INTERNATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION DAY - 2005 OBSERVED

NEW COMMITTEES OF CONCERNED CITIZENS
REPORT CARD SURVEY
POLITICAL PARTIES ARE MOST CORRUPT

STOP CORRUPTION
— RIGHT NOW
Agitation Against Slashing Money from Salary

The army personnel have met out a noble punishment to a village guard for extorting tolls of Taka 10 while distributing VGF cards. This incident took place at Dhalghat union of Paltiya on 25 October in front of hundreds of people. It was the scheduled day for distributing rice among the VGF cardholders. The cardholders had assembled at the Union Parishad for collecting rice. When the army personnel arrived on the scene, the cardholders complained to them that the guard Mahfubul Alam had extracted a toll of Taka 10 for each card. The army-men beat up the guard and punished him by diving him in the pond 101 times.

Source: Daily Samokal, 27 October 2005

The army personnel have meted out a noble punishment to a village

Noble Punishment!

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Source: Daily Samokal, 27 October 2005

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DIALOGUES
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"Corruption has a terrible impact on the socio-economic arena. Effective institutions are needed for curbing corruption. Alongside this, there is need for political will."  
Managing Director of the Asian Development Bank Yang Hui Lee, while speaking at the meeting of PRSP Implementation Forum on 15 November.

Source: Daily Janakanta, 16 November 2005

"The Anti-Corruption Commission cannot function because it has been given excessive freedom."  
Finance Minister M. Saifur Rahman, giving vent to his frustration about good governance and corruption while exchanging views with the journalists after the meeting of PRSP Implementation Forum.

Source: Daily Prothom Alo, 18 November 2005

"The Anti-Corruption Commission could not achieve desired success during its first year. The Commission would become effective within the next few months".  
Chairman of the independent Anti-Corruption Commission Justice Sultan Hossain Khan, while speaking to UNB about the effectiveness of the Anti-Corruption Commission on the occasion of its first anniversary.

Source: Daily Inqilab, 21 November 2005

"Is the Election Commission a primary school where meetings have to be held everyday?"  
Chief Election Commissioner M A Aziz, while replying to a question from journalists about not holding a meeting of the Commission for consecutive three months.

Source: Daily Prothom Alo, 28 November 2005

Corruption of 300 Crore Dollar

Corruption worth at least 300 crore dollar take place in the procurement sector of the government each year. And the development partners of Bangladesh, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), have been putting pressure on the government for a long time for adopting a transparent and accountable procurement policy. But despite this pressure, the approval of such a procurement policy and its translation into a law has not moved forward. For this reason, the World Bank is not releasing 30 crore dollar pledged to Bangladesh. The donors hold the view that social accountability would be ensured within the government if the public procurement policy was converted into a law. A sense of relief would then return to the people. The main objective of the public procurement policy would be ‘war against corruption’.

Source: Daily Manabzamin, 11 October 2005

Money is Needed for Filing GD at Rupganj Police Station!

Although fee is not supposed to be paid for filing GD, allegations have been made against the OC of Rupganj police station Shheeda Shukrana of collecting Taka 500 per GD. Previously, Taka 200 was taken for each GD. And that has now been raised to Taka 500 by citing the upward trend of prices of consumer goods. Kamal Mia, a resident of Tarabo municipality of the upazila, went to OC Shukrana’s room on 22 October morning for filing a GD. The OC told him that cost of everything was spurtling upwards alongside the rising price of consumer goods. The increase in fee for filing GD was therefore natural. When the OC was contacted on the matter, he denied the allegation against him and said that the claim that he was taking money from people for filing GD was not true.

Source: Daily Sangbad, 25 October 2005

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Source: Daily Sangbad, 25 October 2005

Agitation Against Slashing Money from Salary

The village defence force laid siege around the office of the Upazilla Nirbahi Officer of Kalaroa upazila under Salthakra and staged a demonstration against the forcible extortions of bribes from their salary and allowances. A total of 112 village police of Kalaroa upazila came to the office of Upazilla Nirbahi Officer on 31 October morning for drawing their salary and allowances. But an Office Assistant took away Taka 1120 as bribes at the rate of Taka 10 from each member by keeping them waiting for a long time. Immediately after this, the village police laid siege around the office of the UNO in protest against the bribery and started demonstrating. They marched around the upazila headquarters in a procession and demanded action against that Office Assistant.

Source: Daily Prothom Alo, 18 November 2005

China Prepares Black-list of Bribe-givers

There is bad news for the bribe-takers of China. The number of bribe-givers in that country may decrease. This time, the government is preparing a black list of bribe-givers. The list would be unveiled to the public towards the end of the current year. With effect from next year, it would be linked to all the provinces so that people of all regions can see it. This black list is being prepared by including those people and organizations who have been paying bribes in the construction industry, finance, education, health and public procurement of China since the year 1997. A total of 1298 persons were accused of paying bribes in China in the year 2000. This number stood at 1952 last year.

Source: Asia Pulse, 03 November 2005

Plunder in the Name of Education

Complaints have been received about spending money under irrelevant heads after taking huge loans from the donors for reforming secondary education which included introduction of single-track education. Under this controversial programme for educational reform, the consultants had to be paid a fee of Taka 36 crore. Taka 32 crore was squandered by sending 267 education officials abroad for getting a glimpse of single-track education in four countries including Australia. Taka 133 crore were spent for building infrastructure including construction of bathrooms and installation of tube-wells. There are allegations that a major part of Taka 180 crore meant for stipend of female students has been plundered through corruption.

