



SUPRO's Campaign News

TAX JUSTICE

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Ensuring tax justice ensures prosperity and progress Grassroots voices raised on the eve of National Income Tax Day

With the goal to increase taxpayers and strengthen relationship between the potential taxpayers and tax administration, the Bangladesh government observes National Income Tax Day on September 15. Observation of the day was followed by four-day tax fair organised in all the 64 districts. SUPRO actively

discussions in which over 36 thousand grassroots men and women, activists, journalists and representatives of local CBOs and NGOs participated. Folk songs and street theatres were performed in 6 districts that were observed by no less than 10 thousand viewers.

Postcard campaign in all the 45 districts of SUPRO working area was also part of the day observation. Postcards containing four demands, namely (i) ensure people-friendly service for the taxpayer; (ii) ensure digitisation of tax system; (iii) reduce VAT on essential services and goods and (iv) ensure minimum 3 per cent and 6 per cent allocation of GDP in health and education sector respectively were signed by community people and



Mobile van campaign

participated in the government events both at the national and local level.

SUPRO also organised a separate weeklong campaign around the country observing National Income Tax Day. Its 600 network members facilitated the events upholding the theme 'Ensuring tax justice ensures prosperity and progress'.

SUPRO's campaign committees of 37 districts organised processions, rally, human chain and

were sent to the Prime Minister, finance minister, chairman of the National Board of Revenue, lawmakers and deputy commissioners.

Mobile van campaign in the Dhaka city was yet another event that drew attention of people. A professional folk song group and SUPRO secretariat team together developed a powerful script and staged folk song, moving on a pickup van from place to place in the capital city on September 15.



Discussion meeting



Street drama



Human chain



Rally

SUPRO produced position papers, leaflets and posters containing the theme, demands and aspiration of the grassroots for distribution in the events observing the day.

SUPRO tax day campaign reached more than 50 thousand people across the country at the national, sub-national and local level. Apart

from community people, the campaign reached both policy leaders and duty bearers, which will contribute to strengthening relation between the tax administration and civil society actors. News of the campaign was covered by 114 local and 19 national print media houses, nine 9 electronic media houses and 14 online news websites.

University students talk on tax and fiscal justice issues



Finance minister is giving champion trophy

SUPRO jointly with Dhaka University Debating Society (DUDS) organised inter-university debate championship, in September 4-7, 2014 at Dhaka University centring on the theme of 'Ensuring tax justice ensures prosperity and progress'. Forty teams from 24 public and private universities took part in the four-day competition.

Mr Abul Maal Abdul Muhith, honourable finance minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh attended the closing ceremony as the chief guest. Professor AAMS Arefin Siddique, honourable vice-chancellor, University of Dhaka, SUPRO general secretary Md Arifur Rahman, Professor Dr. Mahbuba Nasreen, moderator of DUDS, attended as special guests.

Mr Muhith congratulated DUDS for initiating (BP format) debate competition for the first time at Dhaka University and thanked them for choosing tax and budget issues as debate topics. He gave special thanks to SUPRO for giving support to DUDS. He also praised the organisation for its campaign for tax justice. 'Such initiatives draw people's attention to the proper management of the country's internal resource mobilisation and its

effective use for the benefit of people,' said Mr Muhith about SUPRO's tax justice campaign.

Participants	Number
University	24
Team	40
Debaters	120
Adjudicator	50
Observer	115
Volunteer	105
Organizer	50
Audience	551

Professor Siddique noted that debate encourages rational thinking and praised DUDS for organising the event and SUPRO for their sponsorship.

Mr Rahman conveyed special thanks to DUDS saying that engagement of such youth organisations will bring much benefit to the tax justice campaign in the long run. 'This is the beginning of what we hope will be a long journey together,' he added. He expressed gratitude to the finance minister and the vice-chancellor for their gracious presence and valuable remarks.

Dhaka University through its Institute of Business Administration team won the championship, followed by runner-up BRAC University.

Effort launched to build up strategic relations with the officials of NBR

As a strong strategic relationship between civil society organisations and citizen actors doing tax justice campaign and tax administration is a prerequisite for an effective tax justice campaign, SUPRO regularly organise formal meetings and informal communication with the National Board of Revenue. Concerns are shared, voices raised and grassroots' expectations



Meeting with local tax official

voiced at these meetings organised both at national and local level NBR officials.

