustration. Despite the declaration of 'zero tolerance' against corruption from the highest level of the government, we can see its implementation stuck only in chasing for small fishes. The activities of corrupt leaders at the top are beyond our imagination. We do not see robust investigation or effective legal action against any of those big players.” Dr. Zaman insisted.

Complaining that political elites, businesspeople, and other influential quarters are enjoying impunity, Dr. Zaman said, “The ACC seems to be playing the role of a de facto B-team in this regard. In order to curb corruption and putting effective prevention measures, the ACC has to come out of the identity of the tiger on paper.”

TIB has also said it seeks transparency in the appointment of new ACC leadership and envisions the commission playing a more effective role. “The ACC chief is about to complete his stint, and the commission must take this opportunity to take control and establish the ACC as an effective anti-corruption body. It is the responsibility of the government to ensure the appointment of honest, competent, neutral, determined, and professional leaders with leadership qualities, free from party political influence by following the legal process and ensuring transparency,” said Dr. Zaman hoping that the government will not disappoint in this regard.



Citing the recent release of money laundering information by the Foreign Minister in Begumpara, Canada, Dr. Zaman said, “Apart from the ACC, Bangladesh Bank and the Financial Intelligence Unit, law enforcement agencies, the National Board of Revenue and especially the Attorney General's Office also need to set a visible example of their impartiality, efficiency, and effectiveness. Otherwise, it is impossible to control the rampant corruption, including money laundering.” Observing that “despite the promotion of independent journalism, freedom of expression and free media in the country, in reality, every effort is being made to control the media in both institutional and informal ways,” Dr. Zaman emphasised on ensuring independent journalism, freedom of expression.

TIB also hoped, on this auspicious occasion of the centenary of the birth of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman that the government would strive to establish a well-governed democratic system and led in building the ‘Shonar Bangla’ of Bangabandhu's dream involving every person in the country.

Due to restrictions on public events in the wake of the COVID19 pandemic, TIB has outlined a series of engaging virtual events stretching from the last week of November up to the second week of December to mark IACD 2020 with the theme “Zero Corruption in COVID Response: Stop Corruption, Save Lives”, both at the national and the local level. A high-level panel discussion on

'Youth in Anti-Corruption Social Movement: Cartoon and Painting' was held on 9 December, followed by the announcement of the results of the Anti-corruption Cartoon Competition 2020 with the theme 'Corruption in Tackling Corona Virus' and the inauguration of the Anti-corruption Cartoon Exhibition 2020. Earlier, TIB's IACD 2020 observance officially started with JUDO-TIB International Inter-University 3-day Debate Competition 2020 at the national level on 26 November 2020. On 2 December, the results of the competition were announced after a virtual high-level panel discussion on Governance Challenges in Tackling Coronavirus.



TIB events marking IACD 2020 placed 10 points demands for relevant stakeholders. The notable recommendations, included among others, adaption of an immediate government initiative in collaboration with relevant stakeholders that is effective, coordinated, inclusive, time-bound, and implementable to tackle the 2nd wave of the Corona Virus; extend the advantage of free tests to all districts with an increased number of tests, and follow the government procurement rules and guidelines in all types of procurements in the health sector including introducing E-GP in all emergency procurements. TIB also recommended ensuring effective and exemplary punishment for irregularities and corruption in the health sector during the pandemic; ensuring inclusion of Youth in tackling this global setback and the decision-making process to achieve SDGs and creating a conducive environment for implementation of inclusive sustainable development goal by prioritising Goal 16 overall goals as a precondition.

At the local level, TIB in association with CCCs organised Investigative Journalism Training from 02-03 December 2020 to enhance the skill and capacity of 27 journalists of Coastal Journalists Network (CJNET) on governance in disaster management, national and international climate finance mechanisms and steps, processes, and areas of investigative journalism. At the training, a total of 27 journalists from 14 coastal areas and Dhaka participated. TIB-inspired YES and Yes friends under 45 Committees of Concerned Citizens (CCCs) across the country organized an 'Anti-Corruption Quiz Competition' on 7 December 2020 to raise awareness among the young people about anti-corruption social movement and IACD. To share the importance and significance of IACD among the youth, TIB also organized a cluster-wise virtual 'Anti-Corruption Story-telling Competition' in the participation of TIB-inspired YES and Yes friends from all CCCs across the country from 5-8 December 2020 where the anti-corruption agents shared their strategies, experiences, and accomplishments achieved through anti-corruption activities under anti-corruption social movement.

