



Research Paper

# The Role of Anti-Corruption Commission for Combating Corruption During The Covid-19 Pandemic Situation in Bangladesh.

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## Executive Summary

The Anti-Corruption Commission was formed through an act promulgated on 23 February 2004 that came into force on 9 May 2004. Although initially, it could not make the desired impact, but immediately following its reconstitution in February 2007, the ACC began working with renewed vigor and impetus duly acceding to the United Nations' convention against corruption that was adopted by the General Assembly away back on 31 October 2003. Its framework and function is governed by Anti-Corruption Commission Act, 2004.

An autonomous and well-functioning anti-corruption body is a fundamental pillar of the national integrity system of any country committed to preventing corruption. This is enshrined in the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) 2003, which states that an independent body/bodies within national governance systems is required to promote and enforce anti-corruption policies and practices.

Anti-Corruption Commission was formed through an act in 2004, but is considered to be largely ineffective in investigating and preventing corruption because of governmental control over it. The Anti-Corruption Commission of Bangladesh is crippled by the 2013 amendment of the Anti-Corruption Commission Act which makes it necessary for the commission to obtain permission from the government to investigate or file any charge against government bureaucrats or politicians. The commission is often criticized for being ineffective and wastage of resources due to the influence of the government over it.

But the effort will best be obtained when the transparency of government organization will be ensured through a system where the role as well as overall performance of Anti-Corruption Commission will be more flexible and easy to apply by laws.

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## I. Introduction

### 1.1 Abstract:

Bangladesh is a developing country with different types of problem. Among these, corruption is the most important. Now a day's all persons are very much concerned about it. It also became a burning issue even in our country. Corruption affects our socio-economic and political development of our country. For this reason our country cannot control it. Bangladesh government created the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) in 2004 to fight against corruption as an autonomous institution. Though this institution was created as an autonomous institution, it cannot maintain this status because of government influence on it. For this reason this organization cannot work properly and become fail day by day to fight against corruption. Thus, this study tries to understand the role of Anti-Corruption Commission for Combating Corruption in Bangladesh.

From the very beginning it has deep roots in the society. It affects socio-economic and political development of a country. According to the report of Transparency International Bangladesh is marked as a corrupt country for five consecutive years. Finally, the Anti-Corruption Commission replaced Bureau of Anti-Corruption as an autonomous body. So this study tries to assess the success or failure of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) to fight against the corruption of Bangladesh. The extensive findings of the study shows that though ACC created to reduce corruption from Bangladesh but it could not fulfill its aim and objectives properly.

because of some influencing factors and challenges like political influence, insufficient manpower, lack of integrity, transparency, accountability, lack of independence etc .At present the commission takes many initiatives to prevent corruption and being more efficient but still there have some lacking in performance because of their tardiness. Considering the present situation this study tries to develop some prospective recommendations for making ACC more effective and independent.

### **1.2 Introduction:**

Corruption is a global phenomenon and found in almost all countries of the world. Bangladesh like many other countries is affected by corruption. Corruption affects the socio-economic and political development of our country. A society where corruption is non-existent is just impossible to find. Bangladesh earned a reputation for corruption under the rule of East India Company in the eighteenth century. Corruption control is neither easy nor quick in a country that has a long tradition of nurturing corruption.

It is not an easy task especially in a country like Bangladesh because here Corruption has deep roots in the society. In Pakistan period, the Bureau of Anti-Corruption (BAC) was constituted under the Anti-Corruption Act, 1957 as an autonomous institution to fight against corruption (Das, 2013). BAC was failed to perform of its duty efficiently and finally the government of Bangladesh formulated the Anti-corruption commission by enacted Anti-Corruption Commission Act, 2004. Anti- Corruption Commission (ACC) was established to reduce corruption from Bangladesh and make it a corruption free country. But it cannot fulfill its objectives properly. Though the commission is seemed to be autonomous but it cannot work on its own will. Many times different political parties are interfering in the activities of this commission. There are many complaints received to the ACC about the corruption done by the public and private officials but the concerned authority does not take the sufficient measures to handle them. The chairman of this commission is also deployed politically which impede on the way of transparency of this commission. The study mainly investigate to explore the role of Anti-corruption commission for combating corruption in Bangladesh. This research explicitly focused on the efficiency of ACC. The research is conducted for examining the performance, function, success or failure of ACC.

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), as an independent, autonomous and impartial body, enquires about the allegations of corruption and prosecutes the offenders. The ACC also implements various activities aimed at creating a sense of Honesty and integrity in society. Despite the prevalence of COVID-19 in Bangladesh like the rest of the world, the Anti-Corruption Commission has been devotedly carrying out its responsibilities in compliance with proper health guidelines. The Anti-Corruption Commission adopts various lawful actions against offences mentioned in the Schedule of the ACC Act. The Commission takes steps based on allegations of corruption on its own initiative or based on a complaint filed by the victim or a person on his/her behalf. Such enquiry and investigation activities are considered to be the lawful functions of the ACC. The Commission, as a punitive measure against corruption, hands the offenders over to the courts of law in anticipation of appropriate punishment. In the enquiry of corruption, the Commission takes into account the prima facie value of the allegations, available documentary evidence following the Anti-Corruption Commission Act, 2004 and other relevant laws of the land.

### **1.3 Background of the Study:**

Corruption is a well-known and widespread phenomenon in south Asian countries (Shah, 2001; Singh, 2003). Due to corruption developmental activities are undermining at largely in south Asia which creates less economic growth, reducing efficiency, discouragement of potential investors. Corruption stands out as one of the primeval crimes of civilizations. All the religious Scriptures reveal rigid stands against corruption. Incidences of corruption may be traced back to the history of ancient India. Elaborations of various forms of corruption are evident in Kautilya's Arthashastra. The reports of different Research Institutes reveal that corruption does not only corrode the foundation of democracy, it triggers off terrorism too. This may optimistically be observed that some sort of legal frameworks to curb corruption exist in almost every country of the world (ACC Annual Report, 2021). Bangladesh like many other countries is affected by corruption, but like a few countries it is noted for anti-corruption movements. In Bangladesh like some other South and South-East Asian and African postcolonial countries, the danger of inherent colonial administration and judiciary subverting the political will through their misuse, abuse or even non-use of their delegated authority have largely been acknowledged.

