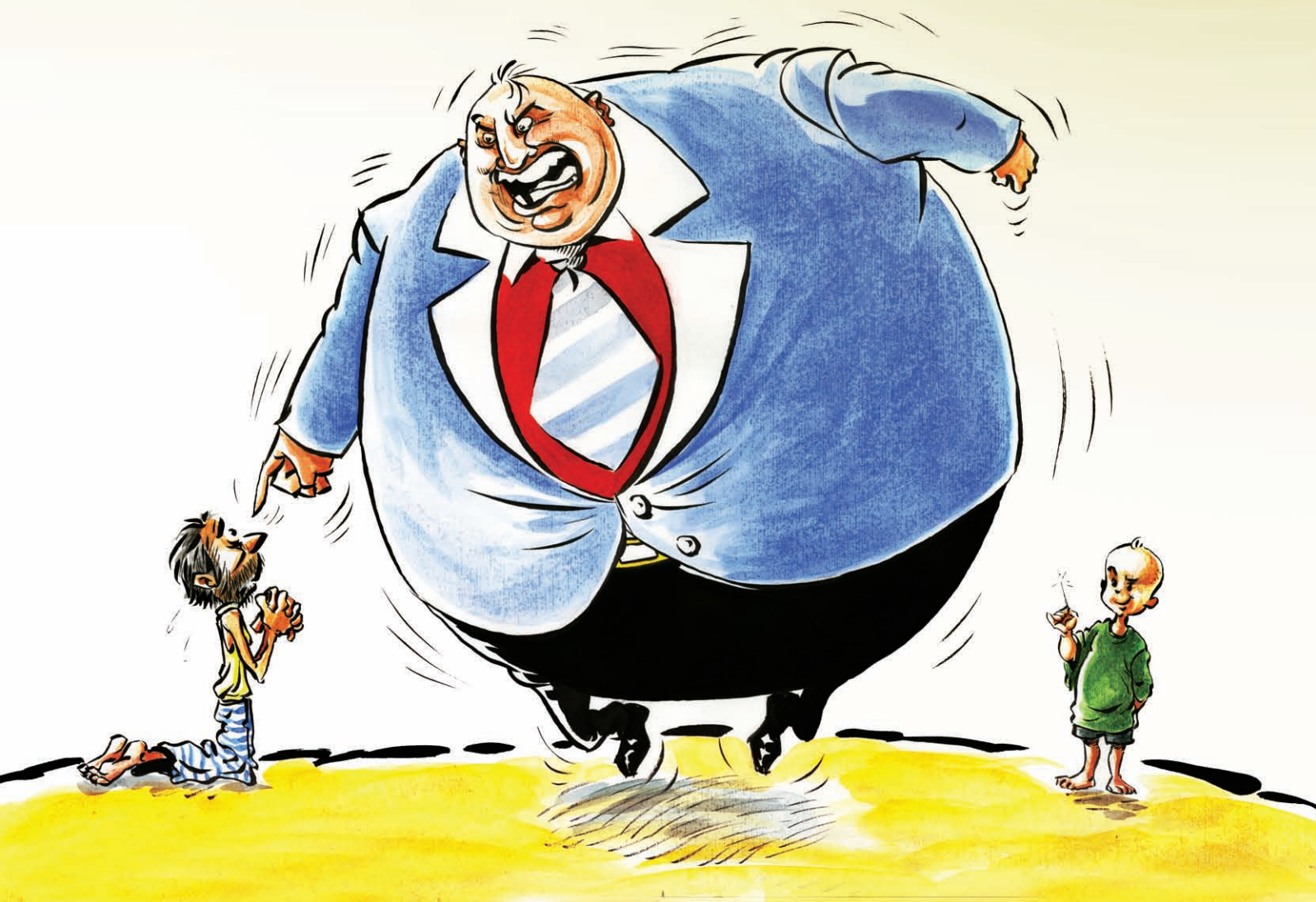


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We Want a Truly Effective Parliament

The Ninth Jatiya Sangsad (the national parliament) has come into being with unprecedented expectations that it will be the key institution to deliver the electoral pledges of the government to establish transparent and accountable governance in Bangladesh as well as effectively control corruption. At the national election leading to the formation of this parliament corruption was at the core of public discourse. Fighting corruption was among the top-ranking commitments by all major political parties competing in the election, especially the two largest parties of the two main alliances.

While the people of Bangladesh have once again demonstrated their unqualified voice and demand for participatory democracy, they have also voted the grand alliance led by the Bangladesh Awami League (AL) to power with resounding victory thanks to its strategic thrust on the issue of corruption.

The first major step in controlling corruption, therefore, has been taken. Anywhere in the world where corruption has been effectively controlled, top level political will and government commitment has been the key catalyst. The AL has also pledged to meet the next key precondition, e.g., establishment of rule of law, through effective functioning of the key institutions of democracy and national integrity system.

A close look at the AL manifesto shows clearly how it gave preeminence to the issue of anti-corruption. A large number of specific commitments were made to create conditions to control corruption, at the core of which was making the parliament effective so that the government can be held accountable, a pledge echoed with almost equal emphasis by most other parties including the largest opposition party, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party.

We want these commitments to be met, especially that for an effective parliament, which is the sine qua non in a parliamentary form of Government for creating an institutional structure against corruption as well as for strengthening democracy.

The main responsibilities of a parliament are to frame and reform laws, and to hold the Government accountable by ensuring effective oversight functioning of the parliamentary committees. It is a commonplace wisdom that our parliament could not play this role in the past. The parliament was bedevilled by multifarious problems including absenteeism leading to quorum crises, boycott of parliament, confrontational political culture undermining issues of public interest in the proceedings of the sessions, and sheer lack of commitment of the Members of the Parliament (MPs) to make the parliamentary committees effective largely because of conflict of interest.

Questions were raised about the transparency and integrity of some parliament members, especially in terms of exercising undue influence in administration, influence-peddling in tender processes for public procurement; exercising power on partisan basis in project implementation at local level; supporting militant and anti-social activities; extortion, illegal occupation of land and other properties; accumulating income and asset from undisclosed sources; preventing rule of law; and misusing entitlement as members of parliament.

According to a TIB research titled Parliament Watch almost 20 crore taka were wasted in the 8th Parliament simply due to delayed commencement of proceeding for lack of quorum. Most of the standing committees on ministries failed to meet at least once a month, which is stipulated as per the rules of procedure adopted by the parliament itself.

People of Bangladesh expect the 9th Parliament to make a hugely qualitative difference from all these. They do not want to see any repeat of the boycott culture.

They want this parliament to set much higher standards than in the past by distancing from the "winner takes all" approach. People want their elected representatives to attend sessions regularly and on time, and raise voice in their favour and for adopting pro-people laws and policies. They want the parliamentary committees to work effectively and hold the Government accountable by reviewing the working of the relevant ministries, investigating allegations of corruption, and taking effective measures as per law.

The electorate wants the Speaker to rise above partisan position and be strictly neutral in conducting the business of the House. They want the MPs to lead by example in terms of transparency, honesty, integrity and ethical standards in such a manner that is consistent with parliamentary practice.

Selflessness and capacity to rise above partisan political behaviour; exercising accommodation and tolerance of constructing criticism; distancing from conflict of interest; and above all exercise of zero tolerance to corruption are the virtues that people want to see in their representatives elected to the Parliament.

In all these, political leaders from both the ruling and opposition parties have their own due roles to play. It is our political leaders who have led Bangladesh through all milestones of achievements in socio-political transformations. We urge upon our elected representatives to have the acumen to live upto the challenge once again and deliver a truly effective 9th Parliament.



‘Wake-up People’ Campaign Building Anti- Corruption Public Opinion

The reconstituted Anti-Corruption Commission and TIB undertook a year-long campaign called ‘Wake-up People’ in order to create a favourable environment for curbing corruption in the country. This campaign was launched on the International Anti-corruption Day in 2007 and continued up to 9 December 2008.

Carried forward with the slogan ‘Wake-up People, Resist Corruption’, the main objective of this campaign was to motivate all sections of people to play their due role in actively deterring corruption through generation of awareness on the subject. It is expected that corruption will be socially resisted and the national integrity system will be strengthened alongside creation of goodwill among the government and politicians for combating corruption. The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) recognised the contribution of TIB in fighting corruption and establishing good governance in the country largely after its own reforms. Side by side, it expressed its willingness to work together with TIB in the anti-corruption movement. As a follow-up, the TIB and ACC jointly undertook this anti-corruption campaign by involving the masses across the country.

Although the campaign spoke about the involvement of all sections of citizens, its main goal was to motivate the younger generation with an anti-corruption spirit. Besides, its principal objective was to make the youths conscious about taking a stand against corruption by abhorring its presence in their academic and professional lives. On the other hand, the ‘Wake-up People’ campaign was organised by incorporating the themes of refraining and resisting corruption, and disseminating information about it with the aim:

- Launch national and local level campaign using suitable tools and media;
- Increase local level citizens awareness, motivation and participation;
- Take special efforts for youth outreach and engagement; and
- Engage various social groups and organizations, especially at local levels.

Although there is need for raising the awareness and participation of general masses in anti-corruption initiatives, participation in them by various sections of public administration is no less important. Based on this realization, the ACC and TIB implemented this programme by involving government organizations. Their positive cooperation and participation in this anti-corruption programme reflected the sincere goodwill of the government in deterring corruption.

Under this campaign, various anti-corruption activities were organized both at the national and local levels, especially in the CCC (TIB-inspired committees of concern citizens) areas on the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Days during 2007 and 2008. Besides, various Communication materials were produced and distributed under the purview of this campaign. A theme-song titled ‘Wake-up People’ produced by ACC and TIB was broadcast throughout the year on TV and radio channels including state-run Bangladesh Television. An anti-corruption concert was held in Dhaka on 8 March 2008 on the occasion of International Women’s Day with the slogan ‘Stand up for Women’s Rights’. It was organized from the realization that Women’s Rights movement and anti-Corruption movement must go hand-in-hand. Over 30 thousand youths who participated in this concert expressed their resolve to take a stand against corruption and extended support to the joint initiatives of ACC and TIB in this area.

The ‘Wake-up People’ campaign was initially launched from the CCC areas. As the youths were the target group of the campaign, its main activity was to hold anti-corruption youth gatherings with their participation. Rallies, cycle rallies, debate and essay competitions, quiz and art contests, information fair, Advice and Information Desk programmes were undertaken alongside concerts as components of these youth gatherings. Besides, distribution of leaflets, display of banners and announcements through mikes were made for publicising these gatherings. Side by

This campaign has generated much enthusiasm throughout Bangladesh about the anti-corruption programmes of TIB. It has especially succeeded in swaying the youth community. It had such an impact on the youths that the YES programme of TIB has been strengthened throughout the country. The youths have been motivated with an anti-corruption spirit through their direct inclusion in it. The presence and participation of youths in this programme have fulfilled our expectations adequately.

Advocate Saiful Islam Reza
Convener, CCC-Chapai Nawabganj

The slogan ‘Wake-up People, Resist Corruption’ is undoubtedly a timely slogan which raises awareness in society. But I hold the view that although the people are always awake, it is our leadership who remain asleep. The youth community may wage social movement, but there should be a legal base for its practical enforcement. I think that the anti-corruption gatherings have not only provided enjoyment to the youths, they inspired the youths with an anti-corruption spirit. I believe that the latent leadership quality among people will be aroused through this campaign.

S A Mahfuzul Haque Nuruzzaman
BPM, Superintendent of Police,
Chapai Nawabganj

Around 50 thousand youths had gathered at this campaign. Their firm resolve was – ‘no’ to corruption. The present generation of youths are pledge-bound to eradicate corruption from society by becoming aware on the subject. If campaigns like this continue, then I believe the youths will play a leading role in raising awareness among themselves, their country, society and family against the horrendous grip of corruption.

Nasima Akhtar (Kuasha)
YES member, CCC-Patiya

The anti-corruption campaign has been launched at the right time. The people could know a lot about combating corruption as a result and awareness has been enhanced in society regarding its deterrence. When the youths who participated and believed in this campaign enter their professional lives, they will work without indulging in corruption. The future of the country depends on their corruption-free endeavours.

Rabeya Khatun

President District Corruption Prevention Committee, Barisal

There is an expression of determination for taking a stand against corruption in the slogan 'Wake-up People, Resist Corruption'. The youths are the future of this country. Therefore, this kind of gathering by involving the youths is very effective in generating anti-corruption awareness. The role of the youths is very important in building a happy, beautiful, sustainable and corruption-free society. But not only by means of gatherings, the youths have to come forward actively through various initiatives in order to make the new generation corruption-free.

