



# TIB

Transparency International Bangladesh

NEWS LETTER

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SOCIAL MOVEMENT AGAINST CORRUPTION

## Wanted proper implementation of electoral pledges

### EDITORIAL

The ruling party of Bangladesh claimed in its election manifesto that efforts for development and the people's welfare would never be successful unless the rampant corruption existing in state machinery and social life was eliminated. For this purpose, the party made commitments to the appointment of an Ombudsman within the shortest possible time and the establishment of an independent and autonomous constitutional body styled the Anti-Corruption Commission, by reorganizing the Bureau of Anti-Corruption. The ruling party also made pledges to ensure transparency and accountability in all purchases and sales made by the government and state-owned enterprises and to account for and disclose the assets of all elected representatives including the Prime Minister, members of the cabinet and persons holding similar rank.

The main cause of the spread of corruption into all corners of society and the state is a lack of transparency and accountability in administration. The present administration of Bangladesh is an offshoot of the colonial administrative system. Delays in decision-making, bureaucratic complexities and corruption are the main hindrances to ensuring Good Governance. An essential precondition for establishing Good Governance is to control corruption. Corruption has become all-pervasive in administration because of the lack of a stringent application of accountability.

Another obvious reason for the rising trend of corruption is the absence of powerful local government. The local government system in Bangladesh is very weak. It is excessively dependent on the center in financial matters. There is a clear stipulation in Article 49 of the Constitution for the running of all tiers of local government under the supervision of elected representatives. But despite Constitutional compulsion, participation of the masses in adminis-

tration cannot be ensured, for various reasons. If local government cannot be made effective and if proper mechanisms are not put in place to ensure its financial transparency and accountability, the chances of upholding people's interest are slim. Conversely, dependence on the center as well as corruption will decrease if administration is decentralized and a strong local government structure is set up.

Discrimination exists in appointments, promotions, training and salaries/allowances of the bureaucracy. As the administration is supposed to provide quality services to the people, ensuring its neutrality, transparency and accountability is essential. Watchdog bodies like the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament, the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General and the Bureau of Anti-Corruption have to cope with various pressures while discharging their responsibilities. Even the Judiciary and the Police department are not free from the influence of this invisible pressure. Democratic governance is characterized by an accountable administration. In many countries where parliamentary democracy is practised, such as Norway, Sweden, Denmark and the United Kingdom, the office of the Ombudsman plays a key role in ensuring transparency and accountability of administration. In Bangladesh, the office of the Ombudsman has not been established as yet, although there are constitutional provisions for the purpose. If an Ombudsman is appointed at the earliest as per the electoral pledge, there can be progress in ensuring the transparency and accountability of administration.

The effectiveness and success of any public institution depends on its credibility. It is a widely held view that the Bureau of Anti-Corruption has lost that credibility. For various reasons, a long time is spent on conducting preliminary inquiries into corruption-related complaints and on their subsequent investigation. On the other hand, delays occur while obtaining prior permission from the government. In this situation, the pledge that the ruling party made regarding the formation of an independent and autonomous constitutional body styled the Anti-Corruption Commission through reconstitution of the Bureau of Anti-Corruption is a must in our context. Independent Anti-Corruption Commissions are playing expanded roles in curbing corruption in many countries of the world like Australia, Singapore and Hong Kong.

We expect that the government implement the pledges that it made, phase by phase, for ensuring transparency and accountability of sales and purchases of state-owned bodies and the disclosure of assets of all public representatives including the Prime Minister, ministers

and others holding equivalent ranks without wasting any more time. Containment of corruption and establishment of Good Governance would be facilitated if this were done. The scope of development would also be broadened at the same time.



# Open discussion on curbing corruption and the role of TIB in Chittagong



It is not possible to uproot the all-pervasive corruption that has infected our administration overnight. The people have to be made conscious about the issue. The speakers expressed this view while participating in an open discussion organized by Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) and an organization formed through its initiative styled 'Friends of TIB - Chittagong'. This open discussion, titled 'Curbing corruption, Good Governance and TIB', was held at the Regional Public Administration Training Center, Chittagong, on 13 November, evening. At the outset, the Executive Director of TIB Manzoor Hasan made a brief presentation on the activities of the organi-

zation. After that, Mohammad Imam Uddin of the same organization presented a paper on 'Corruption, Good Governance and the role of the Civil Society'.

