



News Network

**ANNUAL  
REPORT**

**2015**

*We work for*

*Freedom of Expression*

*Freedom of Press*

*Human Rights*

*Democracy*

*Gender Equality*



*Rights of the Minorities*

*Access to Justice*

*Access to Information*

*Good Governance*

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## EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF NEWS NETWORK

### President

Arifur Rahman Siddiqui, Ph. D

### Vice-President

Kaiser Ali Talukder, Ph. D

### Secretary General

Shahiduzzaman

### Finance Secretary

Jalal Ahmed

### Member

Shahriar Hossain, Ph. D

### Member

Rasada Akther

### Member

Enamul Haque

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News Network envisions a stable nation, where citizens are aware of their rights, enjoy freedom of expression, live with dignity and enjoy gender equality and where the media is free.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2015, News Network projects were supported by The United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF), Janata Bank Limited and the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany.  
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UNDEF-assisted 2-year-long project, 'Rural Media Development Programme for Promoting Democracy and Human Rights', was launch in December 2014, though its implementation started from early 2015. It's the first of its kind project in Bangladesh aiming to improving the professional ability of journalists and CSOs to make people aware about rights based issues through media reporting and sharing information with the public. The project will cover 12 remote districts of the country.

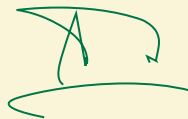
German Embassy in Dhaka came up with a year-long funding support to raise knowledge and understanding on climate change issues of the journalists and build their capacity for better reporting.

Both the programmes gave importance to interaction with the media gatekeepers to promote the issues and publish quality items with care, aiming to raise public awareness and opinion.

In 2014, News Network received a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) fund from the state owned Janata Bank limited to implement its 'Women Journalists Development Programme'. The project was completed in 2015. Anontex Trust Foundation, a Bangladeshi non-profit organisation also provided financial assistance to this project.

This year News Network again provided local support to Thomson Reuter Foundation to implement two different journalists training programmes in Dhaka on 'Editorial Judgment' and 'Sustainable Development in a Changing Climate'.

In 2015, News Network received total grant of BDT 6,894,199.05 (USD 88387) from the funding agencies and the expenditure stood at BDT 10,097,494.02 (USD 1,29,455).



Shahiduzzaman  
Editor and CEO, News Network



*‘we are working for  
social change and  
empowering people’*

## PARTNERS OF THE YEAR



Embassy  
of the Federal Republic of Germany  
Dhaka



JANATA BANK LIMITED

**UNDEF**



The United Nations  
Democracy Fund



Group photo of the participants of an interaction meeting held in Bogra

### 3. PROJECTS AND EVENTS OF 2015

Projects	Support	Status
Rural Media Development Programme for Promoting Democracy and Human Rights in Bangladesh	The United Nations Democracy Fund(UNDEF)	Ongoing
Development Program for Women Journalists	Janata Bank Limited, Bangladesh	Completed
Programme for Journalists on Understanding Climate Change Issues and Quality Reporting	Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany	Completed
Journalists trainings on Editorial Judgment and Sustainable Development in a Changing Climate	Thomson Reuters Foundation	Completed



## 4. MAJOR ACTIVITIES

- Fellowship on journalism for young women graduates
- Development activities for rural journalists and CSOs for promoting democracy and human rights
- Improving professional ability of journalists for better reporting on climate change issues

## 5. PROGRESS

### 5.1 FELLOWSHIP ON JOURNALISM FOR YOUNG WOMEN

For the last 17 years News Network has been providing six to nine months fellowship on practical journalism to young women. Its objective is to encourage them to choose journalism as their profession and acquire necessary skills.



News Network's fellows on journalism are seen in a field for information gathering



After successfully completion of a six months fellowship on practical journalism a fellow is receiving her certificate from Farid Hossain, former Dhaka Bureau Chief of Associated Press

A good number of donor agencies, international organisations and missions supported News Network to keep up the initiative. The programme is not only increasing the number of female journalists but also helping to achieve gender equality and women leadership in journalism profession. Since the beginning of the programme in 1998 and until 2015 the organization awarded fellowships to 285 young graduates. Many of them are now well set in the journalism profession.

At present women account for around only 6 percent of total journalists in Bangladesh. And, most of them are based in capital city Dhaka. So, the initiative has to go for a long way.