Bidhayak Ray Chowdhury

Upazila Executive Officer, Sreemangal

side, view-exchange meetings with the journalists were arranged before each gathering by focusing on the objectives, expectations and strategies of the programme. The first anti-corruption youth gathering was organized in Patiya the south-western upazila in Chittagong on a pilot basis on 10-11 May 2008. Later, five more youth gatherings were held one after another at Chapainawabganj, Satkhira, Rangpur, Barisal and Sreemangal on 21-23 July, 9-12 August, 26 August, 12 October and 20-22 October respectively. Those who extended all-out cooperation to ACC and TIB in making these gatherings a success included the district and upazila administration, law enforcement agencies including the police, electricity authority, Corruption Prevention Committees, Committees of Concerned Citizens (CCCs) and the Youth Engagement and Support (YES) groups of CCCs.

TIB holds the view that these anti-corruption youth gatherings organized with the objective of establishing good governance, and generating mass awareness and public opinion favour of fighting corruption have now become large-scale gathering campaigns at national and local levels. And the most important achievement of these gathering has been to make all sections of people, including the youths, express their resolve by saying '**No to Corruption**'. Besides, it has been possible to ensure spontaneous participation of the general masses including around 300 thousand youths, provide an understanding of the harms caused by corruption, reach the anti-corruption message directly and bring the relevant organizations and individuals to the anti-corruption platform through these gatherings.

Based on these achievements, TIB has become more convinced than ever before that the main force in the social movement against corruption is the all-out support of the people. TIB therefore believes that this movement can not be sustainable and successful without massive participation and identification of the masses with this movement. The ACC and TIB are therefore carrying forward this campaign to elicit fuller support and participation of the masses in order to build up a social movement against corruption and make it sustainable and successful. The ACC and TIB hopes to run similar programmes for involving the masses in the future, alongside other anti-corruption programmes, by attaching due consideration to timely changes in strategies and methods.

Khaleda Akter and Md. Zahidul Islam
Advocacy Officer, TIB

Members' Day Held

A Member' Day – November 2008 was held on 27 November with the spontaneous participation of TIB members, who are a major force for support in the anti-corruption social movement of TIB. Presided over by the TIB Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman at the conference room of TIB, the members held elaborate discussions on the incidence of corruption in Bangladesh, effective measures to curb corruption and the current scenario. While dwelling on the causes of corruption, they said, "Although moral degeneration is often cited as a motivating factor in corruption, it is not solely responsible for this malady; institutional approach also plays a part in it. Corruption has become pervasive because of moral degeneration in society as well as weak institutional strategies". They opined that establishment of good governance depends to a large extent on taking appropriate measures for tackling corruption as well as their effective implementation. They held the view that corruption should be established as a punishable offence. While discussing the impending Jatiya Sangsad election and contemporary

political situation, the members said, "All sections of society should be conscious or should be made conscious in order to elect honest, qualified and incorruptible candidates". They put emphasis on a strong and neutral role for the civil society alongside the Election Commission in this area. The TIB Executive Director informed about the ongoing programmes and briefly narrated the programmes which would be undertaken on the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day on 9 December.



Main Story

Anti-Corruption Day Observed

Bangladesh has been observed International Anti-Corruption Day Since 2004 along with the other countries of the world to strengthen the anti-corruption movement. The day has been observing with the aim to motivate the mass people for holding anti-corruption spirit at national and local areas.

Cartoon Competition and Exhibition

The anti-corruption cartoon exhibition is an exceptional initiative which touches the conscience of the people". "It is possible to generate anti-corruption awareness through artistic and satirical expressions". These were the words of



the youths who came to the anti-corruption cartoon exhibition organized by TIB. These are the youths who dream of a beautiful future.

TIB organized the anti-corruption cartoon competition and exhibition for the third time with the objective of raising awareness and involving the youths in the social movement against corruption. Arranged on the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day-2008 by TIB, creative and young cartoonists who came from all over the country and participated in it depicted the innumerable irregularities and corruption prevailing in society through their paints and brushes. Through these paintings, the cartoonists expressed their resolve to build a well-governed society by uprooting corruption.

Organized in two categories (Group-A: 13-18 years; Group-B: 19-35 years), a total of 791 cartoons from 421 cartoonists were submitted. Three contestants from Group-A and four contestants from Group-B were finally chosen for the award of prizes. Besides, 52 cartoons received special mentions from the two groups. Renowned cartoonists of the country Shishir Bhattacharjee, Ahsan Habib and Shahrier Khan discharged the responsibility of selecting the seven best cartoonists from the two groups. Shoma Surovi Jannat got the first prize from Group-A, SN Sadik (Nabil) the second prize and Asim Chandra Ray the third prize. In Group-B, the first, second and joint third prizes went to ASM Shahidullah Faruk, Mehedi Haque, Syed Kamrul Hasan and Mohammad Raisul Islam Rassel.

The ACC Chairman Lt. General Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury (retd.) distributed prizes and certificates among the winners and specially mentioned cartoonists of the Anti-Corruption Cartoon Competition 2008 at Dhanmondi Drik Gallery on 28 November and also inaugurated the cartoon exhibition. While opening the exhibition, the ACC Chairman said, "Corruption must be checked. The involvement of youths is a must for victory against corruption. It is not possible to win this war if the younger generation do not join this anti-corruption movement". It may be mentioned that the exhibition displayed 59 prize-winning and specially nominated cartoons from the two groups. Mustafa Monwar, an acclaimed artist of the country, was present on the occasion as a special guest. Former Adviser of the Caretaker Government and member of the TIB Trustee Board Advocate Sultana Kamal chaired the programme while the address of welcome was delivered by the TIB Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman.

In his address, artist Mustafa Monwar said, "Cartoon tells the truth. That is why some people don't like it". He further said, "A civilised country seeks criticisms from the cartoonists. We have not yet attained that level. But still, we have to lodge protest against injustices with paints and pens".

An initiative was taken for the first time this year by TIB to display the exhibited items to people across the globe through web-link. This was done directly through the TIB website www.ti-bangladesh.org and through the website of the competition's web-partner Metro-net Bangladesh Ltd. www.metrobd.net.



▲ Cartoon: Syed Nafis Sadiq

Dhaka YES Observed the Day

An essay and show debate competition was organised by the YES group – Northern University, Bangladesh on 22 November on the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day 2008. Nure Jannat Papri, SM Mahub Kamal and Md. Hasibur Rahman secured first, second and third positions respectively in the essay competition on the subject 'The role of youths in the social movement against corruption'. The debate contest was held on the theme 'Only democracy can ensure fundamental rights of the people'.

The students of Business Administration and English departments took part in it. The chief guest of the event Vice-Chancellor of Northern University Professor Dr. M Shamsul Haque distributed prizes among the winners. A quiz contest and a study circle were arranged on 20 November by the YES group – IBAIS University. The members of the newly formed YES group of the university took part in the quiz competition.

Anti-Corruption Rally Held in Dhaka

A colourful anti-corruption rally was jointly brought out by the ACC and TIB in capital Dhaka on 4 December with the slogan 'Wake-up People, Resist Corruption'. Arranged on the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day 2008. Around 5 thousand people belonging to different classes and professions participated in it. The rally was led by the ACC Chairman Lt. General Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury (retd.) and the Chairman of TIB Trustee Board Professor Muzaffer Ahmad. Others who participated in the rally included the Adviser for Primary Education and Culture of the Caretaker Government Rasheda K. Chowdhury, former Adviser and TIB Trustee Board Member M. Hafizuddin Khan, and the TIB Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman. Decorated with colourful banners, festoons, placards, balloons and masks, the rally started from the southern plaza of the Jatiya Sangsad Complex and terminated in front of Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre at Agargaon.



Organized with the goal of involving the general citizens in the anti-corruption movement through generation of anti-corruption awareness and awakening of the people, citizens belonging to all strata of society including officers and employees of public and private sector organizations, representatives of NGOs and business bodies, mass-media workers, leading personalities of the civil society, representatives of the artistic community, physically disabled and backward classes, professionals, members of debating and cultural organizations, and students from schools-colleges-universities participated in it. Besides, the members of Committees of Concerned Citizens from different areas of the country, YES activists and the members of anti-corruption committees set up under the aegis of ACC also participated in the rally. The rally was held in a peaceful and orderly manner with the support of the general masses and was attended by around 50 voluntary organizations including BNCC, Girl Guides, Scouts, Red Crescent Society and Rangers. An orchestra troupe of Bangladesh Police also participated in the rally and energized the participants with their music and drums. The cooperation of Dhaka Metropolitan Police was also mentionable.

Attired in T-shirts inscribed with the slogan 'Wake-up People, Resist Corruption', the spontaneous participation of the people in the rally was quite noticeable. There was a resolve to fight corruption in the voices of the youth. All participants in this first-ever anti-corruption rally in metropolitan Dhaka had only one expectation – if all citizens strive in unison and patriotism can be aroused in them, it will definitely be possible to build a corruption-free Bangladesh by transforming the present situation. The Daily Star, Daily Samakal, Channel-i, Bangla-Vision, Radio-Today and Radio-Foorti acted as media partners in the rally. SAS Compact Tune rendered assistance as the event partner while Metro-net Bangladesh Ltd. served as the web-partner.

Two day long Anti-Corruption Cultural Festival in Kishoreganj

The members of various cultural organizations of Kishoreganj have said 'no' to corruption through their dramas. The anti-corruption cultural alliance formed by 7 local cultural organizations and the CCC-Kishoreganj jointly observed the International Anti-Corruption Day on 2-3 December through colourful rally, discussion meeting and 'cultural festival'. The two day long cultural festival was inaugurated by the CCC member Habibur Rahman. He said that the movement of the CCC was against corruption and dramas were one of the effective tool of that protest. He expressed the hope that this festival would spread the anti-corruption campaign among more people. While speaking on behalf of the cultural alliance, the drama personality Harun-Al-Rashid said that TIB and CCC have organized a drama festival which could play an important role in grooming the people, especially the new generation, in an anti-corruption spirit. Around five hundred spectators on an average enjoyed the cultural festival daily. The CCC members handed over souvenir crests to the heads of all participating organizations on conclusion of the festival.

Anti-Corruption Day Observed in Panchagarh

The Bidrohi Shishu-Kishor Theatre of Panchagarh observed the International Anti-Corruption Day on 4 December with the cooperation of TIB. A colourful rally was brought out on the occasion at 12 noon. Besides, an anti-corruption school debate competition, discussion meeting, cultural programme and prize-distribution ceremony were held in the evening. The Executive Director of the Bidrohi Shishu-Kishor Theatre Abdur Rahim presided, while the District Education Officer Md. Akhtaruzzaman was present as the chief guest. Apart from cultural activists, students and teachers from 10 educational institutions of the district, local journalists and cultural personalities were present on the occasion.

Three Day Long Anti-Corruption Drama Festival in Tangail

The Nagar Natyadal of Tangail organized a three day long anti-corruption theatre festival at the Tangail Shahid Minar premises on 27-29 November with TIB assistance on the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day. Participated by 6 local theatre groups, a huge number of spectators came to watch this festival. The horror of corruption and what should be done to resist it were mainly presented before the audience through discussions and dramas. On the concluding day, souvenirs were distributed among all participating groups on behalf of the sponsors.

Main Story

Cultural Programme

An anti-corruption cultural programme were organized on 5 December respectively in Dhaka on the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day. The anti-corruption cultural programme was held at the Rabindra Sarobar Muktomancha of Dhanmondi. A notable feature of the programme was participation by all classes of people. The programme was started with patriotic songs followed by Rabindra Sangeet, Nazrul Sangeet and Folk Songs. The artistes of Chhayanaut rendered these songs, which captivated the audience.

Following these songs, the Padatik Natya Sangsad (theatre group) came to the stage with their street-drama 'Chor' (Thief). The life of a thief has been depicted in this drama allegorically. Those who lead the society try to build their own fortune instead of working for the people; they seek more despite having much. On the other hand, the petty thief in the village resorts to thievery only for filling his stomach. In contrast, the leaders resort to stealing despite their affluence and neglect their assigned duties. The drama appealed to the people not to vote for such leaders in the coming elections.

