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Research Release

Roads and Highways Development Projects Corruption in the Tripartite Nexus Accounts for 23-40% of Total Expenditures, Says TIB



Through the tripartite collusion of politicians, contractors, and high-level officials, 23 to 40 percent of the total value of road and bridge-related construction works between the fiscal years 2009-10 and 2023-24 is attributed to corruption, amounting to Tk 29,230 to Tk 50,835 crore. This information was presented by Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) at a press conference during the release of their research report titled "Good Governance Challenges in the Implementation of Roads and Highways' Development Projects." In light of the research findings, the organization has proposed 16 recommendations to address the challenges of good governance in development projects implemented under the Roads and Highways Department.

The study reveals that the development policy framework, government procurement system, and project implementation processes in the road and highway sector have been manipulated through the coordinated exertions of politicians, bureaucrats, and contractors. This has led to violations of laws, irregularities, and corruption driven by conflicts of interest and political misconduct at various stages of project formulation and execution under the Roads and Highways Department. Serious deficiencies in all aspects of good governance were identified. Corruption has become institutionalized in the implementation of road and highway development projects due to this tripartite collusion. Between 23 and 40 percent of the total value of construction works related to roads and bridges is lost to corruption involving bribes, tender manipulation, work order sales, political extortion, and other forms of illicit dealings.

The research indicates that bribery accounts for 11 to 14 percent in obtaining construction work orders and contractors' bills. Additionally, corruption through the tripartite collusion of politicians, contractors, and high-level officials ranges from 10 to 20 percent in construction work, including

tender license rentals, sale of work orders, compromises, and local-level political extortion, which has been observed at rates of 2 to 6 percent.

The study also revealed that through collusion among contractors, the top 15 contracting firms have dominated procurement system of the Roads and Highways Department over the past decade. From FY 2013-14 to FY 2023-24, these firms secured road and bridge construction work orders worth approximately Tk 57,000 crore through the e-GP (Electronic Government Procurement) process alone. This represents about 72 percent of the total value of construction work orders awarded through the e-GP system during this period.

According to Dr. Iftekharuzzaman, the Executive Director of TIB, development projects have turned into a way for certain groups to amass cash as a result of the cooperation of dishonest contractors, bureaucrats, and politicians. He said, "Our research indicates that corruption in road and highway development projects ranges from 23 to 40 percent, with project costs being 2 to 9 times higher than those in South Asia and neighboring countries. It is essential to dismantle this tripartite nexus and ensure accountability for those involved. It is essential to establish an environment in which legal violations are effectively managed, particularly through the proper execution of procurement policies. No matter how extensively corruption is debated, it will remain unaddressed unless we tackle the systematic practice of awarding contracts to selected contractors through political and bureaucratic coordination, taking advantage of privileges and legal gaps. I urge that all those involved in irregularities and corruption in this sector be brought to justice and face exemplary punishment."

Emphasizing on the formulation and importance of the 'conflict of interest' law, Dr. Zaman said, "If the tripartite tyranny of politics, bureaucracy, and business is not dismantled, we risk reverting to an authoritarian system that shields corruption. However, a shift in political and bureaucratic culture, coupled with the reform of long-standing institutional norms, has the potential to break the cycle of anomalies and corruption. While acknowledging the development that has taken place, it has unfortunately been exploited by vested interests as a channel for illicit wealth accumulation. The infrastructure we could have been built at significantly lower costs. Due to inflated project expenses driven by corruption, the public bears an undue financial burden, and the quality of infrastructure remains subpar. This feeds a vicious cycle that needs to be broken since it raises maintenance expenses and opens up new avenues for corruption. Reducing corruption will remain difficult unless there is a massive shift in the political, business, and bureaucratic cultures. By misusing their power, a section of the business community and dishonest politicians and bureaucrats have taken over procurement procedures in all industries, including roads and highways. Making ensuring that these kinds of activities don't continue in the future is essential."

