



TIB

Transparency International Bangladesh

NEWSLETTER

Year 5 No. 3 September 2001

SOCIAL MOVEMENT AGAINST CORRUPTION



Political will needed

EDITORIAL

Bangladesh is a country with enormous potential. Endowed with vast natural resources Bangladesh also has excellent human resources. We have opted for a democratic way of governance for our progress. So the commitment of our political parties to the fundamentals of democracy is of paramount importance. Every political party should have clearly articulated goals which when achieved give substance to its commitment to the people. Political parties publish their manifestos before elections, in which their policies and aims are spelt out as commitments to the nation. These should include a pledge to reduce and finally eradicate corruption from society as a precondition of economic and human development. Needless to say, it is important for our political parties to translate their commitments into realities on assuming power. Then the country can embark on rapid development by establishing a corruption-free society. Hong Kong and Singapore provide examples of how corruption can be checked and

good governance ensured, honoring the execution of political commitments.

Corruption discourages local as well as foreign investments and reduces the availability of resources for improving the quality of life. As the scope of corruption widens the authority of the state is undermined and threatened. As a consequence the ability of government to take sound decisions and implement them is seriously affected. This leads to a collapse faith in them. Simultaneously, a deep loss of faith in democracy leads to the failure of democracy to strike its deep roots. In a country like Bangladesh where there is a clear link between political corruption and bureaucratic corruption, which has a way of increasing in benign neglect, determined remedial action is necessary.

In various countries of the world political parties, whose number is usually small in any case, play a cooperative role in development through properly practising democracy. In the west almost all politicians enjoy the trust of the people and the former are perceived to be working in the public interest. In a mature democratic system the leadership not only faces criticism but also commands respect. Such a political climate speaks of a proper democratic mentality. Our own political culture is mostly devoid of tolerance and courtesy nowadays. The unfamiliarity of some politicians with political decorum, their indecent remarks against one another, degrade our political culture. Democracy cannot run its natural course in an atmosphere of intolerance and violence. The common people of Bangladesh have a healthy sense of values and they long for some politics.

The welfare and protection of the interest of the country and the people should be uppermost in the minds of politicians. Those who keep that in mind and selflessly serve the country through definite programmes are politicians in the proper sense of the term. Party division and ideological differences notwithstanding, politicians should reach consensus on certain fundamental issues facing the country. In a society or a state where this spirit is operative, democracy and civil society have a chance. Politics marked by irresponsibility and exclusiveness not only retard the progress of the country but also cause conflict and unacceptable suffering and pain to the people.

Tolerance and a firm political commitment are essential for the development of the country.



