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## National News

### Dr Peter Eigen visits Bangladesh

The founder of Transparency International (TI) Professor Dr Peter Eigen who is also the Chairman of the Advisory Council of the TI recently visited Dhaka on a five-day trip. During this visit Dr. Eigen held meetings with the policymakers, media, development partners, civil society leaders, RMG businessmen and union leaders. It is to be noted that Dr. Eigen is also the initiator of Garments Industries Transparency Initiative (GITI) that was launched in August 2013 after the Rana Plaza incident in Bangladesh that left around 1100 workers dead and many injured. GITI sets out as a joint approach of governments, business sector and civil society in both producing and consuming countries aiming at ensuring governance in this sector.



Dr Eigen also addressed the TEDx Dhaka talks during his visit on 22 November.

## TIB calls for regional cooperation to promote governance in South Asia

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) has called upon the government to propose inclusion of governance and anti-corruption as distinct goals in South Asian Regional Cooperation (SAARC) agenda. This call was made in a press release issued on 17 November 2014.

Earlier on November 5, 2014 TIB sent a letter to the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, urging upon her to take the lead with her other counterparts in initiating measures to control corruption effectively at the SAARC Summit in Kathmandu scheduled during November 22-27. In a letter sent to the PM, TIB Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman also urged upon the following:

1. To recognize corruption as a challenge of highest priority for countries of the region individually and collectively;
2. To pledge that corruption must be addressed by multi-dimensional strategic interventions with particular emphasis on challenging impunity without fear or favour;
3. To undertake effective regional initiatives to mutually share experiences and to cooperate in controlling corruption, particularly its cross border dimensions including illicit flow of corrupt money and resources;
4. To commit to ensure people's access to information and strengthen institutions of accountability, particularly those mandated to control corruption; and
5. To facilitate and enhance greater engagement of people at large, media and civil society to complement government efforts against corruption consistent with article 13 of UN Convention against Corruption.

It may be mentioned that an earlier effort by Bangladesh, prompted by TIB, the 14th SAARC Summit recognized in para 27 of their Declaration that corruption was an issue of serious concern and agreed to exchange information on national experience to effectively control corruption.

## **TIB recommends 17 measures to ensure governance in health sector**

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) recommends 17 measures for ensuring governance in the health sector. The recommendations were placed at a press conference in Dhaka on 6 November while releasing the research report titled “Governance Challenges in Health Sector and Way Forward”.

The research report found remarkable progresses achieved in Bangladesh in terms of various health indicators. But it also revealed lots of challenges in health sector from primary and secondary data sources. Financial and institutional capacity; human resource management of government health services; procurement, repairing and maintenance of government health service institutions; services of government and non-government health service institutions; and monitoring system of nongovernment organizations etc. were analyzed in the study.

The study identified a lot of institutional limitations existing in the health sector. Around 20% positions remain vacant in various institutions under the health department. The recruitment, transfer and promotion involve bribes up to Tk 10 lakh in each case. A part of political leaders, leaders of labor union, assistants of office chief, accountants and administrative officers are involved with those irregularities and corruption.

TIB also recommended a total of 17 measures to ensure good governance in the health sector. Key recommendations include- need based new law implementation and reform of present laws; immediate initiatives for recruiting against vacant position; scoring system introducing to promote capable staff; ending of influence of professional bodies with political affiliation; activating health management committees to ensure local level health services; set up information desks in each hospitals; initiatives for necessary punishment according to proper investigation regarding negligence of doctors or wrong treatment; disclosing the list of registered doctors with their degrees/expertise on the website of BMDC; introduce e-tendering process for procurement, repairing and maintenance; and strengthening the monitoring system to ensure the quality of private health services.

## **TIB and Action Aid Bangladesh urged the UN and Member-States to ensure transparency and accountability in climate finance**

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) and Action Aid Bangladesh (AAB), called upon the United Nations and relevant Member States to ensure transparency, accountability and integrity in climate finance governance at both national and international levels. They also called for creating ways for the effective public participation in implementation, monitoring and evaluation of climate change finance programmes and projects. TIB and AAB expressed disappointment that the Annex 1 countries remained far from providing the committed level of ‘new’ and ‘additional’ funds to the affected countries including most vulnerable states like Bangladesh, and called upon them to disburse promised funds without delay.

At the same time, TIB and AAB also called upon the Government of Bangladesh to allocate necessary funds for the Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund (BCCTF) so that nationally initiated programmes to cope with climate change can continue with particular emphasis on the communities in the coastal regions worst affected by climate change.