Corruption is not a latest occurrence in Bangladesh. It has deep roots in the society. Corruption existed during Hindu, Muslim and British rule of the India sub-continent and engulfed administration, judiciary and trade. An Independent Anti – corruption Agency (IAA), having constitutional status is the sine quo non for effectively controlling corruption. The present Independent Anti- Corruption Commission (IACC) should be rested with the status of a constitutional body with extensive investigatory and prosecutorial powers to enable it to function remaining outside of political control and interference. Relevant laws need to be updated and loopholes therein need to be cemented so that corrupt elements cannot escape punishment. The Bureau of Anti-Corruption (BAC) was established as an ad hoc body in East Pakistan by enactment of Anti-Corruption Act in 1957. All officials of BAC were from the

police on deputation until announcing permanent status and recruitment procedures of BAC. The organization published its own manual in 1970. After independence in 1971, some infrastructural reform of BAC took place and given specific anti-corruption duties. In 1987 the control of BAC came under the secretariat of the President and later in 1991 under the Prime Minister's Office (TIB, 2001). But effort of Bureau was deemed to be ineffective and corruption in Bangladesh slowly worsened over time in 1990s and 2000s, and finally a new institution was put in its place, the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC). On 17 February 2004, Bangladesh Parliament enacted the Anti-Corruption Commission Act and it came into effects on 9 May 2004. From the beginning the commission faced internal and external impediments, created controversy over legal actions and was not able to gain people's trust. The appointments of chairman and two commissioners were not welcomed warmly by the opposition parties and the commission was politically biased in appointment process. Even the government appointed the secretary of ACC without consultation with the Commission (IGS, 2007).

#### **1.4 Literature Review:**

More or less corruption occurs in all public and private sectors of Bangladesh. No single study is found on the study of, "Is the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) succeeded to control the corruption in Bangladesh?" However, one study was conducted by Shadhan Kumar Das (November 2013) on the "Anti-Corruption Commission of Bangladesh: Diagnosis of a Fading Hope". This study analyses design and performance of anti-corruption agencies – Bureau of Anti-Corruption (BAC) and Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) of Bangladesh – under two different political regimes (democratic and authoritarian) and deep-rooted causes of their performance. It begins from the hopes of an effective and independent ACC that were created mainly by civil society and international development partners. However, the study finds the faded hope emanated by bad performance, and tries to understand it through assessing expectations, powers, safeguards, focus, resources, results and value-addition of anti-corruption agencies and highlighting complementary conditions and institutions regarding political space, leadership qualities, social organization, civil society and market.

Alifaluddin in 2012 conducted a study on "Anti-Corruption Commission in Bangladesh to Combat Corruption". He analyzed the performance of Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) to combat the corruption from Bangladesh. M. Abdul Latif Mondal in 2009 again conducted a study on "What impedes effectiveness of Anti-Corruption Commission of Bangladesh. Alan Doig, David Watt & Robert Williams (2005) conducted a research on "Measuring success" in five African Anti-Corruption Commissions" in which they tried to measure the success of Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) in five African countries (Ghana, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda & Zambia). John R. Heilbrunn (2004) also conducted a study on "Anti-Corruption Commissions: Panacea or Real Medicine to Fight Corruption?" He succinctly analysed the functions of Singapore and Hongkong's Anti-Corruption Commission and observe that they have less success to fight against corruption of the respective countries. He also found that the commission of these countries was influenced by the government. Thus the commission could not succeed to control corruption properly.

Talukdar (2009) emphasizes on the mechanisms & institutional arrangements in combating corruption. He argues for couple of innovative & pro-active anti-corruption mechanisms and reviews institutional arrangements (e.g.: ombuds-men, parliament, anti-corruption commission, supreme court, office of the comptroller and auditor general administrative tribunal and others) for combating corruption in Bangladesh. Ahmed (2006) examines the role of the BAC in BD. This study has analyzed the former BAC functions, performance and effectiveness. This study has mainly focus on the reason behind the failure of BAC to combat corruption in Bangladesh. Iftekharuzzaman (2011) finds corruption as a major obstruction to development and independent ascendancy. The objective of this paper is to offer an indulgent of corruption and anti-corruption in Bangladesh and examine how control of corruption is intent in a contest of legitimacy in political space. The paper first attempts a brief conceptual overview of corruption and factors behind it. It then moves on to analyze the political space for corruption and anti-corruption. The paper in conclusion proposes an inclusive approach for combating vice in the country. An UNDP (2013) project describes some aspect of corruption. The main objective of the project is to be promoting accountability and transparency as indispensable pillars of local democratic governance. This project also contributes to reinforcing the importance of corruption control under circumstances of expanded local competences and transparency which represents both a risk and opportunity for good governance for effective development.

#### **1.5 Objectives of the Study:**

This study aims to provide an empirical analysis on the Role of Anti-Corruption Commission for Combating Corruption in Bangladesh. So, the specific objectives are as follows:

- To analyze the role of Anti-Corruption Commission in combating Corruption in Bangladesh.
- To explore the effectiveness of ACC's performance and functions in curbing corruption.

### **1.6 Research Questions:**

The main research questions of this study are in the following:

- What is the aim of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC)?
- What is the function and role of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC)?
- Has the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) influenced by the government of Bangladesh?
- Is the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) succeeded to fight the corruption of Bangladesh?
- How much the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) is succeeded to fight the corruption in Bangladesh?

### **1.7 Methodology of the Study:**

This is a qualitative study and the nature of the research is analytical, focusing on qualitative data gathered mainly from the annual report, different journals and websites of Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), because they are relevant, reliable and authentic source of information to achieve the objective of this research. The data were cross checked by secondary sources.

The study is based on secondary data and it is basically in descriptive nature. Relevant information was collected from various reports, journal articles, daily newspapers, magazines, books, conferences, and governmental web pages.

## **II. The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) of Bangladesh**

### **2.1 Formation of the Commission:**

- a. The commission shall consist of three commissioners and the President shall appoint a chairman from among them.
- b. No action or proceeding of the commission shall be deemed illegal on the grounds of a vacancy in the position of any commissioner or any defect in constituting the commission nor shall this be questioned in a court of law.

### **2.2 Appointment and tenure of the Commissioners:**

- a. The commissioners shall be appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Selection Committee constituted under section 7.
- b. The commissioners shall serve full time.
- c. Subject to the provisions of section 10, the commissioners shall hold office for a period of four years from the date of their appointment.
- d. The Commissioners shall not be eligible for re-appointment after the expiry of their tenure.

### **2.3 Aim and objectives of the Commission:**

To raise a well based anti-corruption culture which will be spread in the society. The aim is to fight against, to control and to prevent the corruption.

Corruption has seeped into all levels of society. No government can prevent such corruption. The masses and students will put an end to corruption; the young people and peasants must take action to prevent corruption. Otherwise, we have to wage a war against corruption.

### **2.4 Overall activities of Anti-Corruption Commission for combating corruption During the Covid-19 Pandemic Situation in Bangladesh:**

- To enquire into and conduct investigation of offences mentioned in the schedule
- To file cases on the basis of enquiry or investigation and conduct cases
- To hold enquiry into allegations of corruption on its own motion or on the application of aggrieved person or any person on his behalf
- To perform any function assigned to Commission by any Act in respect of corruption
- To review any recognized provisions of any law for prevention of corruption and submit recommendation to the President for their effective implementation
- To undertake research, prepare plan for prevention of corruption and submit to the President, recommendation for action based on the result of such research
- To raise awareness and create feeling of honesty and integrity among people with a view to preventing corruption.
- To organize seminar, symposium, workshop etc. on the subjects falling within the functions and duties

of the Commission

- To identify various causes of corruption in the context of socio-economic conditions of Bangladesh and make recommendation to the President for taking necessary steps
- To determine the procedure of enquiry, investigation, filing of cases and also the procedure of according sanction of the Commission for filing case against corruption and
- To perform any other duty as may be considered necessary for prevention of corruption.