After the drama, the Gambira Group of Chapai Nawabganj came to the stage. The spectators were mesmerised by the musical performance of 'grandson and grandfather'. They effortlessly presented before the audience various anomalies and corruption in different sectors, including health and education, through wit and humour. They also urged everybody not to vote for the corrupt in



the election. After that came an artiste of Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra (radio station of Bangladesh government-in-exile during the liberation war) Bipul Bhattacharya, popular singer of the time Krishnakali Islam, popular folk-singer Kiranchandra Roy and lastly the popular band-singer Maksud. The spectators could feel the blood-drenched days of the month of victory in a patriotic fervour through the songs of Bipul Bhattacharya. Kiranchandra Roy presented a number of popular folk-songs. Alongside his pop-songs, Maksud sang some awareness raising numbers for entertaining the audience.

In his address of welcome at the start of the programme, the TIB Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman urged the youth community to become vocal against corruption. At the same time, he called for electing people's representatives by keeping in mind the slogan 'Boycott the corrupt'. In between songs, freedom fighter

Akku Chowdhury and litterateur Selina Hossain expressed their solidarity with the programme. Selina Hossain said, we shall have to make a pledge to shun all bad things in our culture. Everybody will have to make a promise so that Bangladesh does not become the most corrupt country in the world once again. Freedom fighter Akku Chowdhury urged the new generation to plunge headlong in the war against corruption. Around 7 thousand spectators enjoyed the whole programme. Those who assisted the holding of this programme included The Daily Star, Samakal, Channel-i, Bangla-Vision, Radio Today, Radio Foorti, SAS Compact Tune and Metro-net Bangladesh Limited.

Different Programmes Organized in CCC Areas on Anti-Corruption Day

Jessore, Khulna, Bagerhat and Satkhira

Member of the TIB Trustee Board Advocate Sultana Kamal inaugurated as chief guest a rally organized by the CCC-Jessore on 4 December. A discussion meeting was held after the rally where honest people were awarded crests of honour. On the same day, a day-long cartoon exhibition was organized by the YES group at the district council premises.

A colourful rally went round Khulna town on 6 December under the aegis of CCC-Khulna. Later, a discussion meeting was held at Umesh Chandra Public Library with CCC Convener Hafizur Rahman in the chair.

The rally at Bagerhat went round the town on 5 December. After that, a seminar highlighting the significance of the day was held under the chairmanship of CCC Convener SM Jahangir Ali Babu at the auditorium of Bagerhat Cultural Foundation. The Superintendent of Police of Bagerhat Awlad Ali Fakir was present as special guest.

A human chain was formed at Satkhira on 4 December. Besides, a colourful rally went round the town led by the Deputy Commissioner. After the rally, a seminar was held at the municipal auditorium of Shaheed Abdur Razzak Park with CCC Convener Asit Kumar Majumdar in the chair. It was attended by local elites.

Patiya, Chakaria, Chittagong and Comilla

A discussion meeting was held under the aegis of CCC-Patiya with its convener Abhijit Barua Manu in the chair. The Upazila Executive Officer Shafiul Arif was also present at the meeting. A colourful rally went round the town in the morning. Besides, a wall-magazine was published through the initiative of YES members.

A rally, human chain and youth gathering were organized at Chakaria on 4 December. The Upazila Executive Officer Md. Kamrul Alam took part in the youth gathering participated by around 6000 youths. The International Anti-Corruption Day was observed in Chittagong through a rally on 4 December. A colourful rally and a discussion meeting were held in Comilla on 3 and 4 December respectively. Peoples from Different Sections, CCC and YES members participated in them.

Rajshahi, Chapai Nawabganj, Kushtia and Natore

A public rally terminated at Bhuban Mohan Park after going round different thoroughfares of Rajshahi city on 2 December. An anti-corruption cultural programme was organized there after a discussion meeting.

The programmes undertaken by CCC-Chapai Nawabganj on 4 December included rally, discussion meeting, reception to distinguished personalities, distribution of prizes among the winners of various anti-corruption competitions and cultural programme. Eminent litterateur Professor Chowdhury Zulfikar Matin was present as chief guest.

In Kushtia, anti-corruption rally, discussion meeting and cultural programme were organized on 4 December. An anti-corruption play was staged by the Harijan Sanskritik Goshthi during the cultural programme. Besides, Bangladesh Udichi Shilpi Goshthi presented mass-people's chorus while the students of intellectually disabled school presented dances and songs.

In Natore, rally, discussion meeting, human chain and cultural programme were held on 4 December. Elites of Natore town including the Additional District Magistrate were present at the Programmes.

Barisal, Jhalakati, Pirojpur and Jhenidah

A human chain and citizens' meeting were organized at Barisal on 4 December. The Divisional Commissioner of Barisal and the Deputy Inspector General of Police attended the gathering. A rally and a discussion meeting were organized at Jhalakati on 5 December. The Deputy Commissioner took part in the discussion. A rally and a discussion meeting were also held at Jhenidah on 3 December. The programmes organized at Pirojpur on 4 December included rally, human chain, discussion meeting and cultural programme. The different peoples of the town, CCC and YES members participated in them.



Brahmanbaria, Chandpur, Gazipur and Munshiganj

The International Anti-Corruption Day was observed in Brahmanbaria on 4 December through various programmes. The Deputy Commissioner of Brahmanbaria was present as chief guest at the rally while Police Super was present as special guest. A discussion meeting was held after the rally at a school hall-room with the CCC Convener in the chair. On conclusion of the meeting, prizes were distributed who had participated in the anti-corruption quiz and debate contests. The rally at Chandpur was attended by the local elites including the Deputy Commissioner, Police Super, CPC and CCC members. A discussion meeting was held after the rally. A discussion meeting was held in Gazipur at the local auditorium with the Co-convenor of CCC in the chair following an anti-corruption rally on 3 December. The rally at Munshiganj was organized on 3 December. An anti-corruption oath-taking ceremony was held after the rally. Then the harmful effects of corruption were highlighted while staging the people's drama 'Bibek'.

Sylhet, Kishoreganj, Sreemangal and Sunamganj

The CCC-Sylhet organized rally and discussion meeting on 3 December. The Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) was present in the meeting as chief guest. The keynote paper was presented in the programme by the Treasurer and Dean of Metropolitan University Professor Khandakar Mahmudur Rahman. The CCC-Kishoreganj brought out a colourful rally on 2 December, followed by a discussion meeting and cultural programme. The Chairman of TIB Trustee Board Prof. Muzaffer Ahmad was present at the discussion meeting as chief guest. He appealed to the younger generation, especially those who would be voting for the first time, to ensure that their votes were not cast in favour of the corrupt. A rally, discussion meeting and anti-corruption folk-songs were organized on 3 and 4 December at Sreemangal. Important personalities including the Upazila Executive Officer, Deputy Director of the ACC, Upazila Education Officer and Upazila Health Officer took part. A rally and a discussion meeting were organized on 3 December at Sunamganj. The elites including the ACC Director and the Municipal Mayor took part in them.

Lalmoinirhat, Kurigram, Rangpur and Jamalpur

A colourful anti-corruption rally went round the main thoroughfares of Lalmoinirhat town on 3 December. Around 200 people from various walks of life participated in it. A discussion meeting was organized at the CCC office after the rally. A rally was brought out from the CCC-Kurigram office by carrying colourful festoons, stickers and banners. It culminated at the Shahid Minar compound after going round the town. There, representatives from various institutions and the general people formed a human chain for expressing their solidarity against corruption. Later, a discussion meeting was held at the Shahid Minar compound. In the evening, a drama 'Alo-Andharer Jatri' was staged by the people's theatre group at the Central

Shahid Minar compound. The day was observed in Rangpur through a joint rally organized by the CCC-Rangpur, CPC, The Hunger Project and Shujan, followed by discussion meeting, drama and cultural programme. A huge anti-corruption rally was brought out in Jamalpur followed by a discussion meeting. Everybody present at the meeting took an oath against corruption. Additional Superintendent of Police Sheikh Rafiqul Islam spoke at the gathering as chief guest. The special guests were the Regional Statistical Officer Md. Ashraful Alam Siddiqui and the Secretary of District Anti-Corruption Committee Advocate Md. Anwarullah.

Mymensingh, Muktagachha, Nalitabari and Madhupur

An anti-corruption rally was brought out at Mymensingh on 1 December followed by the inauguration of a 2-day cartoon exhibition. Local elites and school students participated in the rally, including ACC, CPC, CCC and YES members. A rally was brought out under the aegis of CCC-Muktagachha on 4 December, which was attended by people belonging to various classes and professions including ACC and Shujan. After the rally, a people's drama titled 'Boba Kanna' was staged by the People's Theatre of CCC on the open stage of the municipal library. The colourful rally brought out by CCC-Nalitabari on 1 December was participated by the local administration, CPC, CCC, Shujan, YES and YES Friends, journalists and members of the civil society after holding a brief discussion meeting. An anti-corruption concert was held in the evening. The band group "Boys' Fair" which was formed by the YES and YES Friends members of Mymensingh CCC presented songs in the concert. A rally, discussion meeting and anti-corruption reception were organized at Madhupur on 3 December.

Faridpur, Madaripur, Savar and Rajbari

The rally at Faridpur was inaugurated by Deputy Commissioner on 4 December. The elites of the town belonging to various classes and professions participated in the rally.

A children's painting competition was organized on 4 December at the independence square in the morning under the aegis of CCC Madaripur. After that, a colourful rally went round important thoroughfares of the town. The recitation competition was held in the afternoon and the cultural programme and prize giving ceremony held in the evening.

A rally, mass-gathering, street-drama and a session of gambhira songs were organized under the aegis of CCC-Savar on the first day of the 3-day programme on 2 December. These programmes were jointly undertaken by the CCC, CPC and the NGO Coordination Council. The Chairman of NGO Coordination Council presided over the mass gathering. Important personalities from various organizations including the Dhaka Divisional Director of ACC, Director of the TSC of Jahangirnagar University and the Upazila Executive Officer of Savar spoke on the occasion. An anti-corruption drama 'Sonar Bangladesh Chai' was staged by the YES members and Gambhira songs were rendered by the artistes of Chapai Nawabganj. Besides, anti-corruption posters were affixed in government and private offices on 3 December and anti-corruption mass-songs were presented on 4 December.

A rally and a discussion meeting were organized at Rajbari on the occasion of anti-corruption day on 24 November.



Fighting Corruption: Turning Commitment into Action

Iftekharruzzaman

We extend sincere congratulations to Honourable Sheikh Hasina, who has been mandated to form the new Government of Bangladesh following the resounding victory of the Awami League-led grand alliance in the election to the Ninth Parliament held on 29 December, 2008. We sincerely hope that she would remain fully committed to deliver the pledges made in her election manifesto, based on which the people have reposed the trust and responsibility of running the government on her for next five years. We also congratulate the BNP-led four-party alliance, especially the leader of the opposition Begum Khaldea Zia, in whose hands will remain the key responsibility of putting sustained pressure on the Government during the period for discharging its responsibility with transparency and accountability.

Control of corruption has been the most prominent among the areas on which national consensus was reached in the run-up to the election. Almost all the parties, especially the Awami League and the BNP, placed anti-corruption on top of their list of priorities in election manifesto and pledged to take active and effective measures for curbing corruption.

Among the five priority areas in the manifesto of Awami League (AL), the pledge for effective steps against corruption and establishment of good governance was the second, preceded only by control of price of essentials. Other pledges of the AL relevant to the agenda of good governance and anti-corruption included: ensuring the independence of Anti-Corruption Commission; annual disclosure of wealth by those in positions of power; eradication of bribery and corruption from all levels of state and society; stringent measures for possessors of unearned income and loan-defaulters, extortionists, tender-manipulators and users of muscle-power; publication of citizens' charter in all offices and stopping the scope for corruption through computerisation of all governmental activities. Side by side, many more important pledges have been made in the election manifesto of Awami League for institutionalisation of democracy, including neutrality of the administration and law enforcement institutions, independence of judiciary, empowerment of local government, and making the parliament effective for ensuring accountability of the government.

In its election manifesto, the BNP committed that it would take strong measures for curbing corruption striking at its roots. Multifarious commitments were made to achieve these objectives including creation of a supportive environment for an independent, neutral and effective Anti-Corruption Commission, implementation of awareness

campaign against corruption by facilitating effective participation of the mass media and the people.

This firm stand against corruption in their election manifesto by both the parties was not merely a strategy to win the election. It reflected the unqualified stance of all citizens of the country against this pernicious menace. An unprecedented opportunity has, therefore, opened up. To be sure, in politics commitment is one thing, delivery is quite another. If what has been pledged in the election campaign is to be viewed as wish-list, a multi-pronged, realistic, achievable and time-bound strategy has to be developed having some basic ingredients.

