

EDUCATION SECTOR GRAFT

Tk 70cr bribery
a year: TIB

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around 12 percent of people had to pay bribes for receiving education or other services from primary to higher education levels in Bangladesh last year, a TIB report said yesterday.

The amount of bribery or undue payment can be estimated at around Tk 70.3 crore annually, according to the report titled "Global Corruption Report: Education".

Transparency International (TI) prepared the report after analysing data of Global

Corruption Barometer-2012 of 107 countries and research papers of other countries.

The TI headquarters and its different chapters across the world yesterday launched the report simultaneously.

As part of this, Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) revealed the report at a press conference at the Brac Centre Inn in Dhaka.

Among the South Asian countries, 48 percent of people in India, 16 percent in

SEE PAGE 2 COL 8

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FROM PAGE 16

Pakistan, 13 percent in Sri Lanka and 3 percent in Nepal and Maldives had been victim of bribery or undue collection of payment in education sector, said the report presented by TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman.

However, Bangladesh was relatively less affected by corruption than the global average of 17 percent in the same indicator, he told newsmen.

The country's education sector is highly vulnerable to corruption because of the complex administrative layers and inadequate monitoring from top to bottom, the report said.

In this sector, corruption occurs in different forms like bribery including in procurement, construction and other infrastructure development, in access to education and such acts as buying of grades.

The other forms include nepotism in teacher appointment, illicit payments in recruitment and admission as well as in campus accommodation, undue political influence in education and research, and degree recognition in cross-border education.

These corrupt practices mostly affect the poor and disadvantaged people who are unable to bear the hidden cost.

The young are the first victims of corruption as it affects the integrity and dignity of life and society at large, and corrupt practices can be transmitted to generations, the report said.

Besides, human life can be endangered by fake or untrained doctors, judges or engineers or by fake scientific research by corrupt academics.

Openness, disclosures, transparency and accountability at all levels are indispensable to check corruption, it said, adding that leadership and political will are fundamental to changing the situation.

The report recommended voluntary engagement of officials and school authority with service recipients and other citizens to promote transparency and accountability at the delivery level of services.

The quality of education, rule of law, training of teachers and zero tolerance to corruption should be ensured to combat corruption, the report recommended.

In Bangladesh, around 1,822 people had been interviewed during the survey last year to prepare the report.

Noted academician Syed Manzoorul Islam, TIB officials, among others, attended the press conference.