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# TIB

SOCIAL MOVEMENT AGAINST CORRUPTION

## Ombudsman Human Rights Commission & Anti-Corruption Commission

### Editorial

In independent Bangladesh, the people are the source of all power. The parliament is composed of people's representatives. The government has to remain accountable. Rule of law has to exist in the country. There are multifarious avenues through which the state can influence the civic life. It is people's expectation that good governance would be established in Bangladesh.



Numerous institutions make important contribution toward good governance in different countries. These include the Ombudsman, the Human Rights Commission and the Anti-Corruption Commission. The idea of setting up these institutions emerged from the need to uphold citizens' rights against the backdrop of a gradually expanding role of the state. This category of organizations has been set up some decades ago in many developed and developing countries of the world. There is an Anti-Corruption Commission as well as a Human Rights Commission in India. The Office of Ombudsman and similar organizations exist in many third world countries including Sri Lanka.

The Ombudsman's Act was passed in Bangladesh in 1980. More than two decades have elapsed since then. But till today, nobody has been appointed to the post, nor has any office been set up for that purpose. Citizens expect that an office of Ombudsman would ensure accountability of democratic government. The law that was framed two decades ago is rather out-of-date in the context of present-day reality. Under the present law the Ombudsman would only be able to investigate certain categories of corruption and there would be no scope for inquiry if somebody obtains illegal benefits through corruption. The Office would also lack the power to punish. Neither would s/he be able to undertake inquiry into local government bodies. TIB strongly believes that a network of Ombudsman is desirable for different service delivery agencies rather than one office.

A strong public opinion has been generated for the establishment of an Independent Anti-Corruption Commission. The major political parties are pledge-bound to the nation in this regard. Various limitations of the Bureau of Anti-Corruption have come to light from the investigative research carried out by TIB. It has been found that effective steps can't be taken for curbing corruption if the anti-corruption body is not made independent. TIB has proposed the formation of a neutral, effective, independent Anti-Corruption Commission. TIB has put forward a possible structure of such a proposed commission.

The constitution of a Human Rights Commission is also being contemplated. The Constitution of Bangladesh has highlighted various human rights themes in the Articles 27 to 43. A draft law was prepared in 1998 for the constitution of a National Human Rights Commission. The government has recently formed a committee for the purpose of setting up such a commission. We hope that the government would very soon constitute a Human Rights Commission.

In order to ensure good governance in the country through the formation of a network of Offices of Ombudsman, Anti-Corruption Commission and Human Rights Commission, the independence, efficiency and effectiveness of these institutions would be vital. At the same time, their jurisdictions will also have to be clearly spelt out. If organizations are set up merely for cosmetic purposes that would only lead to wastage of state funds. They would also lack credibility. It may not be the panacea but much progress can be made towards establishing good governance if these institutions were to be formed and if they were allowed to function truly independently.

# “Social movement needed for curbing corruption”

—Dr. Kamal Hossain

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) has published an investigative research report on the Bureau of Anti-Corruption. A draft outline has also been put forward on an Independent Anti Corruption Commission (IACC) by TIB. TIB arranged a round-table discussion on the occasion of the publication of the Report and the draft outline. It was conducted by TIB’s Chairman Professor Khan Sarwar Murshid and those who took part in the discussions included Dr. Kamal Hossain, the Chief Whip of Jatiya Sangsad Khandakar Delwar Hossain, Chief Whip of the Opposition Vice Principal Abdus Shaheed, Faruque Khan MP, G M Quader MP, former Comptroller and Auditor General and Adviser to the caretaker government M Hafizuddin Khan, former Adviser to the caretaker government S M Shahjahan, former Member of Parliament and Awami League leaders, S M Akram, Professor Ali Ashraf, Advocate Sudhangshu Shekhar Halder, economist Dr. Atiur Rahman, former Cabinet Secretary Mujibul Haque, journalist Enayetullah Khan, former Director General of Bangla Academy Dr. Syed Anwar Hossain, Dr. Tareq Shamsur Rahman, former Director General of the Bureau of Anti-Corruption M. Badiuzzaman, Director (Administration) Abu Bakar Siddique, Dr. Kaneez Siddiqui, Professor K M Mohsin, and Dr. John P Emmert. A num-



Launch of the Fact-Finding Report on the Bureau of Anti-Corruption and a working paper on an Independent Anti-Corruption Commission.

ber of high officials of government and non-government organizations including Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister Dr. Kamal Uddin Siddiqui, the then current Director General of the Bureau of Anti-Corruption Abdul Jabbar and Education Secretary Shahidul Alam, politicians, senior journalists, educationists, researchers and a good number of reporters from various news media were present at the gathering.

