

NATIONAL

TIB's position on Trials against war crime and crime against humanity

The Context

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) considers war crimes including genocide, murder, mass murder, rape and gang-rape that took place in 1971 during the War of Liberation of Bangladesh as gross violations of human rights and crimes against humanity. These were also among the worst forms of abuse of power in the name of protecting religion perpetrated on innocent and unarmed people.

For four long decades, the perpetrators enjoyed impunity. Victims and others campaigned ceaselessly for this impunity to be challenged effectively so that such crimes could never again be repeated anywhere in the world. In many cases campaigners demanding trials and justice were themselves victimized and faced violent reprisals, particularly by the perpetrators and political forces that benefitted from impunity in the name of religion.

Righting the wrongs through Justice

The trials are about a national aspiration and obligation to right the wrongs – indiscriminate killings, mass-killings, rape, gang-rape and torture on Bengalis and non-Bengalis, Muslims and non-Muslims - Hindus, Christians, Budhists. An estimated three million people were killed and two hundred thousand women fell victim of the brutality of rape and gang-rape in a short span of 9 months leaving behind a legacy of crime against humanity unparalleled in history. The trials are about doing justice to victims, and bringing to justice the perpetrators who were allegedly involved in the crime directly and most actively.

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Due process

TIB demands that impunity must be challenged effectively and justice must be done. At the same time, we demand that all trials must be held in accordance with due process, transparently and with fullest regard to the law, free from fear or favour. Trials must also be above partisan political influence and must not be used for political mileage.

The highest level of independence and integrity of the International Crimes Tribunal must be strictly upheld. All measures must be ensured to prevent undermining the credibility of the Courts and judgments.

Fear of justice being evaded

The Constitution of Bangladesh provides for the power of presidential pardon of any convicted person, which has been exercised by different governments on a partisan political basis. This has given rise to fears that those found guilty or facing trial may evade justice through political interference in the legal process. Such a possibility must be prevented.

Equality before law, full justice

TIB campaigns for promotion of good governance at the core of which are justice, rule of law, fairness and democratic accountability. There cannot be any discrimination in the court of law. The law must be applicable equally for all. Failure to do so will imply condoning violations of the constitutional provision of equality of all in the eyes of the law. TIB will continue to campaign against impunity and demand justice consistent with the legal provisions and in the due process.

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TIB proposes for an election time government through the parliamentary consensus committee

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) proposed to form a committee taking equal number of members from both the ruling and opposition alliances with an aim to create a congenial atmosphere for holding a free, fair and credible 10th national parliament election. The proposed framework "Polls-time governmental system in Bangladesh: Process and structure proposal" was unveiled on 12 April 2013 at a press conference at Brac Centre Inn in the capital.

According to the proposal, a Parliamentary Consensus Committee will be formed in the 30 days before the incumbent parliament's tenure expires. The committee will select 10 members and one chief for the polls-time government. The Speaker will form the committee following recommendations of political parties.

The cabinet members of the polls-time government may be selected either from elected representatives of both the ruling and opposition alliances, or from unelected and non-partisan persons, or it may be composed of both the elected and unelected persons. Among the 10 members, equal number of members can be selected from both the alliances or from different political parties on the basis of vote ratio the parties had won in the last three parliamentary polls.

The committee will place the list of eleven members of the polls-time government to the president through the Speaker for approval. If the committee fails to reach a consensus on selecting the chief of the government, the committee will propose names of three persons to the president through the Speaker of parliament. The president will select one from the proposed names as the chief of the government.

If the list is approved, the president will dissolve the parliament in due time and will hand over power to the polls-time government.

TIB urged judicial prove committee into the Savar tragedy

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) had regretted to the Rana Plaza tragedy at Savar and demanded to form a judicial proves committee to dig out the caused and culprits behind the incident. On 24 April, in a press statement, Executive Director of TIB, Dr. Iftekharuzzaman said "we are deeply shocked and regretted for the demise of hundreds lives due to crumble of nine stories building. We also urge to the government to compensate the deceased families and ensure treatment, relief and rehabilitations for the injured."

