

INSIDE

National News

- People get information of health services from Satellite AI-Desk at DMCH
- TIB & BAWIN urge the government to ensure integrity in Water Sector
- Study on Women's Experience of Corruption in Rural Bangladesh
- TIB concern over violation of procurement rules for construction of Karnaphuli tunnel

CCC News

- Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre launched in Khulna
- Initiative to Ensure Quality Services of Municipality in Rangamati
- Collective Efforts improve Quality Health Services in Nalitabari
- Mothers Playing Important Role on Enhancing Quality Education
- Empowered Women, Awakened Conscience, Shall Surely Resist Corruption

National News

International Women's Day 2015

Empowered Women Awakened Conscience Shall Surely Resist Corruption

With the theme of 'Empowered Women, Awakened Conscience, Shall Surely Resist Corruption', TIB observed this year's International Women's Day with various outreach activities. CCC-YES networks organized rallies, discussions, orientations, human chains, seminars, women fairs, and quiz/essay/debate competitions across 45 locations in the country. General people, public officials and representatives, professionals, civil society, media, and youngsters attended these events.

TIB believes lack of accountability in the power structure increases corruption and prohibits social justice, rule of law and equal rights, which are pre-requisites for establishing women empowerment. Therefore, ensuring legal and institutional obligation, awakened conscience for equal rights of male-female is crucial.

As a part of the celebration, two more events were organized: a) an orientation programme titled 'Role of Women Journalists in the Anti-Corruption Movement', held on 11 March for women journalists working in print, electronic, online media and news agencies and b) The findings of a research report titled 'Women's Experience of Corruption: A Snapshot of Two Unions of Bangladesh', released on 12 March.

TIB also put up a two-minute video on YouTube highlighting how women's awareness is crucial to fight corruption. Link to watch the IWD 2015 video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gtxefX-FJHU&list=UU_ojOPPG0ogC8J_GEHYo_oA&index=4

Role of women journalists in anti-corruption movement

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) organized an orientation programme on 11 March 2015, for the Dhaka-based female journalists from both print and broadcast media. The programme, a part of TIB's ongoing media development initiatives where journalists are trained on investigative reporting, was organized on the occasion of the International Women's Day. The programme was attended by a total of 32 participants who discussed their predicaments as women despite having established beyond doubt that given the equal opportunity, they can perform better than their male counterparts. The orientation kicked off with two presentations – one on 'Role of Women Journalist in Anti-Corruption Movement' by TIB's Director- Outreach & Communication Dr. Rezwan-ul-Alam and another on 'Corruption and Women' by Quazi Shafiqur Rahman, Manager-Gender.

TIB's Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman and Deputy Executive Director Professor Sumaiya Khair also spoke.

Corruption is a global problem and a major hindrance to economic and social developments. Especially, the developing countries are the worst affected by it and since almost half of the population is women, they are adversely hit – Iftekharuzzaman

The participants also took part in a group work to identify women related issues in the specific areas of health, education, local government, land and climate finance governance and how they can report more on those topics.

It is to be noted that TIB has been organizing an Investigative Journalism Awards programme since 1999 and also organizing training on investigative reporting since 2010. Besides, TIB started a fellowship programme for journalists in 2012. The objective of these activities is to increase the capacity of the media on investigative reporting so that more news about corruption is published and a greater awareness created.

People get information of health services from Satellite AI-Desk at DMCH

Four Satellite AI-Desk activities were organized at the outdoor premises of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) through which people got information on health services of the hospital. Nearly nine thousand people received information service from members of groups of Dhaka YES who took part in these spontaneous initiatives during 4-5 March and 11-12 March. More than 15 thousand leaflets were also distributed.

Earlier on 2 March, an orientation programme on AI-desk was held for the anti-corruption activism at TIB conference room. YES members of Kuwait Moitree Hall, Fajilatunnesa Mujib Hall, Institute of Education and Research, Institute of Social Welfare and Research of Dhaka University, along with IBAIS University, Uttara University, Sher-E-Bangla Agricultural University and YES-1 of Dhaka YES jointly organized the Satellite AI-Desks.

TIB & BAWIN urge the government to ensure integrity in Water Sector

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) and Bangladesh Water Integrity Network (BAWIN) jointly demanded to the government for taking initiatives to free water bodies from grabbers and ensure punishment to the culprits and to immediately implement the Bangladesh Water Act, 2013. On the occasion of World Water Day on 22 March, TIB and BAWIN formed a Human Chain at the TSC in the University of Dhaka with the slogan of 'Ensure Integrity in Water Sector for Sustainable Development'.