Forty-two per cent RMG workers deprived of government incentives, finds TIB study



According to a study conducted by TIB, around 42 per cent (about 14 lakh) of the total workers employed in the RMG sector did not receive or were deprived of government incentives.

Due to a lack of interest and negligence of the government and the employers' organisations in compiling the list of pandemic-affected workers, about one million potential beneficiaries were deprived of social security assistance.

Organising a virtual press conference on 17 December 2020, TIB revealed the research study titled “RMG Sector in COVID-19 Crisis: Governance Challenges & Way Forward” to identify the governance challenges and limitations in dealing with the COVID-19 crisis. Conducted between March and November 2020, the study followed the qualitative research method.

The research data were analysed based on six indicators of good governance and relevant sub-indicators, including legal limitations and enforcement challenges, response, participation and coordination, transparency, labour rights and safety, and accountability.

Speaking at the conference, TIB Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman said that the apparel owners tended to depend on government incentives during the pandemic which burdened the government and the people.

Dr. Zaman said, “We have seen that about half of the total incentive money given by the government has been allocated to the ready-made garment industry. But their contribution to our GDP is only 10 per cent. The lion's share of the package has gone to the owners. The workers have only got a small part of it.”

He also said that although the employers were able to secure incentives from the government to compensate various losses, no priority was given to ensuring the workers' rights, health protection, and safety. The owners were not active in adopting any effective action plan.

The study said that the procedural complexities of listing put factories and workers outside the garment sector owners' organisations at the potential risk of deprivation.

Besides, the study observed that the large factories have managed to get priority for receiving incentive funds. Large factory owners have been accused of using political influence and lobbying for getting incentives in some cases.

Moreover, a month-long procedural complexity of the refund from the banks to receive the money from factories made the workers living in inhuman conditions during the crisis and reluctant to use

MFS account to receive their salaries and allowances on time.

The study also noted allegations that 21 thousand workers in 64 factories who were supposed to receive the incentives did not receive their salaries and allowances due to the announcement of factory lay-off and dismissal in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis.

The study analysis shows that most incentives (about 84 per cent or BDT 52,800 crores) have been distributed to the factory owners to deal with the potential business loss.



Criticising the buyer organisations, Dr. Zaman said, “We have also noticed extremely pessimistic behaviour among buyer organisations. Although some consumer organisations have taken some steps, they have not given much importance to protecting workers' rights. They have shied away from their responsibilities.”

The Executive Director said those buyer organisations put pressure on the owners and failed in ethical business practices that negatively impacted the government and the people.

Talking about the lack of good governance, Dr. Iftekharuzzaman said, “Deficiencies have been observed in almost every indicator of good governance used in the analysis of research results. There was a lack of goodwill and effective action on the part of both the government and the owners,”

Recommendations

The study placed 9 points recommendations, including the amendment of Section 18 and Section 20 of the Bangladesh Labour Act, 2006 to include the provision of job security for all classes of workers and imposing penalties failing to supply health care materials to the workers and comply with hygiene rules and revoking utilisation declaration (UD) facility in case of such violations.

TIB Research and Policy Assistant Programme Manager Nazmul Huda Mina and Deputy Programme Manager Mohammad Nure Alam Milton presented the study findings at the event.

TIB study unearths irregularities and corruption in the government's disaster management programmes



Despite Bangladesh's good reputation in dealing with natural disasters, a TIB study found a significant lack of transparency and accountability on the part of the government in dealing with recent natural disasters, including Cyclone Amphan.

The study has also identified between 14.36% and 76.92% corruption in four climate change projects, including coastal infrastructure development, renovation, and repair.

In addition, the projects were also found to be plagued by lack of skill, management, absence of coordination with weather forecasters, the ineffectiveness of union-level disaster management committees, and lack of coordination between government and private stakeholders.

TIB unveiled the study titled "Governance Challenges in Disaster Response and Way Forward: Cyclone Amphan and other Recent Experiences" on 24 December 2020 through an online press conference. The study aimed to review the improvement and challenges of good governance in dealing with recent natural disasters and previous four disasters, including Cyclone Amphan.