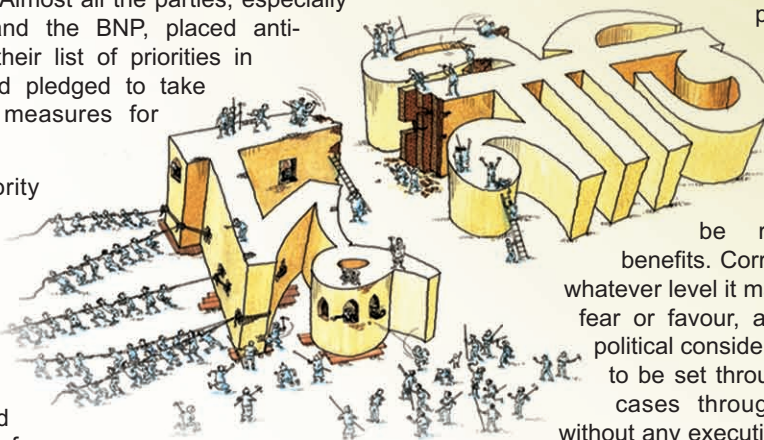
The first and most important ingredient will be the political will at the highest level. It won't be realistic to expect change to come overnight. Nevertheless, what would be crucial is to ensure that there is no deviation from what has been expressed on paper and in statements.

The second essential element of the strategy will be to establish corruption as a punishable offence.

Cost of corruption has to be rendered higher than benefits. Corruption must be punished, whatever level it may take place, without any fear or favour, and rising above partisan political consideration. Examples will have to be set through disposal of corruption cases through due judicial process without any executive influence.

It should also be remembered that corruption cases must not be used as tools for political harassment and violation of human rights. Law must be allowed to take its own course with fullest respect to the right to defence. We always wanted, and shall continue to do so in the future that all corruption cases must be tried and the perpetrators punished if the charges are proved. But that should be done through due judicial process. Failure to do so will tantamount to abuse of power. One abuse of power cannot justify another, not least in case of combating corruption. The alternative to it will be counterproductive to the cause of anti-corruption itself.

The third element which should be emphasized in devising the anti-corruption strategy is the effectiveness and active role of the key institutions of democracy and the national integrity system. The pledge to create an environment for independent functioning of the Anti-Corruption Commission is very encouraging. But whatever may be the legal framework for it, or however independent the Anti-Corruption Commission may be, the reality is that success in controlling corruption would depend greatly on a supportive institutional structure, such as the Parliament, the judiciary, law enforcement agencies, administration, the Election Commission, the Public Service Commission, etc.



Many anti-corruption commissions have failed to deliver because of the failure to political authority to ensure due independence and resources to it and to ensure effective supportive institutional integrity. On the other hand, there are many countries in the world where corruption has been effectively controlled without the existence of a commission specifically mandated as such.

Making the Parliament effective is essential for creating an institutional base for fighting corruption effectively. If the Parliament, the mandate of which it is to hold the government accountable on behalf of the people, fails to deliver its oversight function through effective functioning of the parliamentary committees, then corruption will continue to widen and deepen.

Similarly, just as it is essential to bring the monopoly power of the executive branch to an end, there is no alternative to the independence and effectiveness of the judiciary. It will be possible to establish corruption as a punishable offence only when the judiciary represents highest standards of integrity, honesty and impartiality free from administrative and political influences.

The public service plays a crucial role in curbing corruption. Transparent, neutral and professional administration played a crucial role in fighting corruption in countries that achieved success in this regard. Public service must be free from partisan political influence. Merit, performance, experience and expertise must be established as the determinants of appointment, promotion and transfer in public service. On the other hand, it is also not realistic to expect a corruption-free public service if salaries and benefits remain inconsistent with cost of living. In addressing this problem, extensive, multi-dimensional and long-lasting reforms would be indispensable rather than relying merely on occasional review of salaries and allowances. On the other hand while positive incentives in the form of higher salaries and benefits are a highly important factor, it will never be able to deliver unless combined with negative incentives in the form punishment for deviation from code of conduct to be firmly put in place.

The role of the private sector in curbing corruption is also immense. Bangladesh is a State-Party to the UN Convention against Corruption with effect from 27 February 2007. This Convention recognises corruption in both public and private sectors as punishable offence. Not only bribery and use of other forms of influence by private sector in procuring business deals in the public sector, but also corruption within the private sector has been criminalized. It would never be possible to deter corruption in the public sector if it is not controlled in the private sector also. It is therefore essential to establish honesty, transparency and accountability in the private sector including local, foreign and multinational entities. Besides opening up avenues for international cooperation in such areas as recovery of

money and assets laundered out of the country by corrupt practices, the UN Convention also obliges the Government to establish transparency and accountability in both public and private sectors through legal and institutional reforms.

The mass media also plays a fundamentally important role in curbing corruption. A facilitative environment has to be created for ensuring independent functioning of the media. Free flow of information is a principal precondition for controlling corruption. Freedom of information is on the one hand essential for the mass media and its unhindered flow, while it is also the key to the transformation of the culture secrecy into one of transparency, without which no anti-corruption strategy can achieve any genuine success. Secrecy is one of the main tools of misusing power, for controlling which adoption and effective implementation of the right to information law is indispensable.

Above everything else, the role of the civil society and all segments of the population is crucial to raising effective demand to curb corruption, raising awareness and developing a practice of zero-tolerance against corruption. According to Article-13 of the UN Convention against Corruption, the Government of Bangladesh is committed to create an environment that would facilitate participation of civil society and for that matter all sections of the society in awareness-raising, motivational and participatory programmes against corruption. Indeed, it is through a relationship of partnership and trust between the Government and citizens as co-stakeholders that corruption can be effectively and sustainably deterred.

The depth and breadth of corruption in Bangladesh is pervasive that it will be impossible to achieve an effective and sustainable solution within a short period, or by focusing on a few areas. What is required is a comprehensive and multi-dimensional strategy and effective implementation thereof in an incremental and sustainable way. An environment of trust must prevail among all stakeholders, especially between the government and the people. The latter who have delivered their verdict in favour of controlling corruption with sky-high hopes, and they do not want to be disappointed.

People from all walks of life have delivered an unprecedented victory in favour of Awami League's vision-2021, which contains a huge commitment for change. It is the younger generation and first-time voters whose dreams and expectations should be accorded highest importance, who are ready to be at the forefront of realizing the vision. It is certainly within their reach. There is only one precondition – the two largest political parties and their top leadership will have to remain firm in their stand against corruption.

Dr. Iftekharuzzaman is Executive Director, TIB.

There is only one precondition – the two largest political parties and their top leadership will have to remain firm in their stand against corruption.

Six Journalists Awarded

TIB organized a seminar titled 'Role of investigative journalism in curbing corruption' as well as the award-giving ceremony of Investigative Journalism Award 2008 at the VIP lounge of National Press Club on 20 October. Six journalists in different categories were awarded in this program. The keynote paper at the seminar was presented by the eminent journalist and President of BFUJ Manjurul Ahsan Bulbul.

This year, special correspondent of Protham Alo Sharifuzzaman Pintu received prize in the category of National Newspapers; Anwer Sadat Imran of daily Progitir Alo published from Tangail received award in the category of Local Newspapers; and in the category of Electronic Media, Shahnaz Sharmeen Rinvy, Abu Sufian, Mozammel Shishir and Shovan Aref of Bangla-Vision TV-channel were awarded prize jointly. All the awards carried a prize-money of Taka 60 thousand. The winners were given prize money, certificates of honour and crests.

The Chairman of Anti-Corruption Commission Lt. General Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury (retd.) was present at the seminar as chief guest while the Treasurer of TIB Board of Trustees M. Hafizuddin Khan presided. Those who took part in the discussions on the keynote paper included eminent journalist Syed Abul Maksud, Joint-Editor of daily Prothom Alo Abdul Quayum, Professor Dr. Asif Nazrul of Dhaka University and former Ambassador Wali-ur Rahman. The Executive Director of TIB Dr. Iftekharuzzaman moderated the program.

Manjurul Ahsan Bulbul said, "Just as corruption is all-pervasive, similarly investigative journalism is all-encompassing. Just as corruption is organized, similarly investigative journalism has to be planned. The media has a big role as a supportive force in combating corruption, he added.

Veteran journalist and column writer Syed Abul Maksud said, "We must also speak of corruption in the media sector; because the mass media are committed to providing factual and accurate news." Eminent journalist Mr. Abdul Quayum said, "All newspapers should have a code of conduct so that they can remain free of blemish". Praising this initiative of TIB, Dr. Asif Nazrul said, "Investigative journalism should go very deep".

In his address as chief guest, Lt. General Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury (retd.) said, "I consider the journalists as my associates in the movement against corruption. I expect more investigative reports from our journalist friends". In his concluding speech, treasurer of the TIB Board of trustees M. Hafizuddin Khan said, "Investigative journalism has swollen in size is a positive aspect."

A number of recommendations emerged from the discussions. Notable among these were: code of ethics for every mass media; inclusion of cameramen in the TIB IJ award in the electronic media category; arrangements for imparting training on investigative journalism; journalists to work with honesty and courage; the media organizations to shun partisan or institutional biases and become imbued with patriotism; investigative journalism to be more in-depth; positive steps to be taken by the publisher, editor, senior journalists as well as concerned institutions; and proactive roles of periodicals in the area of investigative journalism.

It may be mentioned that TIB has been awarding this prize each year since 1999 with the objective of enhancing the professional quality of investigative journalism on corruption in Bangladesh. This year, 51 contestants participated in the 'National Newspaper' category, 22 in the 'Local Newspaper' category and 10 in the 'Electronic Media' category. The 4-member panel of judges who evaluated these 83 entries in the competition were eminent journalists Syed Abul Maksud, Abdul Quayum, Manzurul Ahsan Bulbul, and Professor Dr. Dilara Chowdhury of Jahangirnagar University.



The Investigative Journalism Award of TIB is a source of inspiration for journalists. This prestigious prize is also a symbol of recognition of our work. Many have become interested in writing investigative reports on corruption. I believe TIB is playing an important part in this area.

Sharifuzzaman Pintu

There was much pressure on me both from within and outside my organization when I started working on this report. Even my life was at risk. Still we have to discharge our responsibilities for our country and our society. There were many lucrative offers and many obstacles as well; but we have been able to overcome those. We thank TIB for according recognition to our work.

Sharmeen Rinvy

I am really happy. I am genuinely grateful to TIB for receiving such a prize while working from a remote area. I thank TIB for that. I want to do something for the poor mothers of Bangladesh. With this money from TIB, I want to start the work on building a hospital for providing services to them.

Anwer Sadat

Youth Gatherings held in Barisal and Sreemangal

An Anti-Corruption Youth Gathering was held on 12 October under the aegis of CCC-Barisal and the District Corruption Prevention Committee (CPC) with the cooperation of ACC and TIB. In his address as chief guest, the ACC Chairman Lt. General Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury (retd.) made a call to everyone present on the ground to forge a social resistance against corruption. He said, "The involvement of youths in our endeavour against corruption is a must. We have a long way ahead with a series of barriers. We shall be able to surmount all hindrances and become victorious if the youths are with us. We seek cooperation from all strata in this battle against corruption". The Executive Director of TIB Dr. Iftekharuzzaman urged the youths to play a leading role in building a corruption-free and well-governed country.

Others who spoke at the gathering included the Divisional Commissioner of Barisal Mesbahul Alam, Deputy Commissioner Mushfiq Ahmed Shamim, Convener of CCC-Barisal Advocate Manabendra Batabyal and the Chairperson of District CPC Rabeya Khatun.

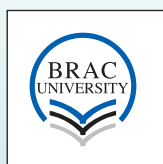
Popular singer Mehreen, band groups 'Souls', 'Rhythm' and other artists performed in the programme. As well as captivating the audience, they urged the audience to become vocal against corruption. Responding to their call, the audience took an oath against corruption. The Youth Engagement and Support (YES) Group members of CCC-Barisal presented choreography on the theme song 'Wake-up People' during the programme. Held at the Barisal Stadium with the cooperation of local district administration, over 40 thousand youths including people belonging to various classes and professions participated in the gathering.



