

## **Right to Information Movement : International and Bangladesh Context**

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*Executive Summary: Movement for establishing right to information is a common experience in different countries in the world. People are fighting for their right to information for many years in different countries. Traditionally, though this movement is against the government, now it is extended up to corporate organizations that preserve and control most of the information. Different organizations are implementing various programs for ensuring common people's access to information since over a decade in Bangladesh also. But the mass level of movement for establishing the right to information is not yet seen in our country, while the degree of campaigning can be marked as enough. This article will review the situation of the right to information movement in Bangladesh with some other countries; and it will focus the paths will have to go away and evaluate our initiatives for establishing right to information (RTI) in the global context.*

### **Prelude**

The right to information (RTI) has been recognized as a fundamental human right, intimately linked to respect for the inherent dignity of all human beings. It permits the individuals, groups and organizations to protect their rights. Everyone has the

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right to freedom of opinion and expression. This right includes freedom to express opinions with no interference and to seek, receive and transmit information and ideas through any media and apart from boundaries. It is an important guard against abuses, mismanagement and corruption. The right to information is also essential for accountability and good governance.

It can also be beneficial for the governments themselves— openness and transparency in the decision-making process can help people to keep trust in government actions. No government can now seriously contradict that the public has a right to information or that fundamental principles of democracy and accountability claim that public bodies operate in a transparent way. The right to information is also a crucial underpinning of participatory democracy—ARTICLE 19, an international organization working for establishing peoples' right to information, has described information as 'the oxygen of democracy'—for without information citizens cannot apply their choices or participate in decision-making processes.

Though right to information has been getting momentum at a strong swiftness in the recent years, it is hardly a new concept. Although RTI has been around for over 244 years, it is still evolving. The recent development of RTI can be considered as the ultimate result of the movement initiated by the enlightenment thinker and politician *Anders Chydenius* (1729-180) from the Finnish city of Kokkola. In Sweden and Finland, the year 2006 was observed as the 240<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the right to information<sup>1</sup>. The occasion of this anniversary was the celebration of the world's first freedom of information legislation which was adopted by the Swedish parliament in 1766. After 200 years of the adoption of freedom of information legislation in the Swedish parliament, the United States of America acknowledged such kind of law through its parliament in 1966.

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Right to information is a movement for establishing the ownership of common people over all kind of information. People are fighting for their right to information for many years in different countries. Traditionally, though this movement is against the government, now it is extended up to corporate organizations that preserve and control most of the information. Maybe, there is no country in the world which doesn't formulate any regulation or enact laws for preserving secrecy of information and the governments continued those regulations and laws for their own interests. But the world is changing and the people are staging movement for the freedom of information altering the traditional culture of secrecy.

Movement for establishing right to information is a common experience in different countries in the world. Different programs have been being implemented for ensuring common people's access to information since over a decade in Bangladesh also.<sup>2</sup> Though the outcome of this movement is not seen yet, but of course, the output is apparent. The mass level of movement for establishing the right to information is not seen in our country, while the degree of campaigning can be marked as enough. This article will review the situation of the right to information movement in Bangladesh with reference to some other countries, it will also focus on the directions which have to go away and overall it will evaluate our initiatives for establishing RTI in the global context. Initially, we would like to discuss some key concepts.

### **Why movement?**

What is the meaning of 'movement'? It is mentioned in the dictionary that movement is 'creating hue and cry or agitation for reaching in a goal<sup>3</sup>'. Certainly, it is the actual meaning of the word mentioned in the dictionary for present Bangladesh. Being related with the political activities, the word 'movement' shaped such a way which shows a cruel reality. We believe right to information movement will definitely not establish such an example.

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Movements are also defining as *social movements*. Charles Tilly defined social movements as a series of contentious performances, displays and campaigns by which ordinary people made collective claims on others<sup>4</sup>. RTI movements in different countries have also been recognized as social movements.

Historically, various popular movements struggling for social justice and democratic rights since the Second World War were known as '*civil rights movement*', most famously the American civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, which struggled for equal rights for African-Americans<sup>5</sup>. The movement for establishing ethnicity, equity, gender equity, homosexual rights etc. and movement against racial discrimination, environment pollution or war is a common phenomenon in the present world. Some biggest movements in the world are the civil rights movement in the United States, American Indian movement, Civil rights movement in Northern Ireland, reform movements in communist Eastern Europe, civil rights and anti-colonial movements in Africa etc. Student movements have occupied a big space of the history of the world movements. The student movement in Japan (1960) was started to protest against Japan-United States mutual security assistance pact. In the same way German student movement (1960) was a left-wing backlash against the post-Nazi Party era of the country. The student movements in France (1968) were initiated for shaking up the 'old society' in many social aspects, including methods of education, sexual freedom and free love etc<sup>6</sup>.