Source: Daily Prothom Alo, 21 November 2005

Former Police Chief of Nigeria Fined on Charge of Corruption

The former police chief of Nigeria Tafa Balogun has been fined 4 million naira and given a prison sentence of 6 months in a money laundering case involving 150 million dollar. He has to undergo eight prison terms of six months duration against eight charges brought against him. It may be mentioned that Nigeria is the sixth most corrupt country in the world according to the index prepared by Transparency International.

Source: Reuters, 23 November 2005
**Ensure Transparency in the Election Process**

With yet another general election in Bangladesh leading to the 9th Parliament knocking at the door, public expectation today is as high as their concern. Voters look at the election as a step forward in creating conditions that would help meeting some of their key expectations, such as controlling corruption, progress towards accountable governance and socio-economic progress, poverty alleviation, security and safety the individual and fulfillment of the people’s fundamental constitutional rights. On the other hand, amongst the major concerns of every citizen of the country is the question whether a truly free, fair and peaceful election will in the end take place with the active participation of all political parties. In this context, there is no alternative to healthy and positive democratic practice, fullest respect to democratic values by all concerned, and transparent, non-partisan, independent and effective functioning of all relevant institutions, especially the Election Commission. For establishing accountability of the people’s representatives to the voters, it is absolutely indispensable to create a corruption free atmosphere in election, keep the corrupt individuals out of the entire election process, and to have the political will and capacity to implement anti-corruption agenda without fear or favour. There is no denying that in Bangladesh, there are still a number of constraints against holding of a free and fair election, and establishing transparency in the entire election process. It is the constitutional duty of Election Commission (EC), first and foremost, to carry out the election freely and fairly. Unfortunately, however, the EC continues to be dependent upon the Government for key management and financial decisions. There are allegations from different quarters that in appointments to various positions in the Commission political consideration has been getting increasing priority. Impartiality of the Election Commission is, therefore, widely questioned. The political parties play a vital role in ensuring free and fair election in a representative democracy. But there is no well-defined and legally binding provision yet in our country on the important issues of the formation of political parties and their funding. An unhealthy competition of buying the entire process starts as soon as election comes. Though there is a set limit regarding election expenses of the candidates, hardly anybody abides by it, for which the undeclared cost of election has been skyrocketing day by day. The primary reason for this is the absence of political will and institutional strength to enforce it. Violation of election code including expenditure limit is hardly punished so that there practically no deterrence against violators, rendering election an investment.

The political parties themselves can and should play the key role in ensuring the accountability of candidates regarding the disclosure of their wealth and other information like criminal records in accordance with the High Court’s order. It is impossible to keep election free of corruption, violence and muscle power without the unqualified commitment of the political parties. They must strictly meet unconditionally and without exception the expectation of the citizens that the corrupt people should not be nominated, election should be free from the influence of black money, and that no candidate should exceed the prescribed limit of election expenditure. For holding a credible and reliable election, reforms in the respective institutions, organizations and election laws are indispensable. The Election Commission has become divided on such a fundamental issue as voter's list, the accuracy of which is sine qua non for holding any free and fair election worth the name. The Commission is fast losing public confidence and trust because of such controversies, most of which are related to weakening of the institution through politicization. Freeing the Commission from government control and political influence will not be enough, it must also be perceived and viewed by the people to be free and independent, having the authority and capacity to exercise the independence. Key to the rebuilding of the trust and confidence of the people in the Commission would be the extent to which it can discharge such primary functions as ensuring a credible voter’s list, transparency in vote-taking and counting, enforcement of spending limits, disclosure of candidates’ wealth. The election monitoring agencies and the media also have a significant role in increasing the quality and transparency of election process. Pervasive corruption and low accountability of governance are increasingly affecting the daily life of the citizens at large. Unfortunately, the key institutions of democracy that can play the most active and effective roles in combating corruption and ensuring transparent and accountable governance today exist only in a façade, mostly ineffective and inactive due to politicization, political corruption, and politics of zero-sum game. Due to the failure of the institutions in the national integrity system like the parliament, especially the Standing Committees, in ensuring the accountability of government, it is becoming increasingly impossible to take practical measures in fighting corruption. People do not want to see the same fate of the next parliament. In the greater interest of the country and future of democracy, therefore, all necessary strategic and policy measures must be taken to ensure transparency of the election process.

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**Compensation for the Gas-field Blow-out and Punishment of the Guilty**

The editorial that was published in the September ‘05 issue of the Newsletter demanding compensation and punishment of the culprits for the blow-out at Tengralla gas field of Sylhet was timely and praiseworthy. Declaration of other gas-fields of the country as abandoned by Niko was also not done in a transparent manner. Proper investigation of widespread corruption in the extraction of country’s natural resources and the punishment of culprits are essential for protecting national interest. We are hopeful that the government would extract compensation from Niko and mete out appropriate punishments to the guilty.

Abu Bakar Siddique
Balubari, Dinajpur

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**Want to Receive Your Newsletter**

I have been reading your newsletter for a long time at the residence of one of my relatives. Please let me know how I can obtain the newsletter published by you.

Md. Moniruzzaman
Dhaka University

We thank you for showing your interest in TIB Newsletter. We will be happy to include you in our regular mailing list. At the same time, you can also apply for TIB Membership. The application form is available on our website or you can collect it from our office.