In light of the research findings, TIB's 16-point recommendations include formulating a 'Conflict of Interest Law' to prevent personal gain, nepotism, and irregularities in all government activities; ensuring that this law is reflected in the rules and regulations governing the implementation of road and highway development projects; enforcing relevant laws, regulations, and guidelines at every stage of project implementation; streamlining the decision-making process for road and highway development; identifying and holding accountable politicians, officials, and contractors

involved in irregularities and corruption at various stages of project execution; formulating development project proposals based on priority to ensure effective evaluation and proper management while incorporating the opinions of relevant stakeholders; reforming the guidelines for project formulation, processing, approval, and amendments in accordance with applicable laws and regulations; completing all project-related procurement activities through the e-GP process; and mandating feasibility studies conducted by qualified, experienced professionals in the formulation of all development projects.

Along with the TIB ED Dr. Iftekharuzzaman, TIB Adviser- Executive Management Prof. Dr. Sumaiya Khair, TIB R&P Director Muhammad Badiuzzaman, Senior Research Fellow Md. Julkarnayeen and Research Associate Md. Mostafa Kamal attended the press conference, which was moderated by TIB O&C Director Mohammad Tauhidul Islam.

Events

Enabling Anti-Corruption Efforts: A Training Workshop on Advanced Research Methodology for ACC Officials



Corruption is a pervasive issue that undermines the integrity of governments and hinders development. To effectively combat corruption, it is essential to equip government officials with



the tools and knowledge necessary to identify and address it. With this aim in mind, recently, Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), in collaboration with the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), conducted a three-day training workshop on Advance Research Methodology at Proshika HRDC in Koitta, Manikganj to enhance ACC officials' capacity for enforcing anti-corruption measures. The training is a follow-up session for 15 officials of the government agency concentrating on both theory and application of advance research process.

The Importance of Research in Anti-Corruption Efforts

Research plays a crucial role in identifying corruption, understanding its root causes, and developing effective strategies to combat it. By equipping government officials with advanced research skills, we can empower them to identify corruption, to uncover hidden patterns of corruption and expose corrupt practices that may otherwise remain undetected. Research can help to identify the underlying factors that contribute to corruption, such as weak governance, lack of transparency, and inadequate accountability mechanisms, etc.

The ACC, an officially autonomous entity of Bangladesh, plays a significant role in the country by investigating the corruption issue. The TIB anticipates that the ACC will be better prepared to identify corruption and implement stringent measures in order to eradicate it as it works to fulfill its mandate.

While inaugurating the training workshop, Muhammad Badiuzzaman, Research & Policy Director of TIB said that, 'We believe that with thorough understanding of research processes, the ACC officials will be able to implement the learnings for ensuring increased accountability and transparency at the administrative level.'

On the first day of workshop, detailed sessions on different aspects of research took place which included the methods of data collection, data coding and transcription, data analysis, triangulation and validation, and report preparation. The training sessions were conducted by TIB Senior Research Fellow Shahzada Akram and Md Mahfuzul Haque, and Research Fellow Atanu Das.

The 15 ACC officials divided in three groups, on second day, applied their learnings through field visits in different government offices including Bangladesh Road Transport Authority, Land Office and Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board. With the data collected from the spots, on the final day of the workshop, the participating ACC officials analyzed the existing discrepancies and irregularities in the public service sector and presented their findings in line with the learnings. Participants also engaged in lively question and answer sessions over each other's works. In conclusion, each group put forward multiple sets of recommendations to improve the service quality of those government agencies.

Key Takeaways from the Workshop

The training workshop was a success, as ACC officials have gained valuable insights into advanced research methodologies. Some of the key takeaways from the workshop include:

The power of research: Participants recognized the potential of research to make a significant impact on the fight against corruption.

Collaboration is key: The workshop highlighted the importance of collaboration between government agencies and civil society organizations in combating corruption.

Continuous learning: The ACC officials understood the need for ongoing learning and development in the field of research.