The study collected the data of initial preparedness, relief distribution and rehabilitation initiatives of the last five major natural disasters, including cyclones Sidr (2007), Aila (2009), Roanu (2016), Amphan (2020) and the flooding in 2019. The data were collected from May to December 2020 and analysed in light of 6 indicators of good governance, i.e., compliance with laws and policies, transparency, capability, accountability, participation, irregularities-corruption and coordination.

Research & Policy Director Mohammad Rafiqul Hassan presented the report while TIB Outreach & Communication Director Sheikh Manjur-E-Alam conducted the event.

The study found that political power and personal interest had played a significant role in constructing shelters and dams. Under the indicator of transparency, the study found that hotline numbers were not disseminated among the affected population, including the release of disaster forecast information and warning messages in some remote areas.

The researchers said, even six months after Cyclone Amphan, the dam in Satkhira's Ashashuni had not been repaired, leaving about 20,000 people homeless. There was also a lack of practical initiatives to conduct disaster drills, assess relief needs and identify and evacuate at-risk populations.

The study also pointed out the lack of transparency in disclosing information, including reporting on actual loss, relief distribution, and authentic local beneficiaries' assessment numbers. During the post-disaster period, the study observed inadequacies in emergency healthcare and sanitation alongside a lack of steps to reform and reconstruct educational institutions. Furthermore, the Water Development Board's inefficiency was evident in dam repairs, resulting in floods and displacement of people. A section of the extremely poor was displaced due to a lack of immediate and long-term rehabilitation in nearby towns, forcing them to move to the capital.

The study further observed that political considerations at different levels of dealing with the disasters led to lower allocation in the worst affected districts. Besides, there was a considerable lack of effective initiatives to comply with international disaster management commitments, national laws, policies and orders.

In addition, irregularities and corruption in the construction and maintenance of disaster-resilient infrastructure (shelters, dams, roads, etc.) intensified the economic sufferings of the vulnerable people. Still, there has been a lack of adequate procedures to hold the system and the individual accountable.

Speaking at the programme, TIB Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman said, "The study has shown that there are deficiencies in terms of every indicator of good governance. Because of the growing natural disasters and the lack of good governance, there is still a loss of about 2.2 per cent national income a year. Though Bangladesh has done well in dealing with disasters and has adequate preparedness and capacity, it is possible to do better by avoiding existing deficits."



He further added that there was a kind of complacency as Bangladesh had become habituated to dealing with disasters. Therefore, the long-term challenges in dealing with disasters are neglected. He stressed that the relevant authorities should take the findings and recommendations of this study seriously enough and take steps to address these shortcomings and challenges."

TIB made a 12-point recommendation to deal with the disaster, including updating the existing warning system and conducting campaigns in easily accessible language. The recommendations also included providing timely forecasts and warnings with more importance in high-risk areas and carrying out relief and rehabilitation programmes with transparency prioritising the most vulnerable families and regions.

TIB Climate Finance Governance (CFG) unit Deputy Programme Manager Md. Newazul Mowla, Climate Finance Policy and Integrity (CFPI) unit Assistant Programme Manager Kazi Abu Saleh, CFPI Programme Manager Md. Mahfuzul Haque, CGF Assistant Manager Razu Ahmad Masum, and CFG Senior Programme Manager M Zakir Hossain Khan also attended the event.

Details of the research report can be found here.

<https://www.ti-bangladesh.org/beta3/index.php/en/research-policy/92-diagnostic-study/6226-2020-12-24-04-14-15>

Forest Department plagued with corruption



Recent study of TIB finds that lack of “effective” monitoring on different activities at all levels and absence of accountability contribute to the institutionalisation of forest sector-centric corruption. The study also identifies a lack of effective measures in preventing forest damage through inconsistent deforestation by ‘aggressive’ tactics, including expansion of forest-based revenue and income-generating activities, giving less priority to forest conservation activities and traditional forest management. In addition, the study also finds a lack of priority allocation, infrastructure and logistics in the implementation of the activities of the Forest Department with an apparent lack of appropriate and effective relevant initiatives. Released through a virtual press meet on December 30, 2020, the study titled "Forest Department: Governance Challenges and Way Forward", a follow-up of a previously conducted TIB study in 2008, was conducted between January 2019 and November 2020.

Accompanied by the study supervisor, TIB Climate Finance Governance (CFG) unit Senior Programme Manager M Zakir Hossain Khan, R&P Programme Manager Md. Rezaul Karim, CFG Deputy Programme Manager (DPM) Newazul Mowla, and R&P DPM Mohammad Nure Alam presented the findings at the event.