### **III. Findings of the Study & ACC's Performance**

#### **3.1 Data Analysis and Findings:**

Traditionally corruption is not a new occurrence in Bangladesh. It has deep roots in the society. Organizations such as TIB have argued over the years that Bangladesh is a highly corrupted nation and that all manner of actions are needed to reduce this corruption. The World Bank and ADB concerned about the corruption in Bangladesh argue that corruption slows economic growth. So an Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) needed to take ownership or responsibility for anti-corruption work. There is now an Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) which was previously the Bureau of Anti-Corruption. However, this study will find out some key findings as an important factor which plays vital role for combating corruption During the Covid-19 Pandemic Situation in Bangladesh by the Anti-Corruption Commission.

Regulatory Actions of Commission to Prevent Corruption, as curative measures to combat corruption, the Commission places the accused persons before the Court after completion of enquiries and investigations of the complaints, and deals with the cases in the Court in expectation of proper adjudications. The legal actions indeed are set to begin just after receipt of the complaint of corruption (ACC Annual Report, 2020 & 2021).

Receiving Allegations of Corruption, the people can submit to the Commission the allegations of offences as included in the Schedule to the Anti-Corruption Act, 2004. The Commission proceeds with legal actions on the basis of the specific allegations relating to offences as stated in the Schedule to the Anti-Corruption Act, 2004 (with Amendments). Commission has got no mandate to initiate any legal actions on the allegations about the offences not belonging to the Schedule. In some cases, however, the petitions of allegations are referred to the Ministries concerned for actions through proper authority. If any public servants/banker/elected public representatives or person engaged in any government duties, demands bribes, and if prior to payment of the bribe, the Head Office of the Commission or the officer in charge of the nearest office of the ACC, are intimidated about it, the Bribe taker (s) may be caught red-handed by applying trapping technique (ACC Annual Report, 2016).

#### **3.2 Overall Performance of Anti-Corruption Commission for combating corruption During the Covid-19 Pandemic Situation in Bangladesh:**

On the basis of inquiry, filed cases, charge sheet etc. the overall performance of ACC from 2020- 2021 are given in following table:

##### **The Performance of ACC (2020-2021)**

<b>Subjects</b>	<b>Numbers</b>
The number of complaints received	33278
The number of complaints accepted for enquiry	1355
Sent to various ministries for action	5358
Unacceptable complaints	26565
Case file	695
Charge sheet	488
Number of trap cases	24
Number of public hearings	6
Providing information in the context of the application	44

The table shows that in three years ACC has enquired into 1355 allegations and finally submitted 488 charge sheets to the judicial court for judgment (2020-2021).

#### **3.3 Enquiry Activities of Anti-Corruption Commission:**

The Anti-Corruption Commission has the authority to conduct enquiry and investigations under sections 19 and 20 of the ACC Act. With this mandate, the ACC conducts enquiry and investigation through its four wings (Enquiry & Investigation-1, Enquiry & Investigation-2, Special Enquiry & Investigation and Money Laundering).

The two Enquiry & Investigation wings are responsible for supervising the field level enquiries and investigations conducted by eight divisional offices and 22 Integrated District Offices. The Special Enquiry &



Investigation wing has the jurisdiction to enquire and investigate into specialized areas. The areas include institutional corruption, arrests of corrupt individuals through trap operation, large-scale financial corruption and other specialized allegations.

Under the existing Money Laundering Act, it is the job of the Money Laundering wing to enquire and investigate money laundering offences and prosecute money launderers linked with one predicate offence, 'bribery and corruption. It is important to note that the investigations of the remaining 26 offences related to money laundering are conducted by the National Board of Revenue (NBR), the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and some other responsible agencies.

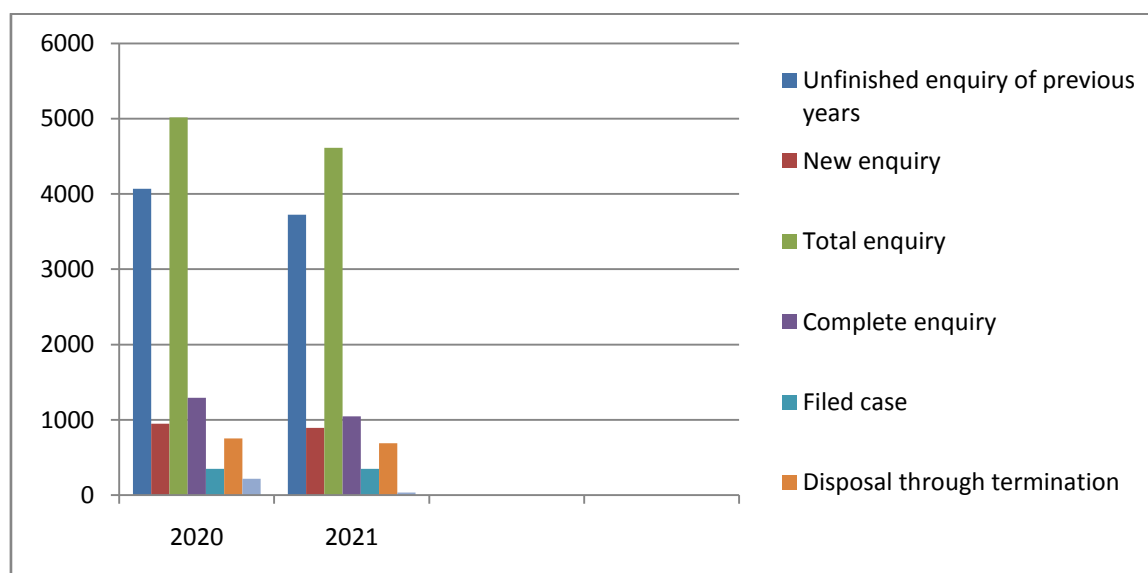
### Statistics of the enquiry activities of the complaints of 2020 and 2021

Enquiry for 2020 and 2021, including the accumulated enquiries from the previous years.

The Commission has taken special initiatives to complete all enquiries, including the previous years' accumulated ones on time. A review of the data presented below shows that the total number of enquiries in the year 2020 stood at 5,017, including the pending enquiries from the previous years. The Commission completed 1,294 enquiries in 2020. Based on these enquiries, the Commission has filed 348 cases. The remaining enquiries have been disposed of by other means prescribed in the ACC Rules. On the other hand, the total number of enquiries in 2021 was 4,614, including the accumulated enquiries from previous years. The Commission successfully disposed of 1,044 enquiries in 2021. The Commission has filed 347 cases after completing necessary enquiries; the remaining enquiries have been disposed of either without any action or following other lawful means.