TIB Outreach & Communication Director Mohammad Tauhidul Islam emphasized the need of equipping ACC officials with enhanced knowledge on research methodology. ‘Capacity development of the ACC officials will help the ACC to become an impactful government agency that would be able to prevent corruption rightfully. We are hopeful that ACC will uncover new means of combatting and averting corruption through researches as an outcome of this workshop,’ he said.

Earlier, the TIB O&C Director hosted a special session on the significance of utilizing open data sources for corruption research and different online repositories and tools for data collection and cleaning.



Conclusion

The training workshop on advanced research methodology was a valuable step in empowering ACC officials to combat corruption more effectively. By equipping officials with the tools and knowledge necessary to conduct rigorous research, the government agencies will be able to identify and address corruption. As the fight against corruption continues, it is essential to invest

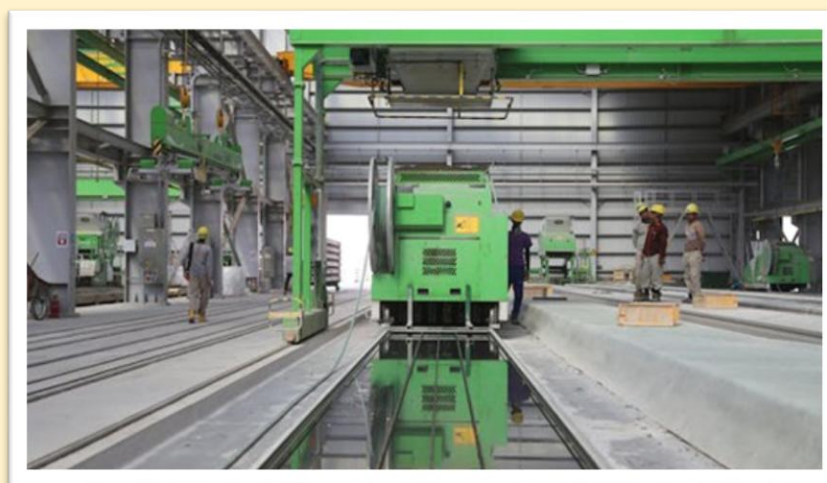
in training and capacity building to ensure that government officials have the skills they need to make a difference.

The participants appreciated TIB's effort to enhance their capacity in research field. On behalf of the ACC Officials, Deputy Director Sharika Islam thanked TIB for the theoretical and practical design of the workshop and lauded the efficiencies of the trainers. 'With our learnings on Advance Research Methodology, we from now on can identify the limitations of researches on corruption as an outcome of the workshop.' She also expressed hope that the newly opened research wing of ACC will perform more effectively as takeaways from the workshop will be replicated for real world application.

The three-day workshop concluded with certificate distribution among the participating ACC officials.

Policy Stances

Private Sector Neglected in Interim Government and Reform Agenda: TIB



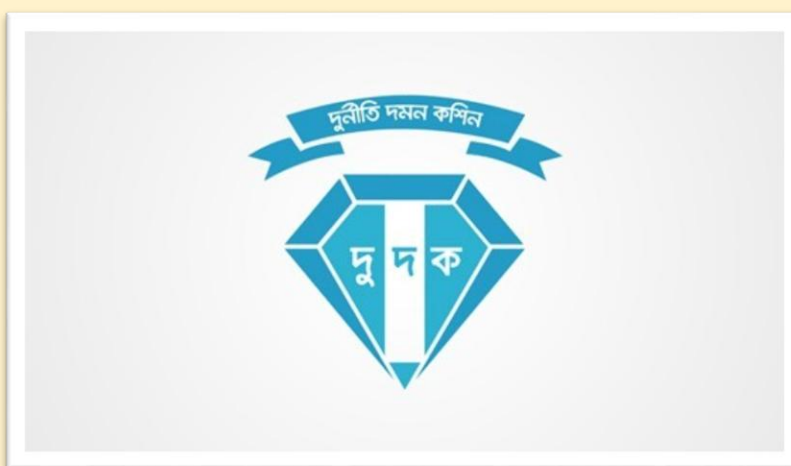
Dhaka, 20 October 2024: To initiate the process of recovering money smuggled from Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) expresses concern over the lack of active participation from the private sector in the interim government's advisory council, as well as the insufficient priority given to this sector in the government's ongoing policy reform activities. It is nearly impossible to establish a non-discriminatory and participatory development system and reforms for the labor force in this sector due to the exclusion of this sector, which is one of the key drivers of the economy. In light of this, TIB calls for the inclusion of representatives from the privately owned business sector in the advisory council. Additionally, the organization urges the formation of a commission to develop a Business Integrity Strategy, ensuring transparency within this vital industry.

