

Progress Report

2010



Civic Bangladesh

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Foreword

Civic Bangladesh stepped into the year 2010 with new possibilities, opportunities, enhanced civic engagement and commitments at the national and international levels. Former President of Oberlin College and author of “All Rise” Dr. Robert W. Fuller who keynoted a roundtable conference on Rights and Justice: The Dignity Perspective of Development in Bangladesh organized on 3 February 2009 in Dhaka by Civic Bangladesh committed generous final support to scale up the Dignity for All campaign. To mobilize Dr Fuller’s financial support required reforming the governance structure and strength of the organization and formal prior permission from the government to qualify for the donation.

The letter of intent awarded by Dr. Fuller was a response to a proposal for supporting the Campaign for Right to Dignity (CARD) program being implemented since 2007 by Civic Bangladesh through its campaign wing Bangladesh Dignity Forum. The Forum mobilized participation of many civic and human rights activists and organizations, and also senior and mid level officials of the government in seminars, workshops and meetings held in Dhaka, Rajshahi, Rangpur, Chittagong, Sylhet, Khulna and Barisal divisions. People from respective districts turned out and expressed solidarity for the constitutional and universal right to human dignity.

Civic Bangladesh thus set the stage for organizing a national conference to represent the culmination of four years of educational/awareness campaigns around the country to rally and inspire people at all levels of society. Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, which is the country’s top rated cultural institution of the government came forward and allied with Civic Bangladesh to co-organize the National Conference on Dignity for All: Bangladesh as a Model for the Global Community on 18 January 2011 at Osmani Memorial Hall in Dhaka with an aim to help create a culture of dignity across the country.

Honorable President of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh **Mr. Md. Zillur Rahman** gave his kind consent to be the Chief Guest and inaugurate the conference while Dr. Robert Fuller warmly accepted our invitation to keynote. Honorable Minister for Home Affairs **Advocate Shahara Khatun**; honorable Minister for Information and Culture **Mr. Md. Abul Kalam Azad**; Professor **AAMS Arefin Siddique**, Vice-Chancellor, University of Dhaka; and **Advocate Moinuddin Miaji**, Ex MP, Chairman, Bangladesh Accreditation Board, Ministry of Industries also gave their kind consent to be the special guests.

Many MPs, senior government officials, human rights and cultural activists, thinkers, educators, students, businesspeople, physicians, lawyers and journalists expressed their interest in taking part.

Amid the strong aspirations, struggle and financial hardship the year 2010 disappeared to welcome a Happy New Year and renew our commitments and recharge our energies.

We are grateful to everyone who stood up for the cause, came forward and became our allies.

Mirza M. Shaheen
Chairperson
Civic Bangladesh

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1.0 CIVIC BANGLADESH

1.1 Organizational Background

Civic Bangladesh is a philanthropic, non-profit and non-partisan voluntary development/human rights organization (HRO) working thematically around FREEDOM, DIGNITY and JUSTICE to build a free and fair society where people can live with equal dignity.

Civic Bangladesh was established in 2005 in Arambag residential area of Mirpur, Dhaka and operated on a limited scale until it was registered as a Trust in 2006 with an aim to advance democracy and governance in Bangladesh. The organization mobilized a group of young students around Global Youth Democracy Campaign (GYDC) and drew the attention of the media. The youths were gradually involved in the Civic Youth Network for Democracy (CYND) created and hosted by Civic Bangladesh to foster their engagement in institutionalizing freedom, to expose and address threats to civil society, and to exercise the freedoms of association, expression and assembly. The organization soon discovered a missing link between freedom, dignity and justice which formed its potential ground for launching the dignity-for-all campaign in Bangladesh.

To lead the dignity campaign across the country, Civic Bangladesh created Bangladesh Dignity Forum in December 2006 as a platform for civic participation in creating a culture of dignity by opposing the evils of rankism. The campaign successfully mobilized noted academics, media personalities, lawyers, physicians, development workers, women leaders and human rights activists of the country. Civic Bangladesh took almost no time to get connected with development thought leaders, actors and agencies at home and abroad. Books and articles on human dignity were translated and published; an academic lecture was arranged for Dhaka University students; and civic dialogues, roundtable conference, seminar, grassroots meetings, forum meetings, and divisional workshops were organized to develop civic awareness, incorporate more voices into the campaign and to strengthen the Forum. Civic Bangladesh looks forward to igniting a countrywide social mobilization to promote human dignity in the economic, social and political institutions as the vehicles of access to justice for all.

1.2 Vision

Civic Bangladesh envisions a free, fair and dignitarian society in Bangladesh which is culturally enlightened, economically productive and environmentally sustainable.

1.3 Mission

Civic Bangladesh seeks to advance the cause of humanity in the economic, social and political institutions through education and engagement.

