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TIB
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NEWS LETTER
Social Movement Against Corruption

WANTED transparency in election editorial

A healthy democracy is a vital requirement for the sustainable development of any nation. It denotes people's participation in the selection of its representatives. By this, people secure the right to contribute and uphold their interest at the policy making level. Through this mechanism, people's representatives contribute towards the development of a nation.

The upcoming election will determine the future of Bangladesh and subsequently the fate of its citizens. First and foremost, there must be transparency in the election process. An updated and corrected version of the voters' list is very much needed. Security during the election period needs to be ensured through effective deployment of the law enforcement agencies. Stringent legal provisions should be made as a measure to prevent election-related violence. The role of the media is important too. Campaign should be undertaken in the mass media highlighting electoral laws and advocating greater presence of voters at the polling stations. The civil society, through close vigilance, also has an important role to play in the process.

To maintain neutrality in the process, elections are being held under the supervision of a caretaker government. But with a brief tenure of 3 months, a caretaker government alone cannot ensure free and transparent elections. The responsibility is still with the political parties to ensure a conducive environment. A caretaker government can play its role once the political parties show their commitment towards a free, fair and a neutral election. For this the ruling party and opposition need to reach a pre-election consensus.

With the objective of contributing towards good governance and safeguarding the interest of the people, TIB plans to conduct a 'Report Card' Survey on the candidates in the upcoming parliamentary election. The survey will be conducted in the six thanas of greater Mymensingh region where 'Committees of Concerned Citizens' have already been formed. The candidates will be asked to give their educational and other relevant qualifications, a brief profile of past activities, previous electoral pledges and the fulfillment, and the candidates' message to the voters. Later, the information obtained will be circulated to the public in the form of leaflets. In addition, opportunities for the candidates to make presentations to the electorate will also be arranged. TIB is of the opinion that this process will enable the general public to make a better choice.