During the discussion, Dr. Kamal Hossain highlighted the importance of soliciting expert opinion for the establishment of an Independent Anti-Corruption Commission. He reminded that an Anti-Corruption Commission alone was not sufficient for curbing corruption. An extensive social movement against corruption and an active civil society were safeguards for its proper functioning. Other speakers dwelt on the failures, inefficiency and limitations of the Bureau of Anti-Corruption as mentioned in the research report of TIB. The speakers unanimously recommended the framing of a law in parliament for the setting up a fully independent, neutral and effective Anti-Corruption Commission to save the country from all-pervasive corruption. They urged the opposition political parties to cooperate with the government in this task.

While concluding the deliberation, TIB Chairman Professor Khan Sarwar Murshid

called upon all to come forward with a cooperative attitude in the matter. Member of the TIB Trustee Board Professor Muzaffer Ahmad presented the research report at the meeting while TIB Director Zia Haider Rahman presented the draft outline of the Independent Anti-Corruption Commission. Research Associate of TIB Anwarul Amin prepared the research report. Officials of TIB including the Executive Director were present at the meeting.

It could be gathered from the report that only 4 percent of those charged with corruption have been convicted and 5.2 percent have been acquitted in recent years. The remaining 90.8 percent cases have remained unresolved. Weak charge-sheets and litigation process, stay order of courts, lack of proper evidence and witnesses, political instability and political influence were mainly responsible for this dismal scenario.

## Chittagong

Political goodwill is a prerequisite for curbing corruption. The Independent Anti-Corruption Commission must be free from political influences, but its accountability to the people must be ensured. This view was expressed by discussants at a meeting organized by TIB on the investigative report on the Bureau of Anti-Corruption and the



Discussion in Chittagong



Focus group discussion in Rajshahi

raft outline for an Independent Anti-Corruption Commission at Agrabad Chambers Auditorium, Chittagong, on 14 January 2002. The speakers at the meeting emphasized the need for setting up of an Independent Anti-Corruption Commission taking into cognizance the reality and domestic needs of Bangladesh. Presided over by the Executive Director of TIB Manzoor Hasan, the discussion was moderated by Dr. Muhammad Yeahia Akhtar. It was participated by the President of Bangladesh Economic Association Dr. Moinul Islam, President of Chittagong Chambers Farid Ahmed Chowdhury, President of Chittagong Journalists Union Muhammad Idris, President of Chittagong University Teachers' Association Dr. Iftekharuddin Chowdhury, Dean of the Faculty of Social Science Dr. Mohammad Mahbubullah.

## Rajshahi

TIB arranged a discussion meeting in Rajshahi on 10 February 2002 to elicit opinion on devising effective means for curbing corruption in the country as well as on the proposed outline for an Independent Anti-Corruption Commission. Held at the Regional Public Administration Training Centre in Rajshahi, the discussants at the meeting made a number of recommendations. The Executive Director of TIB Manzoor Hasan conducted the discussion meeting. Those who aired their opinions on the subject included the Chairman of Public Administration Department of Rajshahi University Professor Shamsur Rahman, Science and Technology Secretary of Rajshahi District Awami League Engineer Shafiqul Islam, Politburo member of Workers Party Fazley Hossain Badsha, Director of a local NGO (ACD) Selina Sarwar.

## Sylhet

TIB organized a discussion meeting in Sylhet on 20 February to elicit opinion on the proposed Independent Anti-Corruption Commission. Held at the conference hall of 'Upashahar Grameen Janakalyan Bhaban', the discussion meeting was conducted by TIB Executive Director. Those who took part in the discussion included the head of the department of social science of Shahjalal University Dr. Kamal Ahmed Chowdhury, the President of Sylhet Bar Association Abdul Khaleque, former President of the Bar Azizul Mallick Chowdhury, Chairman of 'Grameen Janakalyan Sangsad' Jamil Chowdhury, Divisional Public Prosecutor Noman Mahmud, Public Prosecutor Nurul Haque, politician Syed Mostafa Kamal, M A Matin Chowdhury, Mohiuddin Shiru and Al Azad.