1.4 Objectives

The objectives for which the organization is constituted are any and/or all of the following:

- To create a culture of dignity in the economic, social and political institutions of the country;
- To mobilize social resistance against the violation of dignity, the evils of rankism, and the abuse of power associated with ranks;
- To enhance civic power to exercise freedoms of choice, association, assembly and expression;
- To develop an informed, alert and vibrant civil society, and consolidate democracy;
- To help develop transparent and accountable governance at the central and local levels; and
- To promote and protect equal access to human rights and justice.

1.5 Strategies

To attain the above-mentioned objectives the organization shall follow either any or all the strategies as mentioned below:

- To build community-based civic organizations, develop leadership and enhance institutional capacity;
- To develop civic knowledge and awareness among the people organized into different interactive forums;
- To build the capacity of the organized women and men and enable them to be productive, confident, strong and dynamic;
- To develop civic infrastructure and institutions including networks, alliance and coalitions at the grassroots, local and global levels;
- To network with the grassroots, local and global actors, agencies and institutions;
- To pilot action research projects for innovation, replication and extension to improve the life of people;
- To develop, or collaborate or take part in developing models suitable for the healthy and sustainable progress of the present and future generations; and
- To conduct research, policy research, campaign, mobilization and advocacy activities.

2.0 PROGRAMS

2.1. Building Capacity: Civic Education and Awareness

Civic Bangladesh has taken the Capacity Building program to empower the civil society through providing civic education on civic values, cultures, knowledge, skills, and competency and raise their cognitive awareness of free associations and expressions, social and cultural pluralism, respect for cultural diversity and differences among different activists and actors. To develop awareness and capacity of the networks such as Bangladesh Dignity Forum (BDF), Civic Media Net (CIMEN), Civic Education Network (CEN), the program delivers civic awareness through training and orientation on human dignity, political rights, democratic principles and social justice. Also, the program offers a unique learning package that includes reading books entitled “*Jago Saba*” (“All Rise”), “*Sabar Jonno Marjada*” (“Dignity For All”), and “*Gonotantrer Mool Ritin*” (Basic principles of democracy)” published by the organization. Civic Bangladesh further seeks to develop and offer alternative learning opportunities to ease, expedite and sustain the changes.

2.1.1 Civic Education Network (CEN)

Civic Bangladesh is developing Civic Education Network (CEN) as an umbrella of non-governmental developmental organizations. CEN seeks to help build a vigilant, vibrant and responsive civil society through civic knowledge and awareness development for promoting human dignity and rights, justice, democracy and good governance in Bangladesh. To do so, CB Bangladesh has awarded memberships to Catalyst, an NGO based in Rajshahi district, and Adivasi Bikash Kendra (ABIK), another NGO based in Chapai Nawabganj district. CEN was involved delivering civic awareness of the right to human dignity at the divisional level. An account of the training and orientation workshops on Right to Dignity is given below:

2.1.2 Rajshahi Divisional Workshop on “Establishing the Right to Dignity for All”

Bangladesh Dignity Forum, Civic Bangladesh organized a divisional workshop entitled “Establishing the Right to Dignity For All” on 8 May 2010 in the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB) in Rajshahi metropolitan city in cooperation with DAFF – Bangladesh and Catalyst.

Mr. Bayezid Dawla, Executive Director, Civic Bangladesh and also General Secretary, Bangladesh Dignity Forum, keyed the workshop. Individuals, NGO activists, social



workers, academics, lawyers, engineers, physicians, journalists and retired government officials from Sirajganj, Pabna, Natore, Bogra, Joypurhat, Rajshahi, Naogaon and Chapai Nawabganj districts of Rajshahi division took part in the workshop.

The organizations represented to the workshop include STAR, PWD, BUS, PMKS, AUS, Chetona, Protyasha, BOS, DAFF - Bangladesh, Society of Fine Arts, PKSS, PMUS, RUET, Jatiya Mahila Sangstha, ABIK, SDP, Kabius, Sanwar Foundation, and so on.

Chaired by Engineer Musbah Alim, Chairperson, Bangladesh Dignity Forum and Executive Director, Catalyst; the workshop was moderated by Mr. Sadequul Islam, Treasurer, Bangladesh Dignity Forum and also Executive Director, DAFF – Bangladesh.

2.1.3 Rangpur Divisional Workshop on “Establishing the Right to Dignity for All”



Bangladesh Dignity Forum, Civic Bangladesh organized a divisional workshop entitled “Establishing the Right to Dignity For All” on 9 May 2010 in Rotary Club Center in Rangpur metropolitan city in cooperation with Pairaband Janakalyan Unnayan Sanstha, Rangpur and Association for Community and Agricultural Development (ACAD), Lalmonirhat.

Mr. Bayezid Dawla, Executive Director, Civic Bangladesh and also General Secretary, Bangladesh Dignity Forum, keynoted the workshop. NGO activists, social

workers, academics, lawyers, physicians, journalists, political leaders and retired government officials from the Gaibandha, Lalmonirhat, Dinajpur, Rangpur, Nilphamari, and Kurigram districts of Rangpur division took part in the workshop.