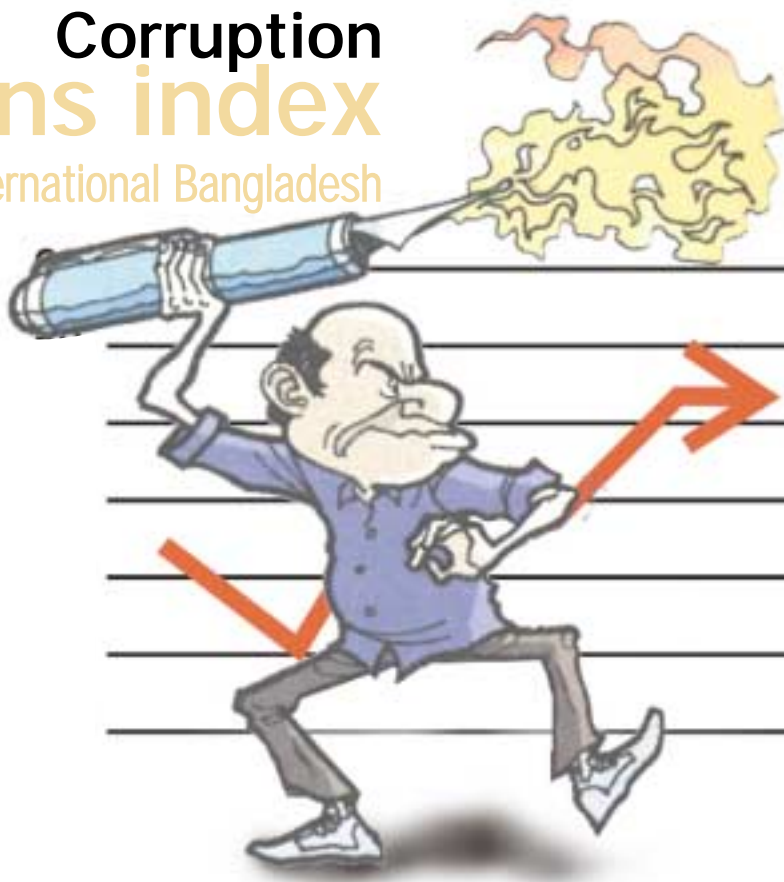
Corruption perceptions index

And Transparency International Bangladesh

Some quarters have tried to discover political ill motive behind the publication of the report. Some have expressed their reservation questioning the transparency of the TI itself. TIB hopes that this write-up will help readers clarify their own impressions...

The Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) recently published by Transparency International (TI) has attracted a lot of publicity. Based on the report, scores of editorials, post-editorials, columns etc. have been written, while many have expressed their opinion in the Letters to the Editor column in various newspapers. Some have tried to portray the real picture of corruption in Bangladesh, expressing their opinion based on their experience. Some quarters have tried to discover political ill motive behind the publication of the report. Some have expressed their reservation questioning the transparency of the TI itself. TIB hopes that this write-up will help readers clarify their own impressions.

The opinion of foreign business executives, high-level executives, managers and country analysts working in a country about the corruption in government, politics and business world and administration is what the Corruption Perceptions Index is all about. The index is prepared by a technical committee composed of professors of various universities under the supervision of Gottingen University, Germany. The CPI does not include all countries of the world. In 2001, 91 countries of the world and in 2000, 90 countries were included in the index. Only 54 countries were included in the index in 1996. It is only when the number of surveys conducted by the independent organizations about a country is at least 3 that the country is included in the CPI. All countries of the world cannot be included in the index because of the non-availability of necessary information. While there are around 200 countries in the world, only 91 countries have been included in the index



for 2001. Bangladesh occupies the 91st position in the index, which is the lowest. But there may be other countries in the world more corrupt than Bangladesh. They could not be included because of the non-availability of adequate surveys and data.

Perceptions Index. This year's sources of information were 14 surveys conducted by 7 organisations.

This year's information on Bangladesh was drawn from 3 surveys conducted by three different independent organizations. These are: 1) Business Environment Survey 2001, conducted by the World Bank; 2) Country Risk Service and Country Forecast 2001, conducted by the Economic Intelligent Unit of the London-based weekly, the Economist; 3) Global Competitiveness Report 2001, conducted by the World Economist Forum.

For some countries 12 surveys have been used as information sources. On the other hand only 3 sources have been used in case of Bangladesh, like some others. This might raise questions that mutually inconsistent subjects have been compared in the CPI. For only 4 countries the highest number of surveys, 12, has been used. On the other hand, for 23 countries, 3 sources only have been used. In the case of Indonesia, the 3rd most corrupt country, 12 surveys have

Source organisations and name of the surveys		
Source Organisations	Name of the surveys	Years of survey
Political and economic Risk Consultancy Institute for Management Development. IMD.	Asian Intelligence Issue	1999, 2000, 2001
World Bank	World Competitiveness Yearbook	1999, 2000, 2001
Pricewaterhouse Coopers	World Business Environment Survey	2001
Economist Intelligence Unit	Opacity Index	2000
Freedom House	Country Risk Service and Country Forecast	2001
World Economic Forum	Nations in Transit	(a) 2000 (b) 1999,
	a) Africa Competitiveness Report (b) Global 2000, 2001 Competitiveness Report	

The CPI is prepared by collecting data from the surveys of various independent organizations. International organizations conducting surveys on global business climate, competitive situation, investment climate, economic stalemates and corruption in governmental activities are the sources of information for the Corruption

been used. So it is not true that the position of Bangladesh is bad because of a smaller number of surveys.

Questions regarding how far the methodology that has been used in the CPI of 2001 is statistically correct may be raised. The methodology that is necessary for preparing a perception index is there in the perception index of TI. The Corruption Perceptions Index shows score, deviation and range, which are the determining factors. So from that point of view the methodology is highly scientific. Besides, the statistical information, which is necessary for understanding perception index is largely, contained in the index itself. The precision of some findings in the case of Bangladesh is less than for other countries as the range of standardised score is wide and standard deviation/variance is high.