According to media reports, the government has decided to establish four reform commissions focused on health, media, labor, and women's rights in the second phase of its reform initiatives across various sectors. Welcoming this move, TIB Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman said, "We have to keep in mind that the capture of policy frameworks by a subset of the private sector, resulting in unaccountable use of corporate power including irregularities, corruption, money laundering, and collusion with political and bureaucratic actors, so supporting the emergence of authoritarianism in our nation. While ensuring justice is crucial, it is impossible to achieve effective results by excluding such a key sector from efforts to realize the dream of a discrimination-free Bangladesh. It is imperative to guarantee the presence of the private sector in the interim government structure in order to handle this scenario."

Calling upon the interim government to ensure transparency and accountability in the private sector, Dr. Zaman further said, "The exploitative system, established through the collusion between the fallen authoritarian government and a part of private sector, was not only strangling the potential of the entire economy but also hindering the natural development of the private sector. To prevent such situations in the future and build a sustainable economic system, TIB believes that formulating a roadmap and implementing a Business Integrity Strategy within the privately owned business sector is essential. To this end, TIB has called for the formation of a special commission."

TIB ED said, "Initiatives to reform the financial, social, and political structures are commendable, as they are crucial in preventing the re-emergence of authoritarianism in the state. The idea of expanding the size of the Advisory Council to accelerate the activities of the interim government is also praiseworthy. On the other hand, we are concerned about the fact that the state reform agenda completely ignores the private sector, which is the sector that contributes the most to employment in the country. Reforming the private sector and ensuring its participation in ongoing reform activities is essential. It will be challenging to address market disorder and restore order to the economic system in the absence of this."

Appoint ACC Leadership Above Political and Bureaucratic Influence Right Away: TIB



Dhaka, 31 October 2024: Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) has called for the appointment of new, independent leadership at the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), free from political and bureaucratic influences. Following the resignation of the ACC Chairman and

Commissioners on October 29, 2024, TIB emphasized in a statement the urgent need to select capable, impartial individuals through established legal procedures. TIB underscored that restoring public trust in the ACC requires leaders committed to integrity and the public interest, wholly detached from personal or partisan agendas.

TIB Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman said, “ACC, which is a major institution in the continuing state reform program, has been unsuccessful for a long time. As a result, an ACC Reform Commission has been tasked with the responsibility of presenting suggestions that will enable the ACC to accomplish its tasks in a manner that is free, impartial, and effective. In this context, the government has undertaken the responsibility of promptly establishing a new commission in response to the recent resignation of ACC officials. Currently, investigations are underway against numerous former ministers, MPs, and government officials from the recently ousted authoritarian regime on charges of illegal wealth accumulation and money laundering. At this critical juncture, a leadership void at the ACC could cause substantial disruption and potential stagnation in ongoing operations, particularly investigations. New inquiries, investigations, or cases cannot be initiated without the establishment of a new commission. Consequently, it is imperative to resolve this gap by forming a new commission; otherwise, state reform initiatives may be affected.”