The organizations represented to the workshop include RDRS Bangladesh, SUJON, The Hunger Project, ACAD, Begum Rokeya Bangladesh, Pairaband Janakalyan



Sangstha, Bondhon, PAUP, ASA, Begum Rokeya Smriti Sangsad, RPDO, VDRS, Upama Palli Unnayan Sangstha, Manabadhikar Bureau, Debi Chowdhurani Palli Unnayan Kendra, Monoswita Mahila Unnayan Sangstha, CRDC, PUS, Uddam Sangstha, CASPER, Integrated Rural Development Foundation (IRDF), and so on.

Chaired by Engineer Musbah Alim, Chairperson, Bangladesh Dignity Forum and Executive Director, Catalyst; the workshop was moderated by Mr. Md. Ahsan Habib Rabu, journalist and Executive Member, ACAD.

2.1.4 Sylhet Divisional Workshop in Collaboration with Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

Bangladesh Dignity Forum-Civic Bangladesh and Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy co-organized the Sylhet divisional workshop entitled “Dignity For All: Perceptions, Actions and Commitments” on 5 June 2010 at the auditorium of Shilpakala Academy in Sylhet.

Facilitated by the Executive Director of Civic Bangladesh, Mr. Bayezid Dawla who is also the General Secretary of Bangladesh Dignity Forum, the workshop explored the perceptions and experiences of dignity



and its violation, manifestations of indignity at the individual and community levels; adverse impacts of indignity on the individual, academic, social, political and economic lives of people; responses to the violation of dignity; and the strategies recommended and actions committed so far to mobilize social actions to resist the violation of dignity.

Chaired by Engineer Musbah Alim, Chairperson, Bangladesh Dignity Forum, the workshop included participation of different non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs), journalists, lawyers, human rights activists, students, teachers and local government representatives from Sunamganj, Hobiganj, Moulavi Bazar and Sylhet districts of the division.

The workshop concluded with the formation of Sylhet Metropolitan Convening Committee of Bangladesh Dignity Forum. Journalist Mr. Al-Azad, who is also the Vice-Chairman of SARC Environmental Journalists' Forum, Bangladesh, was chosen as the Convener.

2.1.5 Dhaka Divisional Workshop on “Right to Dignity: Commitments and Actions”



Bangladesh Dignity Forum of Civic Bangladesh organized Dhaka Divisional Workshop on “Right to Dignity: Commitments and Actions” on 03 July 2010 in the BNPS conference room at Babar Road of Mohammadpur, Dhaka.

Moderated by Mr. Bayezid Dawla, Executive Director, Civic Bangladesh and General Secretary, Bangladesh Dignity

Forum; the workshop analyzed the factors and actors of indignity as well as identified strategic actions to promote dignity for all. The workshop also pointed out that the United Nations should formulate the second Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on Dignity

including a set of specific goals for all member countries to reach within specific timeframes because, the participants argued, the current MDGs cannot be achieved without addressing the issue of dignity.



The participants took active part in the discussion following the inaugural speech by Engineer Musbah Alim, Chairperson of Bangladesh Dignity Forum; and the keynote presentation by Bayezid Dawla.

Most of the participants were the chief executives of the civic and human rights organizations from different districts of Dhaka division. The districts are

Dhaka, Manikganj, Gazipur, Tangail, Mymensingh, Tangail, Narsingdi, Munshiganj, Sherpur, Netrokona, Kishoreganj, Faridpur, Rajbari, Madaripur, and Gopalganj.

The organizations represented to the workshop are Coalition of Local NGOs in Bangladesh (CLNB), Catalyst, DAFF-Bangladesh, Janaseba Kendra, BAPA, World Vision of Bangladesh, SEEDON, KBD Foundation, SIJLY Foundation, Daridra Samaj Unnayan Sangstha, Dishari Mahila Kendra, CSDC, Bandhan Society, Proshar Seba Foundation, USEKA, SPIED, SMUS, IRDC, PSS, Mousumi Sangstha, GSC, GBSS, BCDP, Mayer Dak, Samata Nari Unnayan Sangstha, ASEA, Anubhab Foundation, BPS, VDS, Born4Care, Palli Mahila Unnayan Sangstha, Coastal Development Partnership, RPDO, AMKS, Save the Women, and the PRSF.

The workshop concluded with the participants' spontaneous expression of solidarity for building a dignity-for-all movement in Bangladesh.

2.1.6 Chittagong Workshop in collaboration with Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

"No other human rights activists or organizations talked about dignity before this workshop. But today we realize dignity is what we need most. We need dignity more than any other human rights..."

This is what the participants articulated in the Chittagong divisional workshop on **"Right to Dignity: Commitments and Actions"** held on 21 August 2010 in the seminar room of Chittagong district Shilpakala Academy. The workshop was organized by Bangladesh Dignity Forum of Civic Bangladesh in collaboration with Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Chittagong.