Bangladesh is inheriting a bright history of movements. Lots of students and country people laid their lives in 1952 to establish 'Bangla' as a mother language. The history of Bangladesh becoming as a free and sovereign country was also the most victorious result of a nine months movement in 1971.

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Traditionally, the claiming of rights and movement are connected with one another. So, right to information movements in many countries were the demand of time. In a timeframe, this demand was raised in Bangladesh over a decade ago and still evolving. United States of America enacted the freedom of information law in 1966 and started a worldwide campaign for RTI. There is a growing body of authoritative statements supporting the right to information, made in the context of official human rights mechanisms, including at the United Nations, the Commonwealth, the Organization of American States and the Council of Europe. As a result, many governments enacted this law facing the demands of the people within the country and the governments of some other developed countries ratified the law from their own initiatives.

### **Right to Information: Some References**

The focal point of the discussion on right to information is 'information'. The answer to the question-what is information must be easier than that of what is not information. 'Information' as a term has been derived from the Latin words 'formation' and 'forma' which means giving shape to something and forming a pattern, respectively. Information adds something new to our awareness and removes the vagueness of our ideas. *Information is often basically considered to be the sign or coded messages transmitted in one direction from a source to a receiver, while communication corresponds more to the complexity of the phenomenon of various interchanges, through signs and symbols, between individuals and communities.*<sup>7</sup>

As mentioned by Everett M. Rogers and D. Lawrence Kincaid, 'Information has become the fundamental concept for the study of all living systems. ....Information is a difference in matter-energy which affects uncertainty in a situation where a choice exists

among a set of alternatives.’<sup>8</sup> So, it is clear that the core of human communication is information.

On the other hand, the terms right to information and freedom of information are often used interchangeably and have long been considered as a fundamental human right. In its very first session in 1946, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 59 (I), stating, ‘Freedom of information is a fundamental human right and ... the touch-stone of all the freedoms to which the United Nations is consecrated’.

A society that does not guarantee its citizens the possibility of being adequately informed by plural sources, and of making their viewpoints heard, can scarcely claim to be democratic. Indeed, communication rights strengthen all other human rights.

MacBride Commission report<sup>9</sup> stated, ‘Freedom of information was, in the first place, the citizen’s right to information-the right to be kept informed of whatever might affect his daily life, help him to make decisions, and contribute to his thinking. The scope of this right to information broadened as new techniques gave improved access to information on a nation-wide and world-wide scale’.

Right to information creates legal entitlement for people to seek information and includes duty of the public function bodies, both government and non-government, to make information public and easily available. It enables citizens to seek information from duty holders and makes duty holders responsible to disseminate important information proactively even if it is not asked for<sup>10</sup>.

According to Anura Goonasekera,<sup>11</sup> access to information entails several things. It requires access to information resources including information technologies and training. It also implies access to means of information production and dissemination of information.

So, we can come to a conclusion, right to seek and impart information is a universal right and no government can prevent its

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citizens to exercise this right. But surprisingly it is true that people have to initiate and continue a campaign to apply this right in most of the countries of the world.

### **Global Right to Information Scenario**

Nearly 70 countries around the world have now adopted comprehensive right of information legislative to facilitate access to records held by government bodies and another 50 have pending efforts<sup>12</sup>. A few countries have issued decrees or used constitutional provisions. Many countries have adopted other laws that can provide for limited access including data protection laws that allow individuals to access their own records held by government agencies and private organizations, specific statutes that give rights of access in certain areas such as health, environment, government procurement and consumer protection. Over half of the laws have been adopted in the last 10 years.

The development in the formation of RTI Acts in different countries has a profound consequence with the worldwide movement for RTI. The question of the accountability and transparency of the governments boldly voiced; the movement for access to information became strengthened. The civil society organizations, media organizations and different international donor organizations have played an important role to mobilize the people in these movements and to make it a success.

Among the countries who adopted RTI Acts are mostly northern countries, the rest of the world is following them. There are at least 12 countries in Asia who have already enacted RTI Acts or trying to form laws in this regard. Laws are enacted in South and Central America and six-Caribbean countries and at least 12 other countries are considering enactment of the law. South Africa has enacted a comprehensive RTI Act in 2001 and some countries of South and Central Africa who are also the members of

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Commonwealth are going to follow the law. Recently Kenya has formed such kind of law.