TIB Newsletter
The 9th of December was the International Anti-Corruption Day. The day was observed in many countries of the world with widespread enthusiasm. TIB observed the International Anti-Corruption Day for the second time by taking up various programmes throughout the country participated by the people. This year, the theme of the day was ‘Impact of corruption on human security’. On the occasion, various programmes were arranged against corruption rallies, seminars, discussion meetings and cultural programmes were organised in Dhaka and at various places of the country including Chittagong, Rajshahi and Sylhet by the Committee of Concerned Citizens. In her statement on the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day, the newly elected Chairperson of TIB Huguette Labelle said: Capable and strong leaderships are needed now for curbing corruption. She further said: A strong measure for bringing about positive changes can be the signing of the UN Convention Against Corruption. The leaders should ensure its ratification by the signatory countries and accelerate the process of implementing the UN Convention Against Corruption through an effective monitoring mechanism. The TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman said: It is very unfortunate that Bangladesh has not yet signed or ratified the UN Convention Against Corruption.

Cultural Programme
TIB organised a cultural programme on fighting corruption at the auditorium of National Press Club on the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day. Three plays were staged at the programme by the TIB-inspired people’s theatre groups of Mymensingh, Muktakghata and Nalitabari. Besides the Palagan group from Nalitabari, the Gimbhara group from Chapainawabganj and ‘Rupantar’ of Khulna presented traditional folk songs called ‘palagan’, ‘gambhira’ and ‘pot-song’ respectively. The Executive Director of TIB Iftekharuzzaman, theatre personality Aty Zaker and Sara Zaker were present on the occasion.

Activities of Different Organizations
The development organization ‘Speed Trust’ organised human chain, street drama and discussion meeting at Barisal with TIB’s assistance on the occasion of Anti-Corruption Day. The non-government organization ‘Rupantar’ arranged a seminar, press conference and ‘pot-song’ in Khulna. “YPSA” of Chittagong also organised various programmes including discussion meeting on the occasion of Anti-Corruption Day.

Essay Competition
TIB organised an essay competition on fighting corruption for the students of schools, colleges and universities across the country on the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day. In the judicious judgement of the panel of judges, Marufa Akhtar Taraldar Tasnim Rahat School occupied third position. In the college group, Abdullahil Maruf of Rajshahi New Government Degree College stood first, while Moushumi Akhtar of BAF Shaheen College stood second. At the university level, ABM Enamul Hasan of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Imamul Haque Sagar of Kishoreganj Guru Dayal Government College and BM Musleh Uddin Jalali of Chandpur Government College occupied first, second and third positions respectively.
Anti-Corruption Day Observed in CCC areas

Sylhet, Sunamganj and Srimangal: A citizens’ meeting was organised at Hotel Sylhet Inn at the initiative of Committee of Concerned Citizens (CCC)-Sylhet City on the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day. Alongside the main topic of discussion, the invaluable contribution of Begum Rokeya in the field of education was also highlighted by referring to Begum Rokeya Day. Distinguished individuals of society took part in the discussion, which was chaired by the Convener of CCC-Sylhet City Advocate Emad Ulhaq Shahidul Islam. A colourful rally was brought out from in front of Shaheed Jagat Jyoti Pathagar (public library) under the aegis of CCC-Sunamganj on the occasion of Anti-Corruption Day. The rally went round important roads of the town and a discussion meeting was held after the rally at the public library auditorium. The CCC Convener Nurur Rab Chowdhury delivered the welcome address. The newly formed CCC-Srimangal observed the International Anti-Corruption Day on 9 December with the slogan “Let’s Fight Corruption - Together’. A rally, chorus songs against corruption and street meetings were held for observing the day. Over two hundred citizens belonging to various classes and professions including journalists, development workers, teachers, social and cultural workers, lawyers and students participated in the rally. Other members along with the CCC Convener Professor Sayeed Muxeeb Rahman spoke on the occasion.

Barisal, Pirojpur and Jhalakathi: The International Anti-Corruption Day was observed in Barisal on 9 December with the slogan “Political will is essential for eradicating corruption”. The newly formed CCC-Barisal organized a citizens’ meeting on the occasion titled ‘Say no to corruption’ at the BDS auditorium of the city. Eminent personalities of the town participated in it. The newly formed CCC-Pirojpur affixed posters at various locations of the district town on the occasion of observing the Anti-Corruption Day, hoisted banners on main thoroughfares, organised a rally and distributed leaflets through mass contacts with distinguished personalities. The CCC-Jhalakathi observed the day through various programmes. A discussion meeting was held at the CCC office on the occasion. The CCC Convener Professor Md. Rustam Ali presided over it. Besides, banners were hoisted at different locations of the city.

Chittagong, Comilla and Brahmanbaria: A discussion meeting was organised by CCC-Chittagong City at Abdul Khaleque Engineer Auditorium of Chittagong Press Club on the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day. A TIB official presented the concept paper prepared by TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman on the occasion. Distinguished personalities of society including Dr. Anupam Sen, Professor Muinul Islam, CCC members and TIB officials participated in the discussion. CCC-Comilla observed the day through various programmes. Prisdiced over by the CCC Convener Zahirul Haque Dulal, the elites of society including CCC members participated in a discussion meeting held at the Comilla Shilpakala Academy. Besides, the CCC also organised an anti-corruption rally. The newly formed CCC-Brahmanbaria observed the Anti-Corruption Day through various programmes. A colourful rally and discussion meeting was organized under the headship of Advocate Md. Abu Taher on the occasion.
Debate Competition

It is not possible to establish good governance by hiding information - TIB Chairman Samson H. Chowdhury

The Chairman of TIB Trustee Board Samson H. Chowdhury has said, good governance cannot be established by hiding information. He was speaking at the concluding session of a debate competition organised by TIB on 30 November on the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day.