The workshop was keynoted and moderated by Mr. Bayezid Dawla, Executive Director, Civic Bangladesh and General Secretary, Bangladesh Dignity Forum; following the inaugural speech by Mr. Saroj Kanti Das, President, BARNALY, Chittagong.

The workshop participants argued that rankism exists everywhere in the social and political institutions. Rankism works not only in the government and non-government organizations of Bangladesh but also in all the formal and informal institutions of the world. So, the problem is global. However, rankism can be eliminated from the institutions only when we can build a dignitarian society in Bangladesh as well as in the world. This requires an intensive awareness campaign to create a culture of dignity. A culture of dignity develops only when everyone is treated with dignity.

Individuals and representatives of local government civic, development and business institutions took part in the workshop. The organizations/institutions that represented from the different districts of Chittagong division to the workshop are Chittagong City Corporation, Chittagong District Bar Association, Chittagong Journalists' Union, BARNALY, YPSA, NGO Forum for Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation, UNESCO, Chittagong Society for the Disabled (CSD), UPAKAR, Bihanga, Centre for Human Rights and Social Development (CHRSD), Jum Literature Pong Society, Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha (BNPS), PCDS, Aparajeyo Bangladesh, SAMB, ELLMA, UTSA, UCEP Bangladesh, Songshoptaque, Swapner Neer, Bright Bangladesh Forum, Mamoni, Borony, CLIF, ARJAN, Suchana, PARC, Jibon Chitro, DRISTY, Speed Bangladesh, and ADF Bangladesh.

The workshop was addressed among others by Professor Muhammad Sikander Khan, Vice-Chancellor of East Delta University, and General Secretary, Bangladesh Economic Association, Chittagong; Mr. Mofizul Islam Milon, Organizing Secretary, Bangladesh Dignity Forum; and Mr. Rezaul Karim Hashmi, Member, Bangladesh Dignity Forum.

2.1.7 “Right to Dignity” Workshop in Khulna Division



“Civic Bangladesh is working to develop a culture of dignity in Bangladesh. Once a culture of dignity develops the society will be enlightened and the human souls will be purified eventually to create a revolution in collective consciousness”, said Chairman of

Bangladesh Accreditation Board, Ministry of Industries, Government of Bangladesh Advocate Moinuddin Miaji (Ex MP, MCA, and MPA) while addressing the Khulna divisional workshop on “Right to Dignity: Commitments and Actions” as its chief guest.

The workshop was organized on 04 September 2010 in the Conference Room of Khulna Press Club by Bangladesh Dignity Forum of Civic Bangladesh in collaboration with Centre for Human Rights and Social Development (CHRSD).

Presided over by Advocate Sujit Adhikary, President, Khulna Press Club; and moderated by Advocate Firoz Ahmed, Member-Secretary, Khulna Nagorik Samaj; the workshop was keynoted by Mr. Bayezid Dawla, Executive Director, Civic Bangladesh and General Secretary, Bangladesh Dignity Forum.

Lawyers, journalists, political leaders, academics, local government representatives and officials, and human rights activists, and development workers from different districts of Khulna division took part in the discussion.

The professional groups, civic organizations, and local government institutions represented to the workshop are Khulna City Corporation, Bangladesh Awami League, Rupsha Upazila Parishad, Khulna Bar Association; Khulna Press Club, Khulna Nagorik Samaj, Jonouddog, Centre for Human Rights and Social Development (CHRSD), Jagrata Jubo Sangha (JJS), Nice Foundation, ALO, URMI, CLNB, MOUCHAK, PIACT-Bangladesh, Nari Jagoran, Greehoshukhon, Polly Jagoran, Society for Anti-pollution, CHRD, SONAK, and People's Development Foundation.



President of Khulna district Awami League Mr Sheikh Harunur Rashid Ex MP; Chairman, Rupsha Upazila Parishad; Mr. Liaqat Ali Sharif, Chief Engineer, Khulna City Corporation (KCC); Professor Runu Reza, Councilor, KCC; Mr. SM Zahid Hossain, General Secretary, Khulna Press Club; Mr. Rezaul Karim Hashmi, Executive Director, CHRSD; Mr. Harunur Rashid, Chairman, CLNB; Mr. Farazi Mizanur Rahman, Advocate, Bangladesh Supreme Court; and Professor GM Shindaini, Assistant Editor, The Daily Purbanchal; were among others who took part in the discussion.

2.1.8 “Right to Dignity” Workshop in Barisal Division

Bangladesh Dignity Forum, and the Coalition of Local NGOs in Bangladesh (CLNB) jointly organized a divisional workshop entitled “Right to Dignity: Commitments and Actions” on 29 October 2010 in the BNDN Hall of Barisal City.



Lawyers, journalists, political leaders, academics, human rights activists, business leaders, and development workers from different districts of Barisal division took part in the discussion.