Another anti-corruption youth gathering was held at Sreemangal on 22 October under the same purview of 'Wake-up People' campaign. In his address as chief guest, the ACC Chairman Lt. General Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury (retd.) urged everybody to build up a united resistance against corruption in society. Addressing the youths, the TIB Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman said, "Corruption cannot be checked merely through enactment of law or punishments. All citizens of the country will have to be active against it. The youth community of the country has always played the most powerful role in resisting any injustice committed in the country. This indomitable strength of the youths has provided encouragement to TIB in waging a strong movement against corruption with the participation of all. TIB believes – the invincible youths shall surely resist corruption".

Organized by CCC-Sreemangal and Upazila Corruption Prevention Committee with the cooperation of ACC and TIB, others who spoke at the gathering included the Deputy Commissioner Md. Mafizul Islam, ASP and the Police Super in-charge of the Moulvibazar district SM Ashrafuzzaman, Convener of CCC-Sreemangal Professor Saiyeed Mujeebur Rahman and the Chairperson of District CPC Additional Secretary (retd.) Abdul Quadir Mahmud. Popular singers SI Tutul, Shahed, Sumi and local artistes asked the youths to become vocal against corruption amid the rhythm of their music. The YES group members of CCC-Sreemangal presented anti-corruption folk-song and choreography on the theme-song 'Wake-up People' during the programme. Held on the ground of Victoria High School, around 25 thousand youths took oath to build a corruption-free Bangladesh by saying 'no' to corruption at the gathering.

Participants Dreamt of a Corruption-Free Nation in the Discussion Meeting Held at BRAC University



The Global Affairs Forum of BRAC University jointly arranged a discussion meeting with TIB titled 'Fight against Corruption: Our Goals' on 22 November. The ACC Chairman Lt. General Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury (retd.) and the TIB Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman were present as the key discussants.

The discussants opined that a huge number of new voters were going to vote for the first time in the coming parliamentary election. These voters are expected to elect such parliament members who would represent them in the real sense; and they must be honest, educated and qualified. At the same time, this forum was making those university youths conscious who would exercise their right to vote for the first time. The programme was concluded with a pledge to materialize the dream of a corruption-free Bangladesh through election of honest and qualified parliamentarians. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor of BRAC University Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed moderated the programme.

TIB recommends to improve transparency in healthcare services

TIB submitted some opinions and recommendations in writing on the proposed National Health Policy 2008 (updated), which was drafted by the caretaker government, to the relevant ministry on 25 September. These views and recommendations were collected from experiences of various activities at national and local levels. They called for according recognition to healthcare as a fundamental right of the people and made specific recommendations on the strategic aspects of National Health Policy.

The recommendations emphasised strengthening of the government healthcare services. They also included fixing the price of outdoor tickets in hospitals at either Taka 5 or Taka 6 instead of Taka 5.50, compulsory display of lists showing available healthcare services and availability of physicians, and formation of a national committee on supply of government medicines (in special packets) and keeping the medical equipment in use. Similarly, the recommendations also called for inclusion of all categories of disabled people in the clinical system, setting up of advice and information desk in all institutions, steps for raising awareness on curbing unscientific and quack treatments and improvements in supply of safe drinking

water. TIB put forward these opinions by showing a positive attitude about government initiatives for overall qualitative improvement of the health sector.

Other notable recommendations made by TIB were: forming a monitoring task-force to control the quality of marketed medicines; installation of complaint boxes in accordance with the citizens' charter and framing appropriate rules and procedures for their effective implementation; publication of annual reports on a regular basis in order to ensure transparency through release of information; introduction of e-governance in the tendering process in a phase-wise manner in order to ensure transparency in the supply of service materials; taking up coordinated initiatives alongside the Environment Ministry for disposal of hospital wastes and their destruction in the correct way; inclusion of the representatives of local organizations and civil society for monitoring the quality of services; taking effective steps for ensuring the security of vulnerable population, especially women, through appointment of an Ombudsman for the health sector who will closely observe the workings of the health ministry.

Meeting of Investigative Journalists Forum Held

A meeting of the Anti-Corruption Investigative Journalists Forum was held at the Gulshan office of TIB on 7 October. The members of the Forum Sharifuzzaman Pintu, Ahmed Sagor, Selim Zahid, Shakil Ahmed and Sukdeb Sana were present. Held in presence of TIB Executive Director and other officials, discussions were held at the meeting on providing encouragement to investigative journalists throughout the country and taking up specific programmes to raise the efficiency of journalists.



Besides, discussions were also held on the freedom of mass media, rights of journalists, investigative journalism award of TIB and anti-corruption programmes being implemented in the country. The Forum requested TIB to organize training programmes in future for raising the expertise of journalists in investigative journalism.

TIB's New Initiative 'PARIBARTAN- DRIVING CHANGE'

TIB is going to implement a new 5-year project titled 'Paribartan - Driving Change'. Starting from April 2009, it is expected to continue up to March 2014. The principal objective of the project is to develop the poverty-stricken population. Its main activities will be research on corruption at national and local levels as well as massive publicity for curbing corruption.

Consistent with the PRSP, and implemented with the approval of the Government of Bangladesh, the goal of the project is to achieve positive changes in policies and practices conducive to accountable and transparent governance in Bangladesh. The specific objectives include strengthening the National Integrity System, reducing costs of corruption and improving citizens' access to entitlements through a strengthened and sustained social movement against corruption. Working through an intensified national level advocacy and an up-scaled local level citizens' engagement the project will strive to achieve better enforcement of policies, laws and rules at both national and local level.

A notable feature of the project will be the implementation of integrity pledges with various stake-holders related to development programmes, especially governmental service-delivery organizations, so that different organizations in the country can become islands of integrity. In one hand, the sphere of TIB's work will expand under the purview of the project, and the works which are presently underway will be deepened on the other hand. Alongside continuing the programmes of 36 existing CCCs, 9 more CCCs will be formed in other places of the country under the purview of 'Paribartan'.

By implementing 'Paribartan- Driving Change', TIB seeks to further strengthen the ongoing anti-corruption movement and make the people more aware so that demands for curbing corruption come from the very midst of the masses. Special importance will also be attached in raising transparency in health, education and local government institutions at national and local levels. Plans have been drawn up in the project to forge partnerships with various government organizations and like-minded bodies who are working for development and good governance.

Responding to TIB's call, DFID of the UK, SIDA of Sweden, SDC of Switzerland and DANIDA of Denmark have shown interest to become development partners for this project. It may be mentioned that this is for the first time that SDC has shown interest in getting involved with TIB. The DFID, SIDA and DANIDA were erstwhile development partners of TIB.

Study on poll campaign

Poll Spending is Taka 300 Thousand on an Average Even before the Launching of Campaign

A total of 142 candidates in 40 constituencies had spent Taka 304 thousand on an average up to the date for withdrawal of nomination paper on 11 December (even before the legal starting point for the launching of the poll campaign) in the run up to the parliamentary election scheduled for 29 December. TIB released this through a press conference on 24 December. This press conference was arranged on the occasion of releasing the first report of the study on campaign process for the Ninth Parliamentary Election in 2008. Held at the VIP auditorium of Dhaka Reporters' Unity, TIB Trustee Board Chairman Professor Muzaffer Ahmad, Treasurer M. Hafizuddin Khan and the Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman were present at the press conference. The report was presented by the Senior Research Officer Shahzada M. Akram and Research Officer Sadhan Kumar Das.

TIB conducted this research with the goal of examining how far the candidates in the Ninth Parliamentary election were adhering to laws, regulations and code of conduct, making special review of the visible and quantifiable expenditures incurred by candidates in the election campaign and place recommendations on the basis of the findings. This report was the first phase of the study. In the second phase, monitoring reports will be published on the election campaign and adherence to code of conduct by candidates from the date of finalisation of candidature up to the election-day. In the last phase, a comparative analysis will be made on the accounts of expenditure submitted by candidates in comparison to their actual expenditure.

Information collected from 40 constituencies were analysed in the research. According to the collected information, no campaign had taken place in one constituency. Although campaign took place in 4 constituencies, money spent for the purpose could not be traced out. In 2 constituencies, maximum 14 and minimum 11 nomination-seekers had undertaken publicity. A total of 142 candidates had launched their campaigns even before declaration of schedules for the election. They included 51 from the Bangladesh Awami League (35.9%), 44 from the BNP (31%), 12 from the Jatiya Party (8.5%) and 6 from the Jamaate Islami (4.2%). The number of independent candidates was 8 (5.6%). Most candidates started their publicity in various ways 2 months prior to the announcement of election schedule, which was a clear violation of electoral law. The 44 nomination-seekers of BNP had spent Taka 389 thousand on an average for publicity purpose and the 51 nomination-seekers of the Awami League had spent Taka 309

thousand on an average for the same purpose. A BNP candidate had spent the highest amount of Taka 1 million 978 thousand while an Awami League candidate had spent the maximum amount of Taka 1 million 602 thousand and 700. An independent candidate had spent the highest amount of Taka 3.85 million.

The surveyed candidates had spent a total of Taka 43.2 million 27 thousand 400 illegally during the period. It may be mentioned that it was found in another TIB survey carried out on the cancelled parliamentary election of 2007 that the candidates had spent Taka 1.5 million 20 thousand on an average. The BNP candidates had then spent Taka 1.8 million 69 thousand on an average while the Awami League candidates had spent an average of Taka 1.3 million 96 thousand.



This time also, nominations have been given to black-money holders, businessmen, industrialists, terrorists, etc. by various political parties who do not possess any respect for the

electoral laws. In many instances, the political parties did not fulfil their obligation of nominating candidates who were recommended from the grassroots level. Allegations have been raised against the two major alliances regarding financial transactions for giving nomination. According to unsupported sources, 4 to 10 million taka were deposited to party fund per candidate for obtaining nomination. Electoral expenses were less this time compared to the stalled election of 2007. Even then, some election laws were violated on a party basis, such as holding public meetings by barricading roads. Meetings and processions were brought out in some constituencies. Although it was compulsory for candidates to provide eight specified information, many did not submit those properly. The Election Commission did not take any steps in this

regard. No system has been developed till now for regular monitoring of electoral expenses by candidates.

TIB put forward a number of recommendations to deter corruption in the electoral process and hold an acceptable election by running the process transparently and properly. Notable among these were: regular monitoring of election campaign expense and violation of code of conduct by candidates; measures against those candidates who undertake campaign prior to announcement of election schedule; disclosure of estimated electoral expense information of candidates to the mass media; investigative reporting in the area by journalists should be increased; and different programmes should be undertaken for raising public awareness.

The civil society and organizations having election-related experience should become vocal against violation of electoral rules;

Report on 'Problems and Prospects of Salt Cultivation' Released

Recently the picture of anomaly and corruption has been depicted in an investigative research report published by CCC-Chakaria and TIB. The CCC-Chakaria released this research report through a discussion meeting held at Cox's Bazar on 23 November. M N Alam, Assistant Research Officer of TIB, presented it. The Executive Director of TIB Dr. Iftekharuzzaman, CCC Convener Engineer Rafiqul Hoque and member of the research team M. Shamsuddula were present among other eminent personalities on the occasion. This research was conducted to reveal the nature of various anomalies and corruption in the salt industry and put forward effective recommendations to overcome those. The report says that it is the salt cultivating farmers who are now incurring maximum loss and damage. Only 0.25% of the profits go to the salt farmers and the remaining 99.75% are walloped by the relevant middlemen active between the production and marketing cycle. But it is the salt farmers who bear 98% of expenses incurred for raw-materials. The survey was carried out by means of structured questionnaires between November 2007 and November 2008 through interviews and analysis of data.

Around 2.5 million people are now earning their livelihood by relying on the salt industry. The contribution of salt to GDP is presently over Taka 15 billion. The CCC and TIB have made a number of recommendations for making salt cultivation sustainable. These include ensuring availability of lands to farmers at the right time with the help of local administration, BSCIC and land-owners; giving long-term lease of government khas lands to the genuine and landless salt farmers; making the local tax for salt-lands equivalent to tax for agricultural lands; granting interest-bearing loans of up to



Taka 20-30 thousand per acre for the salt farmers by the government or BSCIC; motivating state-owned banks to sanction loans for salt farming in the coastal areas; motivating NGOs active in the coastal belt to provide special/seasonal credit for salt farming; including salt farming in the agriculture sector after giving due consideration to socio-economic development of the salt-farmers as well as their sufferings; formation of an autonomous Salt Board by the relevant ministry of Bangladesh Government; putting an end to import of salt by individuals or industries in order to ensure market for local salts; construction of embankments and green belts by the government in order to protect salt fields from natural disasters; recruitment of necessary manpower for gearing up the work of 'salt industry development project' of BSCIC; procurement of various office equipment; stopping corruption; supervision of work by forming monitoring cell etc.