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Administration) of Dhaka University Prof. Dr. Shahid Akter Hussain was present as chief guest. Besides, Dr. Iftekharuzzaman, Executive Director, Dr. Sumaiya Khair, Deputy Executive Director of TIB, YES members from different educational institutes of Dhaka and representatives from different like minded organizations were also present.

In his speech Dr. Shahid Akter Hussain said, "Water is very much integrated part of our life and living, but it has reached on the verge of extinction due to our unconscious use and ignorance. Every day we waste water in numerous ways, which may be fatal in future. We therefore need to be more conscious and government must take proper initiatives in this regard".

Dr. Zaman said, "We must find the loopholes of the concerned institutions and take proper steps to solve them so that they can perform at their best. Besides, authorities concerned should ensure proper implementation of existent relevant laws and regulations".

Study on Women's Experience of Corruption in Rural Bangladesh

Women are being forced to accept corruption as a way of life, and at the same time they are becoming victims, agents and in some cases beneficiaries of corruption. A study titled 'Women's Experience of Corruption: A Snapshot of Two Unions of Bangladesh' on 12 March 2015 found. TIB undertook this study with an aim to explore women's experience of corruption in Bangladesh, which included identifying the nature, dimensions and impact of corruption on women, the socio-economic factors responsible for influencing such corruption experience, and how rural women deals with corruption.

In this pre-dominantly qualitative study conducted in two different unions (one located in the affluent district of Gazipur and the other in the destitute Jamalpur district), the study found that social practices in the rural settings are still conservative, banking on the traditional gender roles, which infringes upon women's freedom of



movement. According to the study, rural women perceive an event as corruption only when they are extorted or forcibly coerced into paying money, whereas when they voluntarily indulge in bribery, they don't perceive it as corruption. Further, they consider resorting to corruption for getting things done as natural and acceptable.

The study reveals that women are involved with corruption in three ways: (1) as victims when they are extorted for money while receiving services from various institutions and agencies, (2) as actors of

corruption when the women themselves indulge in giving bribery to get things done on a voluntary basis, and (3) as instruments of corruption when women are used by other parties in corrupt practices such as for extracting loans for offices by using the signatures of women and then later using the loan money for other purposes.

According to the report, the impact of corruption on women occurs on various levels. Women are affected by corruption at personal and family level through health problems, financial losses, and deprivation of other basic needs and necessities such as education and health services. Corruption also impacts women at social level, especially when corruption becomes institutionalized and erodes moral values and ethics of the whole society and at political level when the empowerment of women, especially, the women politicians is jeopardized.

According to the study, women experience more corruption in Bangladesh because of (1) the patriarchal socio-economic structure that ignores women and deprives them of socio-economic equality, (2) lack of empowerment of women, (3) lack of access to various services as well as resources for the women, and (4) lack of good governance in various offices of administration and government.

To mitigate the extent of women's experience in corruption, TIB recommends that the National Women Development Policy 2011 and the related National Work Plan be implemented to ensure women's rights. It also recommended that women empowerment activities such as poverty alleviation, security of women in workplace and full and equal participation of women in socio-economic activities be ensured. The recommendations emphasized the roles and responsibilities of women politicians be specified in equal and just footing as their male counterparts. It also recommended for establishing 'one stop service' for all sectors. At the implementation level, the report recommends that (1) information regarding service receipt from various government and non-government institutions be disseminated in a gender sensitive way, (2) the internal monitoring and accountability of concerned institutions be strengthened to ensure effective and efficient delivery of women-specific services, (3) monitoring and supervision of union level institutions be strengthened to ensure better transparency and accountability for special services given to women, (4) the scope of corruption be minimized through proper use of information technology, and (5) a gender sensitive complaint lodging system be instituted and punitive actions be taken on the basis of the complaints.

TIB concern over violation of procurement rules for construction of Karnaphuli tunnel

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) expressed deep concern over the motive of the government to award the construction of the Karnaphuli tunnel to a consulting firm of the project. TIB also demanded to stop the contract signed between Bangladesh Bridge Authority (BBA) and China Communications Construction Company (CCCC) Ltd. which is a gross violation of Public Procurement Act 2006.

In a statement issued on 24 March, Dr. Iftekharuzzaman, Executive Director of TIB said, "It's a complete violation of Public Procurement Rules. According to media information, this is happening through political affiliation and influence which is completely unacceptable both in national and international standard. The people of the country will be the ultimate sufferer of this irregularities. It's not only a symbol of misuse of power and conflict of interest, but also an evil work of spreading corruption by a foreign company."