The workshop was keynoted by Mr. Bayezid Dawla, Executive Director, Civic Bangladesh and General Secretary, Bangladesh

Dignity Forum, and moderated by Mr. Harunur Rashid, Chairman, CLNB.

Presided over by Mr. Jahangir Hossain Manik, Vice-President, Barisal Chamber of Commerce; and addressed among others by local political leaders Mirza Abual Hossain Arun, and formerly vice-president of BM College Students' Union Mr. Anwar Hossain, the workshop was conducted by Mr. Rafiqul Islam, Executive Director, Bondhon, a social development organization working in the city.

The workshop covered by local newspapers such as The Daily Barisal Protidin, The Daily Ajker Barta, The Daily Barisal Barta, The Daily Ajker Paribartan, and The Daily Matobad.

2.1.9 Review Workshop on Establishing the Right to Dignity in Bangladesh



Civic Bangladesh organized a two-day workshop on 15 – 16 October 2010 in Dhaka to review its strategic measures, structural arrangements and operational framework of Bangladesh Dignity Forum created to campaign for building a dignitarian society in Bangladesh.

The workshop made an assessment of the progress made so far by Bangladesh Dignity Forum and found that the Forum

has made 'good' progress in mobilizing countrywide participation of people around the workshops held at the divisional level, and organizing voices around its call for spearheading a nationwide dignity4all movement in Bangladesh.

The workshop identified the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) and recommended a set of actions such as forming, strengthening, and activating the operational committees of Bangladesh Dignity Forum at the district level.



The review concluded that Dignity Forum would continue to campaign for establishing dignity as a universal and constitutional right, and creating a culture of dignity in the social, economic and political institutions to help build a dignitarian society in Bangladesh.

2.2 Civil Society and Governance

The Civil Society and Governance Program aims to advance democracy and governance through promoting effective political participation in local governance, and mobilizing demands to make the policy process responsive to the needs of the marginalized and the excluded. To promote accountability and transparency of the local government, it seeks to organize issue-specific interactions, consultations, debates and dialogues. To strengthen the civil society, deepen democracy and promote good governance, however, Civic Bangladesh has developed different networks such as Bangladesh Dignity Forum (BDF). Also it engages with the global civil society to globalise common concerns and interests, and contribute to the efforts at building a more just and equitable world.

2.2.1 Bangladesh Dignity Forum

Civic Bangladesh created Bangladesh Dignity Forum (BDF) to provide a platform for individuals and organizations willing to promote the equal dignity campaign launched in December 2006 by the organization. Civic Bangladesh launched the campaign to achieve the overall objective of developing a dignitarian society fed upon the principles of cohesiveness, flexibility, tolerance, nonviolence, openness, and mutual empathy, respect and co-operation. The Forum secretariat based at Civic Bangladesh and supported by a steering committee has made substantial efforts at mobilizing support for the campaign.

2.2.2 Dignity-for-All Campaign

Bangladesh Dignity Forum (BDF) provides a platform for individuals and civic organizations to advocate with the Government to Bangladesh (GOB) to fulfil its constitutional obligation and commitment. The Constitution of Bangladesh states:

“The Republic shall be a democracy in which ...respect for the dignity and worth of the human person shall be guaranteed...”

--From The Constitution of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh ratified 4 Nov 1972

It is remarkable that Bangladesh is one of the few countries that include dignity in their constitutions. While most countries are only beginning to recognize the significance of dignity and are only beginning to use the language of dignity, Bangladesh did it early in history in its **Proclamation of Independence** dated 10 April 1971 “to ensure for the people of Bangladesh equality, human dignity and social justice”. Civic Bangladesh promotes this campaign also in tune with **Article 1 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, which affirms that: “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights”.

To achieve dignity for all, however, Civic Bangladesh does not find any model to follow; therefore, it is imperative that the organization develop a model replicable for building a dignitarian world. To promote the cause, the campaign undertook a number of individual and public consultations as presented below.

Seminar on “Bangladesh Leading the World: Dignity and Destiny in the 21st Century”

Civic Bangladesh organized a seminar entitled “Bangladesh Leading the World: Dignity and Destiny in the 21st Century” on 03 February 2010 in the VIP Lounge of Jatiya Press Club, Dhaka. The seminar was keynoted by Dr. Pamela A. Gerloff, coauthor, “*Dignity for All*”, and Founder and President, Compelling Vision; and attended by Barrister Tania Amir, Lawyer, The Supreme Court of Bangladesh; as the special guest.

Professor Shafiullah Sarker, Executive Director, Climate Concern Foundation (CCF); Engineer Musbah Alim, Executive Director, Catalyst; Mr. Mozid Mahmud, Executive Director, OSACA; and Dr. Anisuzzaman, Assistant Professor, Gono University; took part in the panel discussion.