The CPI of TI is a poll of polls. The survey reports used as the source of information are globally accepted. The respondents included in these surveys included foreign business executives living in the country, high-level executives and managers working in local and international companies, equity analysts, bankers, CEOs and staff of Pricewaterhouse Coopers.

It is not true that Bangladesh is the most corrupt country in the world. Questions may be raised why Bangladesh has been called the most corrupt country among the 91 countries. Among these countries, the score of Bangladesh is 0.4, which is the lowest. That's why the position of Bangladesh is the lowest among these countries. Bangladesh was included in the CPI for the first time in 1996, when it was the fourth most corrupt country among the 54 countries included. After 1996, Bangladesh has been included in 2001 in the index for the second time. It is not true that everybody in Bangladesh is corrupt. Some politicians and some administrative people are responsible for corruption, while everybody except them are victims of corruption.

TI Bangladesh has no role in determining the CPI. It is an international report where no chapter of TI has any role to play. Not only that, no chapter knows beforehand when the report is started and when it is completed. All chapters of TI including TIB play only the role of a conduit in the publication of the report. The Bangladesh chapter presents the CPI through a press release. TIB's purpose was to help the local news media with information about the report beforehand, because the CPI was internationally released at 8 p.m. on June 27, 2001, Bangladesh

Regional meeting of South Asian chapters of TI

A regional meeting of South Asian chapters of Transparency International

was held from June 16 to 18 at the Kalutara Golden Sun resort in Sri Lanka. Apart from the Sri Lanka delegation, delegates from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Nepal participated in the meeting. The Executive Director of TI Margaret Van Haam and programme officer Ran



Liao participated in the meeting, which discussed various measures for curbing corruption in South Asia. The participating countries also agreed to publish a regional newsletter

time. Even if TIB had not released the CPI, it would have been released all over the world including Bangladesh by the international media. Some newspapers in Bangladesh published information about CPI from international media like AFP rather than from the TIB press release or press conference. There is no political motive behind the publication of the report before the elections. Since 1995, this report has been regularly published between June and October. A more convincing case might have been made that the timing of the previous CPI was made with an eye on imminent elections, when it appeared less than eight weeks before the US presidential elections and showed the US to be far from a paragon of virtue - if in the same eight weeks there hadn't also been parliamentary or Presidential elections in Lithuania, Poland, Yugoslavia, Sri Lanka, Slovenia, Belarus, Ivory Coast, Tanzania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Egypt and Kyrgyzstan. Many of those countries featured in the index, and none of them emerged with much credit.

Some people have questioned whether Dr. Kamal Hossain or some BNP leader has played any role in preparing the report. Neither did they have any role, nor they had any prior knowledge of the report. Further, any person involved in politics cannot be involved with any chapter of TI. Dr. Kamal Hossain is not

involved with the TI Bangladesh chapter. He is the chairman of the advisory council of TI (Berlin). Besides Dr. Hossain, former American President Jimmy Carter, former Foreign Minister Mauritania Ahmedou Ould-Abdulaah, Speaker of the South Africa Parliament Frene Ginwala, former Justice Minister of Columbia Nestor Humberto Martinez Neira, former Finance Minister Hans Matthofer, Botswana President Festus Mogae, Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, Noble prize winner and former president of Costa Rica Oscar Arias Sanchez and former President of Germany Richard Von Weizsacker are advisory council members who have been or are involved with politics.

Although many members of the advisory council of TI are involved in politics they all have other important identities. Besides politics, Dr. Kamal Hossain is not only an international legal expert, he is also the also the chairman of the TI advisory council as a lawyer. TI does not get increased financial support from donor organisations for publishing the index - TI is a non-profit international organization spearheading an anti-corruption campaign. TI and TIB is against the use of an NGO profile for business. Although TIB works as a regional chapter of TI, it conducts its activities as a fully independent organization. TIB aims at good

governance in the country through establishing transparency and accountability and stamping out corruption for the sake of economic development.

Dates of CPI publications

Year	Date
2001	27 June 2001
2000	13 Sept. 2000
1999	26 Oct. 1999
1998	22 Sept. 1998
1997	31 July 1997
1996	02 June 1996
1995	15 July 1995

Corruption in primary education

Report card survey published

TIB conducted a report card survey in 8 thanas in greater Mymensing on primary education, aimed at identifying faults and failures and exposing irregularities and corruptions at the basic level of education in the country and ending them. The survey report was formally launched through separate press conferences at Nolitabari, Kishorgaonj, Jamalpur, Muktagacha, and Madhupur in Tangail on July 1 and Mymensing on August 25.