While taking part in the discussion, the President of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industries, Farid Ahmed Chowdhury, opined that corruption could not be checked merely through appointments and transfers in administration. The whole system has to be changed if the malaise is to be contained. The people have to be made conscious for the purpose, so that pressure can be exerted on the democratic government. He demanded of the government to immediately undertake welfare-oriented tasks like appoint-

ment of an Ombudsman, placement of the Bureau of Anti-Corruption under the authority of the Ombudsman, cancellation of the Official Secrets Act, and decentralization of power. Professor Obaidul Karim of Chittagong University said that the civil society could play an important role in realizing political commitments on measures for curbing corruption. If honest people are rewarded and the corrupt are boycotted by society, then corruption will greatly diminish. Advocate Sunil Sarkar called upon all to work sincerely to uproot corruption from society. Those who participated in the discussion included Anwarul Islam, Advocate Mohammad Zaker, journalist M. Nasirul Haque, Dr.

## Third Annual Conference of Asian Development Bank (ADB) / Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

### Anti-Corruption Initiative for Asia Pacific

The Third Annual Conference of ADB/OECD Anti-Corruption Initiative for Asia Pacific was held on November 28-30, 2001 in Tokyo, Japan. Seventeen Asian and Pacific governments endorsed a regional action plan to fight corruption. They said corruption was widespread in the region and hampered economic growth and poverty reduction efforts.

The plan advocates civil service, private business and public awareness action designed to help halt the supply and demand for bribery in publicly funded projects. Implementation of the plan is to be reviewed at annual meetings, to which each signatory government in the region is to report on their progress.

The Bangladesh Government endorsed the action plan. The other countries are the Cook Islands, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, the Kyrgys Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Samoa, Singapore and Vanuatu.

'Corruption imposes a costly burden on business, with negative implications on growth and the creation of jobs,' Shoji Nishimoto, the director of the ADB's strategy and policy department, told reporters at the end of the gathering. Mark Pieth, president of the OECD's working group on bribery in international business transactions, said the annual scale of corruption equaled the illicit drug trade. Pieth said, 'If we can reduce corruption, we can reduce the likelihood of terrorism.'

More than 150 people participated in the meeting, including representatives of governments, business, media, international agencies and non-government organizations. The Executive Director of TIB, Manzoor Hasan, participated in the conference. He chaired the afternoon plenary session of 29th November 2001.

TIB has hailed the approval of a regional action plan to fight corruption by 17 Asian and Pacific governments including Bangladesh. TIB would like to say that the endorsement will help a lot to establish transparency, accountability and good governance in the country.

Nizamuddin Ahmed, Nurul Islam, Yakub Ali, Iqbal Faruq, Farhana Siraj, Kamrunnahar, etc. TIB Executive Director Manzoor Hasan later responded to various queries of the speakers. He opined that corruption is a major hindrance to the country's development and progress. The people have to come forward first if corruption is to be curbed in society. The major political parties made pledges in their election manifestos regarding the constitution of an independent anti-corruption commission, which emanated from the debates on corruption before the election. The people have to come forward again. Pressure has to be applied on the government to set up an independent anti-corruption commission.

The meeting was conducted by Professor Muhammad Yeahia Akhtar of the Department of Political Science of Chittagong University. A large number of people from different professions and classes of Chittagong were present at the function.

It may be mentioned here that 'Friends of TIB' groups are being formed in different areas of the country to build up a social movement against corruption. These units will work for conscientization of the civil society as part of a campaign against corruption. The members will assist the TIB on a voluntary basis. They will participate voluntarily in different anti-corruption programs. They will provide information, ideas and encouragement to TIB for running its various programs.

## First production workshop of people's theatre group of TIB

TIB has formed an 18-member people's theatre group with the assistance of the Committee of Concerned Citizens (CCC), Mymensingh sadar. A production-centered theatre workshop of this group was held on 5 to 7 October at the Udichi auditorium of Mymensingh. All members of the group were present at the workshop. The principal instructor of this 3-day workshop was Mahbuba Haque Kumkum, a member of the popular theatre group 'Dhaka Padatik'. She was given all-out assistance by a member of TIB, Kamal Hossain Mintu. TIB appointed Jayprakash Sarker as the scriptwriter and director of the play. Members of the Mymensingh sadar CCC Professor Jatin Sarker and Sharifuzzaman Parag were present at the inaugural session of the workshop.