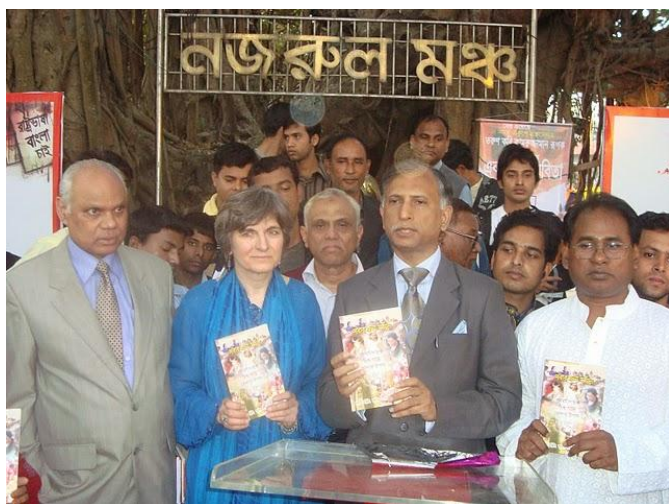
Among the participants were Professor Mozibor Rahman Bhuiyan, formerly Chairman, Jessore Education Board; Dr. Md. Ataur Rahman, Controller-in-Charge, Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University; Dr. M. Ameerul Islam, formerly Director-General, Bangladesh Jute Research Institute; Professor Harunar Rashid, formerly Vice-Principal,

Poet Nazrul Islam Government College, Dhaka; Dr. Golam Mostafa, Child Specialist; Mr. Ashutosh Dey, Disaster Risk Reduction Project Manager, HI; Mr. Swapan Kumer Kundu, Senior Newsroom Editor, Ekushe Television; Mr. Mohammad Nadim, Sub-Editor, The daily Ittefaq; Mrs Kamrunnahr, Senior Program Coordinator, Proshika; Mr. Faisal Bin Majid, Coordinator, Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha (BNPS); and Mr. Abdullah Al Mamun Dipu, Program Officer, Civic Bangladesh.



Mr. Bayezid Dawla, Executive Director, Civic Bangladesh; and General Secretary, Bangladesh Dignity Forum, moderated the seminar.

Launch of “Sabar Jonno Marjada” (“Dignity for All”)



Civic Bangladesh organized the launch of a book entitled “*Sabar Jonno Marjada: Padomarjadabadmukta Bishwa Gorhe Tolar Upay*” on 02 February 2010 at the National Book Fair in Bangla Academy, Dhaka. Translated into Bengali by Mr. Bayezid Dawla and published by Civic Bangladesh, the book was launched by Dr. Pamela A. Gerloff who co-authored the original book entitled “Dignity for All: How to Create a World Without Rankism”, with Robert W.

Fuller. The launch was attended by Professor AAMS Arefin Siddique, Vice-Chancellor, University of Dhaka, as the chief guest; and Professor Dr. Khondokar Bazlul Haque, President, Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA), as the special guest. Translator of the book, Mr. Bayezid Dawla, who is also the Executive Director of Civic Bangladesh, spoke on the occasion.

Open-air Grassroots Meeting at Bhangura, Pabna

Civic Bangladesh organized an open-air meeting with local civil society members including college and school teachers, students, peasants, businessmen, social and political activists on 05 February 2010 at Bhangura in the district of Pabna.



Presided over by Mr. Bayezid Dawla and keynoted by Dr. Pamela Gerloff, the meeting was attended by Mr. Mokbul Hossain, MP as the chief guest; and Mr. Baki Billah, Chairman, Bhangura Upazila Parishad as the special guest.

Conducted by Mr. Md. Monowar Hossain Chowdhury Shaheen, Lecturer in Management, Chatmohar Women's Degree College; the meeting was addressed among others by Engineer Zahangir Alam, Professor Ishaque Ali, Mr. Afzal Uddin, Mr. Swapan Kumer Kundu, Mr. Asibur Rahman Bablu, Mr. Subrata Kumar, and Mr. Abdul Latif.

Meeting with Dhaka University Vice-Chancellor



Dr. Pamela A. Gerloff and Mr. Bayezid Dawla met Professor AAMS Arefin Siddique, Vice-Chancellor, University of Dhaka in the latter's office on the university campus on 31 January 2010, and exchanged ideas and information about promoting the dignity-for-all campaign. The Vice-Chancellor

reiterated his commitment to supporting the initiative taken by Civic Bangladesh for creating a model of dignity in Bangladesh that could be replicated in other countries of the world. Voice of America (VOA) International Radio Broadcaster Mr. Anis Ahmed was also present during the meeting.

An Interactive Cultural Evening Hosted by Bangladesh Dignity Forum



Bangladesh Dignity Forum accorded a reception to Dr. Pamela A. Gerloff in the evening of 31 January 2010 in its secretariat at Civic Bangladesh.

General Secretary of the Forum Mr. Bayezid Dawla who hosted the gathering facilitated informal interactions between the Forum

members and Dr. Gerloff. Noted TV artiste Mr. Moloy Chaki sang a number of melodious songs for Dr. Gerloff and the Forum members.