Irregularities of Badarkhali Samabay Krishi O Upanibesh Samity

After receiving complaints from various quarters regarding irregularities and mismanagement of Badarkhali Samabay Krishi O Upanibesh Samity (Badarkhali Co-operative Society of Agriculture), TIB conducted a research during January to June 2008 with the cooperation of CCC-Chakaria. The report was released at the association's office on 24 November. The report was prepared and presented



by the Research Officer of TIB Md. Habibur Rahman. Chaired by the CCC Convener Engineer Rafiqul Hoque, those who took part in the discussion meeting included TIB Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman, Chittagong Divisional Director of ACC Major Zulfiqar Ali Majumdar, Deputy Director Abul Kalam Azad, Divisional Deputy Registrar of the Cooperative Department Md. Nuruzzaman, District Cooperative Officer Ashish Kumar Barua, Upazila Executive Officer Md. Kamrul Alam, member-secretary of Badarkhali Samity Jahangir Alam, et al.

93.6% respondents in this household survey said that the management committee resorts to corruption in the leasing process. Lease for projects is given at half the price through bribery. The management committee takes a bribe of Taka 4 million 58 thousand 751 each year, as a result of which the association incurs a loss of Taka 9 million 17 thousand 502 per year. Arbitration of an average number of 231 cases takes place at the association each year, of which 21% are dispute cases. 92.8% of the respondents claimed that the management committee does not settle

the cases in a neutral manner. Bribes worth Taka 1 million 155 thousand are taken for the purpose per year, they claimed. Besides, Taka 220 thousand 83 are misappropriated each year in the name of running cases. Taka 379 thousand 278 are misappropriated every year under the heads of meeting, conveyance and travelling allowances. The managing committee takes bribe worth Taka 655 thousand 658 for transferring lands. Votes are bought at the rate of Taka 500 per voter during elections to the managing committee. A non-governmental development organization had built a mangrove forest over 120 acres of land with the goal of saving Badarkhali union from storms and tidal surges. But later the general members including some committee members had chopped off those trees at the instigation of the managing committee, in order to build a shrimp farm. Besides, there are also allegations that the managing committee occupies government lands illegally. Most officials and employees of

the association's office do not work without bribes. A total of Taka 7 million 626 thousand 526 are misappropriated each year through bribery, corruption and irregularities by targeting members, their dependents, partners and the association itself, as a result of which the association incurs a loss of Taka 10 million 324 thousand 619.

A number of recommendations were made in the report to make the association transparent and accountable by eliminating irregularities and corruption. Notable among these were: taking stock of the assets and sources of income of former members of the managing committee as well as officials of the association; taking legal measures against those whose income do not conform with their sources; meting out punishments after identifying the guilty through departmental enquiry against those cooperative officers who were and are still directly involved in the irregularities of the association etc.

Report Card Survey: 21 Reports Released

A total of 24 report card surveys were taken up during the year 2008. Of these, 21 reports have already been published and the rest 3 are awaiting release after exchange of views with the relevant local administration.

Report Card on Education

The findings of 9 report card surveys on primary education were released in October-November. These reports covered the CCC areas of Faridpur, Rajbari, Madaripur, Savar, Khulna, Patiya, Chandpur, Comilla and Munshiganj. Of these, report on the quality of primary education in Faridpur CCC area was released on 27 October and the remaining 8 reports were published in November.

The teachers of concerned primary schools, education officers, members of the school managing committees and representatives of the civil society were present during the release of these reports. Pictures of anomalies in the school management system have been depicted in these reports, including extraction of additional fees from the students, deducting stipend money, negligence of duty by teachers, illegal coaching and collection of money, etc. Side by side, the limitations of various schools have been identified.

Report Card on Health

A total of 9 report card surveys on the subject of healthcare were conducted in the CCC areas. Of these, one report each were released in August and September, 3 in November, 1 in December and 2 in January. These report card surveys were carried out at hospitals situated in the district and upazila

headquarters of Rangpur, Gazipur, Madaripur, Savar, Munshiganj, Rajbari, Barisal and Faridpur CCC areas.

These reports have depicted various harassments faced by the general masses while receiving healthcare services, sufferings like financial losses, misconduct of hospital authorities and corruption prevailing in the delivery of healthcare services. Although the hospital authorities agreed with many of these findings, they cited different reasons for not being able to provide good services. Despite that, the hospital authorities took many measures for improving healthcare services after the release of these reports and awareness has increased manifold at the local level compared to the past.

Report Card on Municipal Services and Land Administration

Two report card surveys on municipal services were undertaken in 2008. Of these, the results of the survey on Gazipur municipality were released on 14 September in presence of the Mayor, officials working in the municipality, local journalists and elites. The recommendations made by CCC-Gazipur and TIB were presented during the release of this report.

In his own report, the municipal mayor agreed with the findings of the TIB report and pledged to implement its recommendations. The findings of another report card survey on the Bagerhat municipality are awaiting release following discussions with the authorities.

Another report on land administration in Satkhira district was released on 25 October.

ED, TIB elected to Transparency International Board

Executive Director of Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), Dr. Iftekharuzzaman, has been elected as a Member of the International Board of the Berlin-based Transparency International (TI). The election took place on October 29, during the Annual Members Meeting of the TI, being held in Athens, Greece. The International Board of TI is the highest body for making strategies and policies of this global coalition against corruption.

Giving his reaction Dr. Zaman said that He commended the role of the Committees of Concerned Citizens (CCC) and members of Youth Engagement and Support (YES) groups, working with TIB in 36 areas all over the country. He expressed deep gratitude to them, Board of Trustees of TIB, members of the staff, TIB members and all others associated with TIB who have been his source of energy and inspiration to move ahead to strengthen the fight against corruption.

Dr Zaman said that as TI Board Member he will try to bring to the global anti-corruption movement the expertise and

experience of some of the best practices introduced by TIB, in particular the importance of deepening and widening of civic engagement, especially the involvement of the young generation. It will also give him the opportunity to work towards stronger reflection of the developing world perspective in the policies and strategies of the international anti-corruption movement.

It is mentioned that the Board of Directors is Transparency International's central governing body and is elected at the

Annual Membership Meeting by accredited national chapters and individual members. Presently there are twelve members of this board. Dr. Huguette Labelle of Canada is Chair of this coalition. Others members are Vice-Chair Akere Muna of Cameroon, Sion Assidon of Morocco, Nancy Boswell of USA, John Devitt of

Ireland, Boris Divjak of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Delia Ferreira Rubio of Argentina, Geo-Sung Kim of South Korea, Rueben L. Lifuka of Zambia, Devendra Raj Panday of Nepal, Gerard Zovighian of Lebanon and Dr Iftekharuzzaman of Bangladesh.

This was a befitting tribute to all citizens of Bangladesh who are victims of corruption and recognition of all those who have been dedicating their time and effort to fight corruption in the country.

TI Bribe Payers Index 2008

Emerging economic giants show high levels of corporate bribery overseas



Companies based in emerging economic giants, such as China, India and Russia, are perceived to routinely engage in bribery when doing business abroad, according to Transparency International's 2008 Bribe Payers Index (BPI). The report was released on 9 December from London, Berlin and Dhaka.

Belgium and Canada shared first place in the 2008 BPI with a score of 8.8 out of a very clean 10, indicating that Belgian and Canadian firms are seen as least likely to bribe abroad. The Netherlands and Switzerland shared third place on the index, each with a score of 8.7. At the other end of the spectrum, Russia ranked last with a score of 5.9, just below China (6.5), Mexico (6.6) and India (6.8).

The BPI also shows public works and construction companies to be the most corruption-prone when dealing with the public sector, and most likely to exert undue influence on the policies, decisions and practices of governments.

TI's 2008 BPI ranks 22 leading international and regional exporting countries by the tendency of their

firms to bribe abroad. The combined global exports of goods and services and outflows of foreign direct investment of these 22 countries represented 75 percent of the world total in 2006. The 2008 BPI is based on the responses of 2,742 senior business executives from companies in 26 developed and developing countries, chosen by the volume of their imports and inflows of foreign direct investment.

"Bribe Payers Index once again stresses that corruption is a global problem demanding global approach", said Dr. Iftekharuzzaman, Executive Director of Transparency International Bangladesh. He said that it was disappointing that companies from developed societies continue to engage in bribery in developing countries taking advantage of weak institutions, laws and enforcement. "Governments of countries of origin of companies operating outside national frontiers have the responsibility and moral obligation to criminalize bribery abroad, and ensure that companies strictly uphold the highest standard of integrity in their international business practice", said Dr. Zaman.

Different activities in CCC areas

CCC Exchanges Views with Khulna City Mayor

Transparency and accountability in the activities of Khulna City Corporation (KCC) has now been ensured. The expectations of the city-dwellers would be reflected by grooming the KCC as a corruption-free service delivery organization. Steps would be taken for evicting the illegal structures on the canals adjacent to the city for the sake of proper drainage. Eviction of illegal embankments and eradication of mosquito menace would be undertaken for enhancing civic facilities. The KCC Mayor said this while exchanging views with the members of CCC Khulna, at the City Complex on 23 October 2008. Along with others KCC Ward Counsellor Shamsuzzaman Mia (Swapan), Convener of CCC Khulna Hafizur Rahman spoke on the occasion.

Anti-Corruption Information Fair Held in Sreemangal

An Anti-Corruption Information Fair was held for the first time in Sreemangal on 21-22 October under the joint initiative of CCC Sreemangal and upazila Corruption Prevention Committee with the cooperation of local upazila administration. The fair was inaugurated by the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO). He expressed the hope that demands of the people for information can be generated by holding such fair. He urged all relevant quarters to reach information to the doorsteps of the common people in villages, because they have limited scope to get information. He assured of all cooperation in this regard. A total of 18 organizations provided information to the visitors. They included the Police Administration, Upazila Health Complex, Primary Education, Land, Family Planning, Agriculture Department, Fisheries Department, BRDB and local development organization i.e. HEED Bangladesh, Niswarga Support Project, Shushashoner Jonya Nagorik – Shujan, Sreemangal Foundation, M-Sida, Sylhet Youth Academy, Sylhet Adivashi Forum, telephone company RanksTel, local Corruption Prevention Committee and the CCC Sreemangal. The main attraction of the information fair was the anti-corruption cartoon exhibition.

Complaint and Advice Box Installed in Kushtia General Hospital

Two Complaint and Advice boxes were installed by the CCC Kushtia on 4 December at the outdoor and emergency service units with the goal of enhancing transparency and accountability of the Kushtia General Hospital. Along with the RMO of the hospital Dr. Abdus Salam, and the Convener of CCC Kushtia Md. Rafiqul Alam, CCC members and the YES group members were present on the occasion.

Complaint and Advice Box Installed in Madaripur Sadar Hospital

An Advice and Complaint box was installed in Madaripur Sadar Hospital. The CCC and YES Group members have been placed demand for it to the authority on the basis of local people's requirements from the past two years. Finally, the Advice and Complaint box was set up by the Civil Surgeon Dr. Md. Alamgir Khan on 12 November with the cooperation of CCC Madaripur.

Savar Municipality will Install a Service Board

A delegation of CCC Savar met with the Municipal Mayor on 16 October with the objective of improving the service quality of Savar Municipality. When the delegation

explained the importance of setting up a Service Board, the Mayor Alhaj Refat Ullah announced that he would install such a board through own initiative within a short time.

Mothers' Gathering at Brahmanbaria

A mothers' gathering was organized at Titash Purbopar Shitanagar Government Primary School under Sadar Upazila of Brahmanbaria on 6 November under the aegis of CCC-Brahmanbaria. Presided over by the Chairman of School Managing Committee Anil Chandra Das, the CCC Convener Advocate Md. Abu Taher, members Shamima Sikdar Deena, Md. Ali Akbar Mojumder, Headmistress of the school Nayeema Aktar, Assistant Upazila Education Officer Md. Mahtab Uddin et al were present on the occasion. Over 300 mothers of students participated in this meeting organized with the goal of raising the quality of the school's education.