During this three-day-long production-centered workshop, special training was given on concentration of the body and the mind, voice casting, creativity, interpersonal communication, acting, character-building and scriptwriting. After this workshop, preparation of a script, direction and rehearsal took place for 15 days from 8 October.

### First production: Inaugural show of 'Bagher Gappo'

The inaugural show of the first production of the people's theatre group titled 'Bagher Gappo' (tale of a tiger) was staged on the open-air stage of Mymensingh Saheb Quarter Park on 4th November at 4 p.m. in the afternoon. The show was formally inaugurated by eminent educationalist, writer, cultural personality and member of Mymensingh sadar CCC Professor Jatin Sarker. In his brief speech he said, "The pattern of theatre has undergone change throughout the world, changes have also occurred in its format." Turning to the people's theatre group formed by the TIB to build social movement against corruption, he said, "Those who are working here are young, full of initiative and determined to do something good." He wished all success to the group. Program Officer of TIB Ekram Hossain briefly spoke at the function on the goals and objectives of TIB. Jayprakash Sarker wrote the script for this inaugural production, which was also directed by him. Present on the occasion were Executive Director of TIB Manzoor Hasan, members of the Mymensingh sadar CCC Sharifuzzaman Parag, Sheikh Bahar Majumdar, Kaniz Gofrani Quraishi, etc. Over 500 enthusiastic spectators including cultural personalities, poets and litterateurs, journalists and elite of the town attended the function. It may be mentioned here that the people's theatre group of TIB will perform at various venues to generate awareness against corruption.





respectively. The second plenary session was chaired by Tunku Abdul Aziz, one of the vice-chairmen of TI. The session was addressed by Dr. Davendra Raj Panday, who spoke on the process and criteria for accreditation renewal, and Miguel Schloss, who spoke on TI's tool-kit. Jeremy Pope and Manzoor Hasan spoke on CPI 2001.

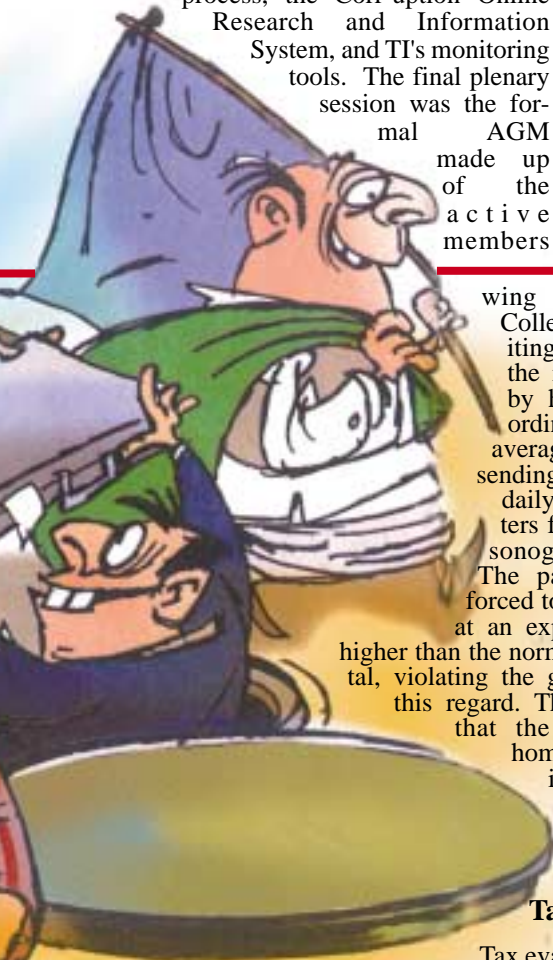
After lunch the AGM broke up into various workshops, covering such topics as TI's Global Corruption Report, the Corruption Fighters' Tool-kit, TI's code of ethics, the new accreditation process, the Corruption Online Research and Information System, and TI's monitoring tools. The final plenary session was the formal AGM made up of the active members

of TI.