2.3 Right to Information and Freedom of Expression (RIFE)

The organization initiated the Right to Information and Freedom of Expression (RIFE) Program to mobilize the journalists to exercise press freedom, develop an informed and alert civil society and hold the government to account. To do so, it has taken preparatory measures for building the capacity of the local journalists so that they can exercise their press freedom and connect the remote communities to the mainstream information networks. In this regard, the program has taken an initiative for building a network of community journalists and training them to play effective roles in covering the unreported issues, events and incidents of economic, social and political importance. Moreover, to make the voters an informed choice, it plans a media campaign to generate public awareness about the electoral rules and regulations, parties, policies, candidates and the process ahead of the parliamentary and local government elections.

2.3.1 Civic Media Net (CIMEN)



Civic Media Network (CIMEN) is an emerging network of local media professionals committed to building an informed, alert and vibrant civil society, promoting human rights and improving governance. Civic Bangladesh has created this network to empower the local media through training, research and campaigns to promote press freedom, freedom of expression, right to information, e-governance,

transparency and accountability as well as to curb public corruption, indignity and injustice.

CIMEN monitors progress in the implementation of the constitutional and legal obligations of the Government of Bangladesh and its commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

I. Constitution of Bangladesh

Article 39: Freedom of thought and conscience and of speech

39 (1) Freedom of thought and conscience is guaranteed.

39 (2) Subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interests of the security of the State, friendly relations with foreign states, public order, decency or morality, or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence –

(a) the right of every citizen to freedom of speech and expression; and

(b) freedom of the press;

are guaranteed.

II. Right to Information Law 2009

The Government of Bangladesh framed the Right to Information Law 2009 to ensure the free flow of information and people's right to information. The law argues that the law has been approved since The Constitution of Bangladesh recognizes the freedom of thought, conscience and speech as people's basic right and since the Right to Information is an integral part of the freedoms of thought, conscience and speech.

III. Article XIX, Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

"Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."

— Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 19.

CIMEN's Aim

To promote the right to information and freedom of expression through promoting community journalism and mainstreaming the voices of the remote and excluded communities in the media

CIMEN's Objectives

The objectives of the CIMEN are:

- To develop a network of community-based journalists at grassroots;
- To empower communities through information transfer, and develop an information society;
- To develop an e-media network to incorporate the inaudible voices excluded from the democratic development process;
- To promote role of community journalists in promoting good governance by increasing transparency and curbing public corruption;
- To feed information into the campaigns led by Bangladesh Dignity Forum;
- To monitor the implementation of the Right to Information Law; and

- To influence policy reforms relating to the constitutional and legal obligations of the government of Bangladesh and its commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

2.4 Education and Development

The Education and Development Program pursues a new education model suitable for the 21st century due to a predictable collapse of the Industrial Age. The education models that have been devised and practiced so far until now to suit the needs of an Industrial Civilization appear to be replaced with the one/s compatible with post-industrial sustainable development to minimize the devastating impacts of climate change. The organization seeks to pilot an ecological education model under a “US-Bangladesh Sister School Initiative”.

2.4.1 Meeting with Director-General, Directorate of Primary Education

Director-General of the Directorate of Primary Education Mr. Shyamol Kanti Ghosh, who is also Additional Secretary to the Government of Bangladesh, hosted a meeting with Dr. Pamela A. Gerloff on 31 January 2010 in the directorate at Mirpur, Dhaka. The meeting discussed the probable areas of



cooperation in the field of education by using the model of Nobel Laureate Poet Rabindranath Tagore. Mr. Ghosh committed necessary support for experimenting with a new education model proposed by Dr. Gerloff. The meeting was also attended by Mr. Bayezid Dawla Executive Director, Civic Bangladesh.

2.5 Networking and Collaborating at Local and Global Levels

Civic Bangladesh networks with citizen and research organizations at the local and global levels. Currently, it is working in networking relationship with CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation (<http://www.civicus.org/new/media/MembersDirectory.doc>) and networks with World Movement for Democracy (WMD), and World Youth Movement for Democracy (WYMD). Also, it engaged in active participation with Dignity for All, and the Global Core Team of Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies (<http://www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/coreteamlong.php#dawla>). In addition, the organization has become a member of Equity and Justice Network in Bangladesh. Further, it exchanged ideas and information at the national and international levels by using different social networks.

Civic Bangladesh explored opportunities of collaboration with social development organizations to advance the cause of dignity and justice in Bangladesh. In pursuit of such opportunity, the Executive Director of the organization exchanged opinions with Barrister

Amirul Islam and Barrister Tania Amir to forge ties of collaboration and cooperation with the Law and Society Trust Bangladesh (LSTB). The organization also allied with Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy to promote the dignity for all campaign across the country.

2.5.1 Meeting with Director-General, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy



(Communication), Civic Bangladesh.

