

NATIONAL

Good governance in LGED a must for rural development

Speakers at a roundtable on "Local Government Engineering Department: Problems of Governance and the Way Forward" stressed

on promoting governance, reducing corruption and political interference in LGED, the agency working for the infrastructural development at rural level. TIB organised the roundtable on 21st July at the CIRDAP Auditorium. Chaird by Mr M Hafizuddin Khan, Member, TIB board of Trustees, the roundtable was attended by Dr Tofail Ahmed, Local Government Expert



and Dr Salahuddin M Aminuzzaman, Professor, Department of Public Administration, Dhaka University as Discussants. Dr Iftekharuzzaman, Executive Director, TIB moderated the session. Mr Shahzada M Akram, Senior Programme Manager and Nahid Sharmin, Deputy Programme Manager, Research & Policy, TIB jointly presented the findings of the study.

The study revealed that despite many positive initiatives and having achievements; LGED, due to political and ministry's interference, coupled with limitations of CGA, Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) and Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED) in monitoring and evaluation of projects, market instability and delay in project implementation; is unable to perform at the expected level. According to the study, contractors are forced to pay from 8.5% to 10.50% of the total bill as bribe which forces them to use low quality materials in projects. The study also revealed a number of irregularities including misuse of LGED assets like vehicles and logistics for personal use; irregularities relating to project development and implementation; backdoor negotiations with contractors and withdrawal of bills etc.

The study made 15 recommendations to make LGED effective and accountable to rural people. The recommendations included the amendment of laws to restrain members of the parliament from interfering in project activities, motivation for LGED officials for achievements as well as punishment for corruption, effective internal and IMED monitoring of projects and above all curbing of party and political interference over LGED.

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TI's GCB finds political parties and police as most corrupt

According to Global Corruption Barometer (GCB) of Transparency International (TI), 93% of the respondents believed that political parties and police were most corrupt public service institutions while 89% indicated judiciary as the most corrupt.

As part of global release, GCB was also released in Bangladesh by TIB through a press conference on 9th July. According to GCB 60% of Bangladeshi respondents believed that prevalence of corruption had increased in 2011-12. Interestingly personal experiences of the respondents showed that bribery had decreased to some extent in eight public sectors i.e. police, judiciary, land, license & permit, health & medication, education, utilities and tax compared to 2010.

TIB urged the government to promote good governance in public service sectors by restoring their positive role in delivering services.

Joint efforts stressed for healthcare governance at local level

Speakers at a consultation on "The Challenge of Governance in Healthcare and Ways to Overcome" stressed on joint efforts among healthcare stakeholders and harmony among national and local level efforts. TIB organized the consultation on 3rd July at the BIAM Foundation auditorium with Dr A F M Ruhul Haque, MP, Minister for Health as the Chief Guest; Professor Dr Khandaker Mohammad Shefatullah, Director General of Health Services as the Special Guest; Dr Iftekharuzzaman, Executive Director, TIB as the Moderator and Professor Syed Monzurul Islam, Member, TIB Board of Trustees as the Chair. Ms Taslima Akter, Research Officer, TIB presented a paper that highlighted TIB's flagship initiative known as Citizen's Report Card (CRC). The paper was prepared through local level consultation with healthcare stakeholders and it threw light on challenges to local level healthcare governance and recommended ways to improve.

Representatives from 44 CCCs, 7 upazilla health complexes, 34 Zilla sadar Hospitals, 3 medical college hospitals attended the daylong workshop and worked into six groups to identify the loopholes in the healthcare sector and strategies ways to improve. They identified shortage of manpower, medicine and equipment; lack of efficiency in monitoring and audit and lack of dissemination of information was main obstacles to ensure quality healthcare services to the people. They recommended the policymakers to ensure doctors' presence, adequate manpower, medicine, equipment, ensure participation of local people, initiate strong monitoring etc. to deliver services at the expected level.



Highlighting on various initiatives taken by the government, the minister informed that the government had formulated policies like health and population, had also set a number of community clinics and recruited thousands of doctors, nurses, health assistants and community healthcare providers to ensure quality healthcare to the poor and marginalized people. He urged all health officials to provide quality healthcare services to people and also build a good relationship with the service recipients.