## TIB Investigative Journalism Award Announced



Members of the TIB Board of Trustees Mrs. S. R. Ghuznavi, Professor Muzaffar Ahmad & Executive Director with the prize winners (left to right) Sagor Sagir, Mustafiz Shafi & Shafiul Alam Raza.

## Four Reporters receive prizes

TIB has announced its investigative journalism award for the year 2001. Staff reporter of Daily Protham Alo Mustafiz Shafi and Staff reporter of Daily Jugantar Shafiul Alam Raza have been awarded the first prize. The winners were given cheques for Taka 50,000 each, certificates and crests. Those who spoke at the prize-giving ceremony included members of TIB trustee board Professor Muzaffer Ahmad and Syeda Ruby Ghuznavi, Executive Director Manzoor Hasan, Bureau Chief of Associated Press Farid Hossain, Executive Director of Democracywatch Taleya Rehman and the prize-winning journalists.

Mustafiz Shafi was awarded the first prize for his investigative report on 'Criminal Gangs in Hospitals' published in the 'Protham Alo' between 17 to 23 October 2000, while Shafiul Alam Raja got the prize for his investigative report titled 'Round-up of the Capital's Police Stations: Corruption by Police Spreading like AIDS' published in the Daily 'Arthonity' between 1 to 9 January 2000. Staff reporter of the Daily 'Muktakantha' Sagor Sagir and Staff reporter of Channel-I Zulfikar Ali Manik got the second and third prizes respectively for their reports titled 'Plundering by Civil Surgeons' and 'Court Martial of Army Mutiny in Chittagong' published in 'Muktakantha' and 'Bhorer Kagoj' respectively. Both of them were awarded certificates and crests.

Transparency International Bangladesh introduced the investigative journalism awards in 1999. The entries are evaluated on the basis of their ability to expose institutional and systemic corruption as well as irregularities and malpractices in the administration. A 2-member jury board was formed to evaluate the entries submitted in the 2001 competition. They made a preliminary evaluation of the reports. On the basis of their assessment, a 3-member jury evaluated comparatively better pieces in the final stage. Members of the 2-member jury board were Bureau Chief of AP Farid Hossain and Special Correspondent of AFP Nadim Quadir. Those who evaluated the entries in the final stage were veteran journalist ABM Musa, Professor Sakhawat Ali Khan of Dhaka University journalism department and chairman of the English Department Professor Showkat Hossain. It should be mentioned here that the names of the newspapers and reporters were erased before forwarding them to the board of jurors for assessment.

Last year, TIB had awarded investigative journalism prize to four journalists. This year, the English entries were not considered to be of sufficiently good quality by the jurors. On the other hand, two reports published in the Bengali dailies got the highest marks and were considered to be of sufficiently high quality. Consequently, the jurors recommended TIB to award both the top prizes to these two reporters.

## Investigative Journalism Award-2002

TIB has invited entries from journalists for the Investigative Journalism Award-2002. The entries must have been published in Bengali or English daily newspapers of the country between 1 January and 31 December 2001. The reports would be evaluated on the basis of their ability to expose institutional and systemic corrup-

tion or administrative irregularities and anomalies. Each prize will carry a cash reward of Taka 50,000 (fifty thousand). The entries will have to be submitted to Transparency International Bangladesh, 121/C (3rd floor), Gulshan Avenue, Dhaka-1212 by 30 April 2002.

## Shows of 'Bagher Gappo' staged

The People's Theatre Group of TIB has staged its anti-corruption play 'Bagher Gappo' (Tiger's Tale) on 29 December 2001. Three consecutive shows were staged in Mymensingh.

Glimpses of various irregularities and corruption prevalent in the education, health and police departments were depicted in the 30-minute play. Around 400 people were present to enjoy each show. The Secretary of CCC-Mymensingh Sadar Ms. Sazia Afrin introduced the play to the audience. Opinion was solicited from the audience after each performance. The audience gave their views quite spontaneously. They opined that the incidents depicted in the play regarding irregularities in education, health and police departments tallied with the reality and they themselves were victims of such incidents. They also said that the initiative of TIB to generate awareness among the people against corruption through drama was

praiseworthy.