Eshrat Rahman  
Staff Reporter, Channel 24

“News Network’s six-month fellowship programme on journalism has opened new opportunities for me to build a carrier in media. My dreams have come true. Fellowship has made it easy for me to find a job in media. Soon after completing the programme I got job offer from the country’s reputed TV channel ‘Channel 24’. I am working as a staff reporter at the TV station. Thank you News Network.”

In the reporting period News Network with the support of CSR fund of Janata Bank awarded 15 young women a six-month fellowship on journalism. Janata Bank Limited is one of the largest state owned banks of the country. The programme completed successfully. By this time most of the fellows have joined in different print and electronic media houses as journalists.



JANATA BANK LIMITED



A participant in Khulna presenting her group work on sharing and disseminating information

## 5.2 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL JOURNALISTS AND CSOs TO PROMOTE DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Violation of human rights issues has become a regular practice in the society. Poor, marginal and minority people are the worst victims of it. Most incidents happen in the country’s remote areas. Their voice, accesses to justice and humanitarian supports are limited. Besides, local right-based defenders do not have enough understanding on the issues and due to their lack of communication skills many incidents go unreported.



The programme has given focus on improving the professional ability of the most potential defenders, particularly to rural journalists, CSOs and NGO staffs to promote democracy and human rights issues effectively and courageously.

It's a two years long programme titled, 'Rural Media Development Programme for Promoting Democracy and Human Rights in Bangladesh', launched in December 2014.

Major activities of the project are; (i) training workshop for the journalists, working in remote districts, (ii) reporting competition for trained journalists on democracy and human rights issues, (iii)



A meeting with the editors of Mymensingh based media house ongoing

networking with the gatekeepers of local media houses and (iv) media training for CSOs and NGO staffs. It will cover 12 remote districts of the country.



Participants of a training workshop are busy to complete their practicals in Khulna

Until December 2015, 100 rural journalists and 60 CSOs and NGOs staffs have been trained. 40 local media gatekeepers including editors, publishers, executive editors and news editors participated in the networking meeting. Country's reputed journalists' trainers and experts conducted the trainings and events.

During the reporting period UNDEF supported programme were implemented in Brahmanbaria, Mymensingh, Rangpur, Dinajpur, Bogra and Khulna districts.

The project has drawn wider attention among the media people, officials and CSOs. They have found it quit relevant at present context of Bangladesh. Local administration, media houses and opinion leaders were very much supportive and cooperative to carry out the project activities. In most events government executives and officials attended. They appreciated the initiative and inspire the participants.

The participants, both journalists and CSOs/ NGO staffs found the programme highly effective to build their capacity. They have put forward several recommendations and requested to undertake follow-up programmes for them and expand the activities in other districts by the country.



A group photo of the journalists and CSO representatives participated in a Khulna programme to promote democracy and human rights



Gagodish Chandra Sarkar  
Editor  
The Daily Shadesh Sangabad  
Mymanshingh

“Democracy and human rights are most important issues in our social life. It ensures the people’s dignity and empowerment. I enjoyed the News Network networking meeting with the local media editors. It has enlightened us and given enough understanding on the issues, role of media gatekeepers and social responsibility to promote democracy and human rights. I have shared my learning from the event with my colleagues and encouraged them to give more focus on the issues. The programme needs to be expanded in other parts of the country. I do believe it will definitely build the capacity of the journalists for better reporting on human rights issues.”

Some results of the programmes are mentioned below;

- Journalists participated in the trainings to improve their understanding, knowledge, courage and confidence, and professional ability to deliver better reports on democracy and human rights. Their number of reports on the issues also increased then before.
- Trained journalists are much more careful about the accuracy of information and in following the ethical issues of journalism.