This report card survey was conducted on primary education offices,

and students, teachers and guardians of Sadar Muktagacha and Gauripur upazila of Mymensing district, Sadar and Sharishabari upazila at Jamalpur, Sadar at Kishorgonj, Mathupur in Tangail and Nalitabari upazila at Sherpur. The survey was conducted on 171 headmasters, 966 students and 966 guardians in 171 primary schools at 8 upazilas in 5 districts, the schools included 105 government, 40 non-governmental 14 satellite and 12 community primary schools. Through the survey data was found on corruptions

A large number of teachers alleged that for their varied work they had to bribe persons at the upazila education office...

of various natures, involving the appointment of primary school teachers and upazila education offices in greater Mymensing, the overall state of service at upazila education offices, corruption and extortion regarding admissions at primary school and other cases, the nature of corruption in the Food for Education Programme, various corruptions of teachers, and the satisfaction-levels of guardians regarding their children's study. The findings were projected through a report. Students were to pay subscriptions and fees for 10 different needs. The sole determinant of

From the pages of Newspapers

Corruption and irregularities cost Works Ministry Tk.350 million.

Because of financial irregularities and corruption in various departments and autonomous bodies of the Works Ministry a loss of Tk.34.67 millions has been caused to the Works Ministry during the period 1994-99. The main reasons for the loss are signing of agreements harmful to interest, purchase of additional equipment, work done without contract paper, expenditure beyond budgetary allocation, and without pp. The report of the Comptroller and Auditor General (1997-98) of Bangladesh has identified those losses as grave ones, remarking that the amount should be realised on determining the liability.

Source: Daily Arthonity, July 13, 2001.

Mass looting instead of manpower development is going on.

Instead of manpower development, a huge amount of money is being misappropriated at the Manpower, Employment and Training Bureau. There are allegations of corruption in varied styles misusing the names of ruling party leaders including secretaries and ministers. There are talks of the welfare fund of the Bureau's wage-earners being spent on 'politics fair'. An amount exceeding Tk.370 million has been drawn for this purpose during the last 5 years. The funds of Bangladeshis repatriated from Iraq and Kuwait are also being misappropriated through various means.

Source: Daily Janakantha, 15 July, 2001.

Allegations of misappropriation against 4 professors of Bangladesh Agriculture University.

Allegations have been raised against 4 professors of Bangladesh Agriculture University and the wife of one of them for misappropriation of Tk.90 thousand, equivalent to 10 metric tones of rice, under a project involving a phony school.

Source: Bhorer Kagoj, July 17, 2001.