The Field Assistant of TIB Karuna Kishore Chakravarty and the drama consultant and coordinator Kamal Hossain Mintu were present with the People's Theatre Group.

### Performance at Nalitabari

The People's Theatre Group also staged the anti-corruption play 'Bagher Gappo' at Nannibazar, Bankura Bazar and Muktijoddha Mancha of Nalitabari Upazila on 24 January 2002 in association with the Committee of Concerned Citizens of Nalitabari. There was a huge turnout at Nannibazar. Many witnessed the show even



Mobile theatre show staged at Kishoreganj S. V. Government High School premises.

from rooftops of houses.

A trustee of Britain's Satata Trust Mr. Mark Phillips and the Program Officer of TIB Ekram Hossain were present at the Bankura Bazar show. Young and old, men and women, boys and girls from schools were present to enjoy the show.

More than a thousand people assembled at the Muktijoddha Mancha show. The convenor of CCC-Nalitabari M A Hakam Heera

## From the pages of Newspapers

### 2 thousand tons of wheat pilfered

During the past four months, over 2 thousand metric tons of wheat were pilfered during unloading of around 1 lakh metric tons of wheat from 8 food-grain carrying ships. This huge amount of wheat worth over 2 crore taka, have been plundered by some dishonest officials of the local Food Department in collusion with an organized and influential gang of pilferers. Some corrupt members of the law-enforcing agencies were also involved in the pilferage of wheat.

Source: Daily Jugantar, 12 January 2002

### Taka 61 lakh of BRTC misappropriated

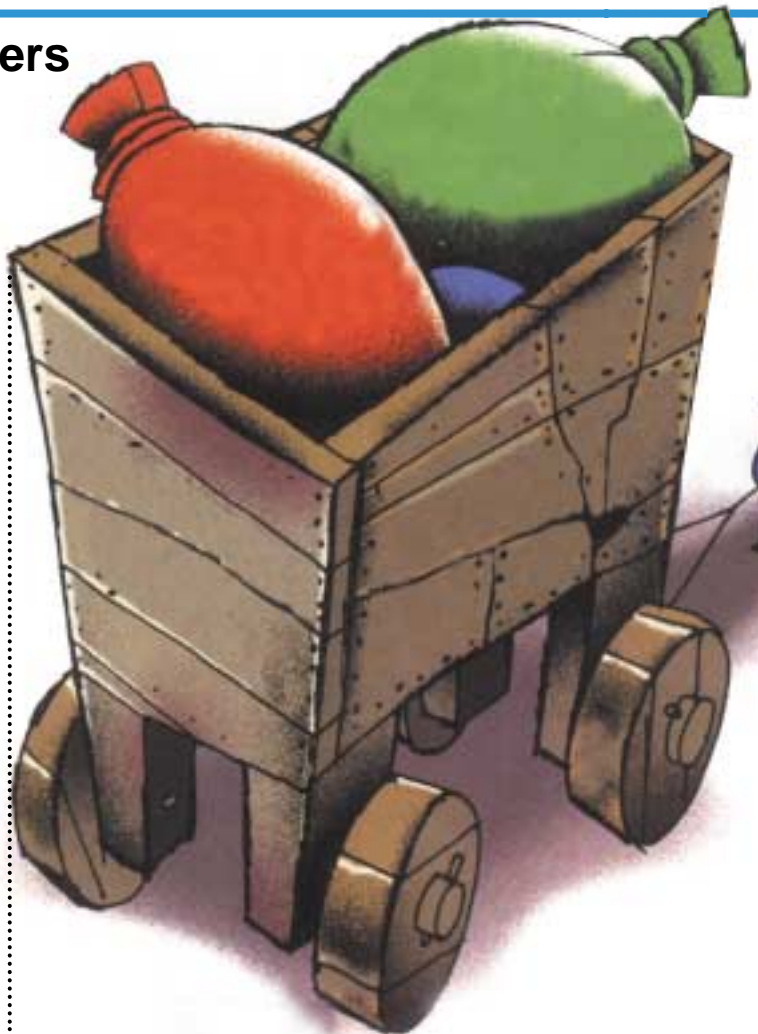
Meghna Transport Ltd., has misappropriated Taka 61 lakh 67, 631 on account of lease payments owing to BRTC for 26 buses. The principal owner of the organization has shown on paper that payment had been made. This serious anomaly came to light when the chairman and directors of BRTC visited its Joarshahara depot on 1 January 2002.