Director-General of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy Mr. Kamal Lohani hosted a meeting with Dr. Pamela Gerloff and Mr. Bayezid Dawla on 01 February 2010 in his office in Dhaka. The meeting discussed the areas of cooperation between Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy and Civic Bangladesh in promoting a culture of dignity in Bangladesh. The meeting was also attended by Mr. Mahiuddin Bhuiyan, Program Officer

2.5.2 Meeting on Strengthening the Capacity of Bangladesh Dignity Forum

Mr. Bayezid Dawla and Dr. Pamela Gerloff met Barrister Amirul Islam, who wrote the principles of dignity, justice and freedom into the Constitution of Bangladesh ratified in 1972, and Barrister Tania Amir on 03 February 2010. The meeting held at The Law Associates in Dhaka discussed strategies to strengthen Bangladesh Dignity Forum, enhance institutional capacity, and extend its operation to develop a countrywide dignity movement. Barrister Amirul Islam and Barrister Tania Amir committed support to building the capacity of the Forum.



In addition, meetings between the Executive Director of Civic Bangladesh and the Project Director of Bangladesh Ovibashi Mohila Sramik Association (BOMSA) were held to discuss areas of cooperation between the two organizations.

2.5.3 Mayday Seminar on “Dignity and Rights of Migrant Workers”

Photo shows (from left) Mr. Bayezid Dawla, Executive Director, Civic Bangladesh and General Secretary, Bangladesh Dignity Forum; Ms. Hasina A. Inam, Chief Functionary, DanChurchAid (DCA) – Bangladesh; Mr. Mustak Hassan Md. Iftekhar, Director-General, NGO Affairs Bureau (NGOAB), Prime Minister’s Office; Dr. Zafar Ahmed Khan, Secretary, Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment, Government of the People’s

Republic of Bangladesh; Mr. Mohammad Bashir, Member, BAIRA; Mr. Syed Saiful Haque, Chairman, WARBE Development Foundation; and Ms. Lily Jahan, President, BOMSA.



Bangladesh Ovivashi Mahila Shramik Association (BOMSA), Civic Bangladesh and WARBE Development Foundation jointly organized a seminar entitled “Dignity and Rights of Migrant Workers” on the

occasion of Mayday 2010 in the VIP Lounge of National Press Club, Dhaka.

Sponsored by European Commission (EC) and DanChurchAid (DCA), the seminar was keynoted by Ms Sumaiya Islam, Director, BOMSA, and Vice-Chairperson, Bangladesh Dignity Forum; and Mr. Bayezid Dawla, Executive Director, Civic Bangladesh, and General Secretary, Bangladesh Dignity Forum.

Dr. Nurul Islam, Director, BMET; Mr. Kazi Abul Kalam, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment; Advocate Adilur Rhman Khan, Odhikar; and former Ambassador Ms. Nasim Firdaus, Executive Director, Bangladesh Alliance for Women Leadership took part as guest speakers in the discussion on the keynote papers.



Among those who also took part in the discussion were Engineer Ms. Musbah

Alim, Executive Director, Catalyst and Chairperson, Bangladesh Dignity Forum; Mr. Sadequul Islam, Executive Director, DAFF – Bangladesh and Treasurer, Bangladesh Dignity Forum; and Dr. Anisuzzaman, Assistant Professor, Gono University, and Executive Member, Bangladesh Dignity Forum.

The seminar was addressed by Mr. Mustak Hassan Md. Iftekhar, Director-General, NGO Affairs Bureau (NGOAB), Prime Minister’s Office; Mr. Syed Saiful Haque, Chairman, WARBE Development Foundation; and Mr. Mohammad Bashir, Member, BAIRA.

Chaired and moderated by Ms. Hasina A. Inam, Chief Functionary, DCA – Bangladesh; the event was addressed by its chief guest Dr. Zafar Ahmed Khan, Secretary, Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment, Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh.

The discussion was covered by the print and electronic media including Boishakhi Television, Ekushe Television (ETV), and ATN Bangla Television.

3.0 PUBLICATION

Civic Bangladesh published in February 2010 a book entitled *Sabar Jonno Marjada: Padomarjadabadmukta Bishwa Gorhe Tolar Upay* (“Dignity for All: How to Create a World Without Rankism” by Robert W Fuller and Pamela A. Gerloff) translated into Bangla by Bayezid Dawla.



4.0 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The organizational management staff includes five officers supporting field network management, training and education, communication, finance, accounts, admin and human resource activities under the leadership of the Executive Director. The Documentation and Monitoring Officer resigned in the middle of the year assigning personal grounds. The administrative support was provided by a caretaker.

5.0 ACCOUNTS AND ADMINISTRATION

The organizational finance, accounts and administrative activities were well managed by an officer. The financial account for 2010 was duly audited by an external audit firm and an audit report was presented to the organization. The stable and smooth implementation of organizational activities was affected due to a lack of funding support. The programs were implemented so far with the internal resources mobilized by the Executive Director from his income and loans.