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## NATIONAL

### TIB condemned Government decision to legalize illegal housing projects and demanded cancellation



Detail Area Plan

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) condemned the Government's reported decision to legalize some illegal housing schemes that defy High Court directive and raise environmental concerns in a statement on July 31, 2012. Expressing deep concern over the decision by an inter-ministerial body to "provisionally" approve the projects that were declared illegal by High Court in June last year, TIB called on the Government to cancel the decision immediately and refrain from doing the same for any other similar project.

Executive Director of TIB, Dr Iftekharuzzaman, said the Government decision on the one hand defies the Court

directive to take action against illegal schemes in wetlands, water bodies and croplands, and on the other undermines the credibility of government in terms of its commitment to environmental sustainability.

"It is common knowledge for all including the Environmental Department of the Government that the projects in question, lying within the jurisdiction of the Detailed Area Plan (DAP), have been declared illegal particularly for their adverse environmental implications. No words can sufficiently condemn the apparent collusion of a section of the Government with the powerful lobbies of housing companies at the expense of future sustainability of life," Zaman said.

He further said that such moves are bound to erode the environmental credibility of the Government and raise doubts about the moral and ethical basis of its high-sounding commitment to confront environmental degradation and climate change using national and international funds.

We call upon the Government to cancel the approvals without fear or favour to anybody.

## Training on Citizen Report Card (CRC) held

A day-long training event was organized for the members of Health Rights Movement National Committee (HRMNC) on July 4 at the TIB Head Office. Since TIB has a long history of experience with using the CRC for ensuring accountability in different institutions, it was an opportunity to share knowledge with network members. Objectives, processes of application, the possible results of applying these social accountability tools, questionnaire preparation, data collection procedures and report preparation were the main points of discussion at the sessions. A total of 29 participants from different member organizations of HRMNC in the Dhaka area were involved.

Sessions were delivered through lectures and discussions, question answer and group discussion methods. The participants all enjoyed themselves and learnt a lot. Mr. Shadhan Kumar Das, Mr. Manzoor E Khoda and Mr. Rezaul Karim of TIB were the facilitators. Dr. Iftekharuzzaman, Executive Director of TIB and Dr. Rashid-E-Mahbub, President of HRMNC, were

present at the inaugural session. At the end of the training, certificates were distributed.



More than 53 organizations over the country under the HRMNC have been working on health issues since 2007, and TIB is one of them.

## Delegates of Transparency International met Dhaka YES members



A special meeting was arranged for the Dhaka YES members with the foreign delegates of Transparency International on July 25. A total of 9 members from different YES groups of Dhaka participated in a meeting with the Director of the Asia-Pacific Department of TI, Dr. Srirak Plipat, Senior Coordinator Mr. Rukshana Nanayakkara and Programme Coordinator Ms. Maren Thompson.

The YES members shared their experiences on cartoon exhibitions, street theatre, AI-desks and anti-drug & traffic awareness campaigns. Interactive discussions followed, after which there was a video presentation of their comprehensive activities. The Director of the Outreach & Communication division of TIB, Rezwan-ul-Alam, introduced the members of Dhaka YES and moderated.

## CCC NEWS

### 'Secondary Education Services: Problems and its Way Out' - Sadar Upazilla of Faridpur

On July 9, Faridpur CCC initiated the publication of a report card survey titled 'Secondary Education Services: Problems and its Way Out' of sadar upazilla under Faridpur District. TIB's representatives presented the report, which described the problems in secondary education at the district and came up with 18 recommendations to solve them. After ending the presentation, an open discussion was held regarding many of these problems. The Education Authorities agreed with most, but they also pointed out that a few of them had already been solved. The District Education Officer also added that all necessary information is being made available so that teachers of different institutions are not being harassed at the Education Office. After the discussion, a decision was taken to submit the entire report to the Education Authorities, and they were requested to place great importance on taking actions and solving the mentioned problems. District Education Officer Md. Kamruzzaman, CCC President, CCC members and TIB representatives were all present.

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## CCC News

### Opinion Sharing Meeting between Service Recipients and Hospital Authorities

An opinion sharing meeting was held on July 11 between service recipients and Hospital authorities at Chittagong by the initiative of CCC Chittagong, with the slogan "we want transparency and accountability in health sector."



