

Media Release

TI-Bangladesh and TI-India condemn BSF atrocity and call for judicial probe

Dhaka, Bangladesh, New Delhi, India. January 20, 2012. Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) and Transparency International India (TII) strongly condemned the brutal torture of a Bangladeshi young man by members of the Border Security Force (BSF) of India for allegedly refusing to pay bribe. TIB and TII demanded exemplary punishment to the perpetrators without any undue delay.

In a joint statement Executive Directors of TIB and TII, Dr. Iftekharuzzaman and Ms. Anupama Jha said, “it is extremely regrettable and absolutely unacceptable that members of a security force of a democratic country can abuse power so despicably and indiscriminately to collect bribe”. Welcoming the immediate suspension of the jawans by the BSF authority, they called upon BSF and the Government of India “to ensure justice in a manner that would deter any future recurrence of such inhuman brutality for shameless act of bribery. Failure to do so will grossly undermine the democratic credentials of India”.

“Allegation of the victim’s probable involvement in smuggling can never justify the kind of extra-judicial torture and violence that BSF frequently resorts to, causing killings, injuries and other forms of injustices in the border on a regular basis. This particular incident graphically reinforces the perception that elements within the BSF, being corrupt beneficiaries, are not only responsible for alleged illegal activities across the Indo-Bangladesh Border, but also for systematic and indiscriminate violation of human rights”, the statement said.

The executive directors of the two neighbourly national chapters of Transparency International, the global coalition against corruption further said, “the departmental court of inquiry that has been taken up is important, but not enough because of potential conflict of interest”. They demanded that a judicial probe be immediately constituted to ensure the fullest possible justice.

Commending the role of the India media in bringing the incident to public attention, TIB and TII said “as the world’s largest democracy and as a state party to the UN Convention against Corruption, India has the responsibility to demonstrate that it is committed to human rights and justice as well as to effectively control corruption”.

It may be recalled that a video clip of nearly five minutes was aired on January 18, on some Indian TV channels, including NDTV showing a Bangladeshi young man being beaten by some uniformed BSF members in Murshidabad district of Parshcim Bangla. The video showed the victim pushed to the ground, stripped, kicked and tortured indiscriminately.

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