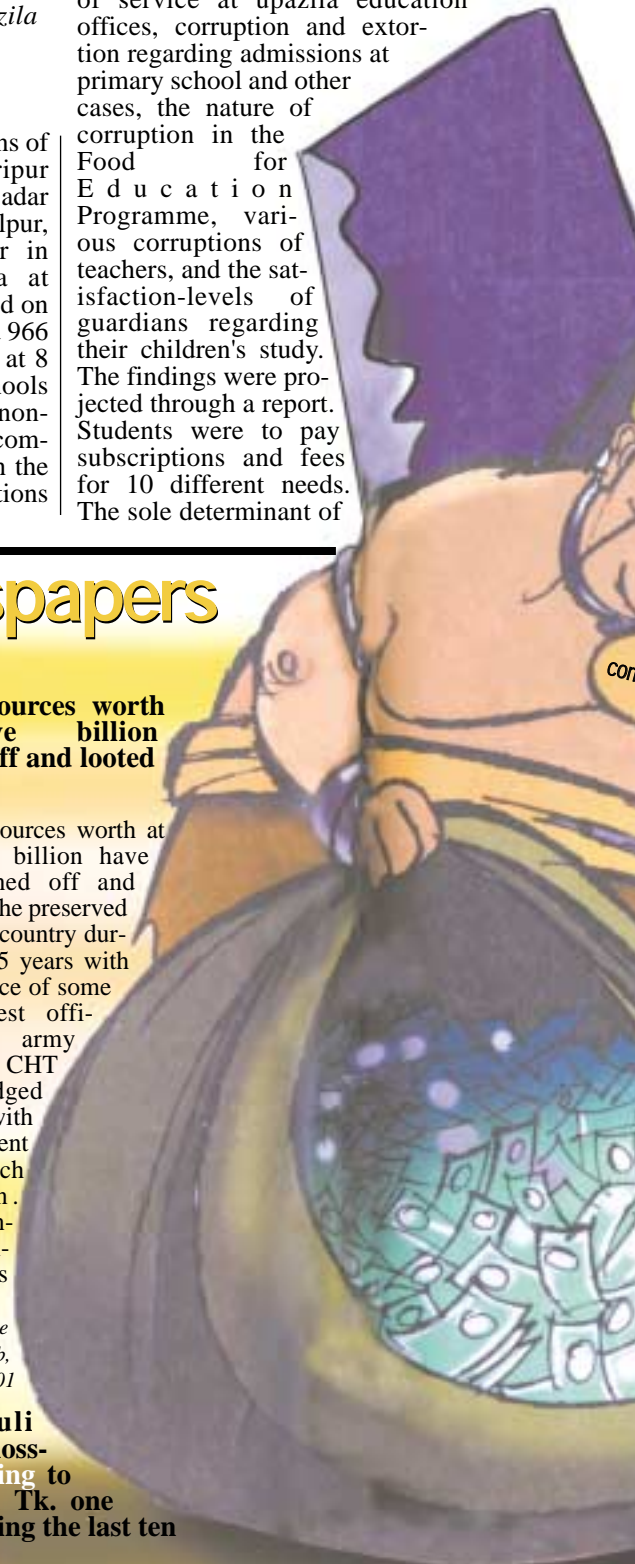
Forest resources worth Tk. five billion siphoned off and looted in 5 years.

Forest resources worth at least Tk. 5 billion have been siphoned off and looted from the preserved forest of the country during the last 5 years with the connivance of some corrupt forest officials. Even army officials in CHT region lodged complaints with the government against such goings-on. But the concerned ministry remains indifferent.

Source: The Daily Inqilab, July 20, 2001

Karnophuli mill incur losses amounting to more than Tk. one billion during the last ten years.

The losses incurred by Karnophuli paper mill during the last 10 years have exceeded Tk. one billion. Lack of sincerity among the mill's officials and workers in discharging their



inclusion in the Food for Education Programme was that only those families possessing 50 decimals of land or less than that deserved to be included. However, 16 percent of students from families possessing more than 50 decimals of land were included in the food for work programme. About 15.5 percent of guardians said that they had to pay bribes to be included in the programme. This report shows that 15.5 percent of students had to pay on an average Tk.32 while 5 percent of students had to pay Tk.5 on an average during the distribution of food. Every time 16.47 percent less food than the amount allocated was given. However, most of the beneficiaries of the programme said that the project has benefited them all. A large number of teachers alleged that for their varied work they had to bribe persons at the upazila education office.

TIB Web Site getting popular

TIB strives for checking corruption at all levels, ensuring transparency and accountability and establishing good governance. TIB started functioning as a trust in 1996 and two years later got governmental approval TIB's Web site has already become popular at home and abroad. This became clear from a statistics of TIB Web-site hits. The TIB Web site was hit 2 lakh 36 thousand 30 times from January to July this year. In January 22 thousand 938 times, in February 22 thousand 940 times, in March 23 thousand 239 times, in April 32 thousand 785 times, in May 31 thousand times, in June 43 thousand 561 times, in July 57 thousand 136 times. You can visit this popular Web site at <http://www.ti-bangladesh.org>.



responsibilities has become alarming. Limitless corruption involving the delivery of the raw material of bamboo and wood has figured prominently in the losses. Theft of valuable machinery of the mill, illegal households in the mill area, and the use of gas, water, electricity etc. in those households contribute to the loss incurred by the mill. The lack of sincerity and corruption of CBA leaders of the mills also cause losses to the mill.

Source: *The Daily Ittefaq*, July 27, 2001

Procession against corruption

An exceptional silent procession demanding a corruption-free Bangladesh was brought out in Sylhet which included representatives of various professions like university teachers, poets, cultural activists and students. Speakers at a post-procession rally said that they were deeply anxious because of the rise of corrupt elements in the society.

Source: *Prothom-Alo*, 30 July 2001.