Year	Unfinished enquiry of previous years	New enquiry	Total enquiry	Complete enquiry	Filed case	Disposal through termination	Disposal in other means
2020	4069	948	5017	1294	348	753	216
2021	3723	891	4614	1044	347	688	32

### A comparative picture of the overall enquiry activities in 2020 and 2021

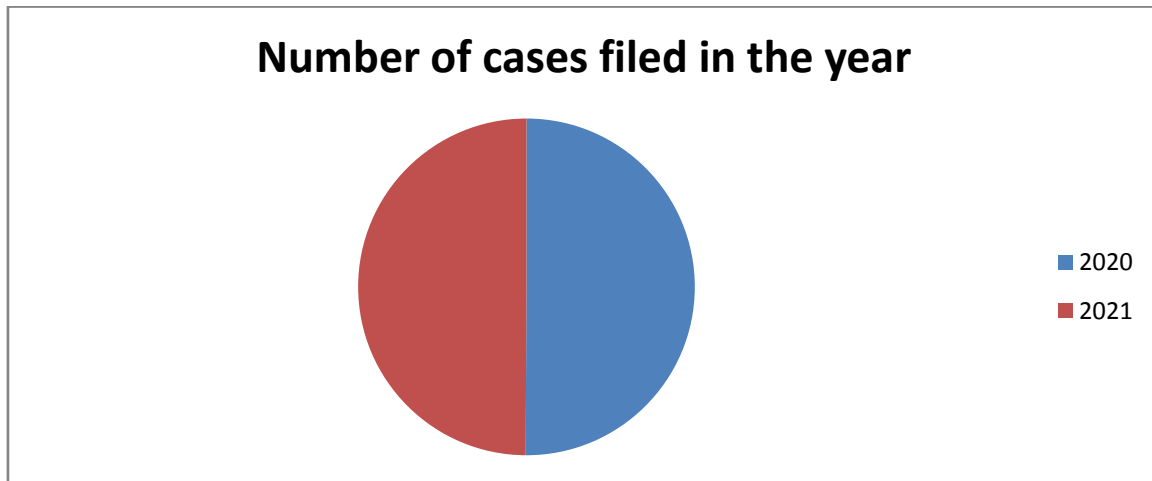


### Statistics of the Commission's cases filed in 2020 and 2021

The number of cases in 2020 and 2021 was also remarkable considering the prevalence of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Year	Number of cases filed in the year
2020	348
2021	347

**A Comparative picture of cases filed by the Commission in 2020 and 2021**

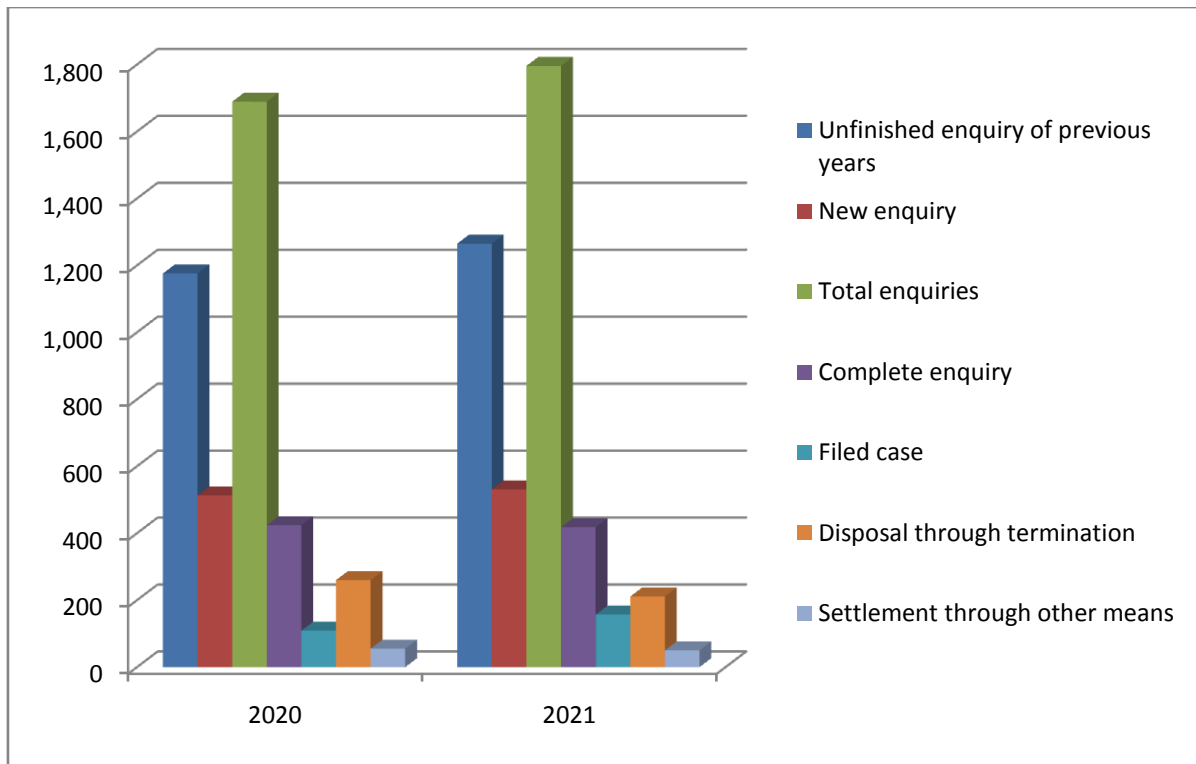


**Statistics of asset enquiry activities**

As per the legal mandate, the Anti-Corruption Commission takes measures against those who possess assets from undisclosed sources. Statistics show that out of 1,689 enquiries in 2020, 513 were initiated in 2020, and the remaining 1,176 were from previous years. The Commission completed 424 enquiries and filed 109 cases based on those enquiries. On the other hand, out of 1,796 enquiries related to assets in 2021, 531 were initiated in 2021. In this year, the Commission completed 418 enquiries and filed 157 cases.

