



ACC
Nation's Conscience

QUARTERLY NEWS UPDATE

ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION

“ZERO TOLERANCE TO CORRUPTION”



Issue No. 4

Saturday December 6, 2008

Anti-Corruption Movement

“As citizens of a spiritual land you treasure the qualities of a good human being: honesty, kindness, charity, integrity, unity, respect for our culture and traditions, love for our country and for God. The future is neither unseen nor unknown. It is what we make of it. What work we do with our two hands today will shape the future of our nation. Our children's tomorrow has to be created by us today.”

His Majesty's Coronation address

“VOICES” OF THE PEOPLE

Thuenlam (close relation) is corruption, Without Thuenlam there is no corruption. Fighting corruption is a difficult task because everything works on Thuenlam. Corruption is related to human greed. As long as human greed is insatiable, fighting corruption would be a daunting task. It is like every Buddhist trying to gain a place in heaven after death.

KEZANG TSHERING, RESEARCHER

Favoring friends and relatives in service delivery is a form of corruption. I would be fair and impartial in delivering my service. Let us be indifferent and impartial in our job responsibility.

SHACHA, RANGER

I love my dad because he keeps his promises.

SONAM, STUDENT, CLASS PP

Journalists in many ways are crusaders against the ills in society. As such, we have a critical role to play in stamping out corruption. I am saddened by the growth of consumerist culture in our society which drives people to extreme forms of greed. As a journalist, I would do my utmost to fight corruption in all forms so that our country does not go down the gutter, that a corrupt official's action does not deprive the education of a needy child somewhere out there.

TENZIN RIGDEN, BHUTAN TIMES

Corruption is misuse and abuse of authority or any activities not done in line with the prescribed rules and regulations. Corruption can be prevented if everybody joins in the fight against corruption and not leave it solely for ACC. It is not ACC's job alone but the ruling government should also be firm and concrete in its action against corruption. Let us support ACC in its fight against corruption by abiding by the rules and regulations and by being morally responsible in our actions.

LOKNATH, RSTA OFFICER

Integrity is not only important for the public servants but is equally important for the private sector too.

Role of Anti-Corruption Commission should be to induce a new culture of intolerance to unofficial deals and to promote transparency and accountability.

DR. BRIAN SHAW

Corruption is cheating others. It can be prevented by being honest. If everyone is honest then there will be no corruption.

PEMA K. LHAZIN, STUDENT, CLASS IV

Doing anything for personal gain at the cost of the society at large is corruption. Tame your mind, self reflection on one's action that can impact the society at large and self control can prevent corruption.

LOPEN KUNZANG, MONK

Corruption is one side of a coin, and we the people have to be another side of a coin, so that we become one and fight against corruption.

KELZANG THINLEY, BBSC

Corruption is stealing, power misuse, not being honest, resource misuse, laziness to carry out responsibilities sincerely. Corruption can be prevented by instituting moral and value education for youth through school curriculum and other system improvement and by rewarding those who report corruption. As a teacher we can create awareness among the youth and promote ethics by discouraging favoritism in school activities and encouraging clean honest conduct in examination and other school activities.

MEGHRAJ TAMANG, VICE PRINCIPAL, MHSS

Poor service delivery and giving advantage to one person over the other because you know him or you gain something from that person is corruption. Such practice deprives those who are poor and who do not have connections. As a taxi driver, I want to be honest with my passengers and charge them the correct rate and if someone forgets his/her bag in the taxi, I will return it.

PHUB DORJI, TAXI DRIVER

Corruption is misusing power and position by officials for ones own benefit or to favor those close to themselves. This creates injustice and deprives the poor of their rights to livelihood. The small role I can play is to be honest and share what I understand with the people in my own community.

AP LHABA, FARMER

Misuse of office vehicles for private use or selling fuel or vehicle spare parts for personal income is corruption. Corruption occurs at low levels because of low salary and lack of incentives. For instance a driver's daily subsistence allowance of Nu.150 a day is not enough to pay for room rents and the meals. Therefore, when the ends cannot be met people resort to corrupt activities. This is a simple example of causes of corruption. As a driver I can help create awareness among my colleagues that we should refrain from corrupt practices because it is risky and the cost of corruption can have huge implications for our family.