Audit objection involving Tk. 98 million

The Comptroller and Auditor General of Bangladesh Syed Yusuf Hossain submitted 9 special reports and 18 annual audit reports to President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed on August 23. Irregularities involving Tk. 98 million were unveiled in the report.

Audit objections were mainly directed at the embezzlement of money, theft, misuse, non-deduction of VAT and disharmony with financial rules and regulations.

Source: *The Daily Independent*, August 23, 2001.

Fake NGO

A fake NGO named Muslim Foundation Bangladesh capitalizing on religion has disappeared from Kulara with Tk. 5 million. In the name of providing jobs to the local unemployed youth it accepted deposits from 388 fieldworkers, each person paying Tk. 1050. The fake NGO started banking operation without prior permission from Bangladesh Bank and the finance ministry. Within the span of a few days the NGO disappeared with the deposits of the workers amounting to Tk. 5 million. The workers submitted a complaint to the local UNO about this.

Source: *The Daily Ittefaq*, 21 August, 2001.

Tk. 25 thousand bribe

No. 9 team of DB police took taka 25000 as bribe from Ruhul Amin, a construction worker from Kuril area at Biswa Road after arresting him and threatening him with remand and torture. Abdul Wahab, an Inspector of DB, and Iqbal, another police officer, are involved with this.

Source: *Daily Janakantha*, August 23, 2001.

TK 30 million pension defrauding at GPO

GPO Dhaka office has defrauded pension amounting to tk. 30 million. An organized gang involved with the pension-giving process is reportedly involved with this. A report of the Auditor General has proved that this defrauding has been done through fake voucher and counterfeit signatures. Almost 8 thousands pensioners draw their pensions from Dhaka GPO every month.

Source: *Daily Jugantor*, August 27, 2001.

Tk. 40 million duty evasion located at Gazipur

Ms. Miracle Industries Ltd has evaded duty to the tune of tk. 3 crore 32 lakh 80 thousand 5 hundred 15 by forging Duty-11 form of the Board of Revenue in the name of supplying WPP bags to the Chatok cement factory. Even after that BCIC has asked the same organization to supply bags.

Source: *Daily Banglabazar*, August 28, 2001.

TIB activities

TIB public-theatre group

Jointly produced by TIB and Democracywatch, 'Bornomala', a mobile theatre play, was staged 12 times recently in Muktagacha, Modhupur, and Nalitabari.

TIB has formed its own people's theatre group and 20 theatre workers have been inducted in the group through interview. The first production-oriented workshop of the TIB public theatre group started at the auditorium of Udichi in Mymensing on September 14. The Executive Director of TIB Manzoor Hasan inaugurated the 3-day workshop. Mahbuba Huq. Kumkum of Dhaka Podatik was the chief trainer, while playwright and researcher Joy Prokash wrote the script of the play and directed it. TIB member Kamal Hossain Mintu coordinated the workshop and drama production.

The visit of DFID delegation

A four-member delegation of the Department for International Development (DFID) of the government of UK came to Bangladesh on August 16 on an in evaluation of the activities of TIB and CCC. The delegation included DFID adviser Colin Roth, Peter Davies and Tahmina Rahman, and a lecturer at Liverpool University, David Watt. During their two-week visit the delegation members exchanged views with the members of the TIB Board of Trustees, TIB officials, CCC members and people of different classes and professions at CCC areas. The DFID delegation members



Mobile theatre show staged

praised the ongoing activities of TIB and pledged cooperation in the implementation of the proposed 'Making Waves' project.

An active civil society would create an enlightened state

The more civil society is expanded; the state becomes more illuminated and well organized. This was the view expressed by the speakers at a seminar organized by TIB's CCC on July 21 at Kishoregoj press club. People belonging to various classes and occupations participated in the seminar titled 'Moral Values and Civil Society in Preserving Civil Right'.

In the seminar, presided over by the Kishoregonj CCC convenor Professor Rafiqur Rahman Choudury, the speakers said that the conscious section of the socie-

ty would have to come forward if corruption has to be checked. " It is only the civil society which can be instrumental in stamping out corruption. Failure to check unbridled corruption could endanger the existence of the country and the nations. That's why the role of civil society is essential for checking corruption." At the seminar a paper titled 'Corruption and conception of life' was presented by Prof. Rafiqur Rahman Choudury, and another titled 'The role of civil society to preserve civil right' was presented by Professor Sharif Kaiser Raja.