Guardians' Gathering at Jhalakati

A guardians' gathering was held at JBI Union Secondary School under the aegis CCC-Jhalakati, which was presided over by the Vice-Chairman of School Managing Committee (SMC) Nurul Islam Khalifa. Held on 4 November, the CCC Convener Professor Md. Rustam Ali was present on the occasion as Chief Guest. The meeting emphasized the role of guardians in grooming their offspring as well-educated and conscious citizens. They were urged to take care in admitting their children on time, sending them to school on a regular basis, helping them in their studies, and taking day to day care.

Installation of Billboard at Chapai Nawabganj

"It takes only Taka 232 for mutation of lands. The land development tax per decimal is only Taka 22 in case of lands used for industrial/commercial purposes in municipal areas and only Taka 7 for lands used in other purposes. These rates are Taka 15 and Taka 5 respectively outside municipal areas. Do not transact more money than is stipulated by falling into the hands of frauds or middlemen". "Illegal transaction of money is a punishable offence. No fees are required for writing General Diary (GD), filing cases or for any other service. Do not fall into the hands of frauds or middlemen for getting services from the police station". The above two billboards have been set up in front of the office of Assistant Commissioner (Land) and the police station of Chapai Nawabganj Sadar. These two exceptional billboards have been installed by these two offices in November with the cooperation of CCC-Chapai Nawabganj and the support of Deputy Commissioner and Police Super of the district.

Meeting on Primary Education at Muktagachha

A meeting between the education authority and the local community was held under the aegis of CCC-Muktagachha on 21 October with the objective of improving the quality of primary education. Chaired by the Co-Convener of CCC-Muktagachha Asstt. Prof. Abdus Sobur, the speakers discussed about various problems in the education arena, such as low salary-structure of teachers, lack of coordination between teachers, education office and guardians, inactivity of the school managing committee, keeping the teachers busy in office work, drop-out of students due to poverty, etc.

Candidates of Parliamentary Election Face the Public

The Parliament plays a vital role in curbing corruption, establishing good governance and institutionalising democracy. In this backdrop, the TIB has been implementing multifarious programmes for a long time for enhancing the effectiveness of the Jatiya Sangsad (National Parliament). As a continuation of this effort, TIB-inspired CCCs, Shushashoner Jonya Nagorik – Shujan and the local Corruption Prevention Committees formed by the ACC jointly undertook an initiative to bring the rival candidates in the parliamentary election face the public in their respective constituencies at 24 places.

The main objective of this 'Choose the Right Candidate' programme was to present the candidates before the people. The candidates put forward justifications for their candidacy in this process. They informed the people about their future plans and participated in a question-answer session. The CCC distributed leaflets by incorporating information submitted to the Election Commission by the candidates, so that people could get an idea about their integrity and qualifications and exercise their voting rights on the basis of that knowledge. Through these leaflets, the people could know the educational qualifications of candidates, details and outcomes of criminal cases filed against them, professions, sources of income, assets and liabilities of candidates and their dependents, amount of loans taken by the candidates or their dependents from banks, performance in fulfilling pledges in the past as members of parliament, etc. This information provided an opportunity to the voters to make a comparative evaluation of the candidates.

The 'Choose the Right Candidate' programme was organized in 24 electoral constituencies through spontaneous participation of the people as well as candidates. Although some candidates could not take part due to their busy schedule of election campaign and mass contacts, most could participate in them. The focus of interest of the voters was the pledges made by the candidates.

Chandpur: The candidates of 9th National Parliament Election identified river erosion as the biggest problem facing Chandpur at a gathering held on 17 December at the Muktijuddher Bijoy Mela Mancha (Hasan Ali High School ground). They pledged to take different governmental steps for checking river erosion. Besides, they promised to rehabilitate the fishermen and establish a full-fledged university at Chandpur.

Chapai Nawabganj: The candidates came face the mass people at Bir Sreshtha Jahangir Mukto Mancha (Municipal Park) on 22 December. They made pledges to introduce inter-city train from Chapainawabganj, establish mango



based industries, ensure gas supply within 2010 and upgrade Nawabganj Government College into a university college.

Satkhira: The candidates assured the voters at a gathering held at Shaheed Abdur Razzak Park on 22 December that they would renovate the heart of Satkhira town 'Pran Shaha Canal', dredge the Kapotakkha and Betna rivers for removing water-logging, construct a by-pass road, develop the Bhomra land-port, restart the closed Sundarban Textile Mills, establish a full-fledged university, and so on.

Sylhet: The 6 candidates of Sylhet-1 constituency faced the voters on 22 December at the District Shilpakala Academy auditorium. All candidates including Abul Maal Abdul Muhith pledged to repeal the most talked about vested property act and take initiatives to remove related complexities.

Brahmanbaria: The candidates of Sadar-3 constituency took part in this gathering arranged at the municipal auditorium on 20 December. The Awami League candidate emphasised on the implementation of his party's election manifesto. The candidate of Gano Forum pledged to upgrade the sadar hospital into a 500-bed one and to establish a full fledged university and the Jaker Party candidate promised to remove traffic jams from the town.

Bagerhat: The candidates from Bangladesh Awami League and LDP took part in the programme held on 22 December at Swadhinata Udyan in Bagerhat. The candidates made numerous pledges including reactivation of the Mongla Port, transforming the airport into a full-fledged one, upgrading Bagerhat PC College into a full-fledged university and construction of the Padma Bridge. They promised to protect the minorities and eliminate militancy and terrorism from the area.

Rajshahi: The candidates of Bangladesh Awami League (grand alliance) and Bangladesh Communist Party pledged to remain present in parliament as people's representatives on a regular basis, if elected, at a gathering held at the auditorium of Rajshahi Chamber of

Commerce and Industry on 20 December. They assured the voters that they would play a notable role for safeguarding women's rights.

Jamalpur: The candidates of Bangladesh Awami League, Jaker Party, Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, and Bangladesh Nationalist Party faced off at the Jamalpur Shahid Minar premises on 26 December. The candidates pledged to upgrade Government Ashek Mahmud College into a full-fledged university, transform sadar hospital into a medical college, build up various employment-generating institutions and establish industries and factories.

Kurigram: A face the public meeting was organized at the Kurigram Shahid Minar premises on 24 December. The candidates of the next parliamentary election declared that they would remain present in parliament regularly, if elected. They pledged to take effective steps for tackling Monga and solving the unemployment problem.

Natore: The candidates of Bangladesh Awami League, Progressive Democratic Party, Jaker Party and Islami Andolan Bangladesh faced the voters at the old bus-stand in Natore on 23 December. They informed the voters that they would take steps to renovate the Narad River, develop roads, establish industries, set up girls' cadet college, improve the law and order situation and curb terrorism.

Sreemangal: The candidates of Bangladesh Islamic Front, Bangladesh Awami League, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal and independent candidates faced the voters on 23 December at the Shahid Minar premises of the municipality. The candidates made clear pledges to provide various facilities including regular wages for tea-labourers, hilly and indigenous people, supply of gas and electricity to remote areas, control prices of essentials, eliminate unemployment, desist from nepotism and partisan acts in order to stop corruption, etc.

Rangpur: The candidates of Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal, Islami Shashantantra Andolan, Krishak Sramik Janata League, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal and Bangladesh Communist Party faced the voters on 24 December at Rangpur Shahid Minar premises. Although Hussain Muhammad Ershad of Jatiya Party and the BNP candidate were absent, those who attended made numerous pledges. Notable among these were the setting up of industries and gas line, upgrading Rangpur into a division, eliminating seasonal unemployment crisis during Monga through employment generation, etc.

Munshiganj: The candidates of Bangladesh Awami League and Islami Andolan Bangladesh faced the people at the Rangmehar Palli Unnayan Juba Sangha ground of Munshiganj on 24 December. The candidates pledged to work all-out for the development of Munshiganj. Notable among these pledges were taking initiatives to bring down the prices of essentials and improving the quality of primary education in the area.

Patiya: The candidates faced the voters at Patiya Rahat Ali High School ground on 24 December. They assured the voters that if elected they would not indulge in nepotism and would allow the administration to function in its own way.

Khulna: The candidates thanked TIB and CCC for waging a social movement against corruption at a gathering held at the Hadis Park of Khulna on 23 December. They assured the people that if elected they would strive to build a corruption-free Khulna.

Gazipur: The candidates faced around 1000 people at the local Bangataj auditorium on 22 December. Although the candidates of the 4-party alliance and grand-alliance were absent, the remaining 7 candidates pledged to work together for the uplift of Gazipur.

Mymensingh: The candidates of Mymensingh-4 constituency faced the people at Railway Krishnachura compound on 23 December. They pledged to build a drug-free and welfare governance system, implement the demand for upgrading Mymensingh into a division, construct Dhaka-Mymensingh by-pass road and upgrade Anandamohan College into a full-fledged university.

Madhupur: The 4-party alliance candidate pledged to gear up the anti-corruption campaign while the grand alliance Bangladesh Awami League candidate promised to implement the election manifesto of his party at a gathering held at Modhupur College ground on 17 December.

Kushtia: At a gathering held at the Kushtia Islamia College ground on 22 December, the candidates pledged to set up industries, restart Mohini Mill, establish fertilizer factory for the farmers, and construct Haripur Bridge and Kushtia by-pass road, set up a radio station. They also promised to implement the project of building a medical college as well to set up of gas line connection within 2010.

Jhenaidah: The attended candidates pledged at a gathering on 24 December organized at the ground of Uzir Ali Secondary School that they will remain present in regular basis at the parliamentary sessions. Besides they also promised to set gas line, take initiative of establishing EPZ and medical college and stop repression of women. The assembled citizens demanded for modernisation of the sadar hospital and reactivation of the children's hospital in order to improve the healthcare system.

Madaripur: The candidates faced the people at the lakeside of Shadhinata Angan in Madaripur on 23 December. They pledged to take steps for establishing a public university at Madaripur, construction of a bridge over the Arialkhan river, development of road communication and construction of roads between Madaripur sadar and all the unions, upgrading of Rajoir upazila sadar into a municipality, electrification of all villages in Madaripur, protection of Madaripur town from the erosion of Arial Khaa river, extension of the town-protection embankment up to Rajarchar of Khowajpur union and payment of arrears to Earhang Jute Mill workers.

Faridpur: The candidates of Faridpur-1 and Faridpur-2 constituencies put emphasis on the importance of social movement against corruption at public gatherings held inside Boalmari upazila auditorium and Nagarkanda auditoriums respectively on 21 and 24 December. Besides, they pledged to implement various plans for employment generation in the area through formation of committees.

Election Manifesto: Gender Sensitivity and Women's Empowerment

Lovely Yeasmin Jeba

The Ninth National Parliament Election, much-cherished by the democracy-loving people of Bangladesh, was held on 29 December. The nation has many dreams, many expectations centring on this election. The major political parties had declared their election manifestos by taking into consideration the hopes and aspirations of the people. The conscious women and human rights organizations had put forward various demands through seminars, workshops and opinion-sharing meetings with the aim of attaching due importance to gender sensitivity, human rights and women's empowerment in all areas of national development.

The Bangladesh Awami League pledged to raise the number reserved seats for women in parliament to 33% in its election manifesto as well as direct election for the purpose in its Vision-2021. The subject has been omitted altogether in the election manifesto of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP). The manifesto of the Bangladesh Awami League has spoken about restoring the 'National Women's Development Policy of 1997'. The subject has not been mentioned in the manifesto of BNP or any other party.

The manifesto of the Bangladesh Awami League speaks about continuing the stipend programme for encouraging women's education and phase-wise introduction of free education up to the bachelor's level, side by side with making the education sector more developed and universal. Similar optimism has been expressed in the manifestos of BNP and Jamaate Islami. Presently, 50.1 percent of the primary school goers in the country are girls and 49.9 percent are boys. That is, girls are more in number compared to boys. But this does not prove progress in women's education; because the rates of drop-out for girls in higher education starting from secondary education gradually rise. Financial insolvency is not the principal cause for this; rather, this high attrition rate for females is more influenced by traditional social values, patriarchal power structure, reluctance about women's education and above all social insecurity. Consequently, pledge of financial assistance is not sufficient for development of women's education. The election manifestos of major political parties should contain clear pledges about raising social awareness on removing all discriminations and violence against women and making the rule of law more sensitive and effective for ensuring overall security of women.

The Bangladesh Awami League expressed optimism about taking up effective programmes for ensuring healthcare for all. BNP spoke about maintaining continuity in bringing down maternal and child mortality. But for attaining these objectives, what is needed foremost is proper employment generation, checking price rise of essentials, curbing corruption in relevant service sectors and ensuring good governance. These issues have been given due importance in the manifestos of political parties. But special measures for employment generation of women, proper implementation of specific quotas in appropriate

instances, formulation of gender sensitive healthcare policy and service-providing strategy need to be articulated more specifically.