"Since the cracks were developed on Tuesday, announcement would have come to be abounded the building by the authority concerned. Instead, Savar Upozila Nirbahi Officer made an announcement, which was published in the media that the building had not posed any risk. Such negligence to the duty and stoic stand of the UNO had led the tragedy" he added "high-rise building just beside a busy highway proved that no accountability have been prevailed among the authority concerned"

In addition, he said, "Judicial inquiries should be needed in a bid to ensure fair trial of the culprits to feel the weight of justice." He also demanded that the proper implementation of the Building Code to foil the nexus of corrupt officials of having opportunity to make building here and there and to collect modern equipments as well as train-up the workforces to face such a disaster in future.

Ensure highest level of transparency and accountability in the construction of the Padma Bridge

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) demanded the government firm stand against any possibility of corruption and ensure maximum level of transparency and accountability in the Padma Bridge project. The demand came in the move of the government decision to construct the bridge with own financing.

In a press statement on 11 April, TIB's Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman said, "The people breathed a sigh of relief after the finance minister's assurance that the government will announce a five-year expenditure plan for construction of the Padma Bridge and would flot tender by June this year." He added, "As the World Bank and other international development organizations had withdrawn themselves from the funding process, therefore, the government must probe the allegation of corruption and bring the corrupt people to justice."

He also said, "Since the bridge will be constructed with own fund, it is crucial that even the slightest chances of corruption or waste of taxpayers' money should be dealt with utmost transparency and accountability."

Global Earth Day 2013 observed

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) and four other like minded organizations demanded that the government should adopt an effective policy to face the challenges of climate change and ensure transparency and accountability in the process. They also placed ten points' demands in this regard. TIB, Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (BAPA), Bangladesh Water Integrity Network, Climate Finance Governance Network and Green Voice raised the demands on 22 April at a human chain in front of the capital's Jatiya Press Club to mark the World Earth Day.

The speakers said, "According to the Global Climate Risk Index 2012, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Honduras are the most vulnerable countries to the changing climate in the next 20 years." In addition, they said, "The Climate Vulnerable Monitor Report 2011 identified Bangladesh as the hotspot of climate risks and apprehended that every year an additional 6 lakh people would be affected in climate change-related cyclones over the next 30 years."

In the 10-point demands, the organizations also called for adopting the second phase of the Kyoto protocol to reduce global temperatures and set up an international migration centre of the United Nations in Bangladesh for climate victims who would lose homes and jobs. The other demands include increased forestation in the costal belt, environment friendly development plans and strategies and skilled disaster management. The organizations also urged to the international community, direct and immediate handover of the global climate fund payable to Bangladesh.



Photo exhibition on climate change held at TSC

A photo exhibition on "Face of Climate Change" in Bangladesh was held at Teachers-Students Centre (TSC) of University of Dhaka focusing the World Earth Day on 22th April. Climate Finance Governance Network (CFGN) in association with Equity BD, BAPA, BIPNetCCBD, CCDF, CSRL and NCCB jointly organized the daylong exhibition. The photos on display depicted the life and livelihood of the southern coastal areas of the country, mostly exposed to the climate impacts as well as salinity, seawater intrusion, river erosion, cyclone, climate induced migrant, urban slums and water logging in capital Dhaka. Din M Shibly, a renowned photographer of Bangladesh who traveled the climate-affected areas for the last 10 years, captured the photographs put on display at the exhibition. TSC director Mohammad Alamgir Hossain officially opened the exhibition.

CCC News

Colorful New Year Celebration

Bengali New Year has been celebrated by different CCCs all over the country at Pohela Boishakh of 1420 (14 April). Colorful rally, dance, music, drama, discussion meeting, sports and other traditional cultural programs were held on this occasion. Peoples exchange New Year's greetings and well wishes for everybody. Collectively they expressed their commitment to build violence, discrimination and corruption free Bangladesh. Members of CCC, Swajan, YES, YES friends and local peoples were participated in this festival.