The qualitative study covered all four types of forest and 60 forest offices for the data collection, including the forest department’s head office. Aimed at exploring the governance challenges in the department, the study analysed the collected data based on six indicators: capacity, transparency, accountability, integrity, participation and irregularities/corruption.

The study observed that the effective implementation of the Forest Act (1926) lacks the necessary rules, action plans, and practical initiatives to reform the 93-year-old Forest Act. Recent examples of the department's discriminatory exercise of power are in the name of the forcible eviction of forest-dependent indigenous peoples in violation of traditional land rights, in violation of forest laws and unilaterally protected forests, wildlife sanctuaries, national parks and declarations.

The study also noticed the passive role of the forest department in the adoption of large-scale projects, including coal-based power projects around the protected forest lands, illegal occupation of forest lands, and allocation of forest lands for various development works and prevention of permanent damage.

According to the study, until December 2019, only 6 thousand 692 acres (3%) of forest land had been recovered by the department in the last five years. However, a total of 2 lakh 8 thousand 453 acres of forest land has been forcibly seized. The most effective improvement of forest management with the help of remote sensing and modern technology is being hampered due to a class of dishonest

department officials, thus making the department's activities particularly questionable.

Also, during the implementation of forest projects, there are allegations of embezzlement of up to 61 per cent by the DFO, Range and a section of BIT officials during the distribution of cash at the field level. There are allegations of illicit money transactions from BDT 50,000 to BDT 3 crore for the appointment, posting, and transfer of various posts, including the portion of Chief Forest Conservator, at different times.

Pointing to the research findings, Dr. Zaman said, "The department has not been able to effectively and practically exercise both the powers and capabilities vested in it to protect forest lands and to ensure the traditional rights of indigenous peoples living in forests, and we have noticed many deviations there including failure to prevent the encroachment of forest lands and how the forest lands have been allotted for the construction of civilian and military installations. Through deforestation, eviction and illegal allocation of forest land or its use by a section of Forest Department officials, there has been a kind of institutionalisation of collusion; where in reality, the protector is playing the role of predator."

Speaking about the coastal area, Dr. Zaman said the deforestation in the coastal region would affect the people living in the area, and many of them have already become internal refugees.

In conclusion, Dr. Zaman called upon the Forest Department and other stakeholders to consider TIB's 15 point recommendations to prevent the damage of forest and suggested a radical change of the department while enacting a new law.



TIB placed 15 points recommendations that included permission of the Forest Department before deforestation and use of forest land in case of urgent need of the state with completion of defect-free EIA and environment-friendly forestation of the same amount of land to formulate 'Compensatory Forestry Rules'; ensure changes and reform of the forest law determining the traditional land rights of the forest-dependent indigenous peoples, and stop the collection of revenue and profit-making initiatives with banning the commercialisation of natural forests.

CJNET journalists received training on Investigative Journalism

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) organised two days long virtual training on “Investigative Journalism on Governance in Disaster Management and Climate Finance” for the Coastal Journalists Network (CJNET) from 02-03 December 2020.

The workshop focused particularly on enhancing the skill and capacity of journalists on governance in disaster management, national and international climate finance mechanisms and steps, processes and areas of investigative journalism.

Dr. Iftekharuzzaman, Executive Director, TIB inaugurated the training. Julfikar Ali Manik, Freelance Journalist and planning consultant of Boishakhi Television; M Zakir Hossain Khan, Senior Programme Manager, TIB; Iftekhar Mahmud, Senior Reporter, The Daily Prothom Alo; and Rafiqul Islam Montu, Journalist and Coordinator of Coastal Journalist Network (CJNET) were the resource persons of the training. A total of 27 journalists from 14 coastal areas and Dhaka participated in this training workshop.

Sharing meeting held on Union Parishad's challenges amid corona crisis

Eight Union Parishads' Chairmen and Secretaries participated

Committees of Concerned Citizens (CCC), Sylhet organised a virtual sharing meeting titled “Implementation of Union Parishad’s Activities to Tackle Corona Crisis: Challenges and Way Forward” on 26 December 2020 with the participation of the Chairmen and Secretaries of 8 Union Parishads under Sylhet Sadar Upazila.