Year	Unfinished enquiry of previous years	New enquiry	Total enquiries	Complete enquiry	Filed case	Disposal through termination	Settlement through other means
2020	1,176	513	1,689	424	109	260	55
2021	1,265	531	1,796	418	157	211	50

**A comparative picture of the ACC’s asset enquiry activities**

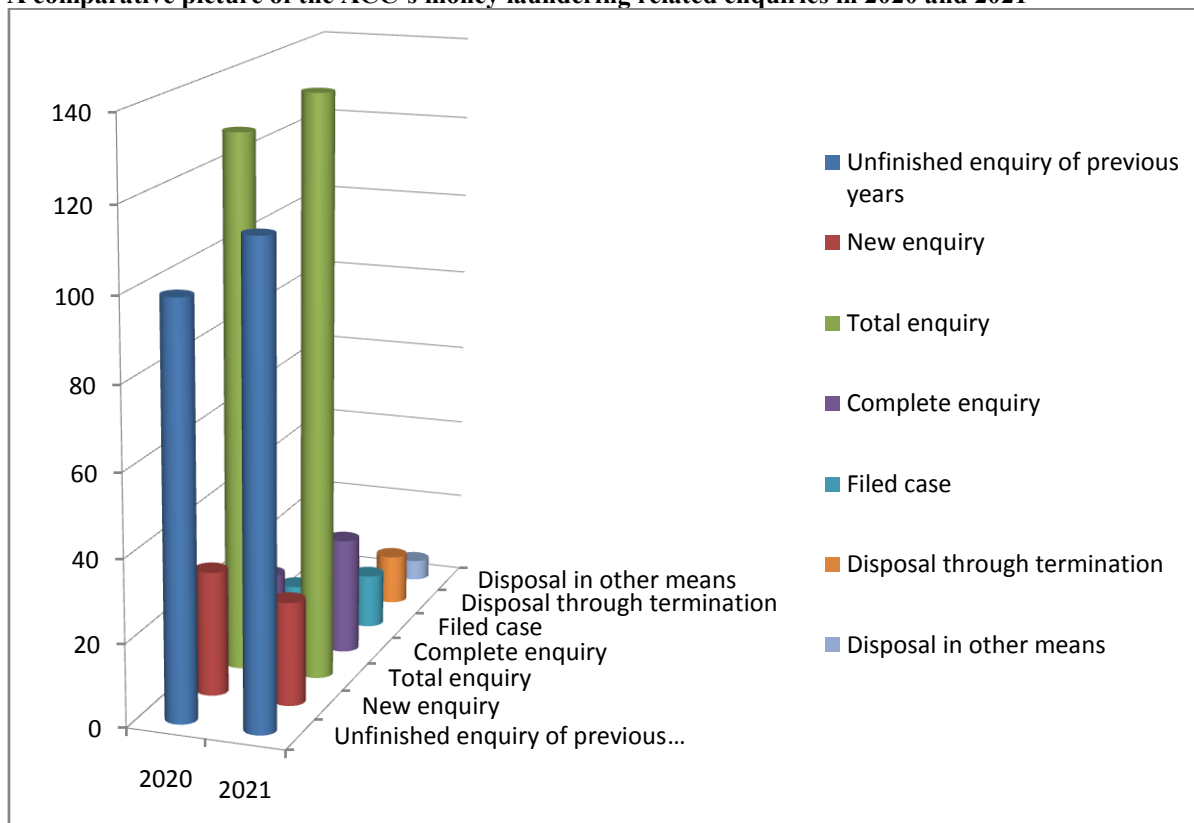


**Statistics of the ACC’s money laundering related enquiries in 2020 and 2021**

In 2020, out of 129 enquiries, including the pending money-laundering enquiries from the previous years, the Commission completed 17 enquiries. Eight complaints turned into litigations from those, and six were disposed of after proper enquiries, and three were disposed of by other lawful means. In 2021, out of 139 ongoing enquiries, the Commission could finish 28. Of them 13 complaints turned into litigation, 12 were disposed of as there were no substantive findings and five were disposed of through other lawful processes.

Year	Unfinished enquiry of previous years	New enquiry	Total enquiry	Complete enquiry	Filed case	Disposal through termination	Disposal in other means
2020	99	30	129	17	8	6	3
2021	114	25	139	28	13	12	5

**A comparative picture of the ACC's money laundering related enquiries in 2020 and 2021**



### 3.4 Investigation Activities of Anti-Corruption Commission:

Investigating corruption-related offences is one of the leading legal functions of the Anti-Corruption Commission [Section 17 (a) of ACC Act 2004]. The outcome of the investigation is the basis for prosecuting the people against whom complaints were lodged. Sections 19 and 20 of the Anti-Corruption Commission Act have conferred special powers on the ACC in this regard. With this mandate, the ACC conducts investigations through its four wings (Enquiry & Investigation-1, Enquiry & Investigation-2, Special enquiry & Investigation, and Money Laundering Wing). The Enquiry & Investigation wings investigate complaints recommended by the Complaints Scrutiny Committee. Several sections of Enquiry & Investigation wings supervise the field-level enquiries and investigation activities conducted by eight Divisional Offices and 22 Integrated District Offices. The Commission's Special Investigation wing and Money Laundering wing deal with specialized cases that require a comprehensive investigative mechanism.

#### Statistics of the investigation activities of the cases of 2020 and 2021

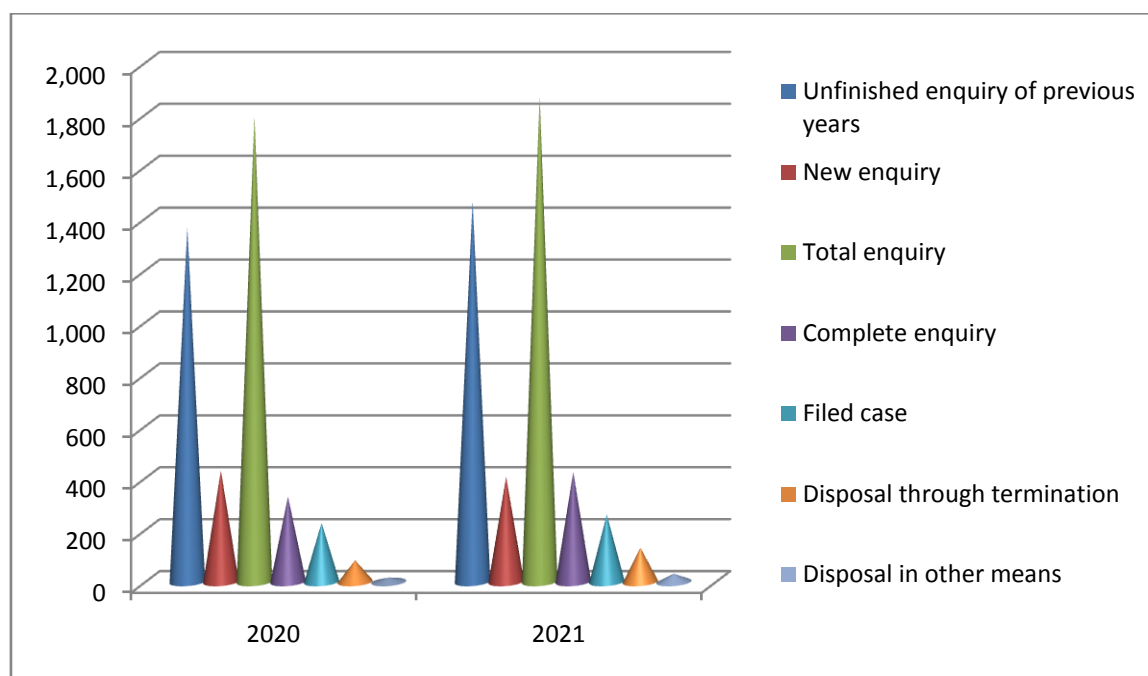
The Anti-Corruption Commission has taken the necessary steps to complete each investigation within the stipulated time. The progress of investigations into the cases is closely monitored to achieve the Commission's target of the annual work plan. These steps have given impetus to the overall investigation activities. Statistics reveal that the total number of investigations in 2020 was 1,796, including the pending investigations from the previous years. Among these, the Commission completed 329 investigations in 2020. Based on these investigations, the Commission approved the filing of charge-sheets in 228 cases. Of the



remaining investigations, 84 Final Reports (FR) were approved by the Commission. Seventeen investigations have been sent to other agencies with the request to take necessary action. On the other hand, the total number of investigations in 2021 stood at 1,873, including the pending investigations from the previous years. Among those, 424 investigations were completed, and the filing of charge-sheets got the approval of the Commission in 260 cases. Of the remaining completed investigations, 132 Final Reports (FR) got approval. Besides, 32 investigations were sent to other agencies for necessary action.