Source: Daily Protham Alo, 11 January 2002

### Crores of taka plundered at Bianibazar land port

The government is incurring revenue loss of at least one crore taka each month due to false declarations made while importing a huge quantity of coal from India everyday through the Sutarkandi land port of Bianibazar. Taka 699 is realized per ton of imported coal according to the duty rate fixed by the government. But many importers import 150 metric tons of coal after making a declaration for 100 metric tons with the collusion of customs officials. As a consequence, the government incurs a revenue loss of 33 thousand taka on Letter of Credit for 100 metric tons of coal.

Source: Daily Jugantar, 16 January 2002



introduced the Satata trustee Mr. Mark Phillips to this gathering.

### People's Theatre show at Kishoreganj, Muktagachha and Modhupur

Three shows of 'Bagher Gappo' were staged at Kishoreganj SV Government Girls High School on 16 February 2002 in front of Muktagachha Municipal Memorial on 21 February 2002 and Ranibhaban High School of Modhupur on 19 February 2002. A large number of people turned up to see the play.

### People's theatre in drama festival

A Sylhet region-based street drama festival was organized by Srimangal's Bijayee Theatre on the occasion of 50th anniversary of the great language movement. Held at the compound of Srimangal's Victoria High School, the 4-day festival was inaugurated by the Secretary General of Bangladesh Gram Theatre Mr. Humayun Kabir. This street drama festival of people's theatre was hosted with the assistance of the President of Moulvibazar district Natya Samity Mr. Khaled Chowdhury and a Satata trustee from Birmingham (UK) Mr. Abdul Muktadir.

### Advocacy training for CCC members

Members of TIB's Committees of Concerned Citizens are frequently involved in advocacy work on different aspects of social life. An advocacy training was arranged recently to give them a clear idea about the issues on which TIB is campaigning. Twenty-four participants were present in the program held at

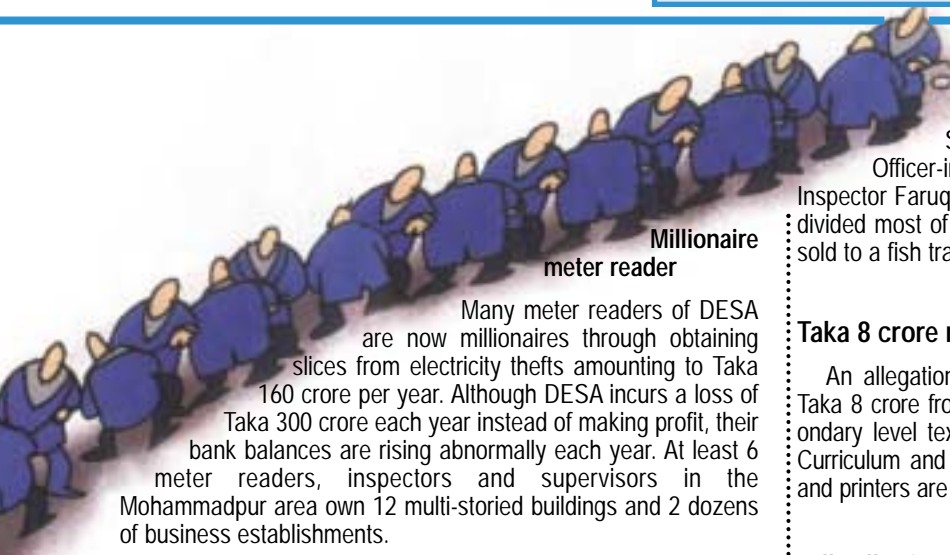


CCC Participants attending advocacy training in Comilla

Bangladesh Rural Development Academy, Comilla between 26 and 28 December 2001. Apart from CCC members, some officials and volunteers of TIB also participated. Member of TIB Abu Zayed Mohammad, Naresh Madhu of PRIP Trust, Research Officer of TIB Saidur Rahman

Molla and Program Officer Ekram Hossain were present as instructors.