Lakshmikant Singh, Convener of CCC’s Local Government Sub-Committee delivered the welcome speech in the meeting. The meeting was chaired by CCC President Samik Shahid Jahan while Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) of Sylhet Sadar was the chief guest.

Speaking at the meeting, UNO Kazi Mahua Momtaz said, “COVID-19 is completely a new kind of crisis for us. For this reason, in the beginning, we had to face various challenges in creating public awareness about compliance with hygiene rules, social distancing, eradicating panic about Coronavirus, providing government incentives and relief materials to low-income people.”

Union Parishad's representatives have been playing an important role in tackling all these challenges, she added.

While answering a question, she stated that the selection of VGD (Vulnerable Group Development) beneficiaries for 2021-2022 cycle is being done in a complete online system. Due to this process, the possibility of irregularities has been reduced a lot. The UNO assured that strict action would be taken if any evidence of irregularities are found.

She said, “We have been vigilant from the very beginning to prevent any kind of irregularities and corruption in the distribution of incentives and relief materials in Sylhet Sadar Upazila. We will try

our best to prevent any kind of irregularities and corruption in the government service in future as well.”

No.07 Mogholgaon Union Parishad Chairman Hiron Mia, No.02 Hatkhola Union Parishad Secretary Md. Aftab Uddin, and TIB's Sylhet Cluster Programme Manager Nazma Khanam Naju also addressed the meeting.

In the open discussion, the Union Parishad's Chairmen and Secretaries discussed on the challenges and way forward in the implementation of Union Parishad activities during corona crisis. CCC Vice-President A. K. Sheram and Advocate Shirin Akter were present in the meeting.

International Anti-Corruption Day (IACD) observed at CCC level

CCCs call for favourable environment to stop corruption

TIB inspired Committee of Concerned Citizens (CCC) across the country observed the International Anti-Corruption Day (IACD) on 09 December 2020 with the theme "Zero Corruption in COVID Response: Stop Corruption, Save Lives."

Due to restrictions on public events in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, a series of virtual programmes including discussion meetings, anti-corruption story telling competitions, quiz competition, competition on seeking information, debate competitions and live discussion at Community Radio were undertaken in 45 different locations of the country.

Most of the CCCs observed IACD jointly with District/Upazila Administration, Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), and other like-minded organisations.

In these meetings, CCC called upon the government to ensure a favourable environment for the prevention of corruption in achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

They also emphasized the combined efforts of government, political parties, civil society, media, and mass people which are essential for achieving SDGs. They also urged everyone to make concerted efforts to strengthen the social movement against corruption in Bangladesh.

CCC placed a 10 point demand including the adoption of an immediate government initiative in collaboration with relevant stakeholders that is effective, coordinated, inclusive, time-bound and implementable to tackle the 2nd wave of the coronavirus; and extend the advantage of free tests to all districts with an increased number of tests, and follow the government procurement rules and guidelines in all types of procurements in health sector including introducing e-GP in all emergency procurements.

CCC also demanded to ensure effective and exemplary punishment for irregularities and corruption in health sector during the pandemic; and ensure inclusion of youth in tackling this global setback and the decision-making process to achieve SDGs.

Anti-Corruption Quiz Competition: On the eve of the Day, online 'Anti-Corruption Quiz Competition' was held on 07 December 2020 at 45 CCC areas.

With an aim to inspire youths (who aren't involved as YES/YES Friends) for engaging social movement against corruption at their locality, the competition was organized with the participation of young students studying from higher secondary to undergraduate level in different educational institutions at different CCC areas.

The specific objectives included providing ideas to young students about IACD & anti-corruption social movement and to involve more youths in this movement.

Main topic of this quiz competition covered International Anti-Corruption Day (IACD) & Anti-Corruption Social Movement, SDGs, RTI Act, 2009, ACC etc. A total of 425 students participated in the online quiz competition among them 154 were awarded as winners.

Anti-corruption story telling competition: Aiming to mark IACD through exchanging experience of fighting corruption, TIB organized Anti-Corruption Story Telling Competitions on 05-08 December 2020 at nine clusters of its Civic Engagement Division. YES and YES Friends Members from 45 areas across the country participated in these virtually organized events.

A total of 129 contestants (male: 77 & female: 52) shared their strategies, experiences and accomplishments achieved through anti-corruption activities after involvement in the YES or YES Friends group. A total of 31 contestants were awarded in these competitions.