Year	Unfinished investigation of previous years	New investigation	Total investigation	Complete investigation	Submission of charge sheet	Final report submitted	Disposal in other means
2020	1,366	430	1,796	329	228	84	17
2021	1,467	406	1873	424	260	132	32

**A comparative picture of the ACC’s investigation activities in 2020 and 2021**

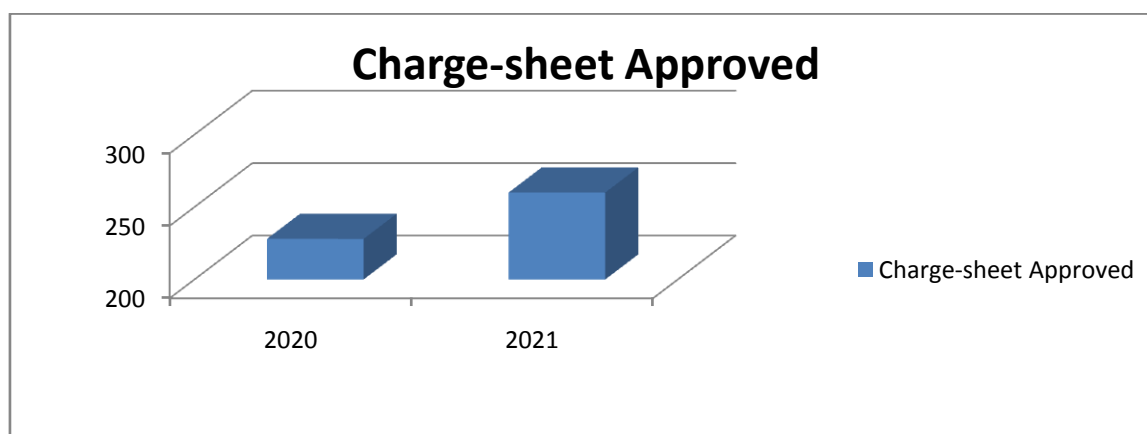


**Statistics of charge-sheet approval of cases 2020 and 2021**

Reviewing the statistics of the charge-sheets approved by the Commission in the last five years, it is observed that due to lock-down enforced in different phases during the outbreak of COVID-19, the number of charge-sheets approvals in 2020 was relatively low. Nevertheless, as a result of the improvement in the COVID-19 situation, the number of charge-sheets started increasing again in 2021.

Year	Charge-sheet Approved
2020	228
2021	260

**A comparative picture of the ACC’s charge-sheet approval of cases 2020 and 2021**



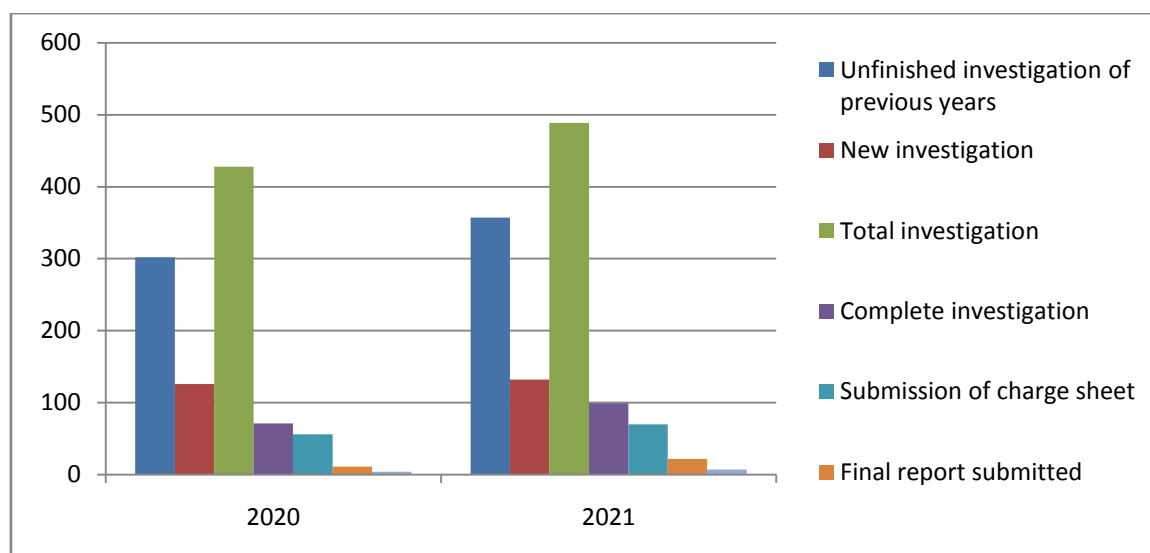
**Statistics of illegal asset investigations for 2020 and 2021**

It is the legal responsibility of the Anti-Corruption Commission to take action against those who acquire assets disproportionate to their known income. Action is taken against those who acquire wealth through bribery, corruption or any other illegal means in accordance with Sections 26 and 27 of the ACC Act. Of the total 428 asset-related investigations, 126 were started in 2020, and the remaining 302 were accumulated from the previous years. Out of the total 428 investigations, 71 were completed. The Commission approved 56 chargesheets based on the completed investigations. In 2020, 11 Final Reports were submitted. The remaining four were sent to other agencies for necessary action.

On the other hand, 489 investigations related to assets were accumulated in the Commission. Of them, 132 investigations were started in 2021. In this year, 99 investigations could be completed. From the completed asset investigations, 70 charge-sheets were approved. After completing investigations, 22 Final Reports were submitted. Besides, seven investigations were sent to responsible agencies. Table 9 provides a comprehensive overview of the ACC’s activities in conducting asset investigations and their outcomes.