Rujaqayyah Hall of Dhaka University emerged champion in the anti-corruption debate competition by beating Law department of the same university. In the semi-final, Rujaqayyah Hall defeated the debating entity called the Group of Debaters. Runner-up Law department of Dhaka University reached the final by beating Haji Muhammad Mohiuddin Hall. Held at the auditorium of Hotel Abakash of Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation located at Mohakhali of Dhaka, the competition was inaugurated by Poet Asad Chowdhury. Apart from Samson H. Chowdhury, those who were present on the last day of this four-day-long debate competition included the Chairman of Development Studies department of Dhaka University Professor Dr. Salahuddin M. Aminuzzaman, journalist Ajoy Das Gupta, Director of BELA Advocate Syeda Rizwana Hasan, Assistant Professor of the East-West University Dr. Golam Ahmed Faruqui, Directors of various divisions of TIB.

Welcoming the participating teams, TIB Chairman Samson H. Chowdhury said, the response received from the country's universities for participation in the anti-corruption debate competition was indeed praiseworthy and was a good sign. We all have to remain conscious about corruption and should work for generating awareness among other people as well, he said. He opined that private lives of all should be transparent if we are to move the country forward. The tendency to hide facts should be shunned if transparency is to be ensured for good governance. He expressed the hope that it would be possible to establish good governance by keeping the people informed.

It may be mentioned that a total of 36 government and private universities, initially screened by TIB from a huge number of applications received from all over the country, participated in this 4-day competition held between 27 and 30 November. The teams included various halls and departments of Dhaka University, halls of Engineering University, various departments of Chittagong, Rajshahi, Agricultural and Jahangirnagar University, departments of various private universities, Medical Colleges and some university colleges registered with the National University. Apart from corruption, the attending audience enjoyed lively debates on such themes like the mass media, education, law and justice, bureaucracy, price of essentials, production, society, politics, economy, government and the system of governance.

TIB PROGRAMMES

TIB Presentation at IBA Auditorium of Dhaka University

TIB made a Power Point presentation on “Fighting Corruption in Bangladesh: A TIB Perspective” at the IBA Auditorium of Dhaka University at the invitation of the Institute of Business Administration. The presentation was made by the Executive Director of TIB Ittekhuruzzaman. Attended by around 200 students, the programme started with a brief speech by the Director of IBA. The TIB profile, its vision and mission, method of work, concept of corruption, corruption and development, various sectors of government, etc. were elaborated through the Power Point presentation. The teachers and students present in the programme made numerous queries about TIB. The Executive Director replied to all the questions and said, corruption was abuse of public office for private gain. He urged the audience to stand beside TIB in the social movement against corruption.

TIB Members’ Day

October 3 was the TIB Members’ Day. Held at the TIB premises, 12 members attended the proceedings. Addressing the members, TIB Executive Director Ittekhuruzzaman said that this meeting would create opportunities for members to get directly involved in the activities of the organization. He exchanged views with the members on publication of corruption database, telecast of new TV advertisement, formation of new people’s theatre groups, constitution of new CCCs and TIB’s presentation at IBA of Dhaka University. The attending members gave advice on holding roundtable discussion between the government and the people on the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day, publication of reports in newspapers on the most corrupt sectors prior to the observance of the day, arranging press conference and undertaking a signature collection campaign for signing and ratification of the UN Convention Against Corruption by the Government of Bangladesh. It may be mentioned that the annual general meeting of the TIB members would be held on 20th January.

Fellowship Program

For the first time TIB is awarding fellowship to five researchers in senior and general category for conducting research in the area of corruption and governance system. Among the public universities, Dr. Yeahia Ahtker, Professor of Political Science department, Chittagong University, received the senior fellowship award for the research on barriers towards good governance. Four have received fellowship in the general category. Those included are, K.N.M. Hossainul Haque of South Asia Partnership (SAP) Bangladesh for his research on government pension system, lecturer of the department of Media and Development of Independent University, Zakir Hussain Raju for the research on mass media and governance, Mohammad Akter Mahmud of the Urban and Planning department of Jahangirnagar University for the research on planning and approval system of RAJK and lawyer of Supreme Court, Shakir Khondoker Shafqiar for the research on judicial system.
Huguette Labelle Elected TI Chairman

Huguette Labelle, a respected Canadian with a broad background in development issues, has been elected Chair of Transparency International, the global coalition against corruption. She replaces Dr. Peter Eigen, who founded the TI movement and has served with distinction throughout the organisation's 12-year history. Eigen will assume the Chair of Transparency International's Advisory Council. In his new position Dr. Eigen replaces Dr. Kamal Hossain of Bangladesh who has stepped down, but will continue to be an advisor.

"I am deeply honoured to be elected by the Transparency International movement to lead this vitally important organisation, and to contribute to improving the lives of the victims of corruption around the world," Labelle said. She brings a strong commitment to strengthening TI's already solid foundations, but warned of the challenges ahead: "Embedded corruption around the world continues to trap millions in poverty. Transparency International will continue to lead the fight to reduce the corrosive effects of corruption and enhance the opportunity for a better life."

"I am leaving the Chair of Transparency International in extremely capable hands," said Peter Eigen. He described his successor as "exceptionally well-equipped to lead the TI movement and to inspire its national chapters around the world. Her capacity to bring together diverse interests will help TI take on the criminals and vested interests that continue to ruin lives around the world."