As in 1999 and other years TI combined its AGM with the holding of the two-yearly International Anti-Corruption Conference (IACC), which took place from 7th to 11th October. Not unlike the previous IACCs the conference had a wide range of workshops (114 altogether) under general 'streams' such as: public sector, law enforcement, private sector, civil society, education, international monitoring, natural resources, financial services industry, regional, creative workshops, among others. Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) made a presentation in the local government workshop ('Countering corruption in local government services') by way of presenting the case study of the activities of the Committee of Concerned Citizens. Manzoor Hasan chaired the workshop 'Indicators to monitor the performance of institutions: What are they and what

can they tell us?'. and presented Dr. Gopakumar Krishan's paper 'Increasing Information Access to Improve Political Accountability and Participation: Mapping Future Actions in Asia Pacific'.

Other than the standard workshops the highlights of the conference were the creative workshops (which ran parallel on 10 different topics, with attendance limited to 20) and the Art Programme. The conference attracted 1,300 participants and it was an opportunity for TIB to network with individuals from different parts of the world. The other Bangladeshis who attended the conference were Dr. Kamal Hossain (Chairman of TI's Advisory Council), Ms. Tahmina Rahman, a consultant residing in the UK and working on governance issues and familiar with TIB activities and Mr. Abdul Mukhtar, residing in the UK, and a well-wisher of TIB.



wing of Dhaka Medical College Hospital are eliciting commissions from the relatives of patients by holding hostage the ordinary patients. On an average, the doctors are sending 15 to 20 patients daily to diagnostic centers for performing ultrasound and CT-scan. The patients are thereby forced to undergo these tests at an expense 3 or 4 times higher than the normal rate at the hospital, violating the government rules in this regard. There are complaints that the patients are sent home without treatment if they protest.

Source: Daily Jugantar, 20 October 2001

### Tax evasion of Taka 9 crore

Tax evasion of Taka 9 crore at source has taken place during the last Aus (rice) procurement drive in 16 districts of North Bengal through connivance between District Food Officers and the owners of rice mills. The LSD officials in these districts exempted the rice mill owners from payment of 3 percent tax at source. But according to government rules, bill is supposed to be paid after deduction of 3 percent tax at source.

Source: Daily Ittefaq, 21 October 2001

### Corruption in Employment Bank

Strange things are happening in the Comilla branch of Employment Bank. Rampant corruption and irregularities have taken root here. The unemployed youths are facing harassment as a result. There are complaints that sanctioned loans are being cancelled when bribes are not paid. No remedies have been found even after reporting the matter to

the higher authority.

Source: Daily Manabjamin, 23 October 2001

### Taka 3000 crore usurped in 2 years

An amount of Taka 3103 crore, 69 lakh 4 thousand 315 taka has been misappropriated through corruption and irregularities in the Roads and Highways Department. This amount has been plundered between 1996 and 1998 through thefts from cash and stores, anomalies in tendering and excess bills for different jobs. No disciplinary or criminal case has been filed against anybody yet because of negligence and indifference of the ministry. Neither has an inquiry committee been formed. Taka 66 lakh 70 thousand 501 have, however been extracted from the concerned persons secretly.

Source: Daily Jugantar, 24 October 2001

### Corruption in Dhanmondi Tehsil office

Corruption and irregularities have become acute in Dhanmondi Tehsil office. Nearly 50,000 people frequent the Tehsil office, which is located at Nilkhet of capital Dhaka, for matters pertaining to land. But a section of the employees harass the visitors in different ways. Mutation is not possible here without bribes. For each mutation, the officials have to be paid between Taka 3000 to Taka 5000. The amount is charged based on the complexities of the papers. Those who fail to pay the amount find their legal documents confined in files.

Source: Daily Janakantha, 3 November 2001

### Nothing moves without money

Chaos is prevailing in Ashashuni settlement office. Nothing moves here without money. After obtaining bribes from the contending parties, one party is given land document while money given by the other party is returned. But nobody wants to open his mouth for fear that his land ownership would be lost. Lease of mouzas is approved in favour of Deputy Assistant Settlement Officer, treating these like bazars and ghats. Consequently, the land-owners have no option but to part with money if they are to evade settlement.