- Trained CSOs staffs improved their communication and reporting skill and sharing information with media people. Many of them also sharing information in their social media.
- Local media gatekeepers (editors and news policy makers), participated in the networking events received better understanding on the social impact of publishing more news stories with respect to human rights. They have expressed their commitment to defend and promote the issues for the greater interest through media actions



Maksud Ali  
Staff Reporter  
The Daily Probaha,  
Khulna

“ I've been working working as a reporter in a local newspaper for a couple of years but I was not satisfied with quality of my reporting. I made lots of mistakes as I had little understanding about ethical issues and better report writing. But after receiving training from News Network now I feel quite confident. My office is also satisfied with my recent performances. Hope to do far better in the coming days. Much of the credit goes to News Network and its trainers. Thank you News Network. ”



Dr. Mohammad Rezwanul Karim  
Regional Manager  
NGO Forum for Public Health

“Media Training for CSOs and interaction meeting between journalists and CSO and NGO representatives has been encouraging for me. It has worked well to build a working relation among us and sharing information with each other, and contributing items to mainstream news media and social media. The training has made CSO and NGO representatives more aware about the working of media and has made us confident to work to promote democracy and human rights issues. As a participant I have found it effective. The programmes have helped to develop our professional skill to conduct case studies, issues based report materials, preparing campaign martial and press releases. It was an exception and innovative programmes to defend human rights. My request is to expand it to other districts with follow-up activities.”

- Participated media editors and news policy makers often encourage their reporters and news room editors to address the issues effectively and public more in-depth news items.

UNDEF

The United Nations  
Democracy Fund



Group photo of the journalists participated in a training programme on climate change issues was held in Rajshahi.

### 5.3 IMPROVING PROFESSIONAL ABILITY OF JOURNALISTS TO REPORT ON CLIMATE CHANGE ISSUES

The project focused on the journalists, working in Rajshahi, Cox's Bazar, Bagerhat & Khulna districts. It may mention that in last two decades millions people of those areas were badly affected by the climate change. Natural disasters, river erosion, drought and famine are the cause of miseries for thousands of people. This has displaced tens of thousands of people and many of them migrated to big cities for survival.

The programme activities were;

- To arrange 3, 4-day training workshop for journalists
- Organise 3, day-long interaction meetings with the editors