The countries where the RTI Act or RTI related legislatives functioning are as follows: Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Colombia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, South Korea, Kenya, Kosovo, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Mexico, Moldova, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkey, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States, Uzbekistan and Zimbabwe.

On the other hand, the following countries are trying to adapt legislative to establish RTI: Argentina, Azerbaijan, Barbados, Botswana, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji Island, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, Indonesia, Lesotho, Macedonia, Mel away, Montenegro, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Philippine, Russia, Serbia, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Taiwan, Tanzania, Uganda, Uruguay and Zambia <sup>13</sup>.

### **Right to Information Movement: International Context**

The right to information movement in different countries has become significantly visible from the early 1990s, though the movement was started more than 200 years ago. Formation of freedom of information laws is the ultimate result of these movements. However, freedom of information laws has been going for more than 200 years, but very few are more than 20 years old. There is now a veritable wave of freedom of information legislation sweeping the globe, numerous such laws have been

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passed, or are being developed, in countries in every region of the world.

Traditionally the governments follow a culture of secrecy, they enact laws like Official Secrets Act, they hide important information from the citizens, and they create obstacles so that the people can not demand the information. People of some advanced countries, by this time, have thrown these ideas as the back dated formula for running the administration. Most cases, human rights organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGO) and United Nations organizations have played a key role to form and fruitful ending of the movements. Here we can have a look in the RTI movements of some countries of the world.

### **Sweden**

The history of freedom of information laws can be traced back to Sweden where, in 1766, the parliament passed the Freedom of the Press Act, which required the disclosure of official documents upon request. The Freedom of the Press Act is now part of the Constitution and chapter 2 of constitution is Sweden's freedom of information law. Among other things, it provides that “every Swedish subject shall have free access to official documents.” The rest of Chapter 2 is in essence a freedom of information law documents, “sets out the exceptions to free access, and in most cases provides for a right to appeal refusals to grant access to the courts.”

Over recent decades, Anders Chydenius’ legacy has received increased recognition globally. With the creation of the United Nations and international standards on human rights, the right to information began to spread. Anders Chydenius took an active part in the Diet of 1765-66. One of the lasting results of his activities was this Ordinance on Freedom of Writing and of the Press (1766), which he considered himself to be one of his greatest achievements. In this article it is mentioned earlier that the recent

development of RTI to be evaluated as the ultimate result of the movement initiated by the enlightenment thinker and politician Anders Chydenius from the Finnish city of Kokkola. Anders Chydenius says,

I am addressing that freedom, by which I mean the privilege of every citizen given to him by the laws and constitutions of the realm to promote his own happiness to the degree that he will not impair the happiness of his fellow citizens or of the whole society.<sup>14</sup>

### **Indonesia**

In Indonesia, the RTI movement was started from 1980. Some NGOs and especially the pro-democracy movement in Yayasan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Indonesia (Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation), started to fight for the recognition of civil and political rights, including the right of public access to information. Indonesian NGOs have taken note of the importance of public access to information for quite some time. Many movements have been organized to achieve the right to information, together with other strategic human rights. Indonesia's political changes, at least those starting from 1997, have provided an environment that is conducive to the enlargement and the strengthening of these movements.<sup>15</sup>

Indonesia's NGO movements, in terms of the public access to information and transparency in general, can be classified into three categories: those in the fields of (1) research and advocacy, (2) litigation, and (3) legislation and policy reform.<sup>16</sup>

Strengthening advocacy for the draft of the freedom of information bill as well as to unite NGOs that have already worked on or have the same interest in striving for the right to information, the Indonesian NGOs have collaborated in creating one coalition

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named *NGOs Coalition for Freedom of Information*. Since November 2000, around 18 NGOs from a wide range of interests have become members of the coalition. The coalition's activities are: drafting, lobbying (especially to the parliament), and campaigning, as well as mobilizing public support for a freedom of information act.<sup>17</sup>

### **Mexico**

In the early 1990s, as Mexico's environmental movement began to rally around the issue of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), public demands for more access to environmental statistics emerged as a distinct right-to-know (RTK) movement.<sup>18</sup> After NAFTA's implementation, organized Mexican civil society renewed its efforts to push for reforms to Mexico's federal environmental law that would enshrine the right to information and requirements of the public. The movement to achieve reform in the environmental arena was more than an outgrowth of the trend, initiated under NAFTA, to achieve parity in environmental regulations between Mexico, Canada, and the United States.