Year	Unfinished investigation of previous years	New investigation	Total investigation	Complete investigation	Submission of charge sheet	Final report submitted	Disposal in other means
2020	302	126	428	71	56	11	4
2021	357	132	489	99	70	22	7

**A comparative picture of the ACC’s illegal asset investigations for 2020 and 2021**

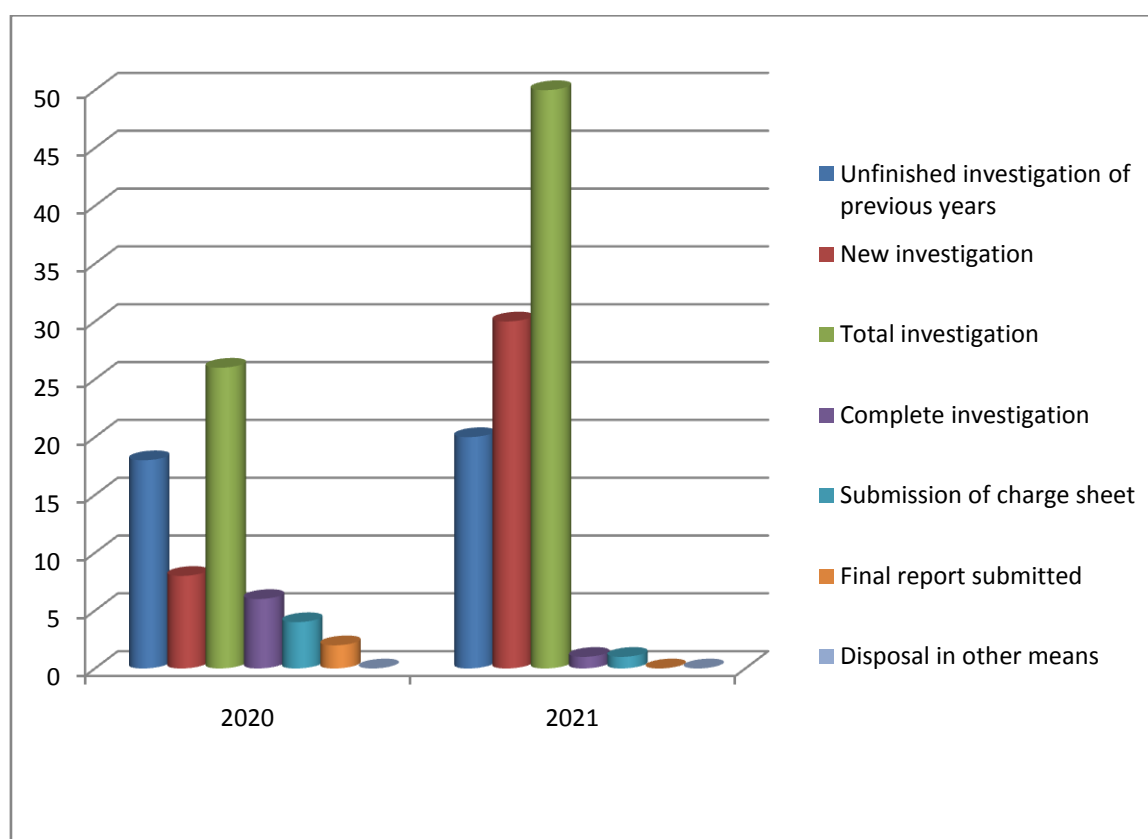


### Statistics of investigations on money laundering cases in 2020 and 2021

Under the existing money laundering law, the Anti-Corruption Commission can only investigate money laundering cases related to bribery and corruption. The investigation of money laundering cases related to the other 26 predicate offences is being conducted by different agencies, including NBR and CID. The Anti-Corruption Commission investigates money laundering cases meticulously. The Commission has completed investigations in six cases out of 26, which included the accumulated investigations from the period preceding the year 2020. The Commission approved charge-sheets in four cases, and Final Reports (FR) were submitted in two cases. On the other hand, in the year 2021, one investigation was completed out of a total of 50 which included the pending ones from the previous years. The ACC investigates money laundering cases with great importance.

Year	Unfinished investigation of previous years	New investigation	Total investigation	Complete investigation	Submission of charge sheet	Final report submitted	Disposal in other means
2020	18	8	26	6	4	2	0
2021	20	30	50	1	1	0	0

### A comparative picture of the ACC's investigations on money laundering cases in 2020 and 2021

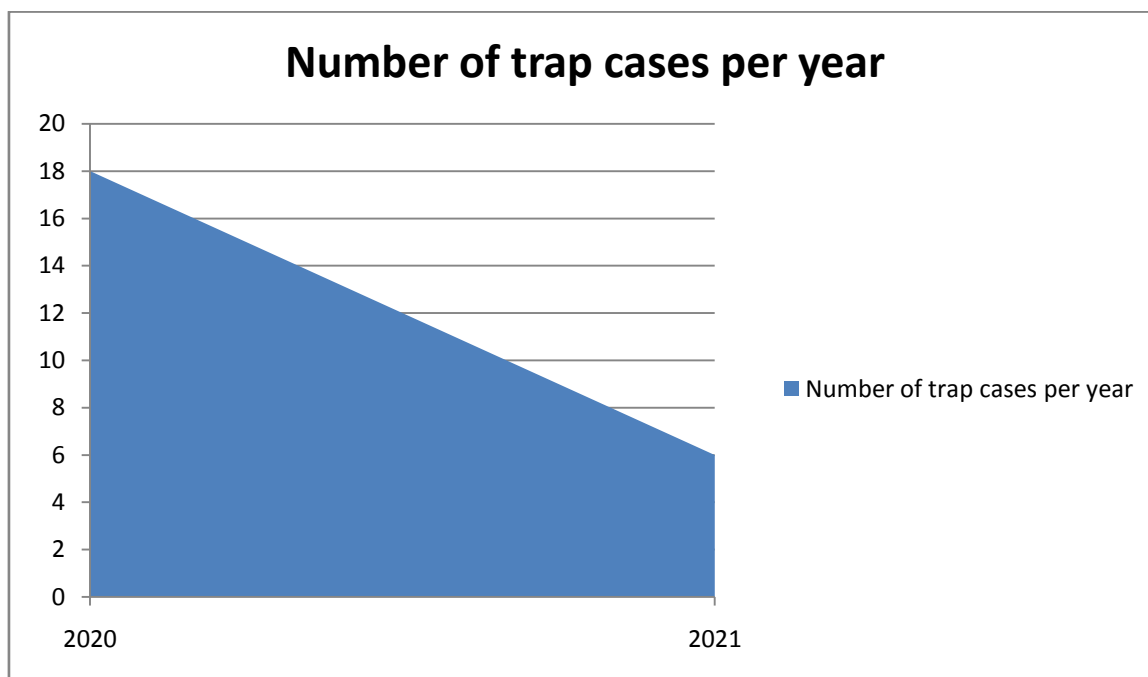


### 3.5 Trap cases of Anti-Corruption Commission

The Commission is conducting Trap Cases to end the culture of bribery and eradicate corruption. The Commission gives the approval to conduct trap operation to catch those service providing officials red-handed who seek bribes or gifts while delivering public services. If the information of demanding bribes by any government employee comes to ACC, the Commission takes necessary steps to catch them red-handed. The following table shows the activities of the ACC in investigating the trap cases in 2020 and 2021.