Source: Daily Jugantar, 4 November 2001

## Workshop on need assessment for advocacy training of CCC members

TIB undertook a plan recently to impart training on advocacy to CCC members in order to raise their efficiency in combating corruption through advocacy. The CCC members have carried out advocacy work in their social life at different times and on different themes. They have sufficient experience of this. But they lack experience on how to conduct advocacy within a specific framework. So, a tailor-made training course was planned for the CCC members in order to find out the limitations in their experience and an assessment of the need for knowledge of other subjects. It was decided that in the first phase, a 'need assessment for advocacy' exercise would be undertaken to be followed by preparation of a module for advocacy training and then a 2-3-day-long training course.

A need assessment workshop was therefore conducted at the office of the CCC at Modhupur, Tangail, on 9 October. TIB



Executive Director Manzoor Hasan presided over this workshop. Nine members and the secretary of CCC-Modhupur, one member from CCC-Muktagachha-Mymensingh, the secretary of CCC-Nalitabari, two advocacy instructors and the Assistant Program Officer of TIB were present on the occasion. The advocacy instructors were Dr. Sanaul Mostafa of Network for Research and Training and Naresh Modhu of SAMATA, Pabna.

Dr. Sanaul Mostafa said in the inaugural session that the CCC members

have carried out many advocacy programs in their social life. Besides, the CCCs are already doing advocacy work in society. He requested the members to identify the difficulties that they were facing while carrying out advocacy work. The members then presented their problems one by one.

The problems that were identified by the members included time constraints, dearth of efficiency due to lack of training and information, absence of efficient and strong leadership, non-cooperation of officials belonging to the administration when information is sought, chaos due to misapplication of law, lack of education and awareness among the populace, strong position of corrupt people in society, lack of democratic culture, political influence, lack of confidence I.

### Meeting on choosing the right candidate held under the auspices of TIB at Muktagachha

The Committee of Concerned Citizens (CCC) formed through the initiative of TIB held a meeting at Muktagachha of Mymensingh on 25 September, afternoon, on the occasion of the release of report cards on 'Choose the right candidate'. The CCC and TIB organized this gathering for the sake of ensuring transparency and accountability of future MPs - who would be the future helmsmen of the country - by introducing them to the voters. The personal and political background of all candidates of Muktagachha (Mymensingh-5) constituency, their involvement with society, awareness regarding problems being faced by the country and the locality, reasons for running in the election, budget, probable role if unsuccessful in getting elected, etc. were presented at the meeting.

All candidates including those from the Awami League and the four-party alliance presented their respective cases at the



Parliament is the focal point for all kinds of activities in parliamentary democracy. Parliament and parliamentary practices are in an embryonic stage in Bangladesh. TIB started a new project named Parliament Watch from 28th October 2001 to monitor various activities of the Parliament, including the Parliamentary Committees, as supreme 'watchdog body'. TIB would like to monitor the Speaker's role, activities of Parliamentary Committees, the passing of bills, and the presence and role of MPs among other things. A report will be released after each of the session of the parliament.

CCC Advocate AHM Khalequzzaman, Paresh Chandra Saha of Workers Party, Bishwajit Nandi of Krishak Sramik Janata League, member of Muktagachha CCC Principal Swapan Kumar Das, Advocate Sharafuddin Ahmed, etc. The speakers were full of praise for the report card initiative. They said that this would lead to consensus among the political leaders and future MPs regarding the need for transparency, accountability and good governance. Mutual respect and tolerance among the political leaders would also increase as a result.

After the meeting, report cards on the candidates were distributed among the audience. The cards were distributed among the voters of the upazila so that they could choose the right candidate.

of the people in all aspects of society and the need for strengthening TIB and CCCs.