In the continuity of this movement, in June 2002, the government has passed *the Federal Transparency and Governmental Public Information Access Law* which fills gaps in the environmental law, giving Mexico the best of only three laws of this nature in Latin America. Now citizen groups are hard at work making sure that both the environmental and the general RTK laws receive adequate governmental attention and are effectively implemented.

### **South Africa**

In South Africa, after many years of apartheid (*a political system in which people of different races are separated*) in which the minority government suppressed information in order to

immobilize the opposition and repress the population, information became key to the liberation movement both within the country and for its supporters outside of South Africa. Subsequently a period in which press freedom had been summarily restricted, the government had operated in profound secrecy and misinformation was mainstreamed, the architects of the new South Africa recognized the right to freedom of information in the new Constitution of 1996. The drafting of the right to information law which eventually expanded upon this right began in 1994 and continued until February 2000, when the *Promotion of Access to Information Act (POATIA)* was finally approved.

The *POATIA* was seen as one of the important elements of transition from apartheid and was both radical and broad-ranging in its scope. The role of civil society was explicitly recognized by the sponsor of the Bill and there was an assumption that government information should be in the public domain.

### **Philippines**

In the Philippines mass support for openness grew out of concern about corruption. Under Ferdinand Marcos, 1972-1986, there was a virtual information blackout, with almost all government documents classified as secret. As a reaction to the repressive information policy, following the revolution in 1986, the framers of the new Constitution in 1987 took the step of guaranteeing press freedom and information access within the Constitution itself. In addition, the Supreme Court has been a staunch defender of the right to information, holding the constitutional provision on the right to information as self-executing and consistently ruling against state agencies seeking to restrict the release of information deemed to be in the public interest.

In 2002, a number of NGOs which had encountered difficulties accessing important official information, came together to form the Access to Information Network (ATIN). In late 2002, ATIN

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drafted a Freedom of Information Law which is currently being considered by the Senate. Between 1998 and 2003, more than a dozen Freedom of Information Bills have been brought before the senate, but it has failed to ratify a single one.

### **India**

Advocacy on the right to information has been addressed most effectively in the rural areas of India, where peoples' movements have shown how information can empower common people in their daily lives. The demand for legally enforcing people's right to know was first raised by Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) in Rajasthan in the early 1990s. Led by social activist and former administrator Aruna Roy, MKSS exposed mind-boggling percolation of funds sanctioned on public works like roads, bridges, water tanks, wells, school buildings and so on by highlighting the entries in official records and the actual work done, or, in many cases, not done at all. The MKSS does not take government or donor funds and is completely supported by the local people. It is campaigning through public donations and even, at times, donations of grain from local households.

The right to information and the right to survive thus became united in peoples' minds.<sup>19</sup> Initially, demands to see the muster rolls were met with refusal, on the grounds that these were 'secret documents'. These refusals led to agitation for the right to information. Some people, especially in the government, felt it was absurd for villagers to be demanding to see the muster rolls and this led to a long struggle – including hunger strikes, sit-ins and rallies – for the right to access this information.

By 1994, MKSS hit upon a new, empowering strategy, based on the idea of a '*jan sunwai*' or 'public hearing'. The exploitation of the poor in two ways – by denial of their minimum wages and through corruption by some of the village middle class – was revealed at the *jan sunwais* in front of the entire village. After a long battle,

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the government announced a change in the Panchayat Act, so people could inspect local documents pertaining to development works.<sup>20</sup>

Early in 1999, when the government of Rajasthan constituted a committee to draft a right to information law or executive order, the MKSS traveled through the five divisional headquarters of Rajasthan, holding consultations, street-corner meetings, performing street plays and reaching out to large number of people.<sup>21</sup>

The MKSS succeeded in making the Government of Rajasthan concede a notification allowing citizens to inspect all records of a panchayat. The next victory was to make the government concede the citizens' right to receive a photocopy of panchayat documents. This was the first step to an enormous dive forward in ensuring transparency in governance.<sup>22</sup>

Although it was a struggle of the rural poor, it caught the attention and got the support of a cross-section of the country's media, lawyers and jurists, academics, and even bureaucrats and legislators, many of whom came together to form the National Campaign on the People's Right to Information (NCPRI). The movement therefore ranged from the village level to the media, and to policy-making at the State level and at the centre. NGOs and activists all over the country have adopted this strategy with minor changes in methodology and linkages have been made with major peoples' movements. Members of the NCPRI have also made submissions on the Freedom of Information Bill, 2000 to the Standing Committee.