Subjects included in the training program were different categories and strategies of advocacy, areas of advocacy, problem identification and solutions, qualities of advocates, techniques of conducting meetings, among other issues.



### Millionaire meter reader

Many meter readers of DESA are now millionaires through obtaining slices from electricity thefts amounting to Taka 160 crore per year. Although DESA incurs a loss of Taka 300 crore each year instead of making profit, their bank balances are rising abnormally each year. At least 6 meter readers, inspectors and supervisors in the Mohammadpur area own 12 multi-storied buildings and 2 dozens of business establishments.

Source: Daily Manabzamin, 26 January 2002

### Medicine of health complex sold outside

The patients of Hatiya health complex have to buy most of the needed medicines from outside. Some nurses buy costly anti-biotic medicines from outside via the patients for depositing them in the hospital and later sell those medicines to the druggists at a nominal price.

Source: Daily Ittefaq, 19 January 2002

### APP jailed

The APP of Melandaha upazila of Jamalpur district Advocate Khairul Islam has been sentenced to 7 years' rigorous imprisonment and 2 lakh taka fine, failing which imprisonment for one year, for misappropriating wheat meant for the distressed mothers who hold VGD cards.

Source: Daily Protham Alo, 13 February 2002

### Fish looted by police

The police have looted fish worth Taka 40/50 thousand from Shimrail area of Siddhirganj on 17 February 2002. Directed by the Officer-in-Charge of the police station Ismail Hossain, Sub-Inspector Faruque forcibly looted fish from a fish farm. The police divided most of the fish booty among themselves. The rest were sold to a fish trader.

Source: Daily Jugantar, 18 February 2002

### Taka 8 crore misappropriated

An allegation has been raised regarding misappropriation of Taka 8 crore from the government fund meant for publishing secondary level text books this year. Some top officials of National Curriculum and Text Book Board and some dishonest publishers and printers are reportedly involved in this embezzlement.

Source: Daily Ajker Kagaj, 30 January 2002

### Toll collection by police

An allegation has been raised against the Officer-in-Charge of a police station regarding toll-collection on the occasion of police week in Fatulla industrial area. Businessmen complain that the Officer-in-Charge has collected a few lakhs taka as toll from different mills and factories.

Source: Daily Ittefaq, 25 January 2002

### Where people are harassed by officials

There is no end to harassment at the Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training. People suffer and undergo harassment due to slow pace of work and the expectation of officers and employees that they would be paid bribes. A large sum of money is extracted from people who are coming home or going abroad.

Source: Daily Manabzamin, 29 January 2002

# TIB programs

## Training on News-scan database

TIB has been preparing news-scan database since January 2000 on the basis of corruption-related reports published in the newspapers. A 2-member team from TIB visited TIB on 21 and 22 December 2001 to receive training on the subject. The coordinator of database team M. Abdul Alim presented a detailed overview about the research framework. Director Zia Haider Rahman, Program Officer Ekram Hossain, Research Officer Saidur Rahman Molla, Research Associate Anwarul Amin, Media Outreach Relations Officer Mohammad Imamuddin, Assistant Information Officer Taslima Akhtar and volunteer Shamaila Mahbub also participated.

## TIB at the Manila Conference

A conference titled 'Regional Forum on Effective Legislative Oversight for Transparency and Accountability' was held at the Filipino capital Manila on 10-11 December 2001 under the aegis of Center for Legislative Development (CLD). Members of Parliament, representatives of local governments, NGOs and civil societies from different countries of the world participated in this 2-day conference. Executive Director, Research Associate and Research Assistant of TIB participated in the conference.

## Muktagachha would be turned into a corruption-free area

State Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources AKM Mosharraf Hossain has sought the cooperation of all to free Muktagachha from corruption. At a tea party jointly organized by Muktagachha CCC and TIB on 8 February 2002, the minister said that Muktagachha should become a corruption-free area with the cooperation of all in the locality. The convener of the CCC presided over the meeting held at the auditorium of the municipal library and arranged in honor of the newly elected MP, local politicians and distinguished personalities. Executive Director of TIB, Abu Reza Fazlul Haque of BNP, Abul Kashem of Krishak League, Abdur Rashid Kala Mia of 'Nagorik Parishad', CCC members Advocate Sharafuddin, Advocate Mahbubur Rahman, Ekhlasur Rahman, Upazila Executive Officer Monowar Hossain Akhand and TIB

Program Officer Ekram Hossain spoke on the occasion.