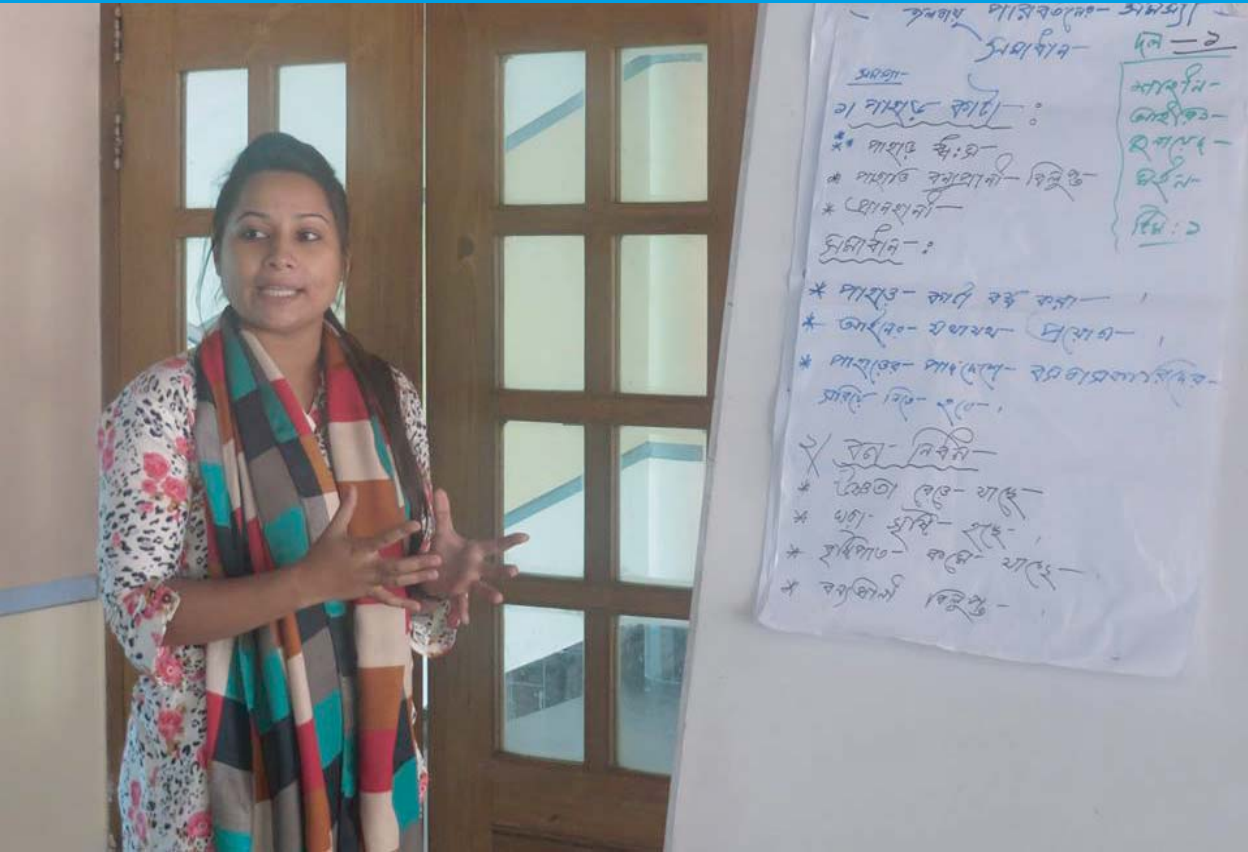


Group works

A total sixty journalists participated in three training programmes. On the other hand thirty three editors, executive editors and news editors of local newspapers, and most senior journalists of national media houses participated in day-long discussion meetings. Some important feedback from the participants;



Dr. Hossain Shahrier delivering his lecture on the effect of climate change issues to the journalists working from Bagerhat



A participant presenting her group work on to face the challenges of climate change in Cox's Bazar

- Needs follow-up training
- Introduce reporting competition on climate change issues
- Needs fund for local and community newspapers to cover the issues effectively from remote areas
- Introduce a news-feature service on climate change issues
- Expand the programmes to other districts
- Introduce exchange visit nationally and internationally for local journalists





# GAMAG

## Global Alliance On Media And Gender



Photo: UNESCO/GAMG

In December 2015, News Network participated in the first International Development Cooperation Meeting on Gender and Media (7-8 Dec) and the first The Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMAG) General Assembly (9-10 Dec) at Palais Des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland.

UNESCO, GAMAG, Republic of Lebanon and Hellenic Republic were the Co-Hosts and the partners were UN Women, United Nations Human Rights, FAO, WFP, WHO, UNHCR, UNEP, The World Bank, ITU, ILO, UNIDO, UNODC, WTO, WMO, UNCTED and Council of Europe. More than hundred of Government delegates, representatives of UN systems, donors and non-government organization, journalists and ICT sectors participated in the programmes, where Shahiduzzaman represented News Network, a leading media support organisation of Bangladesh.

The end goal of it is to achieve gender equality in media. GAMAG is an outcome of the UNESCO-led 2013 Global Forum on Media and Gender held in Bangkok, Thailand (2-4 December 2013). A Group of delegates are seen in the photo.

## Support to Thomson Reuters Foundation

In 2015, News Network locally supported the Thomson Reuters Foundation, a UK based international media organization to arrange their two different training programmes in Dhaka for journalists, working in national print and electronic media.



Participants of the workshop on Sustainable Development in a Changing Climate

Thomson Reuters Foundation's five days training-workshop on 'Sustainable Development in a Changing Climate' was held from 10 to 14 August at News Network Training Room in Dhaka. Journalists from major media houses and spokespeople participated in the programme. It is designed to help journalists stimulate and inform

public debate on development priorities.

Thomson Reuters Foundation's another five-days training were held in Brac Inn, Dhaka from 17 to 21 August 2015 on Editorial Judgment. 12 journalists from around the country took part in the training. International trainers Mr. Barry Compton Moody and Mr. Andrew Dobbie conducted the programme.