In the continuation of this movement, the Tamil Nadu Right to Information Act 1997, the Goa Right to Information Act 1997, the Rajasthan Right to Information Act 2000, the Madhya Pradesh Right to Information Act 2000, the Karnataka Right to Information Act 2000, the Delhi Right to Information Act 2001 were prepared

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and finally the central Right to Information Act 2002. India passed the law on right to information in May 2005, which became operational in October of the same year.

#### **Bangladesh**

The movement for RTI was ongoing in Bangladesh from the early 1990s. It can never be denied that the RTI movement in Rajasthan touched Bangladesh also. Although Article 39 (2) of the Bangladesh constitution states: “a) the right of every citizen to freedom of speech and expression and b) freedom of the press are guaranteed”- it does not make a clear reference on right to information. So, some non-governmental organizations took initiatives to organize a movement for RTI. At present, a national movement is emerging in Bangladesh in support of the demand for RTI. Several civil society organizations have formed coalitions and networks to work at different levels to make the act a reality.<sup>23</sup>

Mass-line Media Centre (MMC), a media-focused NGO led the movement to make it a success. Afterward, several international organizations like UNESCO, INGO like Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF), ARTICLE 19 joined with this movement. The organizers implementing some regular activities like seminars, round-table discussions, opinion sharing, interviewing, publications, poster publishing, advertising, media advocacy etc.

However, Bangladesh Law Commission drafted a working paper on the Right to Information Act in 2002. The MJF formed a core group of specialized lawyers who analyzed the draft working paper and prepared a draft Right to Information Act in 2007. The caretaker government called public opinion on the draft RTI Act and in the end, this non-elected and army-backed government passed an ordinance in 2008. Finally, the government passed a bill on RTI in the Bangladesh parliament in 2009.

### **The Other Countries**

Another country with a long history of freedom of information legislation is Colombia, whose 1888 Code of Political and Municipal Organization allowed individuals to request documents held by government agencies or in government archives. The USA passed a freedom of information law in 1966 and this was followed by legislation in Australia, Canada and New Zealand, all in 1982.

### **Involvement of International Organization in RTI Movement**

Though it is the individual matter of the people and the state to enact a RTI Act, but some international and regional organizations are helping the countries to prepare a RTI Act. The organizations are funding to initiate or running the RTI movements and providing intellects also. Sometimes they are functioning as the pressure groups on the governments. Such kinds of organizations are- Commonwealth, Council of Europe, Organization of American States, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank etc.

There is a growing body of treaties, agreements, work plans and other statements to require or encourage nations to adopt freedom of information laws. The growth is especially strong in the area of anti-corruption, where most new treaties now require that signatories adopt laws to facilitate public access to information. Most treaties on environmental protection and participation also include public access rights and have been particularly important in encouraging many countries to adopt national laws on access to environmental information and general FOI laws.<sup>24</sup>

The treaties, agreements, work plans and other statements are as follows: United Nations Convention against Corruption, United Nations Human Rights, Rio Declaration/ UNECE Convention on Access to Environmental Information, Council of Europe, European Union, African Union, SADC Protocol Against

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Corruption, Organization of American States, Chapultepec Declaration, Arab Charter on Human Rights, Commonwealth, Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), ADB OECD Anti-Corruption Initiative for Asia-Pacific.

### Nature of Right to Information Movement

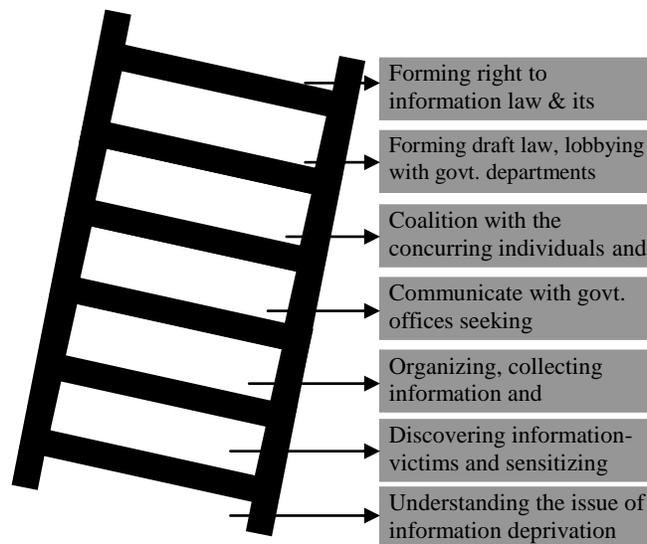
Experience from many countries showed that RTI movement becomes a social movement. If we analyze the RTI movements of different countries, we find some common stages in those movements.