The speakers stressed on the need for generating public opinion to build up a social movement against corruption. Local politicians and distinguished guests participated in the meeting.

## Meeting of volunteers

The youth community will have to play a pioneering role for the betterment of our society. TIB has taken up an initiative to form groups of volunteers in order to involve the youth community in the movement against corruption. Three separate meetings were held with this aim at Muktagachha on 29 November 2001, at Mymensingh on 9 December 2001 and at Nalitabari Ganaunnayan Library on 12 December 2001. The volunteers spontaneously participated in these discussion meetings and showed their willingness to work alongside TIB.

## Reception at CCC-Modhupur

A reception was arranged by the Committee of Concerned Citizens (CCC) of Modhupur for the elected parliament member of Modhupur (Tangail) constituency Dr.



Participants from Bangladesh at the Manila conference

Abdur Razzak. Held on 29 December 2001 with the convener of CCC Professor Golam Samdani in the chair, the reception was addressed by the president of Upazila Awami League Khandakar Shafiuddin Moni, members of the CCC Gyasuddin Ahmed and Dr. Meer Farhadul Alam Moni and Program Officer of TIB Ekram Hossain. Held at the CCC office, local elite, politicians and professionals were present at the gathering.

## Anti-corruption essay and debate contest in Kishoreganj

TIB and Kishoreganj CCC organized an anti-corruption essay and debate competi-



TIB stall at the 'Democracy Festival' held in Chittagong

tion with the goal of involving the younger generation - the future helmsmen of

## Advocacy campaign on corruption in primary education



Bangladesh.

Gurudayal Government College, Wali Newaz Khan College, Government Women's College, Government Boy's College, SV Government Girls High School, Arzat Atarjan High School, Azim Uddin High School, District Memorial High School, and Kishoreganj Girls High School participated in this exceptional competition held between 11 and 16 February 2002. Gurudayal College emerged champion in the college category while SV Government Girls High School became champion in the school category of the competition. The runners-up were Wali Newaz Khan College and Arzat Atarjan High School. The topic of the debate was 'A capitalist society nurtures corruption'.

The final session of the competition held on 16 February 2002 was presided over by TIB's Executive Director. Others who spoke on the occasion were SM Abdul Mannan, Advocate Bhupendra Bhowmik Dolan, Ekram Hossain and Rafiqul Islam.

Roundtable in honor of the newly elected MP, local politicians and distinguished individuals in Muktagacha

The members of the CCC sub-committee are: Abdul Mannan, Aminul Haque Chowdhury, Nazmunnahar Molly and Mukti Chowdhury.

### Modhupur

An advocacy campaign on eliminating corruption in primary education was launched by TIB and CCC-Modhupur in Modhupur on 12 January 2002. Two separate meetings were held on the day at Modhupur Model Government Primary School and the office of Dhanbari Primary Teachers' Association.



The finalists of a debate competition in Kishoreganj

TIB had carried out "a report card" survey on primary education in 8 thanas (formally Upazila) of greater Mymensingh to identify lapses in the elementary level of education in the country and to unravel the irregularities and corruption existing in the system. The findings of the survey were released in May-2001. The CCC members have now started an advocacy campaign to reduce the irregularities and corruption in primary education.

A sub-committee has been formed in Kishoreganj for the purpose with Mohammad Shafiqul Islam as the convener. Members of the committee have met with the District Education Officer, Thana Executive Officer and the Thana Education Officer. They handed over the "report card" survey report to them and drew their attention to the findings. The officials conceded to the findings and expressed the hope that anomalies would be reduced in the future.

Around one hundred headmasters of primary schools, Thana Education Officer, Assistant Education Officer and representatives of teachers' associations, members of the Committee of Concerned Citizens (CCCs) and the Research and Program Officers of TIB were present at the meeting held at Modhupur Model Government Primary School.

The convener of CCC Professor Golam Samdani informed the audience about the findings of the "report card" survey on corruption in primary education. The Thana Education Officer differed on some aspects of the report. In reply, the Research Officer of TIB said that scientific methods were followed while preparing the report. The data were verified through various means. The CCC convener said that the main goal of TIB was to identify the lapses in order to eliminate them.