The CCC members were informed that they would soon be trained on the basis of their needs after a module is prepared for them on the subject. The members showed keen interest about it. Among those present at the workshop were convener of Modhupur CCC Golam Samdani, members Jainal Abedin, Sri Kumar Guha Niogi, Tapan Kumar Goon, Abdul Latif, Saidul Islam, Rokey Begum, Shaikha Muhsana Billah, Giasuddin Ahmed and CCC member of Muktagachha Ekhlashur Rahman Jewe



## Training workshop

A training workshop was organized recently for the field workers of TIB on preparation of report cards. The three-day workshop was held between 20 and 22 November at the BRAC training and resource center, Modhupur. Secretaries of CCCs, field-workers and volunteers participated in the workshop. The participants were taught how they could train others to prepare report cards and could themselves prepare an elaborate report card. The trainees prepared three experimental report cards in the field in groups. Research Officer of TIB Saidur Rahman Molla and Program Officer Ekram Hossain acted as instructors.

## Focus Group Discussion on "Nature and Forms of Independent Commission on Anti-Corruption"

TIB organized a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) on the nature and form of the proposed Independent Commission on Anti-Corruption. The Focus Group Discussion was held on 25th of November. The Chairman of the Board of Trustees of TIB, Professor Khan Sarwar Murshid, facilitated the FGD. M. Hafizuddin Khan and Abdul Mueyed Chowdhury, both of whom were former advisers of the Caretaker Government, Mr. Badiuzzaman Khan, the former Director General of the Bureau of Anti-Corruption, Professor Mohammad Mohabbat Khan, Member of the Public Service Commission, Mr. Momenul Haque, the former Director of the Bureau of Anti-Corruption, and Mr. Sultan Z Khan, former Chairman of the Security and Exchange Commission, took part in the FGD. The participants made suggestions about the proposed Independent Commission on Anti-Corruption.

## A different kind of projection meeting for the candidates of Mymensingh Sadar and Modhupur

Two exceptional projection meetings were organized at Mymensingh Sadar and Modhupur of Tangail on 22 September morning by the Committee of Concerned Citizens (CCC) formed at the initiative of TIB.

TIB had carried out a report card survey titled 'Choose the right candidate' for introducing the prospective candidates to the voters with the goal of ensuring transparency and accountability of future members of parliament. On the basis of these reports, the personal and political profile of the candidates, their involvement with society, awareness regarding the problems faced by the country and their locality, objectives of standing in the election, budget, probable role if not elected, etc. were highlighted in the published report card. The projection meeting of candidates were arranged on the occasion of releasing the report card.

The Upazila Executive Officer (UNO) Enamul Haque Ena presided over the function held at the Modhupur Upazila Development and Training Center. The candidates of Modhupur (Tangail-1) constituency were present at this unique gathering. Standing on the same stage, they pledged that they would not support any terrorist activity during the elections. Among the 7 candidates, Awami League nominee Dr. Abdur

Razzak, Jatiya Party (E) nominee Mrs. Fatema Khan and independent candidate Professor Abdul Ghafur Montu exchanged views on the elections in a free and frank manner while sitting on the same dais. They expressed their firm determination that the Jatiya Sangsad election would be held in a free, fair and neutral manner and pledged not to support any terrorist activity. Many people of the locality expressed the view that there would be no electoral violence if this cordiality among the leaders continued. The UNO gave information about the stringent measures taken by the administration to contain violence in the area. Among others, the convener of Modhupur CCC Professor Golam Samdani and the Executive Director of TIB Manzoor Hasan were present at the meeting.

The projection meeting of Mymensingh sadar took place at the Bar Library auditorium. Chaired by the convener of the CCC Professor Shamsul Islam, 7 candidates

including those from the Awami League and the four-party alliance took part in it. The candidates were: Principal Matiur Rahman (Bangladesh Awami League), Delwar Hossain Khan Dulu (Bangladesh Nationalist Party), Anil Bandhu Das (Jatiya Party-Manju), Sheikh Mohammad Siddiqur Rahman Komol (BSD), Nasrin Monaim Khan (independent), Mohammad Shah Asaduzzaman (Communist Party), and M. Kausar Hossain Harun (independent).

The candidates presented their views in a cordial atmosphere at both places. The candidates praised the initiative to publish report cards on the candidates and arrange projection meetings to introduce them. They opined that this type of initiative would save a lot of their expense, would forge mutual trust, respect and cooperation, and above all, would be helpful in institutionalizing democracy. When the rival candidates took their seats, the audience applauded them with repeated clapping.