Advocate Nasirudding Faruqi, advocate Bhupendra Bhowmik Dolon, Nazmun Nahar Moly, politician Shafiqul Islam and advocate Shah Azizul Huq participated in discussion on the two papers presented. The seminar was presided over by CCC member advocate Asoke Sarker.



First anti-corruption procession in the country

At Nalitabari thana sadar in the remote border areas of Sherpur, Committees of Concerned Citizens (CCC) brought out an anti-corruption procession. Led by Professor Muzaffer Ahmad, a trustee board member of TIB, the procession was joined by TIB Executive Director Manzoor Hasan and members of CCC Nolitabari, and many youths spontaneously participated. The colorful procession paraded various streets of the town with banners and festoons demanding the building-up of public opinion against corruption and public awareness. This was the first anti-corruption procession organized by TIB.

Seminar at Muktagacha Civil Society in Transparent Election process and Establishing Democracy

Veteran economist and TIB Trustee board member Professor Muzaffer Ahmad has said that the development of a healthy democratic culture is a must for democracy. Black money, arms and cadre have become a part of our democratic culture. We want to witness elections free from black money, arms and cadre. The initiative of a conscientious person is stronger than the evil deeds of one hundred terrorists, he said.

Professor Muzaffer Ahmad was addressing a seminar organised by Committees of Concerned Citizens and TIB at Muktagacha in Mymensing on August 4, as the chief guest. While addressing the seminar on 'The Civil Society in Transparent Election Process and Establishing Democracy', Professor Ahmad quoted French philosopher Voltaire, who had said: "I disagree with every word you say, but will defend to death your right to say it." He said that what Voltaire had said was the moving spirit of democracy. Professor Ahmad underscored the role of civil society in transparent election and establishment of democracy.

The seminar was presided over by the convener of Committees of Concerned Citizens of Muktagacha, Advocate Shamsul Huq. The President of Mymensingh District Citizen's Movement, Advocate Anisur Rahman Khan, was the special guest. Two separate papers on 'Free



Fair, and Transparent Election for Democratization: Perspective Bangladesh' and 'The Importance of Civil Society in Establishing Democracy and Civil Rights' were presented by Professor Khondaker Muzahedul Huq and Professor Zulfiqar Rafiq Ronju respectively.

The Chairman of Daogaon Union Parishad Advocate Sharaf uddin Ahmed, women's rights activist Selima Begum Baby, the Principal of Muktagacha college Swapan Kumar Das and playwright/researcher Joy Prokash Sarker participated in a discussion on the papers. The address of welcome was delivered by TIB Executive Director Manzoor Hasan. Member of CCC Advocate AKM Mahbubur Rahman Bulbul gave the vote of thanks. TIB Program Officer Ekram Hossain was the compere at the function.

TIB ED Mazoor Hasan was the chief guest.

Seminar held on transparency in public administration and democracy

Socheton Nagorik Committee (Committees of Concerned Citizens) organized a seminar titled 'Transparency in Public Administration and Democracy' on July 28 at Modhupur. Two papers titled "The Role of Citizens, Political Parties and the Civil society in a Transparent Election Process" and "Forest, A forestation and Corruption; Perspective Modhupur" were presented by professor Golum Samdani and Professor Joynal Abdein respectively. Eminent environmentalist Professor Dwijen Sarma was present at the seminar as the chief guest.

Presided over by Professor Golam Samdani the convener of CCC

Modhupur, the seminar was held at Upazila Training and Development Centre. The seminar involved the secretary of Tangail Press Club Zafar Ahmed, Magistrate AFM Hayatullah, the teacher of Modhupur Rani Bhabani High School Md. Abdul Latif, the Headmistress of Corpus Christy High School Mrs Maria Chiran, the principal of Modhupur Degree College Md. Hekmat Ali, Range Official of Modhupur forest department ABM Mahfuzul Haq, Upazila Nirbahi officer Enamul Huq Ena, social worker Bappa Siddiqui etc. The Executive Director of TIB Manzoor Hasan delivered the address of welcome.

The speakers at the seminar said that transparent elections are the foundations of democracy. Democracy is the stairway to the overall development of a country. Transparent elections can check corruption and ensure accountability, democracy, manpower develop-

ment and overall development of the country. Honest and bold political workers should be elected for accountability in politics and this task calls for an important role of the civic society. Transparent elections cannot be ensured if the civil society remains passive.