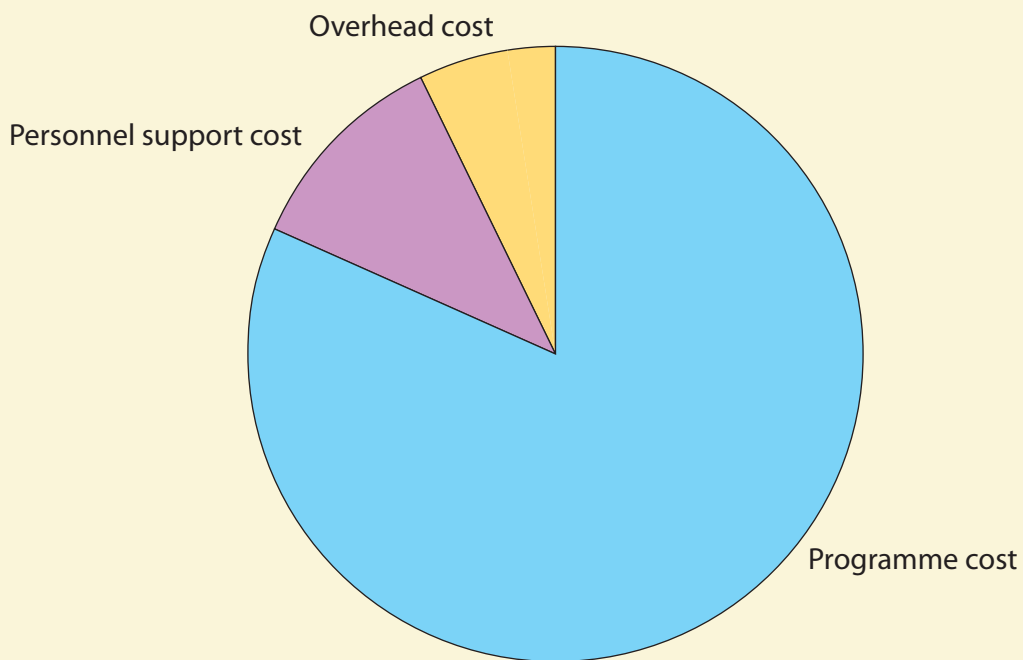
Group photo of the journalists participated in the training on Editorial Judgement



THOMSON REUTERS  
FOUNDATION



# Financial Report 2015



**BUDGET 2015**

Sl.	Heads	Amount
<b>A.</b>	<b>Program Cost:</b>	
1	Preparing Guideline, folder and brochure	230,100
2	Training workshops for rural journalists	2,439,216
3	Commissioning for reportings	304,200
4	Reporting competitions for trained journalists	158,340
5	Network / workshop events for editors	306,072
6	Media training workshops for CSO staffs	1,562,184
7	Interaction meeting for network building among trained CSOs staffs & journalists	437,112
8	Programme for journalists on understanding climate change issues and quality reporting	1,500,000
9	Monitoring	138,528
10	News Network Website development	246,000
11	Trainers honorarium	374,400
12	Local Coordinator honorarium	299,520
13	Intern honorarium	182,520
14	Media Fellowship developing female journalists	506,770
	<b>Total Programme cost</b>	<b>8,684,962</b>
<b>B.</b>	<b>Personnel Support Cost:</b>	
1	Project Coordinator	468,000
2	Program Officer	468,000
3	Accounts Officer	149,760
4	Office Assistant	74,880
	<b>Total Personnel support cost</b>	<b>1,160,640</b>
<b>C.</b>	<b>Operation support cost</b>	
1	Office Rent	365,040
2	Bank Charge	1,872
3	Internet & telephone	46,800
4	Electricity	46,800
5	Office supplies, stationery & conveyance	37,440
	<b>Total Operation support cost</b>	<b>497,952</b>
<b>D.</b>	<b>Equipments</b>	
1	Laptop-2	109,200
2	Camera-1	31,200
3	Multimedia Projector-1	61,152
4	Printer-1	54,600
	<b>Total equipment cost</b>	<b>256,152</b>
	<b>Grand total</b>	<b>10,599,706</b>

Programme supported by UNDEF, Janata Bank Limited, Anontex Trust Foundation and Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany

**NEWS NETWORK  
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2015**

PARTICULARS		AMOUNT IN BDT.
<b>RECEIPTS:</b>		
OPENING BALANCE (01.01.2015)		
Cash in hand	5,656.00	
Cash at Bank	6,163,013.88	
		6,168,669.88
<b>FUND INFLOW</b>		
Fund received from:		
United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF)	5,407,500.00	
German Embassy Dhaka	1,486,699.05	
		6,894,199.05
Bank Interest		14,487.10
Advance recovery		39,850.00
Subscription from the Executive members		2,100.00
<b>TOTAL BDT.</b>		<b>13,119,306.03</b>
<b>PAYMENTS:</b>		
Preparing guideline, folder & brochure		228,665
Training workshop for rural journalists		2,115,516
Commissioning for reportings		150,900
Network / workshop events for editors		310,405
Media training workshops for CSO staffs		1,561,061
Interaction meeting with CSO & journalists / editors		454,127
Monitoring		69,100.00
News Network Website development		227,586.00
Trainers honorarium		372,000
Local Coordinator honorarium		278,500.00
Intern honorarium		196,430
Salaries		1,429,300.00
Travel cost		294,130.00
Laptop		106,080.00
Camera		60,962.00
Multimedia projector		57,720.00
Printer		54,080.00
Office rent		392,730
Bank charge		9,869
Internet & telephone		67,106
Electricity		48,108.00
Office supplies & stationery		49,578.02
Audit fee		69,050
Training workshop for rural journalists on climate change issues		1,110,391
Fellows honorarium		150,000
Fellows accommodation cost		72,000
Mentors honorarium		45,000
Field visit for fellows		65,000
Certificate giving ceremony		50,000.00
Entertainment		2,100
<b>Total expenditure BDT.</b>		<b>10,097,494.02</b>
Advances		<b>165,000.00</b>
Closing balance (31.12.2015)		
Cash in hand	4,743.73	
Cash at Bank	2,852,068.28	
		2,856,812.01
<b>GRAND TOTAL BDT.</b>		<b>13,119,306.03</b>

### CERTIFICATE GIVEN BY THE AUDITORS

We have audited the accounts of NEWS NETWORK Dhanmondi, Dhaka Registration no. FDR-922, dated 20.3.1995 for the Year ended 31December 2015 and examined all relevant books and vouchers and certifies that according to audited accounts.

1. The brought forward foreign donation at the beginning of year 01 January 2015 was Tk. 6,168,669.88
2. The foreign donation amounting to Tk. 6,950,636.15 was received by the organization during the period.
3. The balance of unutilized foreign donations by the organization at 31December 2015 Tk. 3,021,812.01.
4. Foreign donation amounting to Tk. 10,097,494.02 has been utilized for the following purposes (shown project wise).

NAME OF THE PROJECT:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rural Media Development for Promoting Democracy and Human Rights in Bangladesh</li> <li>2. Training Workshop for journalists on understanding climate change issue and quality reporting</li> <li>3. Media fellowship developing female journalists</li> <li>4. Media fellowship developing female journalists</li> </ol>
FUNDING AGENCY:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. UNITED NATIONS DEMOCRACY FUND (UNDEF)</li> <li>2. GERMAN EMBASSY, DHAKA</li> <li>3. JANATA BANK LIMITED</li> <li>4. ANONTEX TRUST FOUNDATION</li> </ol>

Name of the project (s)	Budget for this year	Amount spent this year	Difference
Rural Media Development for Promoting Democracy and Human Rights in Bangladesh	8,630,376.00	8,153,819.00	476,557.00
Training Workshop for journalists on understanding climate change issue and quality reporting	1,500,000.00	1,486,516.00	13,484.00
Media fellowship developing female journalists	383,650.00	383,650.00	-
Media fellowship developing female journalists	57,908.00	45,737.00	12,171.00
News Network	27,772.02	27,772.02	-
<b>Total Taka</b>	<b>10,599,706.02</b>	<b>10,097,494.02</b>	<b>502,212.00</b>

Total expenditure in BDT. 10,097,494.02 (Equivalent USD 129,455 / EURO 117,412)

5. Certified the organization has maintained the accounts of Foreign Donations and records relating thereto in the manner specified as in section 5 of the Foreign Donations (voluntary activities) Regulations Ordinance, 1978 read with rule 6 and 7 to the said ordinance.
6. The information furnished above is correct and checked by us.

Dated: 28.02.2016

*Pinaki Das*  
**Pinaki Das, FCA**  
 Partner

**Pinaki & Company**  
 Chartered Accountants

Ahsandell, 2/A Mymensingh Road,  
 (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor), Shahbag, Dhaka-1000.

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## OUR AGENDA

- Promotion of freedom of expression, freedom of press, human rights and gender equality.
- Work for developing professional capacity of journalists.
- Encourage young women to take up journalism as a profession.
- Promoting investigative journalism and right to Information.
- Sensitise media people on crucial social issues including Right to Information Act, democracy, good governance, transparency and promotion of access to justice.
- Motivate children and youths to build themselves as good citizens.
- Promote secularism, tolerance and peace in the society, and also the rights of ethnic and indigenous people of the country.
- Organise dialogues, seminars, workshops and discussion meeting on issues of national importance.