We can also observe a hierarchy in the right to information movement.

Here, according to the experience of RTI movements in different countries, a brief analysis on the hierarchy in the right to

information movement will be seen in the following few paragraphs.

In the initial stage, an individual or a group of people try to understand the issue of information deprivation. This feeling is seen in the first RTI movement in Finland. The feelings of Anders Chydenius in Finland or the feelings of Aruna Roy in India have



*Hierarchy in the right to information movement*

appeared as movement. There is no doubt, these thinkers are the advanced citizens of that society and almost all of them gained the feelings from their society and from the misery of people of the society.

They shared their feelings with their friends and fellows. Spreading this sharing turned into the campaign in some countries. They tried to find some organizations beside them or they have formed some organizations to organize people and aware them about their rights. Some NGOs has applied such a supplementary approach in their activities which is well-known as rights based approach (RBA). In the third stage, the activists of the movements or the activists of the organizations try to collect information, try to find out the causes behind information deprivation.

Then the organized people go to the government offices to seek information and to claim their rights. The real scenario of RTI situation becomes visible then. Usually, the government officers try to hide the information or deny providing the information. They show some legal and official bindings to support the circumstances. The activists go to the government offices repeatedly to establish their demand. Though these individual initiatives become able to draw the attention of government offices but frequently fail to reach the destination. So, the question of forming coalition comes to front.

Coalition with the concurring individuals and organizations create a big platform to raise the voice high and to work from grassroots to policy-making level. Sensitizing journalists and media organizations and making them one of the parts of the coalition is another task in this movement. Media has played a vital role to make the movement a success in different countries. The coalition has to form draft laws, analyze government initiatives and suggest alternatives. The coalition also has to lobby with government departments to take initiatives to enact the law. Following the

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continuous pressure, finally, the government takes initiative to place a bill in the parliament and enact the law.

Finally, the recent experience tells us that the circumstances in which right to information legislation comes into being vary enormously and often depend on the circumstances that have spawned specific campaigns, the nature of the campaigns themselves and the factors that conspire to result in the approval of legislation. No government can now seriously deny that the public has a right to information or that fundamental principles of democracy and accountability demand that public bodies operate in a transparent fashion. However, it is still a matter of surprise that the people have to organize movements in most countries to enact such a law which is helpful for both the government and people.

### **Conclusion**

In Bangladesh, the RTI Act is now in force to recognize specifically people's right to information and providing a procedure for its implementation. But, there are certain prohibitory Acts and rules to block the information such as the Official Secrets Act 1923, sections 123 and 124 of Evidence Act 1872, Rule 28 (1) of the Rules of Business 1996, Rule 19 of Government Servants (Conduct) Rules, 1979 and Oaths (affirmation) of secrecy under the Constitution etc. So, the application of Right to Information Act can be stopped by the exercise of these prohibitory Acts.

The people of Bangladesh are not conscious enough about the Right to Information Act-this comment came from a foreign observer who worked for the betterment of right to information situation in Bangladesh.<sup>25</sup> If we evaluate the RTI movement of one and half decades, we see our mass media are sensitized enough to run the RTI movement. Print media are playing a vital role in publishing various news and views as well as the electronic media are trying to aware people about RTI. Although these initiatives are not enough and still the media are not active enough. This is a

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big limitation of our RTI movement that we failed to sensitize our media up to a level which drive the media organizations to implement something from its own initiative.

The other point to be noted that sometimes we see reports, articles and even features on RTI are being published in the newspapers and periodicals. No doubt, these are the good endeavors. But the numbers of the writers are so limited. On the other hand, those who have been writing, all of them are not writing from their own initiatives. Some NGOs or INGOs are convincing them to write something. If it happened in the initial stage, there was no problem.

People from no parts of the country have raised their voice so loudly that it could be considered as movement.<sup>26</sup> We have to think about it. Maybe, our RTI movement moved to central level before it being formed in the grassroots level. Probably, that's why, the governments passed so many days to consider it. We need continuous efforts. One more thing, we have no scope to stop our endeavor just after enacting a law, we have to evaluate the law, its applications and its limitations and start a new turn in our movement to change the law if it is required.

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