Dr. Nurul Islam, Dr. Enamul Haque, Dr. Shahidul Haque, Dr. Shaheen Ara and Dr. Jafar Ullah were present and answered the

questions of audiences. During the open discussion session, participants raised concerns over the lack of

pure drinking water, lack of medicine supplies, additional amounts in ticketing and the misconduct of nurses and other employees of hospitals. Authorities committed to resolving the issues within a short period of time. According to the speakers and audience, this type of meetings will build a bridge in relationships between the parties and help to ensure accountability. Another opinion sharing meeting was held in Pirojpur on July 31 between hospital authorities and service recipients. This was presided over by Dr. Md. Abdul Gani, civil surgeon of Pirojpur. Details of available services, as well as on the limitations of the hospital, were presented before the audience by residential Medical Officer Dr. Shangkar Kumar Ghosh. An open discussion was held afterwards with recommendations to improve the quality of services using existing resources.

### Face the Public to Establish Transparency and Accountability

Joint initiatives by the local people and Councils are required to make a strong, transparent and accountable local government. Keeping this in mind, the CCC organized events where elected representatives of municipalities and Union Parishads faced the people, and which also included announcements of their FY-2012-2013 budgets. The municipalities' and UP representatives announced their budgets and answered various questions raised by the participants.

Lakshmipur, Rangamati, and Khagrachari municipalities organized the event 'Face the Public' on July 4, on July 8 and on July 19 by the initiatives of respective CCCs in their locality. The Ward Councillors, Mayor and the local people also participated. The Presidents of the CCC presided over the meetings and respective municipality representatives and the Mayor answered

different questions raised by the participants. The Municipality authorities also declared the budgets of FY-2012-2013, along with their development plan in the period. They committed to implementing the plans in time and asked the people for their cooperation accordingly.



### A Case Study: after 14 days the People of Three Villages get rid of Flood Water

All of the residential areas of Koiliarbil union and Chokoria Upazilla in Cox's Bazar district were submerged under flood water on June 27, 2012. After the rain stopped, water began to recede in all the areas except the Choto Vayola, Vornachor and Hamidullah Shikdarpara villages. Some neighbouring landlords made a barricade in fear of soil erosion, which resulted in water stagnation and put the people of these three villages in danger. Women, children

and elderly people faced problems in movements and suffered from diarrhoea and other abdominal diseases. Under these circumstances, members of the CCC Chokoria were informed about the plight of these villagers during relief distribution in other flood affected areas on July 4. The relief distribution team of CCC instantly visited the mentioned areas and prepared a report describing the whole situation of the villages.

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As a result, the daily Prothom Alo, the daily Kaler Kantha and the daily Azadi, along with other lead local newspapers, published the news with high importance on 5-8 July.

At the same time, the villagers submitted a memorandum describing their terrible situation to the Upazilla Nirbahi Officer of Chokoria on July 5, 2012. The members of CCC Chokoria also met the UNO and requested him to resolve the prob-



lem. As a result, the AC (land) visited the villages with CCC members and advised them to dig

a canal over the khash land for draining out the water.

However, the illegal owners of



that khash land made a barrier to prevent the canal from being dug by the local people. Again CCC members, TIB employees and the local UP representatives sat together and came to a decision to dig the canal. Finally, the people of those three villages were freed from the water after a long trial. They are now happy and grateful to TIB and CCC Chokoria for their help.

## DHAKA YES NEWS

### Satellite AI-Desk

The four YES groups of the University of Dhaka and members of Uttara University organized the AI-Desk on July 15 and 16, 2012. A total of 6940 service recipients received information from the YES members on these days. YES members delivered information related to fees of different services, availability of services, location of medicine distribution centres and so on, verbally and through leaflet distribution.



### Theatre Show



This year the Dhaka YES theatre team produced their third production, and staged a show on July 19 at Shohrowardi Uddan, Dhaka. Around 150 viewers watched the drama, which focused on the application of the Right to Information Act, river pollution and land encroachment.

### Study Circle

The YES Group - Institute of Education & Research, University of Dhaka organized a study circle on 'Climate Change: Bangladesh and International Context' on 29 July 2012. Shahzada M. Akram, Senior Programme Manager of TIB was the key facilitator in this study circle.

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