He also added, "Government's political pledge was to establish governance in all sectors and stop all ways of corruption through ensuring accountability and transparency, and at the same time ensure equal and competitive scope for all including the non-government sectors, and also to ensure implementation of development project following experience-expertise and qualification. But the government is twisting the rules due to strong influence of an ex-minister."

He asked the government to consider the greater interest of the people of this country and not to set an unethical practice like violating procurement rules in the government's development project. He also urged for an utmost involvement of the Prime Minister of Bangladesh and her cabinet on this issue.

CCC News

Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre launched in Khulna

CCC Khulna launched Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre (ALAC) in Khulna on March 24, 2015 with the aim to provide free and confidential legal advice to the citizens who are victims and witnesses corruption on education, health, local government, land and climate finance governance sectors. ALAC is an important tool through which CCC will be able to stimulate the local citizens about their legal rights and encourage them to take action against incidences of corruption.

The programme was presided over by Begum Ferdoushi Ali, President of CCC, Hasan Ali, Senior Program Manager-Civic Engagement of TIB presented a PowerPoint presentation on ALAC in the meeting and addressed various questions on ALAC implementation raised by the participants.

Initiative to Ensure Quality Services of Municipality in Rangamati

CCC Rangamati organized an opinion sharing meeting with Rangamati Municipality authority on 5 March 2015 to increase quality of services for ensuring transparency and accountability of municipality services. Issues such as quality service, Face the Public programme, operationalisation of Ward Level Co-ordination Committee (WLCC) and Town Level Coordination Committee (TLCC), cleanliness of municipal area and garbage management, beautification of Rangamati were discussed.

Municipality Mayor Md. Saiful Islam Chowdhury proposed to co-opt CCC member in TLCC and urged all to submit tax on time and come forward for the development of the municipality.

Empowered Women, Awakened Conscience, Shall Surely Resist Corruption

CCCs observed International Women Day on March 8, 2015 across the country with the theme of 'Empowered Women, Awakened Conscience, Shall Surely Resist Corruption'. A series of programs were undertaken including rally, discussion meeting, human chain, anti-corruption street theater, Satellite Advice and Information Desk, Anti-corruption Oath-taking and various other outreach activities in 45 different locations in the country.

A large number of people, representative of government and non-government institutions, civil society activists, cultural and social activists, journalists, local representatives, students & teachers from schools, colleges and universities along with CCC, Swajan, YES and YES Friends members attended IWD events organized by CCCs around the country.

A concept note with a set of demands was circulated among all relevant stakeholders where TIB stated that lack of accountability in the power structure increases corruption that prohibit social justice, rule of law and equal rights, which is a pre-requisite for establishing women empowerment. Therefore, ensuring legal and institutional obligation, awakened conscience for equal rights of female-male is crucial. Speakers of different IWD events stated that our women are belonging backward position and underprivileged because of our existing patriarchal attitude. On the other hand, corruption is also hindering the process of women development. Hence, it is inevitable to resist corruption and establish good governance in every sector of our society and state to achieve the desired development of women.

Collective Efforts improve Quality Health Services in Nalitabari

"All should join hands for the improvement of the Health complex" thus stated Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer (UHFPO) Dr. Md. Rafiqul Islam in a meeting with CCC Nalitabari and Nalitabari Upazila Health complex on 4 March 2015. He sought cooperation of including TIB-CCC, local citizens to solve the problems of Health Complex. He assured to ensure health services by taking immediate initiatives to address the problems identified in the meeting.

CCC's observations includes absence of Medical Officer at the emergency ward for 24 hours, inadequate first aids, absence of designated doctors name with phone number, unavailability of doctors at outdoor, cleanliness of the Health Complex, closed counter for female, unavailability of medicines at indoor etc.

Mothers Playing Important Role on Enhancing Quality Education

With an aim to improve quality of education through mother's participation, CCC Kishoreganj and Uttar Maksudpur Govt. Primary School authority jointly organized a Mothers Gathering at the school premises on 25 March 2015. Union Parishad Chairman of Latibabad Union Abdul Razzak attended as Chief Guest.



Suggestions came to recruit two more teachers and one guard, while problems of play ground, absence of tube well, separate toilet for girls' students etc. were also discussed. Mothers also discussed about the roles and responsibilities of parents, parents' awareness, increasing the number of stipend recipients and infrastructural development etc.

Editor: S M Rezwan-ul-Alam

Sub-Editor: Zahidul Islam

Design: Barkat Ullah Babu

Write us : Transparency International Bangladesh, e-mail: advocacy@ti-bangladesh.org

Join us : www.ti-bangladesh.org www.facebook.com/TIBangladesh