The report card was distributed after the discussion meeting. It was prepared on the basis of information supplied by the candidates. The card was distributed among the population of the Upazila to make it easier for them to choose the candidate for voting. TIB hopes to implement this program throughout the country in future.





## LETTER

### Political goodwill

A congenial atmosphere is required for playing a proper role in parliament. The essence of democracy is reduction of dissent among the political parties through dialogue, willingness to work together, tolerance, mutual respect, discussions based on logic for removing differences, and working in harmony with each other. The democratic institutions can not be effective unless democracy is practised. Democracy cannot move forward in its normal course in the midst of politics of vengeance. We thank the TIB Newsletter for publishing a timely editorial on political goodwill.

M. Hasan Reza Mamun  
Stadium Road, Feni.

### Urgent need for reform of the Judiciary

The judiciary in the country cannot enforce rule of law in the country with neutrality and spontaneity. The honesty of judicial services, especially that of the lower courts, is now being questioned. The legal business in now caught in the web of influence-peddling. Consistent with tradition, the judiciary and its work can no longer function at a distance from the common people. But all this is happening only because the judiciary is under the control of the executive branch of the state. The judiciary, therefore needs to be separated from the executive, a judicial service commission needs to be formed as in America and Britain, a central administrative structure needs to be built for the judiciary, and similar other activities need to be undertaken.

Mohsin Chowdhury  
Chawkbazar, Chittagong

### Uprooting corruption

The need for uprooting corruption is very urgent. Everybody is seen to express his dismay at the level of corruption in the country. But no effective step appears to be taken. In my opinion, the government should take a final decision on this and undertake all-out measures for the purpose. We want a Bangladesh which is above all kinds of injustices, immorality,

irregularity, exploitation and deprivation.

Rafiqul Islam Babul  
Officer, Janata Bank, Siddhirganj,  
Dhaka

### Corruption by Police

The police administration is one of the most important departments for enforcing law framed by the government. But a situation conducive to taking bribes or tolls has been created because of the use of police for political ends by the government. There is a gulf of difference between the legal income and actual assets of police officials. As a consequence, fraud and corruption is on the rise. The general public is of the opinion that the police are involved in bribery, torture, non-acceptance of complaints, collusion with musclemen and criminals and sharing of booties with drug traffickers and smugglers. The police force needs to be modernized in line with existing socio-economic realities of the country in order to eliminate corruption.

M. Moazzem Hossain  
Saheb Bazar, Rajshahi.

### Needed radical reform of the education system

The rate of education in Bangladesh is gradually increasing. But overall, the quality of education has not improved. Each year, the number of educated children getting mere certificates is on the rise. The educational arena is turning chaotic. There is no sign of introducing production-oriented education. No effective education policy is in place in the coun-

try. As a result, corruption, indiscipline, terrorism, cheating, distribution of fake certificates is fast spreading. Qualitative improvement of education has not materialized. Although the rate of education is rising, corruption in the Education Department is also increasing. Especially, adoption of unfair means in examinations has sharply increased during the past few years. The traditional system of examination is largely to be blamed for that. The teachers also get involved in corruption via this system. Unless the education system is thoroughly reformed, we can not free ourselves from this situation.

Amjad Hossain  
Girda Narayanpur, Sherpur.

### Bangladesh is number one

It is very sad that the position of Bangladesh is top-most in the world in the field of corruption. Bangladesh can be proud of many things. But corruption has tarnished many of our achievements. It is also hampering our progress. I think, we should look at it from a national viewpoint instead of looking at it politically. Everybody should come forward irrespective of party or opinion. The corrupt people should be resisted socially. What is needed most at the moment is a social movement against corruption. That day may not be far away when Bangladesh would occupy a position in the comity of nations as the number one corruption-free nation in the world.

Sanaullah Sikdar  
3/M/1, Jigatala, Dhaka.

### The Civil Society has to come forward

It is known to all that the politicians of Bangladesh do politics for their own interest. This could be possible due to lack of transparency and accountability in the workings of political leadership and the bureaucracy. The political leaders, therefore, do not feel encouraged to ensure transparency and change the existing laws. Side by side, the bureaucrats are also deriving benefits out of the existing situation. The situation cannot be changed if the civil society does not resist these unethical activities.

Nasrin Siraj  
Department of Sociology, Chittagong University.

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