During this phase SUPRO's 43 district campaign committee leaders attended a number of formal and informal discussions with 83 local tax officials that included Divisional Tax Commissioner, Deputy Tax Commissioner, Assistant Tax Commissioner, Tax Inspector and Tax Collectors. At national level, SUPRO Director and team members had several meetings with five high officials of NBR, Ghulam Hussain, Chairman, SM Aminul Karim, Member-Tax Policy, Kalipado Haldar, Member-Legal Enforcement, Md Chowdhury Amir Hossain, Member- Information Management & Service, and Md. Rustom Ali Molla, Commissioner of Tax, Zone 4, Dhaka.

All these meetings were successful in terms of expressing grassroots concerns and building strategic relation between SUPRO, NBR and grassroots communities.

Capacity building of grassroots campaigners on tax justice continues



Master trainer training at national level

The issue of tax justice is gradually gaining importance in the country's development agenda as citizen actors and development practitioners are dealing with issue with much more seriousness than ever. While doing campaign on people's right to tax justice, we increasingly feel that the issue campaigners need to much strengthen their knowledge and understanding of the complex dynamics of tax issue. Hence, SUPRO keeps capacity building of grassroots campaigners as one of its core objective of its tax justice campaign and plans to train at least 90 master trainers and 600 trainers on tax justice campaign in all the 45 districts of its working area from the period of April 2014 to March 2015.

As part of the plan, two three-day training of trainers sessions on tax justice were held at SUPRO office, one on August 26-28 and the other on September 2-4 this year. The participants divided in two groups attended the training. During the first phase of the project total 39 grassroots leaders, 6 women and rest 33 men, were trained as master trainers. Among them one is National Council member, 11 District Secretary and 18 District Campaign Committee members.

The campaigners trained as master trainers will transfer their knowledge and skill to the Campaign Committee members of their respective district. The process has already started and so far 47 grassroots campaigners, 10 women and rest 37 men, have received orientation from the master trainers.



Orientation at grassroots level

SUPRO joined the 7th CRAFT Strategic Meeting in Kenya



CRAFT member are in a business meeting

SUPRO Executive Board member MA Quader and Oxfam Policy and Campaign Officer Dhana Ranjan Tripura attended a two-day strategic meeting of Campaign for Research and Advocacy for Fair Taxation, in short CRAFT, at Naivasha, Kenya in June 26-27 this year. SUPRO is an active member of CRAFT since 2012. It is also a member of

African Forum and Network on Debt and Development (AFRDAD), ZIMBABWE, Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC), NIGERIA, Egyptian Centre for Economic and Social Rights (ECESR) EGYPT, Forum Civil (FC), SENEGAL, Publiez Ce Que Vous Payez (PCQVP), MALI, Southern & Eastern African Trade, Information and Negotiations Institute (SEATINI), UGANDA, Tax Justice Network-Africa (TJN-A), KENYA, Third World Network-Africa (TWN-A), GHANA,

and Oxfam Novib, The Netherlands.

The June event was a strategic meeting where all the CRAFT members' representatives along with issue experts met to share activities, achievements and lessons learnt with a view to strengthen the movement in their own constituencies and also at global level.

SUPRO engaged in formation of Asia Tax Justice Alliance

September 2, 2014 marked the birth of a region-wide consolidation of the previously scattered tax justice movement in Asia. Over 60 leaders of citizen movement, civil society organisations and trade unions came together in Bangkok to build a regional alliance on tax justice in Asia. On behalf of SUPRO Chairperson Mustafizur Rahman Khan took part in the process.



Leaders of citizen movements having in the business session

Despite the differences in country contexts, organisational capacities, political opinions and positions of individual members, the 2-day regional assembly eventually succeeded to form the Asian Tax and Fiscal Justice Alliance and set out its initial action plans.

The new Asian Tax Justice and Fiscal Alliance will serve as a platform to promote exchange, cooperation and joint efforts in the region on tax justice campaign. It will also work closely with the Global Alliance for Tax Justice and draw on its resources and expertise.



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