He further said, “Since its establishment in 2004, the recruitment process within the ACC has been influenced by political and bureaucratic factors, often operating as an instrument to fulfill these agendas. Throughout authoritarian regimes, there were clear instances of the Commission’s submissive alignment with political authorities. The Commission, influenced by appointments rooted in political and bureaucratic motivations, did not meet its anticipated responsibilities and showed minimal engagement in fulfilling them. Consequently, commissioners who were appointed under political and bureaucratic influence have been persuaded by the priorities of incumbency, which has an effect on both their decision-making and their actions. There were multiple instances in which the ACC neglected to commence investigations, despite possessing extensive information and strong evidence of widespread corruption and money laundering. In some cases, the ACC even acquitted defendants after initiating investigations, which established a precedent that was detrimental. There have been instances in which the ACC has let itself to be utilized as a tool for the purpose of harassing political opponents or groups that are not in favor with those in power. Consequently, rather of functioning as a powerful anti-corruption organization, the ACC has frequently played the role of a facilitator and protector of corruption.”

Dr. Zaman said, “We believe that no individual directly or indirectly involved in party politics should be considered for appointment as ACC Chairman or Commissioner. We also call for the appointment of individuals who are highly competent in anti-corruption efforts, free from political influence in their personal lives, unaligned with bureaucratic interests, and demonstrate a strong stance against corruption. If these conditions aren’t met, the public’s high hopes, which were based on unprecedented sacrifices, will be shattered again, and the function of the interim government will be called into question.”

CCC News Highlights

CCC Leaders Hold Strategic Meeting, Reaffirm Anti-Corruption Commitment



On 03 October 2024, Leaders of the Committee of Concerned Citizens (CCC), inspired by Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), convened at BIAM Auditorium for a strategic meeting focused on combating corruption and strengthening field-level transparency efforts.

The gathering, attended by 184 participants, including 48 women, began with the national anthem, followed by an anti-corruption oath led by TIB Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman. Representatives from 45 CCCs, including current and former Presidents, Vice-Presidents, and YES Sub-Committee Conveners, participated in discussions on critical issues such as freedom of speech, justice, education, banking, local governance, elections, and parliamentary reforms.

Ferhana Ferdous, Director of Civic Engagement (CE), presented progress updates, while Kazi Shafiqur Rahman, Coordinator, CE moderated the sessions. The event underscored a unified call for transparency, accountability, and good governance to shape a corruption-free Bangladesh.

Youth Leaders Strategize for Anti-Corruption Movement in "New Bangladesh"



On 02 October 2024, Young volunteers from 60 Youth Engagement and Support (YES) Groups across Dhaka and 45 CCC areas convened for a strategic meeting titled "New Bangladesh and Anti-Corruption Social Movement: Young People's Thoughts". The daylong event, held at BIAM

Auditorium, focused on fostering fresh ideas to combat corruption and build a transparent, accountable society.

The meeting commenced with the National Anthem and a tribute to students injured or lost during the anti-discrimination movement, followed by an anti-corruption oath led by TIB Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman, who also outlined the event's objectives.

Participants, including leaders, deputy leaders, and former leaders of YES groups, shared field-level challenges and proposed actionable ideas to ensure good governance in sectors such as education, banking, and the environment. Discussions emphasized transparency and accountability as cornerstones of a corruption-free "New Bangladesh."

The event featured contributions from TIB officials, including Ferhana Ferdous, Director of Civic Engagement, and Md. Atikur Rahman, Coordinator of Civic Engagement. Speeches were delivered by YES representatives Abrar Jahin Raein and Md. Mehedi Hasan, further inspiring collective action toward the vision of a corruption-free society.

A total of 235 YES members of 45 CCC based YES groups and 15 Dhaka based YES groups were present in the event.

Public-Private Partnership Crucial for Implementing NIS and Achieving SDGs, speakers at workshops



A series of eight workshops titled "Implementation of National Integrity Strategy (NIS) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Way Forward" were held across Savar, Nilphamari, Khulna, Bogura, Lakshmipur, Chandpur, Gaibandha, and Satkhira. Jointly organized by district and upazila administrations in collaboration with respective Committees of Concerned Citizens (CCC), these workshops aimed to enhance institutional integrity and foster good governance in alignment with NIS to achieve the SDGs.