Presidents of CCC or their representatives made the judgment in these competitions. Contestants expressed gratitude to TIB and CCC for creating this space for sharing their experiences.

Competition on seeking information: CCCs organized a Competition on Seeking Information in the due process according to the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2009 as a part of the celebration of International Right to Know Day 2020.

The main objective of the competition was to build the capacity of the youth to use the RTI Act and increase the interest of service providers at local levels in providing information.

YES and YES Friends members along with the students of different institutions who received training/orientation on RTI Act participated in this competition.

As a part of this competition, they submitted applications to different government authority/institutions according to RTI Act, 2009 for seeking information from the period of 15 October - 30 November 2020.

During the mentioned period, a total of 26,824 applications were submitted to different institutions/authorities by 483 youths.

The names of winners were announced by respective CCCs on 09 December 2020 at the event of IACD. From 45 CCCs, 167 contestants were awarded as winners.

President and respective members of CCC flagged out the objective of RTI Act and its application to prevent corruption while announcing the result.

Besides, a live discussion meeting on the theme of IACD was broadcast by a community radio called Lokobetar in Barguna and an anti-corruption debate competition was held in Chandpur on the theme 'Right to Information Act is the main tool to prevent corruption.'

Virtual sharing meeting with District and Upazila Primary Education Officers
Quality primary education through establishing transparency and accountability

CCC, Chakaria organised a virtual Sharing Meeting with Education Authority on 29 December 2020 with the participation of all Upazila Education Officers of Cox's Bazar district.

The meeting was presided over by CCC President Bulbul Jannat Shaheen. Asaduzzaman Chowdhury, District Primary Education Officer (DPEO) of Cox's Bazar was present as the chief guest while Ferhana Ferdous, Director - Civic Engagement of TIB, was present as discussant.

Principal Alhaj Farid Uddin Chowdhury, former CCC President, Chakaria welcomed all in the meeting conducted by AGM Jahangir Alam, Area Manager-CE of CCC, Chakaria. Kazi Shafiqur Rahman, Senior Programme Manager-Civic Engagement of TIB, discussed on the objective of the meeting. Cluster Manager of TIB Md. Jasim Uddin shared a presentation regarding the improvement of primary education.

Addressing as the Chief Guest Md. Asaduzzaman said, "There is no difference between the demands of CCC-TIB and the demands of the government's primary education department. Activities are being implemented in different ways with the same goal and objective."

"We also believe that if CCC-TIB achieves success is possible to implement throughout the district, the people of Cox's Bazar will get the benefit. Similarly, the quality of primary education will be improved through establishing transparency and accountability. We want to replicate this activity in the whole district in future in collaboration with CCC-TIB," he added.

Ferhana Ferdous, Director, Civic Engagement division, said, "Our dream is to have a corruption-free Bangladesh. With that dream, TIB is working on various issues including education in 45 CCC areas across the country. The sincere cooperation and commitment expressed by the Cox's Bazar District Primary Education Authority in today's meeting has further strengthened our aspirations."

"We hope that the Primary Education Department of Cox's Bazar district will act as a role model in future in the dream of establishing a transparent, accountable and corruption free Bangladesh," she added.

Among others, Cox's Bazar Sadar Upazila Education Officer Nurul Amin, Chakaria Upazila Education Officer Gulshan Akhter, Teknaf Upazila Education Officer Muhammad Emdad Hossain Chowdhury, Ramu Upazila Education Officer Gaur Chandra Dey, Pekua Upazila Education Officer Mohammad Salamat Ullah, Moheshkhali Upazila Education Officer Abu Noman Md. Abdullah, Kutubdia Upazila Education Officer Anwarul Quader and Ukhyia Upazila Education Officer Subrata Kumar Dhar spoke in the meeting.

The virtual sharing meeting was also attended by CCC Vice-President Runendu Bikash Dey, CCC Member Santosh Kumar Sushil and Hure Jannat Milli, SWAJAN Member Khaleda Khanom and Abul Mashroor Ahmed, YES and YES Friends members.

Editor: Sheikh Manjur-E-Alam

Sub-Editor: Mohammad Tauhidul Islam, Shakil Md. Faisal, Yasmin Ara

Design: Barkat Ullah Babu

Write us: Transparency International Bangladesh | email: advocacy@ti-bangladesh.org

Join us: www.ti-bangladesh.org; www.facebook.com/TIBangladesh