Samson H. Chowdhury, Chair of Transparency International Bangladesh and members of TI’s Board of Trustees congratulated Ms. Labelle on her election and expressed their deepest appreciation to Dr. Eigen for his extraordinary leadership, passion and devotion that has established TI as the leading and highly regarded international NGOs working on issues and challenges affecting lives of peoples across the world. They hoped that the transition in TI with Ms Labelle as the new Chair, would enable TI to carry forward the work done so far with reinforced dynamism and vibrance, and do it more effectively.

Labelle was elected on 13 November, 2005 by the Annual Meeting of Transparency International's nearly one hundred chapters and contact groups around the world. Barrister Akere T. Muna, the founder and president of Transparency International Cameroon, was elected Vice Chair of Transparency International.
TI's Perception Index and Reactions

Bangladesh has topped the list of countries in the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) of Transparency International for the fifth time in a row. The index was published in various places of the world on 18 October. There were massive reactions from various quarters because of Bangladesh occupying the top position among the corrupt countries of the world once again.

A total of 159 countries have been included in this year’s index. Bangladesh has found place at the bottom alongside Chad of Africa. Both the countries occupy 158th position with 1.7 points each in a 0-10 scale. This index was released internationally from London on 18 October. Among others, TIB Executive Director Rehnumazaman was present there. He said at the press conference, CPI is a measure of perceptions about the nation as corrupt. While corruption is indeed the most formidable challenge against governance, development and poverty reduction in Bangladesh as well as most of other developing countries.

Member of the TIB Board of Trustees Professor Muzaffer Ahmad presented the index on behalf of TIB at the conference room of National Press Club. Senior officials of TIB were present on the occasion. Professor Muzaffer Ahmad said at the press conference, the top position of Bangladesh in the TI survey did not indicate that the entire population of Bangladesh were corrupt. The general populace of Bangladesh were mere victims of corruption resorted to by a few individuals and associated organizations backed by political and official power. The bureaucracy, trade and commerce and criminalisation of politics have taken the country to an extreme state of corruption. He further said, it would be difficult for Bangladesh to achieve the millennium development goals if this trend of corruption continued.

The government and the opposition parties expressed opposite views on Bangladesh topping the index. The Communication Minister and standing committee member of BNP Barrister Nazmul Huda said, those who want to identify Bangladesh as a failed state have assisted in the preparation of such reports. On the other hand, the presidium member of Awami League and MP Suranjit Sengupta said, the alliance government has put blemish on the general people by becoming champion in corruption for consecutive four times.

Giving his reaction, the Chairman of Anti-Corruption Commission Sultan Hossain Khan said, the Anti-Corruption Commission in Bangladesh cannot function properly due to various administrative complexities. He expressed the optimism that it would be possible to free Bangladesh from corruption to a large extent in future if the Commission functioned independently in its own way. Member of the Commission Professor Dr. Maniruzzaman Milad said, it cannot be claimed that there was no corruption in the country; but it was also not true that Bangladesh was the most corrupt. Expressing his anxiety, the framers of the country’s Constitution Dr. Kamal Hossain said, the image of the country is being lowered in the outside world due to Bangladesh topping the list in corruption for consecutive five times because of the failure of present alliance government. On the other hand, the news of corruption perception index was widely publicised by various global media. The local news media of the country also gave extensive coverage to the top position of Bangladesh in corruption.

It may be mentioned that TI has been publishing the corruption perception index on an annual basis since 1995. This index is prepared on the basis of 18 surveys conducted by 10 internationally reputed institutions. As fundamental change in the state of corruption is time-consuming, the index is determined on the basis of a three year average of collected data. In the case of Bangladesh, data from seven surveys carried out by the Columbia University, Economist Intelligence Unit, Merchant International Group, World Economic Forum and World Market Research Centre were used. These surveys were conducted through discussions mainly with businessmen, investors, country experts and resident specialists of concerned countries. The Passau University of Germany undertook statistical analysis of the index and management and coordination of research.

TI Survey: Political Parties Are Most Corrupt

The political parties are the most corrupt organizations in the world. Transparency International (TI) released this finding from London on 9 December on the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day. TI conducted this survey for two years among 55 thousand people of 69 countries around the globe. Respondents from 45 countries in the survey placed the political parties on top in the list of corrupt entities for the second year in a row. The parliament or legislature, the police and legal system/judiciary have been ranked below political parties by this TI Study titled ‘Global Corruption Barometer 2005’. According to another TI Study titled ‘Stealing the Future: Corruption in the Classroom’, education has been particularly mentioned as a corrupt sector. The study says, the extensions of corruption in the education arena have become acute. As a result, disastrous consequences are likely for the pupils of affected countries.

