

## MONTHLY UPDATES, APRIL 2010

The Affiliated Networks for Social Accountability (ANSA), housed within the Institute of Governance Studies, BRAC University organized three Gambhira performances titled ‘Tothyo Jana Harge Odhikar’, to raise awareness on the Right to Information Act, in Dhaka, on Pohela Boishakh, (14 April 2010). ‘Tothyo Jana Harge Odhikar’ was written, directed and performed by the renowned theatre group, Prachyanat, at three significant locations around Dhaka city.

Gambhira is a folk theatre format extremely popular in the northwest of Bangladesh. The Gambhira explored many problems ordinary people run into when faced with having incorrect, or lack of, information about government services and practices, and how the Right To Information Act may be used to rectify that situation.

The 2nd Pilot Program of CSTP on PSD held at BCDM, Rajendrapur (Residential Phase) and Dhaka (Non-residential or Experiential Learning Phase) from April 10 – 28, 2010. The training program has been organized by the Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) in partnership with Institute of Governance Studies (IGS), BRAC University and KDI School of Public Policy and Management, South Korea. The training program is a part of initiative undertaken by Bangladesh Investment Climate Fund (BICF), in association with the Ministry of Establishment, Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh. Seventeen Deputy Secretaries of the GoB have participated the training program. The program included a basic training on Private Sector Development (PSD) and experiential learning through field attachment and private sector company visit programs to bridge the knowledge and skill gaps of the Civil Servants (CS) and make them sensitive and proactive change agents for private sector led economic growth in Bangladesh. Journalism Training and Research Initiatives - JATRI of IGS organized a Dialogue on ‘Right to Information Act & Investigative Journalism Techniques’. Ralph A. Frammolino the celebrity Journalist of The Los Angeles Times facilitated the discussion with the journalists of The Daily Adhinayak (upcoming), who had also received training from JATRI in the month of March. JATRI organized an exposure visit of crime reporters to Anti Corruption Commission on 6 April, 2010 for senior and mid-career journalists from leading newspapers who had also received a specialized training course on ‘Techniques of Investigative Reporting’ from JARTI in December 2009. Issues related to crime, corruption and unlawful activities were discussed while visiting the commission. Colonel Hanif Iqbal, Director General-ACC briefed the activities of ACC followed by a question-answer session.

JATRI organized its 1st refreshers on 20 April, 2010. The refresher was facilitated by Mr. Mohammad Sanaullah, Head of News and Program, ABC Radio. The main training was organized the last year on 28-30 April. Ms. Barbara Dury, former CBS 60 Minutes Producer and Mr. Farid Hossain, Bureau Chief, AP facilitated the training. The total number of the participants was 20 in the training. This Training was designed for Broadcast Journalists of Rajshahi and representatives from different broadcast participated in this three-day program. Hasan Azizul Huq, renowned writer was present in the opening session as the Chief Guest. Professor Nurullah, Pro-VC, Rajshahi

University distributed certificates among the participants in the closing session of the training. Probbash Amin, Editor, News and Current Affairs, ATN News and Mir Masrur Zaman, Joint News Editor, Channel i were present in the training program as resource persons. The program was intended to enhance the knowledge of the participants about investigative reporting for broadcast media in Bangladesh. The training was also focused on the ethics of investigative journalism with a purpose to make the participants practice the ethics while reporting. JATRI organized a lecture on “Broadcast Journalism in Bangladesh” at JATRI premises on Thursday, 08 April, 2010 at 10.00 am. Prominent broadcaster and Chief of Bangla Service of Voice of America (VOA), Mr. Iqbal Bahar Choudhury delivered the lecture which was followed by a question-answer session. Senior journalists, media professionals from electronic and print media attended the program.

Munyema Hasan and Mohammad Sirajul Islam, Research Associates of IGS attended a regional workshop on right to information (RTI) titled “Toward More Open and Transparent Governance in South Asia” held in New Delhi, India from 27 to 29 April, 2010. Delegates from Mexico, Canada, and South Africa along with the eight SAARC countries participated in the workshop. The Chief Information Commissioner of Central Information Commission, India inaugurated the workshop and stakeholders from SAARC countries presented country reports on State of Transparency Regimes in South Asia, Challenges and Opportunities before Governments, Information Commissions, and Media and Civil Society. Participants from Mexico and South Africa spoke on Access to Information. A resolution on priority for different stakeholders and the region was adopted at the end of the workshop where two ideas floated by the IGS team were included. These are comparative studies for best practices on RTI in South Asia and annual meeting of all Information Commissioners of South Asia for their capacity building. Indian Institute of Public Administration organized the workshop with support from the World Bank Institute.