On the same day, the indigenous hilly peoples celebrated Baisabi at hill districts. Programs has been arranged by CCCs in collaboration with local socio-cultural organizations. Hilly indigenous groups performed their traditional culture and rituals in the New Year Baisabi celebration.



CCC News

Savar tragedy and Charitable Initiatives

On 24 April 2013, an eight-story commercial building, Rana Plaza, collapsed in Savar where approximately 2,500 people were injured with all of them rescued from the building alive. The search for the dead ended on 13 May with the death toll of 1,127.

The Savar tragedy had been talk of the time since the mishap took place and it is considered to be the deadliest garment-factory accident in history, as well as the deadliest accidental structural failure in modern human history.

From the absolute humanitarian ground TIB initiated numbers of measures for that deadliest Savar tragedy with the help of CCC, Swajan, YES; YES Friends in most of the sanak areas that is as:

- Government declared National mourning day and we convened a staff meeting in central office to offer one minute silence and discuss briefly.
- TIB issued a statement for that savar collapse
- Staff contributed 0.5% of their basic salary for this collapse and provided large quantity of dry food and water to patients were admitted in Enam Medical College also distributed funeral cloths for the people expired in that collapse.
- TIB also distributed cash money to badly wounded people were admitted in Enam Medical College.

It is praiseworthy that despite not having CCC's any common fund where they can donate but special inventiveness initiated in Savar sanak and other sanak.

Savar Sanak issued a press release for that and Savar YES members have donated and collected blood, and supplied dry foods by their own. YES members of Savar rescued people from collapsed building, help them to get admission into different hospitals and clinics.

Blood donation program was initiated by Jhenaidah Sanak and Munsiganj Sanak, Swajan and YES group also contributed financial support as much they could effort for Savar victims.

Brahmanbaria

15 village of Brahmanbaria were attacked by Tornado on March 22. CCC, Swajan, YES, YES friends of Brahmanbaria stand beside the Tornado affected people. With the support of TIB they provide financial assistance to 69 victim family of Amodabad, Chandi, Dubla and Jarultala village under Akhaura and Sadar Ipazila. CCC president Professor Md. Shafikul Bari, Vice-president Jesmin khanama, CCC member Advocate Md. Abu Taher, Md. Ali Akbar Majumdar and representatives from TIB.

Citizen's initiative for health awareness

The World Health Day has been observed by different CCCs all over the country on 7 April. Rally, discussion meeting, AI Desk, blood grouping and blood donation camp and cultural programs were held to create health awareness among peoples. Government and non-government organizations, Swajan, YES, YES friends and local people were attended the programs. Speakers mentioned that, health is a rights and quality health service should ensure for all. Peoples received advice and information about health and health service from these programs.



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National Legal Aid Day Celebrated



Along with other days 'National Legal Aid Day' has been celebrated first time by Gazipur and Chapainwabganj CCC on April 28. The day observed with rally, discussion, fair, advice and information desk with the collaboration of government and non-government organizations. Campaigning legal aids affairs, leaflets, posters and associated information disseminated by CCC, Swajan, YES, YES Friends' members.

YES News

IBAIS YES demands justice in Savar Tragedy

In protest of Savar's Rana Plaza Tragedy, YES group of IBAIS University formed a human chain along the road of its Dhanmondi campus on 30 April. In association with Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), they demanded to ensure justice through free and fair inquiry as well as compensations to the victims. Teachers and students of different faculties and the students from other Universities were present among the participants.

Dhaka YES Theater

Dhaka YES theatre group arranged a regular show on 18 April 2013 in front of the Rayer Bazaar Boddhobhumi, Dhaka. The YES members disseminated information on Right to Know act, river pollution, and land encroachment etc through the theatre show. More than 200 audiences were present in the show.

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