SONAM DORJI, DRIVER

Cheating in examination and favoring one student over the other is corruption. Speak against such act by putting your opinion in the suggestion box.

THINLEY PHUNTSO, STUDENT, CLASS XI

Corruption is a wrong doing which people normally do for the personal benefits of themselves or their friends and relatives. Corruption can be prevented by educating/creating awareness to people by emphasizing that “IT IS WRONG”. Corruption is a wrong doing which should waver in one's soul for so long that it will prevent one from committing another act of corruption. Public education is important and 60% of ACC's budget should be allocated for funding public education. The ACC should assist in increasing pay and allowance while promotion should be based on dedicated work and not taken as a right. To seek the support of everyone anti-corruption campaigns should be carried out in the villages. Let the citizens be informed of their responsibility to build harmony in the nation.

PHUB DEM, ECONOMIST

Taking what is not yours is corruption. As a mother if you find something that is not yours in your child's bag, ask your child to return it and say sorry.

KESANG CHODEN, MOTHER

Influencing a person's point of view to have your own way is corruption. For instance in our case, if budget allocated for plantation is misused or misappropriated for other activities that favors personal interests then it is corruption. Similarly Bhutanese gift giving culture and bribery are intertwined. Clear conscience and exemplary leadership is necessary to separate the thin line. Let us be responsible for our action.

SONAM, FORESTRY OFFICER

Corruption is seen from three different angles: political corruption, economic corruption and bureaucratic corruption. Corruption occurs when there is monopoly, huge discretionary powers, lack of transparency and accountability. Corruption in the form of favoritism and nepotism occurs due to our close knit society where we have a lot of obligation to each other. As an individual, corruption can be prevented by being responsible, being accountable to our actions and being transparent in what ever we do.

TASHI PENJORE, RCSC

Corruption starts from a simple incident to big complex issues. In schools, partiality, favoring one student over the other for various reasons is corruption. As a teacher I would promote transparency through the school system of giving back evaluated examination papers to the students and hear their comments and feed back and answer the queries.

DOLAY TSERING, TEACHER

Don't copy in the examination. It is bad. I hate those who copy.

TENZIN TSHOKIE, STUDENT, CLASS III

INTERNATIONAL ANTI CORRUPTION DAY & NATIONAL CORRUPTION FREE WEEK
09-17 December, 2008



AGAINST

CORRUPTION



AS YOU SOW, SO SHALL YOU REAP!

In a brief way, one has to believe in karma, which is caused by the root circumstance of self, or ego, through contributing negative or positive circumstances that cause passions or emotions. Buddhist theory about karma is different than the theories of any eternalist religion. Eternalists who have faith in God believe that if they please God, there will be heaven when they die, or if God is unhappy with them, God will punish them and there will be hell. It is not enough to think this. According to Buddhist doctrine, because there is a self, self-attachment is supposed to be changed to selfless wisdom through abstaining from non-virtue, including the ten non-virtues, and accumulating the ten virtues.

Logically, if a self exists, unless that self is purified, the self's ordinary mind will be continuous. As long as there is a self, it causes deep suffering and also momentary happiness unless fully enlightened. If the self is continuous, there has to be the phenomena of death, the phenomena of sickness, and the many negative phenomena of suffering. So, this self that is the root of suffering is supposed to be purified from believing in karma, abstaining from negative karma, and accumulating positive karma, which causes happiness for this life and causes rebirth in the higher realms for the next life onward until gaining confidence and attaining the state of enlightenment.