Commenting on the findings of these two surveys, TI Chairperson Huguette Labelle said: Corruption is the principal problem of our times. The impact of corruption on poor is most terrifying. If the people become frustrated on the issue, then it would not be possible to do anything for curbing corruption. The findings of the survey are a warning for the people, so there is need for change. But leadership, willpower and influence are needed for changes to take place, she added. According to the citizens of 48 countries who took part in the survey, corruption has increased over the past three years. Citizens of 12 countries think that corruption would diminish while citizens of 34 countries are disillusioned due to deterioration of the situation.
CCC PROGRAMMES

The Committees of Concerned Citizens (CCCs) formed through the initiative of TIB at different places of the country for generating awareness against corruption undertook various programmes like seminar, opinion-sharing meeting, workshop, honouring successful student, inauguration of advice and information centre, mothers’ gathering, observance of international literacy day, open discussion, poster-affixing, etc. Programmes held at various places were as follows:

Workshop

Rajshahi: A workshop was held on the ‘role of women community in the social movement against corruption’ through the initiative of CCC-Chapainawabganj. A call was made at the meeting to become more vocal in favour of improving the quality of education and against corruption. On the other hand, the CCC-Chapainawabganj arranged a separate opinion-sharing meeting with the private secondary school teachers’ association and the Headmasters at Kamaluddin Girls’ High School premises on 29 September. Emphasis was laid at the meeting on eliminating corruption in recruitment of teachers, removing irregularities in government offices concerned with education and achieving desired results at the primary level. On the other hand, CCC-Chapainawabganj organised an opinion-sharing meeting on 8 October with the governing council of Chamgram Hasam Nasir High School on their powers, responsibilities and obligations, limitations, relationship with the Headmaster, etc.

Mymensingh: A workshop titled ‘Report Card Survey 2005’ was held on 22 October at Hotel Mostafiz International of Mymensingh Sadar. The main objective of the workshop was to finalise the questionnaires prepared by TIB on health, secondary education, police, and the lower judiciary. CCC members from the five districts of greater Mymensingh were present at the workshop. Besides, Senior Programme Officer (Policy & Research) of TIB Md. Sydur Rahman Molla and Senior Training Officer Riazuddin Khan were also present.

Seminar

Seminar on local governance and primary education: The speakers at the seminar on ‘Pro-people local government council: Role of public representatives and citizens’ said, it is not possible to establish good governance if the local government councils cannot be turned into pro-people and effective institutions. The seminar, held under the auspices of CCC-Kishoreganj on 24 October at the ‘muktamancha’ of local press club was chaired by eminent lawyer Prof. Ashok Sarkar. The Upazila Nirbahi Officer Md. Anisuzzaman was the chief guest while the municipal chairman Alhaj Abu Taher Mia was present as the principal discussant. TIB official and representatives of various classes and professions attended the seminar. Besides, the speakers at the seminar on ‘Standard of primary education: Problems and prospects’ organised with the objective of ensuring quality primary education said, the government has failed to build quality educational institutions although primary education has been made compulsory for all children. The state could not yet meet the constitutional obligation of establishing ‘uniform, pro-people and universal primary education’ even after the expiry of thirty years. The speakers said this at the seminar held at the ‘muktamancha’ of Kishoreganj Press Club on 28 September. Chaired by the CCC member and distinguished freedom fighter Professor Abdul Gani, the keynote paper at the seminar was presented by Professor of Jahangirnagar University ATM Aliqur Rahman. Apart from eminent personalities, the seminar was attended by teachers, members of school management committees, journalists and representatives of various classes and professions.

Opinion-Sharing Meeting

Opinion-sharing meeting on Education: An opinion-sharing meeting was held with the District Primary Education Officer at his office on 22 September under the aegis of CCC-Chapainawabganj. A call was made at the meeting to become more vocal in favour of improving the quality of education and against corruption. On the other hand, the CCC-Chapainawabganj arranged a separate opinion-sharing meeting with the private secondary school teachers’ association and the Headmasters at Kamaluddin Girls’ High School premises on 29 September. Emphasis was laid at the meeting on eliminating corruption in recruitment of teachers, removing irregularities in government offices concerned with education and achieving desired results at the primary level. On the other hand, CCC-Chapainawabganj organised an opinion-sharing meeting on 8

International Literacy Day Observed

Chapainawabganj: The International Literacy Day was observed on 8 September under the joint auspices of CCC-Chapainawabganj and the district administration. During the rally and discussion meeting arranged on the occasion, people were urged to give literacy to the illiterates. The CCC convener Advocate Saiful Islam Reza and other members participated in the discussion.

Extimpore Speech

Rajshahi: An extempore speech competition was arranged on 6 October for the CCC Volunteer Group with the goal of imbuing the youths, who are the future generation of the country, with honesty, patriotism and an anti-corruption spirit. It was held at the CCC office under the aegis of CCC-Rajshahi City.
Mothers’ Gathering

Kurigram: CCC-Kurigram organised a mothers’ gathering at Khalliganj Government Primary School premises on 29 September for raising awareness of mothers in quality primary education and proper growth of children. Over two hundred mothers of school-students participated in it. Presided over by the chairman of School Managing Committee Md. Abdus Saber, songs were rendered and a drama titled ‘quality education’ was presented at the gathering with the participation of students. Kishoreganj: A mothers’ gathering was held at the auditorium of Kishoreganj Bouli Government Primary School on 27 November under the aegis of Kishoreganj CCC. Supported by TIB, the slogan at the gathering was ‘Only a mother can send children to school regularly and make them sit before the table for study.’ Attended by over 400 mothers, the best teachers and meritorious students were awarded prizes at the meeting. The CCC members and eminent persons including government officers were present.

Chapainawabganj: The CCC-Chapainawabganj arranged an opinion-sharing meeting with the local journalists at its office on 18 October with the goal of working together with the mass media for combating corruption. The CCC Convener Advocate Saiful Islam Reza presided over the meeting. Towards the end of the meeting, an Advice and Information Centre was inaugurated at the CCC premises with the objective of providing free information and guidance.