Local government is another important area in the election manifestos. The local government councils need to be further strengthened through decentralisation of power. The female members are getting elected in their 'reserved seats' through direct ballot since 1997, in accordance with the recommendations of the commission formed for women's empowerment. These seats are not getting adequate importance in the absence of specific legal direction on the responsibilities-obligations and power of reserved-seat members. On the other hand, even when women of reserved seats are eager to work, they are retreating in the face of financial and muscle power as well as partisan politics. These problems faced by female members have not been reflected in this year's election manifestos. But the pledge to 'ensure a transparent, accountable and democratic local governance system' would remain incomplete if these subjects are not given due consideration.

A notable aspect of the election manifestos of major political parties this time has been the implementation of multi-directional anti-corruption programme, ensuring the independence of Anti-Corruption Commission and raising the awareness of people. Corruption has a natural bias against the weaker segments of society – the poor, women, children, the handicapped and the minority communities. They are therefore deprived of all fundamental rights including education, health and legal rights. Consequently, gender-sensitive programmes need to be undertaken at all levels of society in order to wage a social movement against corruption. The state policies and development strategies will have to be reoriented on the basis of gender equality criteria.

The principal precondition for democracy is good governance. The active participation of men and women at all levels of policy-making in society is a precondition for establishing good governance. But widespread discriminations are observed in the positions of men and women in the political power structure as well as all areas of decision making process. The women community are the main victims in areas where misuse or misapplication of power takes place. Because of various reasons like insecurity, use of muscle power in politics, menace of black money, degeneration of values etc., and active participation of women in national development has not yet reached the desired level. The pledge of good governance has found reflection in all the election manifestos, meetings and mass-contacts of political parties. Gender sensitivity and women's empowerment are closely intertwined with these. So, we have firm faith that the society will move forward in the right direction after overcoming these hindrances.

Lovely Yeasmin Jeba is Senior Gender Officer, TIB

Orientation-Workshop of YES Members

TIB organized an orientation-workshop for the YES members who were operating Satellite Advice and Information Desk (AI Desk) programme at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) on 16 November. The main objective of this half-day workshop held at the conference room of the administrative block of DMCH was providing an on-the-spot idea about the administrative facilities of the hospital, effectiveness of information services, and overall monitoring and preparation of report. The workshop was inaugurated by the TIB Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman and the Director of Dhaka Medical College Hospital Brig. Gen. Dr. Md. Abdus Shahid Khan. Among others Deputy Director Dr. Kazi Enamul Kabir, and Assistant Director Dr. Mosaddeq Ahmed and nursing supervisors of the hospital were present on the occasion.



At the concluding phase of the workshop, the Director of the hospital highlighted the importance of information dissemination services by citing some examples: "The survival of a patient depends on getting the right information at the right time. So, the sole purpose of information dissemination will have to be service-orientated", he said. The representatives of the hospital gave assurance of all kinds of cooperation in future activities and wished success of this programme.

YES Groups formed at Various Educational Institutions in Dhaka

The YES Group – IBAIS University started its journey through an orientation on 2 November 2008. Held at the university auditorium, Dean of the Arts Faculty and Chairman of the English department Professor Dr. Khandakar Rezaur Rahman was present at the orientation programme as chief guest. Others present on the occasion were Senior Lecturer of the English department Farzana Parveen and members of the YES group. The YES group members were briefed on the social movement against corruption, activities of the YES group and formulation of an action-plan.

The orientation programme for the YES group - Bir-Sreshtha Noor Mohammad Rifles Public School and College was held on 11 November. The address of welcome was delivered by the Principal of the institute Shahina Parvin. In her speech, she said that the youths of today would one day contribute

towards running the country from their respective positions. And in this field, the YES groups inspired by TIB have a platform which could help sow the seeds of honesty and idealism among the youths. In his concluding speech, the Adviser of the YES group Md. Nurul Islam wished overall success of the group and concluded the orientation programme.

The YES group - Ruqyyah Hall, University of Dhaka has also started functioning. An orientation on the activities of TI, TIB and YES group was organized at Rokeya Hall on 29 November. The YES group members who participated in the programme expressed their resolve to build a well-governed Bangladesh by waging an anti-corruption movement. Adviser of the YES group Lafifa Jamal and the Principal House Tutor Jahanara Khan were present on the occasion.

International Anti-Corruption Conference (IACC)



Under the banner "Global Transparency: Fighting corruption for a sustainable future", this year's the global anti-corruption community came together in Athens, Greece, for the 13th biennial International Anti-Corruption Conference (IACC) from 30 October to 2 November, 2008. The conference gave special attention to the challenge corruption faces to sustainable and equitable development. The conference focused on four themes reflecting crucial aspects of sustainable development and corruption: Human security, climate change, compromised livelihoods and energy security.

Since the first meeting in Washington in 1983, the IACC has grown exponentially, now regularly attracting over 1000 leading practitioners and thinkers from all corners of the globe. This year, the conference attracted more than 1300 delegates, from 135 countries including heads of state, the private sector, the judiciary, compliance experts, government representatives, academics, law enforcement, the media and civil society representatives.

In the conference about twenty-five representatives including Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Chairman Lt.General (Retd.) Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury, TIB Executive Director Dr. Iftekharuzzaman, Treasurer of TIB Trustee Board M. Hafizuddin Khan were present from Bangladesh. The next IACC will be held on 2010 in Bangkok.

YES Activities in CCC Area

Survey of YES Members at Rajshahi

79.89% of new voters have expressed their opinion in favour of nominating the Deputy Speaker of Ninth Jatiya Sangsad from the opposition. 60.19% respondents supported woman's representation as the Speaker and Deputy Speaker. 86.04% did not support boycott of parliament for a prolonged period. 94.69 % among the new voters stated their decision to exercise their right of casting votes in the Ninth National Parliament Election. These findings were obtained from a survey titled 'Views of the New Voters' conducted by CCC-Rajshahi and its Youth Engagement and Support (YES) group. 412 voters participated in this survey.

Survey on views of new voters of Barisal

Around 96% of the new voters of Barisal expressed their opinion in favour of not voting for the corrupt and anti-liberation elements. 97% of the new voters held the view that votes should not be cast in favour of those who did not keep their promises in the past. These findings were revealed in a survey report on 'Views of the New Voters' conducted in Barisal ahead of Ninth National Parliament Election. This survey was carried out among 200 new voters in 30 wards of Barisal City Corporation by CCC-Barisal and YES members from 12 to 23 December.

Anti-Corruption Cycle Rally at Jessore

An anti-corruption cycle rally was organized at Jessore on 3 December with the slogan 'The invincible youth shall surely resist corruption'. This publicity-oriented cycle rally was organized to arouse an anti-corruption spirit and help inculcate anti-corruption attitude among all. The rally was inaugurated by the Co-Convener of CCC Fokhre Alam, Convener of the YES sub committee Abu Saleh Tota, CCC members Sheikh Golam Faruque and Advocate Proshanto Devnath. 30 members of the YES group participated in the rally.

Anti-Corruption Drama Staged in Chandpur

The members of the people's theatre group of CCC-Chandpur staged the anti-corruption play 'Protirodh' (Resistance) at the Koralia Registered Municipal Primary School on 21 October. This play was staged to generate awareness against corruption among the masses by highlighting various anomalies in society.

Anti-Corruption Theatre Staged in Munshiganj

The people's theatre group of CCC-Munshiganj staged the drama 'Bibek' (Conscience) on 29 October. Organized with the objective of creating anti-corruption awareness, the drama was staged at the Dewan Bazar Ratanpur Primary School premises. Among others the CCC Convener Professor Anil Kumar Chakraborty, CCC member Khaleda Khanom and the YES sub committee Convener Tanvir Hasan were present on the occasion.

Anti-Corruption Oath-taking at Gazipur

An anti-corruption oath-taking ceremony and discussion meeting were organized for the students of Quddus Nagar High School at Konabari union of Gazipur sadar on 6 November. Around 1,400 students took oath against corruption through this programme. They articulated in a firm voice, "We shall not engage in corruption, neither shall we tolerate it". The CCC Convener Professor Md. Ayesh Uddin was present in the programme as chief guest and conducted the oath-taking ceremony.

Street-drama of Khulna People's Theatre Staged

The people's theatre group of CCC-Khulna staged the drama 'Bon-rakhash' (Monster of the Forest) on 22 October at Nirala Model School. Those who were present on the occasion included the people's theatre members D S Tushar, S M G Newaz, Sezan Ahmed, Md. Kamrul, Asafur Rahman Kajal, Md. Ruhul Amin and Nadim-ul Alam.

TIB PUBLICATIONS

With the aim of building a broader platform of anti-corruption social movement, TIB has been working for increasing citizens' engagement. Reaching at this goal, it produces and distributes various communication materials which are an important part of its advocacy programme. These materials produce with the anti-corruption key messages and are playing a significant role in creating awareness and generating opinion against corruption among the masses. Like the other years, TIB has also produced and distributed various communication materials in 2008. Besides publishing materials on day observance, TIB has produced materials on different research reports and civic engagement programmes. To mark International Mother Language Day, International Women's Day, International Right to Know Day and International Anti-Corruption Day TIB has produced different materials i.e. leaflet, poster, sticker, greetings card, brochure and catalogue. The 2nd edition of CCC directory and YES directory has published at the beginning of the year. A pen holder shaped calendar has produced on the occasion of Bangla New Year. A leaflet on the health service of Dhaka Medical College Hospital has also published under the aegis of TIB. An analytical brochure on Corruption Perception Index 2008 has also brought into being in this year. On the other hand, a booklet on Citizens' Charter and a research book on Corruption in Public Universities have published by the initiative of TIB. Besides all these publications, newsletter WAVES and Nagorik Prottoy have been published regularly. The calendar of 2009 has produced at the end of the year 2008.



TIB in TV News

The TV channels are playing a significant role alongside newspapers in presenting various activities of TIB to the countrymen. The BTV and 10 private TV channels spent a total of 6 hours, 48 minutes and 38 seconds in broadcasting various news items on TIB between June and December 2008. TIB got highest coverage in June, totalling 2 hours 40 minutes 12 seconds. It was 1 hour 4 minutes 2 seconds in July, 33 minutes 34 seconds in August, 1 hour 7 minutes 27 seconds in September, 44 minutes 46 seconds in October, 22 minutes 8 seconds in November and 41 minutes 59 seconds in December.

Among the channels, Channel-One topped the list in broadcasting TIB news with 59 minutes 38 seconds and Diganta spent the least time of 5 minutes 44 seconds. Besides, ATN Bangla spent 58 minutes 27 seconds, NTV 32 minutes 8 seconds, RTV 31 minutes 13 seconds, Channel-i 33 minutes 31 seconds, ETV 47 minutes 42

seconds, Bangla-Vision 48 minutes 37 seconds, Boishakhi 38 minutes 1 second, BTV 15 minutes 15 seconds and Islamic TV spent 20 minutes 1 second. TIB extends its good wishes and gratitude to all TV channels.



POST-BOX

AI Desk: A Timely Step

I came to know from the July-September issue of Waves that TIB has set up an Advice and Information Desk (AI Desk) at Dhaka Medical College Hospital. I personally extend my felicitations for this timely step. The relatives of helpless poor patients who come to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for obtaining healthcare services have to face harassments in different ways. They often have to lose everything after falling into the hands of the middlemen. TIB is playing the role of a friend in this kind of circumstances. Harassment would diminish on the one hand by taking necessary help from the AI Desk, and the patient would also get genuine services from the hospital after becoming conscious about their rights.

Shoumik, Moghbazar

Let there be an Auspicious Beginning to the New Day

The hopes and expectations of the people centring on the present Ninth National Parliament are immense. The main hope of the people is that there would be no repetition of the bitter and painful experiences of the past. The elected government should maintain a democratic environment in the country. The new government should make the parliament effective, so that people can enjoy the fruits of democracy. The parliament will have to become the centre of all political activities by overcoming all obstacles. The political parties will have to demonstrate highest degree of tolerance and responsibility. Whichever political party forms the government, their key aim should be to show a responsible attitude by taking lessons from the past and work for improving the lot of the common people of the country together with the opposition. Only then would it be possible to put our cherished democracy on a firm footing on the path of an auspicious beginning for a new day.

Shuchi, Pabna

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