Headmasters of primary schools, Thana Education Officer, Assistant Education Officer, members of CCC and TIB officials were also present at the meeting held at the office of Dhanbari Teachers' Association.



CCC Participants attending advocacy training in Borga

## Meeting with District Education Officer

The CCC members held a meeting with the District Education Officer of Mymensingh on 17 January 2002 regarding the findings of the survey on corruption in primary education. The District Education Officer welcomed TIB's survey. Conceding to the existence of different kinds of corruption in primary education, he said that everybody should work together to eradicate institutional corruption. Mentioning various measures taken by him to curb corruption, he said that it would be possible to check corruption in primary education if everybody cooperated. CCC members Momtazuddin, Pradip Chakrabarty and Sharifuzzaman Parag were present at the meeting.

## Nalitabari

A meeting was held with the Education Officer and headmasters of Nalitabari, Sherpur on 11 February 2002. Chaired by CCC convener MA Hakam, discussion was held on the "report card" survey to check corruption in primary education. The Thana Education Officer, Assistant Education



Discussion meeting with Education Officers and Headmasters of primary schools of Nalitabari, Sherpur

Officer, and Headmasters of 110 primary schools were present at the meeting.

The CCC convener explained the background of the "report card" survey and sought the cooperation of all to eliminate corruption in primary education. The Education Officer and some teachers expressed some dissent-

ing views on different irregularities and corruption that exist in primary education. But they praised TIB's initiative to check corruption and promised to make sincere efforts to ensure transparency. The CCC convener thanked everybody present for their cooperation and for freely exchanging their views.



## Politicizing corruption

The politicians have started to do politics with corruption. The ruling party has published a White Paper. The Opposition has done likewise. In our country, the political parties seldom indulge in self-criticism. Whichever party goes to power, it jumps on the state resources and devours with both the hands. The political leaders are not concerned about this. If a party goes to power, the good people fall back while the bad elements go forward. The corrupt people are not tried. They find escape-routes through the

loop-holes of law courts. Politics is resorted to on the issue of corruption. Effective measures should be considered on how to get rid of it.

*Sadia Afreen  
Salema Khatun Girls College,*

## Corruption in the banking sector

The banking sector in Bangladesh is no less corrupt. Various kinds of anomalies exist here, such as, obtaining loans through influence peddling, non-execution of the conditions on which loans are sanctioned and embezzlement of money through fraud. The financial sector can not be developed if the banking sector is not reformed.

*Mirza Ghalib  
Mohammadpur, Dhaka*

## A strong civil society

The more powerful the civil society is, the more illumined, organized and consolidated the state is. Despite limited capacity and various limitations, and the smallness of its size compared to a huge population, the civil soci-

ety of this country has never failed to show proper direction to the nation at appropriate times. The civil society has to take up appropriate measures to curb corruption and establish good governance. A strong civil society is a prerequisite for this purpose.

*Mona  
Upashahar, Rajshahi*

## Good Governance

Money and muscle-power are now controlling politics. Whatever the parties say, it is a fact that no ruling party has ever taken any strong measure against corruption. We request the political parties to put forward specific, precise and unambiguous programs to check corruption. Take effective steps to tackle terrorism. Only then would good governance be ensured.

*Moushumi  
Puthia, Chittagong*

## Wanted Independent Anti-Corruption Commission

Corruption is a major hindrance in Bangladesh's develop-

ment endeavor. According to TIB, per capita income would double if it can be checked. An independent anti-corruption commission is required if action is to be taken against all corrupt elements including the people in power. The two major parties have shown us the vision of such a commission during the last election. Implementation of that proposal is urgent if the country is to be freed from corruption.

*Meher Farnaz  
BBA Marketing, Dhaka University*

## People's theatre on corruption

A people's theatre on corruption titled 'Bagher Gappo' (Tiger's Tale) was staged at the Agricultural University crossing on 29 December 2001. This people's drama has depicted within a brief span of time corruption in education, health and police departments. This initiative by TIB to generate awareness among the common people is indeed praiseworthy.

*Mohammad Alauddin Patwari  
Agricultural University, Mymensingh*