Basic training for field level workers of TIB

A two-day basic training programme was organized for the field-level workers of TIB on August 16 and 17. Held at the Training and Resource Centre of BRAC in Mymensing the training programme involved CCC secretary, field assistant, volunteers and support staff. The trainers were Executive Director of TIB Manzoor Hasan, member Abu Zayed Muhammad. Research Officer Sydur Rahman Molla, Program Officer Ekram Hossain, and Assistant Program Officer Samapika Halder.

Executive Director of TIB as trainer

The Executive Director of TIB Manzoor Hasan participated in a session of the 36th senior staff course of Bangladesh Public Administration Training Center (BPATC) on August 14. Officials of different departments of the government at joint-secretary rank took part in the training program. The participants requested Manzoor Hasan to participate in another session.

Modhupur CCC organised a seminar at Upazila Training and Development Centre





**L
E
T
T
E
R
S**

Independent Anti corruption commission

The world is now witnessing an anticorruption crusade. The African country of Botswana is gradually going ahead by forming an independent anticorruption commission side by side with democratic rule. Singapore has got traditional parliamentary form of government, an independent Judiciary and an independent Anti corruption commission. Hong Kong with an area of 1076 Sq. Km and a population of 7 million has also got an

**i
n
d
e
p
e
n
d
e
n
t
a
n
t
i
c
o
r
r
u
p
t
i
o
n**



commission. Bangladesh is a very poor country. If Bangladesh has to be freed from corruption, democratic governance, an independent Judiciary and an independent anticorruption commission are the prerequisite

Jahangir Kabir
Development researcher
Kishorgonj.

Political Interference

The Bureau of Anti Corruption has said, in an assessment report to the government, that lack of political will as well as political and administrative interference pose one of the major obstacles to stamping out of corruption under the existing system in our country. The Bureau of Anti Corruption is not free from political interference. For economic progress, establishment of good governance and development of an effective anticorruption strategy are the imperatives.

Hamid
Cox'sbazar.

Corruption Index

The fact that Bangladesh is the most corrupt country in the world according to the corruption perceptions index of transparency

index of transparency

International is a matter of great concern for us. We are in such a predicament because of some dishonest politicians and some administrators. When Nigeria was included in the survey of TIB last year as the most corrupt country in the world the Nigerian president Obasanjo accepted the dubious distinction and pledged to continue an all out struggle to stamp out corruption. Given the that our political leadership would be sincere in combating corruption. I hope, in a few years time, Bangladesh would be known as a country free from corruption.

Ahmed Kamal.
Rangpur.

Unity against corruption

Eradication of corruption is a must for infusing dynamism into the development process in the country. TIB has often attempted to quantify the extant of corruption in the country on various occupations through research. Effective steps to stamp out corruption cannot be undertaken because many politicians patronize corruption. For that reason if an anticorruption campaign is launched on behalf of the civil society, the government and the administration will come under pressure. We should develop unity for organising a comprehensive battle against corruption for the sake of national development.

Rafiqul Islam.
Officer, Janata Bank,
Dhaka.

Corruption at Benapole land port

Because of corrupt officials and workers Benapole land port can not generate the expected amount of revenue. If corruption could be checked, the

amount of revenue realised through Benapole, the largest land port in the country, could exceed TK. 10 billion. But the amount realised in 2000- 2001 was only TK. 5.95 billion. Staffs ranging from the Commissioner to the Custom Super, Inspector and general employees are involved in corruption.

Towhidul Anwar .
Benapole, Jessore.

Mass looting of wheat and rice

In the name of distribution of wheat and rice among the students under food for education program mass looting of wheat and rice is going on. As if nobody is concerned. At various places in the country, dealers in collusion with UNOs, school managing committee teachers and education directorate officers are misappropriating wheat and rice. Cards are collected showing fake students, submitting extra demands and managing education department officials. The guardians of students have to purchase these cards.

Roksana Parveen.
Sylhet

Creating public awareness.

The citizens of developing countries in most cases can not distinguish between honest and dishonest officials. This lack of consciousness needs to be removed. Corrupt people can be socially boycotted by showing honor to the honest people and creating hatred against the former in the minds of the people. Besides the idea that committing corruption and supporting corruption are harmful for the nation should be deeply imprinted in the minds of people.

Selim
Chandpur, Comilla