For instance, the Support to ICT Task Force (SICT) Project at the Planning Commission which was started several years ago to initiate pilot electronic government (e-Government) projects is nearing the end of its project duration. There is little effort from the government to try to learn from the experience of this project so that government institutions can learn from its achievements and mistakes. Disowning efforts started by previous governments, whether good or bad, is a custom long practiced in Bangladesh -- this government can perhaps try to break the cycle. Also, UNDP's e-Development Cluster has been engaged in providing capacity building and technical assistance to high-level government officers, which have for the most part remained under-utilised by the government.

It is crucial that the national anti-corruption drive incorporates strategies to end corruption in governance systems and embrace e-Government as a possible tool. While it may not be possible for the caretaker government to make substantial progress in this respect in only a few months, the least it can do is to try to link the anti-corruption drive with possible solutions to fix the systems and explore how e-Government can support in this process. It may very well be argued that IT systems at the end of the day are under control of human beings and are subject to just as much manipulation, but it is also true that with sincere intentions, IT systems gives powerful options for creating adequate levels of check and balance so that any unwanted "eraser-action" will leave a digital trail -- something that is not possible in a manual system.



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Conclusion

The approach that the anti-corruption drive has taken so far has been targeted more at the criminals rather than the sources of the crimes. This runs the risk of leaving the drive with inadequate legitimacy, lack of focus, and inclination towards short-term gains. It is time that we turn the anti-corruption drive towards a more positive path that can reduce corruption on the basis of strong institutions and well-defined accountability structures, rather than one that is dependent on witch-hunting, since we do not know how effectively an Anti-Corruption Commission will function under a democratically-elected government tied to many interest groups.

Also, another danger of an Anti-Corruption Commission is that given its lack of internal check-and-balance, this kind of an organisation may be misused if its control is taken over by biased groups or individuals. Considering all this, the government should look more seriously into reducing loopholes in government procedures in key institutions, including the justice and police systems, as the central element of the anti-corruption drive.

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