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Corruption costs govt Tk 11535cr in first half of this year

Education sector tops the list as per TIB report

Corruption, rooted deep in the country, has drained down government wealth estimated at Tk 11,534.98 crore or 2.1 billion US dollars during the first half of 2000 (January-June), says a report of Transparency International, Bangladesh, reports UNB.

Releasing the report at an informal meeting yesterday with a group of senior journalists, Prof Muzaffar Ahmed, Trustee of TIB, said the figures were compiled from newspaper reports, which

are incomplete compared to the actual corruption in different sectors of the government.

"It's a tip of the iceberg," said Prof Ahmed who was an adviser in the caretaker government in 1991. Corruption has been retarding the progress of the nation, he added.

TIB Secretary General Towfiq Newaz explained activities of the Bangladesh chapter of German based Transparency International. He said they started opera-

tion four years ago with the objective of combating corruption. The core financing of their project came from the Danish government and later from USAID.

Presenting the salient features of the report, TIB Executive Director Barrister Monzoor Hasan said the 'News Scan Database Report' is based on reports of nine national and six regional dailies.

He said a sample survey to verify the newspaper reports

showed that 95 per cent of those was correct. Some were however found far less than what actually happened. Citing an example, he said, a report said a loss of Tk one crore in a health sector project in Jessor. But TIB spot investigation revealed that the actual loss was about Tk 4.5 crore.

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See page 11 col 6

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