Natore: An Advice and Information Centre was inaugurated on 20 October at the premises of CCC-Natore with the objective of providing information and advice to the common people free of charge. The Upazila Nirbahi Officer Md. Aminul Islam inaugurated the centre. The elites of society, professionals, journalists, government officials and NGO representatives were present on the occasion. It may be mentioned that, the Advice and Information Centre would provide information on government and private organizations, education, health, land, power, law and court, passport, communication, union parishad, municipality, etc. This service would be rendered to the general public free of charge at the convenience of CCC members and citizens’ demand.

INCEPTION OF ADVICE AND INFORMATION CENTRE

Modhupur: An Advice and Information Centre was inaugurated on 31 October at the office of CCC-Modhupur. This centre was set up through the joint initiative of TIB and Modhupur CCC for upholding public interest. Chaired by the CCC Convener Md. Abdul Latif, the Upazila Nirbahi Officer of Modhupur was present on the occasion as the chief guest while the Acting Principal of Modhupur Degree College Md. Montaz Ali was the special guest. The elites of society, professionals, journalists, government officials and NGO representatives were present.

Muktagachha: Supported by TIB, an ‘Advice and Information Centre’ was opened at the premises of Muktagachha CCC in presence of eminent personalities on 23 October with the objective of providing information and counselling free of charge. Professionals from different sectors were present at the occasion.

Jamalpur: An Advice and Information Centre was inaugurated on 28 October by unveiling the cover of an fact sheet at the premises of CCC-Jamalpur with the support of TIB. The objective of the centre is to provide correct information and guidance to the general masses for getting services from public and private sector organizations. Eminent personalities of Jamalpur were present at the programme.

Jajmanu: A reception for the GPA-5 recipient students was organized through the initiative of CCC-Jamalpur on 29 October at the auditorium of District Shlipakala Academy. During the reception, the meritorious students were urged to groom themselves as good citizens by concentrating on their education and to come forward for curbing corruption by playing an active role in the social movement against corruption.

Chapainawabganj: The CCC-Chapainawabganj organized a reception for the students who got GPA-5 in the SSC examination on 17 September. During the programme, the students were asked to come forward to combat corruption by expressing their aversion against corruption.

Kishoreganj: A reception was organized under the aegis of CCC-Kishoreganj for the SSS examinees who received GPA-5 in secondary examination at the auditorium of local Teachers‘ Training College on 22 September. The speakers at the programme stressed on grooming the students as qualified citizens in order to build a corruption-free society and country.

Receptions for students who received GPA-5 in secondary examination

Rajshahi: A reception was organised under the aegis of CCC-Rajshahi for the SSS examinees who received GPA-5 in secondary examination at the auditorium of local Teachers‘ Training College on 22 September. The speakers at the programme stressed on grooming the students as qualified citizens in order to build a corruption-free society and country.

Chapainawabganj: The CCC-Chapainawabganj organized a reception for the students who got GPA-5 in the SSC examination on 17 September. During the programme, the students were asked to come forward to combat corruption by expressing their aversion against corruption.

Modhupur: A reception was organized by CCC-Modhupur at Modhupur Degree College premises on 3 October for the students of the upazila who got GPA-5 in SSC examination. The speakers urged the successful students to dedicate themselves in the service of the country through application of their talent.

Jamalpur: A reception for the GPA-5 recipient students was organized through the initiative of CCC-Jamalpur on 29 October at the auditorium of District Shlipakala Academy. During the reception, the meritorious students were urged to groom themselves as good citizens by concentrating on their education and to come forward for curbing corruption by playing an active role in the social movement against corruption.

TIB Newsletter
Formation of Committee of Concerned Citizens

TIB is forming Committee of Concerned Citizens (CCC) at the local level with the objective of ensuring transparency and accountability in public and private service sectors and generate awareness for raising service quality and fighting corruption. TIB has formed such committees in the recent past at Comilla, Sunamganj, Sylhet, Srimangal, Barisal, Pirojpur, Jhalakathi, Kushtia, Jhenaidah and Jessore with the goal of strengthening the social movement against corruption.

Kushtia, Jhenaidah and Jessore: A 16-member CCC was formed at Kushtia district on 30 November at a meeting held at the auditorium of Kushtia Press Club, with Professor Sudin Kumar Lahir as the convener. A 12 member CCC was formed at Jhenaidah under the auspices of TIB on 1 December with Advocate Sheikh Selim as the convener. The 15-member CCC-Jessore was formed on 1 December with Advocate Sheikh Hasan Imam as the convener in a meeting held at a local hotel.

Brahmanbaria, Chandpur, Chakoria and Patiya: A CCC was formed at Brahmanbaria with Advocate Mohammad Abu Taher as the convener on 4 December. The Chandpur CCC was formed on 10 December with Professor Monohar Ali as the convener. The CCC - Chakoria under Cox’s Bazar district and the CCC - Patiya under Chittagong district were formed on 18 December and 6 December respectively with Engineer Rafiqul Haque and Sagir Mohammad as conveners.

Khuina, Bagerhat and Satkhira: A 17-member CCC was formed at Khuina on 18 December with the former joint secretary, Hafizur Rahman, as the convener. Eminent cultural activist Advocate Jahangir Ali Babu as the convener, a 9-member CCC was formed at Bagerhat on 17 December. At the Central Public Library of Satkhira, a 13-member CCC was formed on 16 December with Professor Sheikh Abdul Wadud as the convener.

Comilla: A CCC was formed at Comilla on 25 September at the initiative of TIB. A 13-member committee was formed with Zahirul Haq Dulal as the convener. Besides, a 4-member advisory committee was also formed for running the programmes of the CCC effectively.