Dr. Sumaiya Khair, Deputy Executive Director, TIB; Brigadier General Dr. M. Saidur Rahman, Director, Rajshahi Medical College Hospital; Dr. M. Sirajul Haque Talukder, Civil Surgeon, Faridpur District also spoke on the occasion.

CCC News

Opinion sharing meeting with police emphasized on friendly cooperation

Chandpur district CCC in collaboration with the district police administration organised an opinion sharing meeting with the citizens on 8th July at the Rotary Auditorium. Citizens from all walks of the district, civil society members and police officials attended the meeting. The objective of the meeting was to explore ways to improve the quality of services of the law enforcing agency and also to build close rapport between the police and the citizens. The sharing meeting created an opportunity for both parties to discuss the existing service delivery situation by the police, identify the gaps in service delivery and recommend ways to improve. Participants emphasised that transparency and accountability of police services was must to ensure quality service by the police. They assured the police administration to extend their all-out support to maintain law and order of the district. They further said that such dialogue was a bold step toward making the police service accountable to the people.



Collective Initiatives towards an Effective Local Government

'Citizen Report Card (CRC)' on the services of Rajbari Municipality was released at a roundtable meeting jointly organised by the Rajbari CCC and Rajbari



Municipality on July 7, 2013 at the conference room of Municipality. The CRC covered the period from December 2010 to November 2011 and assessed the quality, limitations and obstacles of different services offered by the municipality. Municipality officials including the mayor & councilors, journalists, NGO representatives, CCC members, swajan and YES members attended the meeting. The CRC presented perceptions, grievances and satisfaction of citizens' about different services provided by the municipality and recommended some implementable measures to improve the quality of services. Municipal authority pledged to solve problems that were achievable from their part. All discussants stressed on a comprehensive initiative to turn Rajbari Municipality as an effective and citizen friendly local government institution.



Chehelgazi Union Mothers to work for quality education

Chehelgazi Union mothers pledged to pay more attention to their children's education as well as more engagement in different programmes organised by the School Management Committee (SMC). They pledged these during a Mothers' Gathering organised at Chehelgazi Union Government Primary School on 7th July. Dinajpur district CCC in cooperation with the SMC organised the gathering. Mothers were excited to have participated in such gathering and suggested to continue this initiative in future. They expressed that they were immensely benefitted by learning their roles as a home educator of their children. They also felt that, being a mother, they have rights to make the SMC accountable. The SMC recognised that this type of gathering would enhance mothers' awareness and improve the overall quality of primary education at their school.

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CCC News

MMCH is doing better and more than their capacity – thanks to the CCC

Mymensingh CCC organised an opinion sharing meeting with the authority of Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH) on July 21, 2013. Senior officials of the hospital, CCC members and TIB Officials attended the meeting and discussed the state of governance at the hospital and the role of CCC in improving the quality of the services and ways to empower the service recipients in demanding transparency and accountability. Mr. Mike Niler, Senior Consultant, DFID also attended the meeting as part of DFID's study on 'Voice and Accountability in Health sector of Bangladesh'

The hospital authority appreciated the role of the CCC and requested their continuous and focused involvement regularly. The hospital authority highlighted a big gap between supply and demand: MMCH was providing the services to 1000 beds with the capacity of serving 500 beds. Lack of human resources was one of the major constraint to meet demands of the patients, they said. The authority further informed that they were trying their level best to promote accountability and transparency in the hospital by ensuring regular attendance of doctors and nurses and by improving indoor, outdoor medical and pathology services. Meeting participants said that despite many limitations, the quality of services has improved – thanks to continuous efforts of the CCC and the positive approach of MMCH authority.

DHAKA YES

YES orientation on TI and TIB held at Dhaka University

Youth Engagement and Support (YES) groups of Institute of Social Welfare and Research (ISWR), Kuwait-Moitree Hall, Begam Fajilatunnesa Mujib Hall of Dhaka University jointly organised an orientation programme on Transparency International (TI) and Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) on 23rd July. Dr. Md. Nurul Islam, Director-ISWR attended the orientation as the Chief Guest. YES group of Development Studies of the same university organised a similar programme on 28th July. A total of eighty YES members participated in these orientations. Resource persons from TIB oriented the YES members on research and campaign activities of TI and TIB. YES members received a preliminary idea on global anti-corruption movement and social movement against corruption in Bangladesh. They vowed to fight against corruption in their respective campuses to reduce the high prevalence of corruption in Bangladesh.

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