There is no question that those who are corrupt in this life will have negative consequences in future lives as a result of the bad karma they cause from their negative actions with bad intentions. Even in this life, whoever starts to become corrupt has already started to be haunted by their demon of deception and dishonesty, although it may seem from momentarily apparent circumstances that they are acquiring money, possessions, or any kind of profit from their actions. They have to worry day and night about when other people will figure out they are corrupt, and they can become extremely worried about when the police or government will find out what they have done and when they will be put in jail and lose their positions. They cannot sleep well, they cannot relax, and they cannot actually enjoy themselves with their families and friends unless they are idiots, because they have to continually think of their faults and guilt, so they become full of fear and paranoia about being caught and punished. Their family is also tormented by worrying about their relative who has become corrupt. Therefore, their lives will not be normal or comfortable. Whatever they gain materially through corruption does not make any sense, because they have totally lost their happiness since they have no capacity to enjoy it.

The citizens of Bhutan really need many profoundly wise leaders to influence them positively, often advising them about cause, effect, and future consequences in the long term, not thinking only about momentary circumstances and copying modern westerners who, in this degenerate time are materialistic and want instant gratification and material rewards, so they do not think about how to keep their own countries in peace and comfortable because they are excited about material power, so they just choose temporary benefit and advantage, with nobody paying attention to what will be caused ultimately.

Among the citizens of Bhutan, there must be some who have keen faculties and can be incisive, thoughtful leaders who can provide long-term benefit. Often, countries are ruined by their own citizens, just like within the physical body, harmful internal bacteria can be powerfully negative. One is supposed to be alert and prevent this by feeding and increasing positive beneficial bacteria, which can overpower the negative from positive energy. For this to occur, from inside of the country, it is necessary to have very wise, insightful people who can determine what is beneficial for the country of Bhutan, not only temporarily but for the long term.

HE Dungse Thinley Norbu

BHUTANESE STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN SAARC DEBATE

Tshering Penjor and Puja Subedi from Motithang Higher Secondary School represented Bhutan at the SAARC round competition for the 11th Dr. Mahbub ul Haq Memorial Inter-School debate held in New Delhi on 24 October 2008 on the topic "All countries in the world, rich and poor, are vulnerable to corruption; so corruption is not a development issue at all".

The annual debating competition is organized by the UNDP and the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation.

Tshering Penjor won the best speaker for the motion and Sheza Alqera Atiq of Pakistan won the best speaker against the motion.

The following paper against the motion was presented by Puja Subedi.

Corruption is commonly defined as the misuse of entrusted power for private gain. In a normally functioning society with high level of awareness, every member as an individual and an organization ensures that the next person or organization is not corrupted since they know that it will affect them in short or long term. This is the scenario in developed countries.

In developing nation, poor governance, high poverty rates, lack of press freedom and weak judiciary plague the normal functioning of the society. When we say developing, it not only refers to economical and infrastructural development but also in terms of education, health services, media, technology etc. In developing nations the awareness level is very low due to low literacy rate and there is also large discretion of power.



When development activity occurs, there is a large inflow of money from the country's own resources and foreign aid agencies. Due to poor governance, this money is not properly utilized and those officials enjoying discretion power put it away for their private benefit. Moreover, a developing nation is usually economically poor and thus the government officials are lowly paid, which forces them to accept bribes to support their family.

Researchers have shown that high poverty is seen as the breeding grounds for corruption, when the awareness level remains low and those enjoying great privileges divert the money allotted for those living below

poverty lines into their own bank accounts and the poor have to indulge into corrupt practices to survive. The poor are in no status or are absolutely unaware to protest. This is how development becomes a major factor in breeding corruption, since money means greed and greed means unfair means, i.e., corruption.

Moreover developing nations also suffer from political instability which results in dictatorship. Under such government, the press is harassed and enjoys no freedom to report. According to the reports by Reporters Beyond Borders, Non-governmental bodies for reporters, the third world countries have the worst press freedom with high number of harassment cases towards the journalists.

And similarly the judicial body is either dependent or weak. This is due to two factors, one pressure from political leaders and the other low salaries for judges due which they indulge in corrupt practices.

When a censored media combines with weak judiciary, the corrupted politicians have less to fear and they keep on indulging in corrupt practices which encourages to take the same path since there is no or minimal punishment. This again results in high corruption rate in developing nations.

Therefore, developing countries are more vulnerable corruption, since they have nothing to use to fight corruption.