The workshops, attended by representatives from 369 institutions (345 government and 24 non-government), emphasized the necessity of public-private partnerships in ensuring integrity in service delivery systems. Participants developed actionable plans tailored to their respective institutions and pledged phased implementation.

Prominent government officials, including Deputy Commissioners and senior administrators, highlighted the need for collaborative efforts. Mohammed Saiful Islam, Deputy Commissioner of Khulna, stated, “To build a non-discriminatory New Bangladesh, we must ensure integrity in our service delivery system.” Similarly, Mohammad Nairuzzaman, Deputy Commissioner of Nilphamari, stressed the importance of “proper implementation of the NIS and collective efforts to achieve the SDGs.”

In Chandpur, Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Mohsin Uddin underscored the link between good governance and reduced corruption, asserting, “Implementation of the National Integrity Strategy and Sustainable Development Goals is essential. Corruption will decline when we uphold our duties and respect the laws.”

Ms. Hosna Afroza, Deputy Commissioner of Bogura, called for transparency and accountability in institutional practices, emphasizing their role in achieving sustainable development.



Facilitated by Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) coordinators, the workshops featured comprehensive PowerPoint presentations outlining the National Integrity Strategy and its alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals. Participants examined key elements of NIS, government initiatives, and strategies for implementing SDG-16, which focuses on promoting peace, justice, and strong institutions.

The sessions also addressed challenges in applying NIS at the local level, particularly in service delivery systems. Recommendations included- Formation of ethical committees; Monitoring progress in action plan implementation; Recruitment of skilled and efficient personnel to ensure corruption-free governance; Provision of technical support by local administrations to government institutions; The workshops facilitated open discussions, enabling participants from government, non-governmental organizations, and civil society to share insights and commitments.

The workshops reiterated the importance of joint initiatives between public and private sectors. Deputy Commissioner of Lakshmipur, Rajib Kumar Sarkar, noted, “Preventing corruption is crucial for the country’s development. Awareness must begin at the family level to build a corruption-free society.”

Md. Abubakar Sarkar, Upazila Nirbahi Officer of Savar, highlighted the shared responsibility of public and private entities in achieving sustainable goals, stating, “To benefit from anti-discrimination movements, we must work collaboratively to implement the NIS and SDGs.”

The workshops concluded with participants pledging to implement their institution-specific action plans in phases. CCCs expressed gratitude to all attendees and emphasized the critical role of public-private cooperation in the successful execution of NIS and SDGs.

Speaking at the closing, Mr. Mostak Ahmed, Deputy Commissioner of Satkhira, reminded participants of their duty to citizens, asserting, “Government officials and employees are paid by the hard-earned money of the people. It is our responsibility to serve them with honesty and dedication.”

The workshops also engaged representatives from civil society organizations, journalists, and TIB Cluster Coordinators. They collectively expressed hope that such initiatives would enrich the knowledge and commitment of stakeholders, fostering a corruption-free, accountable, and transparent governance system in Bangladesh.

By addressing both systemic challenges and actionable solutions, these workshops laid a foundational framework for institutional integrity and sustainable development, marking a significant step toward achieving the SDGs by 2030.

Information Fair held in Madhupur and Patiya to promote awareness on RTI Act, 2009



In an effort to enhance awareness of the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2009 and ensure its proper implementation, the Committee of Concerned Citizens (CCC) organized information fairs in Madhupur and Patiya. These events, held on October 29-30, 2024, in Madhupur and on October 30, 2024, in Patiya, were conducted in collaboration with the Upazila administration. The fairs served as platforms to foster public knowledge about the RTI Act and reinforce the collective commitment to creating a more transparent and accountable system of governance.