Volunteer Group

Nalitabar: Volunteer’s day was observed by the volunteer group of Nalitabar on 19 and 26 September afternoon at the CCC premises. Presided over by the volunteer Ram Krishna Saha, the programme included extempore speech, topical speech, reading and review of the Constitution. Later on, prizes were distributed among the winners of the debate competition by the convener of CCC-Nalitabar Advocate Suhad Alamgir. Besides, the volunteer group formed a human chain before the main road of upazila headquarters on 27 October morning demanding continuation and reinforcement of official raids for eliminating adulterated foods and commodities.

Kurigram: An anti-corruption human chain was organized under the aegis of the volunteer group of CCC-Kurigram on 17 October at the local Shapla square. People from various professions including the members of TIB volunteer group and people’s theatre group participated in this programme, which was aimed at curbing corruption by raising transparency and accountability in public and private service sectors.

Natore: The volunteer group of CCC-Natore organized an essay competition for the school students on 29 September. Prizes were distributed among the winners of the competition on 20 October by the Upazila Nirbahi Officer Aminul Islam. A publicity campaign was waged by the volunteer group of Natore on 10, 12 and 16 October at all public and private organizations located in the district. The aim of this campaign was to motivate the officers-employees so that they did not neglect their duties and refrained from bribery. The volunteer group distributed leaflets and posters in government offices with that objective.

Publication of ‘Chetona (Spirit) and ‘Gontoby’ (Destination)

On 9 December, the volunteer group of Modhupur CCC published a periodical under the name ‘Chetona (Spirit)’ on the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day. Story, poem, poetry and articles on corruption were included in the magazine. The editorial board included: CCC-convener Debasish Goswami, M. Touhiduzzaman and Muhammad Rafiqul Islam. Program division of TIB provided complete support in publishing the magazine. On the other hand, volunteers of CCC-Nalitabar published a periodical named ‘Gontoby’ (Destination). The editorial board of ‘Gontoby’ included: Snigdha Rahan, Mosharraf, Yasin, Sojol and Nitay were in cooperation. It was named and designed by Rukunuzzaman Jewel and the Program division of TIB played the overall supervisory role.

Rajshahi: The volunteer group of CCC-Rajshahi observed the International Volunteer Day on 5 December through various programmes with the slogan ‘Wanted incorruptible youths from the volunteer day’. Rally and human chain were organized on the occasion and public opinion was forged through VIP cards carrying the question ‘What to do for tackling corruption?’ Later on, the selected cards were hung on the ‘public opinion board’ of the CCC office for display.
New Personnel at TIB

A total of 30 new staff have been assigned various divisions of TIB during October, November and December. Those who joined are: Lovely Yasmin Jaba - Senior Gender Officer; Mohiuddin Ahmed and Atiya Begum Als - HR Manager; Syed Akhtar Rahman, Mohammadi Arif Rahman, Muhmmad Salih Islam - Assistant Manager; Rakshana Parvin - Front Desk Assistant; Md. Monoran Islam, Tanque Ahmed and No. Three Marmo - Support Staff. Those who joined the programme are: Sall Uddin Ahmed and Nanda Lai Subrath - Senior Programme Officer, Shameem Akter Jahan - Senior Programme Officer MAE; Md. Rezaul Karim, Howlader Md. Khalid Bar, Md. Sohail Islam, Md. Mozammel Hossain, Sujit Kumar - Assistant Programme Officer ARH Anuuzzaman, Jasminuddin, Mathew Mithu, Matihha Jahan - Programme Organiser. Those who joined the research division are: M. Zakir Hossain Khan, Md. Rezaul Karim, Md. Akser Hossain - Research Officer; Anif Reza Anik - Assistant Research Officer; Rumana Sharmi, Minhia Karimah, Mohamed Hossain Alom, Sohul Ahmed, A.B.M. Reazuddasam, Md. Zakir Hossain - Research Assistant.

INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM AWARD 2006

Investigative journalism has been an integral part of TIB’s activity plan since its inception. TIB has encouraged investigative report by giving awards to journalists for the best pieces of investigative journalism. The award was introduced in 1999. In this regard, TIB invites reports published in the newspapers and broadcast in the television channels of Bangladesh for Investigative Journalism Award 2006. It is noted that winner from each group will receive a cash prize of Taka 50,000, a crest and a citation. The reports should be sent to The Advocacy Division, TIB, Progress Tower (6th Floor), House -1, Road -23, Gulshan -1, Dhaka -1212 within 30 March 2006.

Rules of Participation:

• For Newspaper: The investigative report related to corruption, which published in This Bangla and English newspapers and magazines of the country from 01 January to 31 December 2005 will be entitled in this competition. The original copy of the report should be submitted and photocopy of reports will not be accepted. The submitted copy of the report will not be returned.

• For Television: The complete report should be submitted along with the Compact Disk (CD) that was broadcasted in the above-mentioned time. In this case, Investigative Features based on corruption would also be entitled in this competition.

• The report will be evaluated comparatively considering the subject, importance, depth of information and substance, style and quality of presentation and the probable impact of the report on the society and state.

• Except the series report, a participant cannot send more than one report.

• Report will be sent along with one copy of recent photograph, contact address and telephone number of the reporter.

Contestants are requested to mention ‘Investigative Journalism’ on the top of the envelope.

• It is needed to mention, TIB nominated a Panel of Judges for adjudicating the reports. After composing all the Judge’s number, this panel will select the winner and their decisions regarding this matter are considered as the ultimate.