The call was made on 23 September in a human chain organized by the youth groups of TIB and Action Aid at the TSC premises of University of Dhaka. The students of the different universities of Dhaka took part in the human chain which was addressed by the Pro Vice Chancellor Professor Dr Shahid Akhter Hossain and TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman. Dr Zaman said that effective participation of people, especially from climate change affected regions, must be ensured in project planning, fund allocation and project implementation. He also called upon the countries, donors and other

stakeholders to work together and develop a fund depository and registry mechanism to facilitate tracking of fund disbursement and use. TIB supported Committee of Concerned Citizens (CCC) also organised human chains with similar demands at Khulna, Satkhira, Bagerhat, Barisal, Pirojpur, Patuakhali and Barguna.



Earlier on September 22, TIB submitted a letter of appeal to the United Nations with similar demands. It was handed over to UNDP's Country Director Pauline Tamesis for transmission to the Secretary-General Mr Ban Ki-moon on the occasion of the UN Climate Summit held in New York on 23 September.

Along with the letter, a collection of nearly 5000 signatures in support of the call by young people from worst affected coastal regions of Bangladesh was also given to the UNDP Country Director. In their submission TIB pointed out that though developed countries agreed to provide 'new' and 'additional' public climate finance to climate affected LDCs including vulnerable states in a manner that by 2010 US\$100 billion would be disbursed, however, as of July 2014, as low as 7.2% of commitments had been met. It underscored that effective participation of people, especially from climate change affected regions, must be ensured in project planning, fund allocation and project implementation. The anti-corruption watchdog agency also appealed to Member States to act on their commitments under the Rio Convention, Cancun Agreement and Rio+20 Agreement.

The statement urged upon governments and companies to ensure highest standards of transparency and integrity in reporting greenhouse gas emissions particularly when such reporting results in revenues, for example, through carbon market credits.

### **Joint Press Conference on Land Grabbing and Acquisition**

TIB along with 8 other organizations held a press conference on 13 November 2014, to protest grabbing of agricultural and forest lands ignoring the existing laws of the country by some influential quarters. The other organizations were Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD), Ain O Shalish Kendro (ASK), Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST), Bangladesh Adivasi Forum, Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA), Nijera Kori and Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon. Held at the reporters unity premises in Dhaka the press conference presented some case studies in support of their claim. The media was briefed about the findings of a report which highlighted five cases from different parts of the country where land grabbing by corporate bodies and land acquisition of forest and agricultural land by the government have put residents' lives and livelihoods at stake. Some of the victims also talked about their plights in the press conference.



## CCC News

### Education Authority Urged to Replicate CCC Activities in Other Schools

‘CCC Kishoreganj is facilitating different activities in Boulai Govt. Primary School aiming to improve the quality of education. CCC’s activities contributed a lot in achieving the Best Teacher award of Kishoreganj district and I am grateful to TIB-CCC’ said Nadira Begum Beauty, the Head Teacher of the school in a meeting with Education Authority. The meeting was organized by CCC, Kishoreganj on 19 November 2014 with a view to ensure quality education. The Head Teacher also mentioned that despite some limitations students’ success rate and quality of education is improving day by day as a result of CCC interventions.

In an open discussion, CCC and YES Members raised the issues of shortage of teachers, unhygienic and inadequate sanitation system and poor infrastructure etc. They also asked the education authority to address these problems immediately to the higher level. Assistant Upazila Primary Education Officer Ms. Saima Sultana stated that CCC-TIB is playing a vital role in improving the quality of education at Boulai Govt. Primary School. She also appreciated the ideas and urged to replicate the CCC-TIB initiatives in other schools of the district to improve the quality of education. She assured to bring the issue to the attention of higher authority.

### Collective effort needed to improve the quality of health services

Civil Surgeon of Bagerhat Dr. Md. Bakir Hossain recognized CCC’s initiatives in a sharing meeting with Bagerhat Sadar Hospital and told that it helped in many ways to improve the quality of health services of this hospital. He stated that all should join hands for the improvement of the hospital services and he sought cooperation from all concerned to control visitors at the hospital which remains a major problem. The Civil Surgeon also stressed the need of disseminating the service related information to the people so that they can avail the services without any harassment or free of cost where applicable. He shared these things while presiding in a sharing meeting with Bagerhat Sadar Hospital authority, organized by CCC, held on 26 November 2014.



The meeting was moderated by Babul Sarder, Convener of CCC’s health related sub-committee. Residential Medical Officer, Senior Consultant, other doctors, nurses and officials of the hospital along with CCC President Advocate Ram Krishno Basu, Vice-President Farida Rahman and other CCC Members participated in the discussion meeting. Some observations on the hospital services by recipients and CCC were shared in the meeting. Most of the service recipients felt that the qualities of the hospital services have improved. They also agreed that the doctors are facing problems due to increased number of patients and their attendants.

The meeting came out with some important recommendations: assign an Information Officer along with an information and enquiry room, arrangement of separate toilets for male and female patient in outdoor, arrangement of separate toilet for female doctors and nurses, display information board covering available health services for women, take initiatives to control the visitors at different wards and control entry of male visitors in female ward etc.

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