A total of 55 institutions participated in the fairs, including 48 government offices and 7 non-governmental organizations. These institutions set up stalls where they proactively shared information about their services with the public. The event was endorsed by the Upazila Nirbahi

Officers (UNO) of both districts, who instructed all government offices to make their information readily available to the public as part of a broader effort to encourage transparency.

The fairs attracted a significant number of visitors. In total, 3,767 people attended the events, with 2,336 men and 1,431 women among the participants. These visitors received valuable information directly from the stalls and were given basic training on how to submit applications requesting information, as outlined in the RTI Act. As a result of these efforts, 2,377 individuals filed 2,376 RTI applications. Of these, 1,272 applications resulted in immediate responses from government offices.

The information fair in Madhupur took place on October 29, 2024, and was inaugurated by Md. Jubayer Hossain, the UNO of Madhupur. During his speech, he reiterated the government's obligation to provide information when requested by the public. The event featured a discussion meeting, which was chaired by Md. Abdul Malek, President of CCC Madhupur. Ms. Rifat Anjum Pia, Assistant Commissioner (Land), Emranul Kabir, Office In-charge of Madhupur Police Station, Md. Shahidur Rahman, Upazila Secondary Education Officer, and Nitai Chandra Kar, Acting Principal of Shaheed Smriti College, participated as special guests.

A total of 26 stalls were set up in Madhupur, including 24 government offices. The fair, held at the Upazila Administration Chattar, provided a valuable opportunity for citizens to engage with government representatives and gain insights into public services.

On the second day of the event, a "Face the Public" session was organized, where representatives from the Upazila Land Office and Upazila Primary Education Office addressed queries from the public. A total of 250 individuals participated, receiving answers to questions related to land and primary education.



In Patiya, the information fair was inaugurated on October 30, 2024, by Md. Alauddin Bhuiyan Johnny, the UNO of Patiya, following a rally. The event included a discussion meeting, presided over by Advocate Kabishekhar Nath, President of CCC Patiya. Md. Alauddin Bhuiyan Johnny spoke as the chief guest, while Senior Upazila Fisheries Officer Swapan Chandra Dey participated as a special guest. Former CCC President S M A K Jahangir delivered the welcome address, and TIB Cluster Coordinator Md. Jasim Uddin outlined the objectives behind the information fair. The event was moderated by Abdur Razzak, Convener of the fair's organizing sub-committee.

In his address, Md. Alauddin Bhuiyan Johnny emphasized the role of both government and private departments in providing essential services to citizens. He noted that the fair allowed these departments to present their services directly to the public, fostering greater public awareness. The event also featured a range of activities, including citizen dialogues, an anti-corruption quiz competition, an art competition, cultural performances, and a campaign on the RTI Act, 2009.

A total of 30 stalls were set up in Patiya, with 26 representing various government offices in the Upazila. These stalls provided valuable information to the public, contributing to the overall success of the event.

These events in both Madhupur and Patiya successfully promoted awareness of the RTI Act, 2009, empowering citizens with the knowledge to seek information and participate more actively in the governance process. The fairs underscored the importance of transparency and the role of citizens in holding government institutions accountable.

Sharing Meeting with Department of Environment Held in Natore



The Committee of Concerned Citizens (CCC), Natore, organized a sharing meeting in collaboration with the Department of Environment, Natore, on 28 October 2024. Md. Rafiqul Islam, Assistant Director of the Natore district office, Department of Environment, attended the meeting as the chief guest.

Md. Abdur Razzak, Convener of the CCC Sub-committee, highlighted concerns regarding environmental degradation, emphasizing that the pollution of the Narada River has become a significant issue. He urged joint efforts from the Department of Environment and the Water Development Board to dredge the river and called for the immediate elimination of illegal brick kilns and the banning of polythene use.

Addressing the meeting, Md. Rafiqul Islam stressed that the Department of Environment has initiated monthly mobile courts to combat the use of polythene, illegal brick kilns, and hydraulic horns. He underscored the importance of public awareness campaigns to mitigate environmental disasters, stating that community participation is essential for sustainable change.

