



Press Release

Rights Based CSOs Demanded Immediate actions to Save the Manpura Island Save Manpura, Make WDB Accountable

Dhaka, 18 April 2017. A group of 28 rights based CSOs and climate affected adolescents of Manpura island demanded immediate initiatives to save the Manpura Island from the river erosion. They also demanded transparency and accountability of the Water Development Board (WDB) to the local people and local administration. They placed these demands form a human chain and rally organized today in front of the national press club. The human chain and rally titled “We Demand Accountable and Peoples Oriented Initiative of Water Development Board to save Manpura Island” was moderated by Mustafa Kamal Akanda of COAST Trust, while Zayed Iqbal Khan of Bangladesh Krishak Federation, Subal Sarkar of Bangladesh Bhumihin Samity, Aminur Rasul Babul of Unnayan Dhara Trust, Mihir Biswas of Bangladesh Paribesh Bachao Andolon and Rezaul Karim Chowdhury of EquityBD spoke at the occasion. Two adolescents of Manpura island named Ms. Sabia Akhter Mim and Md. Sajib also presented their sufferings in Manpura due to river erosion and climate change.

On behalf of the organizers thanked the government for allocating about 197 crore taka for Manpura island, to ensure proper utilization of that allocation they placed some specific demands were placed such as: i) Information about the WDB works must be open for all and there must be a complaints response mechanism, ii) Tender and purchase process of WDB must be transparent, iii) WDB must be accountable to the local people and local elected bodies/local administration, iv) If needed, army can be deployed to ensure smooth and speedy works.

Aminur rasul Babul said, we must save our coastal areas, coastal people. We must save the Manpura island. To save the island perfect and proper utilization of budget allocation must be ensured. WDB must be transparent and corruption free, to make the WDB corruption free a white paper on its past activities must be published. Zayed Iqbal Khan said, during 1973 to 2010 Manpura has lost 34 square kilometers of its land. The land is decreasing day by day, to save the people of Manpura embankment with concrete blocks are necessary. Subal Sarkar said, about 20 villages and 10 bazars have been gone under water completely. Even the main town of Manpura is in vulnerable situation, since the river is just about 300 yard far for the main town. Immediate initiatives are now must for the people of Manpura. Mihir Biswas said, we have very bad experiences with the work of WDB in recent past. What they did in the Haor areas is creating suffering for thousands of people. We don't want to see the same thing is happening in Manpura island. WDB must be reformed and it must be pro-people.

Ms. Sabia Akhter Mim, an adolescent of Manpura said, we have lost our house three times, we are still vulnerable to lose it again due to river eerosion. Our education is interuupted, our livelihood is interrupted. We urge to all concern to save us form the river erosion. Md. Sajib said, During the rainy season we can't go to school, our parents have so far been forced to change their livelihood options three-four times due to river erosion. We want to live a good life, to do that, we would like to urge the government to save the Manpura.

Rezaul Karim Chowdhury said, We would like to thank government for allocating 197 crore taka for Manpura. This very important allocation will be fully wastage if there is no reformation in the WDB. WDB must be accountble to the local Upaila, Zila Parishad i.e. local administration. Peoples partiioationin WDB must be ensured.

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