PUJA SUBEDI,
Class XI, Motithang Higher Secondary School

THE COST OF CORRUPTION

Corruption can reduce a country's GDP by more than 0.5 percent. Corruption is not just a national but a global problem, because large-scale corruption frequently involves international transactions and players. - (IMF)

One-third of public investment in many Asian and Pacific countries is spent on bribes or lines the pockets of officials. It also suggests that corrupt practices can cost as much as one-sixth of a country's potential gross domestic product. - (ADB)

More than \$ 1 trillion (USD 1,000 billion) is paid in bribes each year and that the comprehensive estimate would well exceed USD1.5 trillion amounting to 5% of the world economy. Countries that tackle corruption and improve their rule of law can increase their national

incomes by as much as four times in a long run and child mortality rate can fall as much as 75%. - (WBI research)

Investment in corrupt countries is almost 5% less than in countries that are relatively corruption free. - (IMF)

One East Asian country is estimated to have lost \$48 billion over 20 years due to corruption surpassing its entire foreign debt of \$40.6 billion. It is estimated that as much as \$ 30 billion in aid for Africa has ended up not in Africa, but in foreign bank accounts. - (ADB)

Corruption adds to about 20-100% to the cost of procuring government goods and services in several Asian countries. - (ADB)

Military corruption costs Russia almost \$80 million in 2008 (Source:

today's top story - (TI/RUSSIA DAILY)

Health expenditures represent more than 7 percent of Latin America's GDP, with about 3.5 percent of GDP spent by the public sector alone. More than two-thirds of the public expenditures go to build, maintain, and operate public hospitals and provide related services, creating wide latitude for potential corruption. - (TI)

Corruption in the water sector is a root cause of the global water crisis that threatens billions of lives and exacerbates environmental degradation. - (GLOBAL CORRUPTION REPORT 2008: CORRUPTION IN THE WATER SECTOR)

Corruption is common in the public administration and the delivery of basic services including water. - (WBI)

ARE YOU CORRUPT?

"Am I corrupt?" As Buddhists and citizens of a GNH nation state, we should not have difficulties asking this question to ourselves, to our conscience of course. If we want to build a strong foundation for a vibrant democracy, it is fundamental; we cannot afford not to ask this question. Systems and institutions will be place but if people managing them and working in them are corrupt, the most robust of them may become dysfunctional. Working in the Anti-Corruption Commission, it is a constant beckoning. Why not? Unless one is uncorrupt and incorruptible, how can one have the moral authority to even talk about corruption let alone fight it! Whatever mantra we may chant, whether, vibrant democracy, good governance, zero tolerance to corruption, GNH, understanding the "SELF"

may be the starting point. SELF as a citizen, a monk, a parent, a son/daughter, a teacher, a student, a politician, a *gup*, a bureaucrat, a soldier, a business person.....

A great Buddhist Master said, "It is stupid to look for solutions to the problems of the world (home, office, nation, if I may add) outside you." Problems lie in us (self) and fortunately therein also lie the solutions to the problems.

As we commemorate the National Corruption Free Week and the International Anti-Corruption Day, my colleagues in the ACC and I pray that every Bhutanese be freed from the 8 worldly dharma: wanting to be

praised, not wanting to be criticized; wanting to be happy, not wanting to be unhappy; wanting to gain, not wanting to lose and wanting to be famous (or attention), not wanting to be ignored, which is the cause of suffering, spiritually speaking and cause of corruption, morally speaking.

"The cause of happiness is practicing virtue," said another great Buddhist Master. Asking ourselves, "Am I corrupt?" may be a step towards practicing virtue and cultivating a culture of "Zero Tolerance to Corruption."

"May all sentient beings enjoy happiness and the causes of happiness; may they be free from suffering and the causes of suffering."

Neten Zangmo, Chairperson, ACC



To report CORRUPTION write to the Anti-Corruption Commission, P.O. Box: 1113. Thimphu, Bhutan.
Call: 02-334863/67/68, 336407/08 OR FAX US ON: 02-334865. For more information visit: www.anti-corruption.org.bt