Additionally, Md. Shafiul Islam, Area Coordinator of TIB, presented an overview of the "Participatory Action Against Corruption: Towards Transparency and Accountability (PACTA)" project. He requested the attendees' support and collaboration to ensure the success of the initiative.

The meeting brought together officials from the Department of Environment, CCC members, YES members, and TIB Natore staff. The discussions highlighted the importance of collective action, policy enforcement, and public cooperation to address environmental challenges facing the region.

Orientation on TI, TIB, and Anti-Corruption Social Movement YES Members Trained to Strengthen Anti-Corruption Efforts



An orientation program titled "TI, TIB, and Anti-Corruption Social Movement" was organized on 14 October 2024, to empower members of the Youth Engagement & Support (YES) group from the University of Asia Pacific, Stamford University Bangladesh, Uttara University, Daffodil International University, and Dhaka YES-2. The event was held at the Meghomala Conference Room of the Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) office, with 39 YES members in attendance.

The session aimed to educate participants on the vision, mission, and objectives of Transparency International (TI) and TIB, the concept of a social movement against corruption, the TIB Code of Ethics, the YES Operational Guidelines, gender issues, and the PACTA project. Additionally, the orientation included discussions on leveraging social media as a tool to strengthen anti-corruption movements.

The inaugural session was led by Ms. Ferhana Ferdous, Director of Civic Engagement Division at TIB, as the chief guest. Kazi Shafiqur Rahman and Atikur Rahman, Coordinators of Civic Engagement, also attended the event. In her speech, Ms. Ferdous emphasized the purpose of the orientation—equipping YES members to raise awareness among peers, friends, and families in the fight against corruption. She highlighted that YES members are pivotal actors in TIB's anti-corruption social movement and should understand ethics, norms, and values to strengthen their role as change agents.

Kazi Shafiqur Rahman underscored the importance of designing and implementing effective, results-oriented YES initiatives, while Atikur Rahman inspired members by discussing the significance of their volunteer efforts in supporting the movement. Yasmin Ara, Mochaddik Hosan, and Hozzatul Islam, Assistant Coordinators of TIB, facilitated interactive sessions throughout the day-long event.

Additionally, a similar orientation took place on 6 October 2024 at the Bangladesh-Kuwait Maitree Hall, University of Dhaka, with the support of TIB's Training Unit. This session was attended by 30 YES members and focused on the same key topics. Yasmin Ara, Mochaddik Hosan, and Hozzatul Islam, assistant and deputy coordinators of TIB led the discussions, fostering practical engagement on social movements and ethical action against corruption.

Both sessions aim to enhance the capacity of YES members, ensuring their effective participation in anti-corruption activities by equipping them with necessary knowledge, strategies, and tools.

Dengue Awareness Campaign Conducted by YES Group at Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University



Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University: The YES Group of Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University organized a Dengue Awareness Campaign on 21 October 2024, to raise awareness about the prevention of the disease. The campaign was inaugurated by the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Md. Abdul Latif, in the presence of Pro-VC Dr. Md. Belal Hossain, Director (Students Advisor) Dr. Muhammad Rashedul Islam, and Dean Dr. Md. Salauddin Md. Chowdhury, who encouraged the YES members' efforts.

In his inaugural speech, Dr. Md. Abdul Latif commended the initiative and assured immediate action, including fogging spray and campus cleaning, to combat the spread of dengue. The YES members actively participated in the awareness campaign by distributing informative leaflets on dengue prevention to students, teachers, and staff across the university. These leaflets were placed on the YES Notice Board, other prominent notice boards, and areas such as dormitories and faculty buildings.

The campaign underscores the need to educate the university community about proactive measures and hygiene practices to combat the spread of the disease. Through this initiative, the YES Group aims to foster a healthy and informed environment for all members of the university.



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