Year	Number of trap cases per year
2020	18
2021	6

**A comparative picture of the ACC’s Trap cases**



**3.6 Prosecution of Anti-Corruption Commission:**

One of the essential legal mandates of the ACC is to bring the perpetrators of scheduled offences under the ACC Act by producing objective investigation reports to the court. The Commission handles every case with equal importance. The Commission adheres to the Anti-Corruption Commission Act, 2004; Money Laundering Prevention Act, 2012; Penal Code, 1860. The Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898; Prevention of Corruption Act, 1947; The Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1958; The Evidence Act, 1872, and other relevant laws and regulations. According to section 17 (b) of the Anti-Corruption Commission Act, 2004, the Commission files cases and begins legal proceedings based on enquiry and investigation into scheduled offences

**The Offences that the ACC is empowered to prosecute**

The Commission is mandated to prosecute the offences described in the Schedule to the Anti-Corruption Commission Act, 2004; The Prevention of Corruption Act of 1947; Money Laundering Prevention Act, 2012; Offences under Penal Code (section 161-169, 217, 218, 409) and any offence under sections 420, 467, 468, 471, 477(1) if they are related to public property. Moreover, offences committed by a government employee or a bank official or an employee of a financial institution in the course of official duties under sections 109, 120b, 511 of the Penal Code are also within the legal scope of the ACC.

Under Section 32(1) of the Anti-Corruption Commission Act, 2004, the Commission has full authority to file cases against these offences. Pursuant to Section 28(1) of the Anti-Corruption Commission Act, 2004, offences under this Act and its Schedule shall be tried only by a Special Judge. However, in the event of any conflict between the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1958 and the ACC Act, the provisions of the Anti-Corruption Commission Act will be applicable [Section 27 (3) of the ACC Act]; the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1958 will be applicable to appeals.

The Legal wing of the Commission oversees legal matters and maintains up-to-date information on the Commission’s cases. The lawyers appointed by the Commission under the direct supervision of this wing deal with the cases of the Commission in the relevant courts. At present, the Commission appoints contract lawyers on a separate panel to handle corruption cases on behalf of the Commission in both the Special Judge’s Court and the Supreme Court. The 122-member panel of lawyers is called ‘public prosecutor’ and serves in 13 Special Judge’s Courts both within and outside Dhaka. Twenty-nine lawyers are working in Dhaka Division, 20 in Chittagong Division, 16 in Rajshahi Division, 13 in Rangpur Division, 19 in Khulna Division, 9 in Barishal Division, 7 in Sylhet Division and 9 in Mymensingh Division. Among them, there are 04 female public prosecutors as well. Besides, 27 learned lawyers handle cases on behalf of the ACC in the High Court.

### **3.7 The Anti-Corruption Commission makes arrests to comply with legal obligations:**

Under section 20 (3) of the Anti-Corruption Commission Act, 2004, an ACC officer is empowered like an Officer-in-Charge of a Police Station to investigate the offences scheduled for the Act. In 2020, for investigation purposes, the investigating officers of the Commission have arrested 29 people accused in various corruption cases. The Commission makes arrests to comply with legal obligations, to reduce disregard of law by accused and to create Anti-Corruption awareness. One of the ways to uproot the sources of corruption is to arrest the bribetakers red-handed. All kinds of legal protections are provided to the arrested persons. Trap operation are continued to prevent the notoriety of bribery.

#### **Statistics of bank officials, government officials and others among those were arrested in 2020 & 2021.**

Occupation/contact number of the arrested	Number	
	2020	2021
Bank/Employees	8	0
Government/Employees	12	11
Public Representatives	4	4
Employees of Non-Banking Financial Institutions	0	11
Business persons and others	5	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>31</b>

### **3.8 Enforcement operation of the ACC at a glance (2020 and 2021):**

The Anti-Corruption Commission launched a toll-free Hotline number (106) on 27 July 2017 to receive public complaints and prevent corruption immediately. In the very first week of the launch, about 75,000 phone calls were received. The AFP, The France24, the BBC, The Mail Online, The Deutsche Welle, The Qatar Post, The Herald and many other media outlets worldwide published news pieces on this in different languages.

This trend of reporting complaints to the Hotline continues as a routine activity. About 42 lac (4.2 million) phone calls have been received since the inception of the Complaint Centre. Hotline services are conducted every working day from 9 am to 5 pm divided into four shifts. Five trained technicians of the Commission are providing this service. Activities of the Complaints Centre are digitally monitored. The ACC Complaints Centre (106) is being run under the close supervision of the Commission's senior officials.

In addition to allegations of corruption, the Hotline also receives calls about complaints that fall beyond the purview of the ACC, such as complaints about personal disputes, dowry, and negligence in school, social disputes, land disputes, and various social problems. Following the Commission's explicit instructions, the call center agents record allegations of scheduled offences under the ACC Act and counsel the complainants about what to do about non-scheduled offences. Overall, the ACC Complaints Centre (106) acts as a reliable platform for the general public to lodge complaints. In order to institutionalize the activities of the Complaint Centre, the government approved the organogram of the Enforcement Unit with a 26 members staff. Accordingly, the Unit started its official journey on 23 January 2019 with the posting of trained officials. The Enforcement Unit conducts operations as per the directives of the Commission and takes immediate action in five different means. In addition, letters are sent from the Unit requesting the relevant department to take necessary action regarding a complaint.

In 2020 and 2021, the Anti-Corruption Commission conducted 632 enforcement operations on complaints received through the ACC hotline and other sources. These immediate operations made it possible to prevent corruption immediately. The authorities concerned have taken appropriate measures to stop controversial recruitment, prevent substandard construction work, to disconnect illegal gas connections, to evict illegal structures along rivers, canals and roads, and to protect the environment. When necessary, during the drive expert assistance was sought from relevant agencies. As a result, the quality and transparency of the campaign were increased. Due to the prima facie evidence of the allegations, formal enquiries was started into 203 allegations in the last two years. Moreover, eight cases were filed directly under the powers given by the latest amended Rule 10(f)(1) of the Anti-Corruption Commission. According to Rule 16 of the ACC Rules, 2007, with the approval of the Commission, criminals were arrested in four cases of bribery through Trap operation.

### **3.9 Prevention of Corruption and Development of Good Practices in ACC:**

The Anti-Corruption Commission is carrying out three-dimensional activities to prevent corruption. The Commission is gradually carrying out short-term, mid-term and long-term activities targeting specific groups in the light of its strategy. Short-term activities include building awareness among the stakeholders through Anti-Corruption campaigns. The mid-term activities include events organized by the corruption prevention committee, including public hearings. Long-term activities include various Anti-Corruption programs organized by members of the Integrity Unit. Awareness among all walks of life is growing day by day about corruption. The underline significance of the Anti-Corruption Commission Act, 2004 is that the highest priority is given to prevent corruption. Out of the 11 functions of the Commission mentioned in the ACC Act, 2004, six activities are related to the prevention of corruption. One of these functions is to strengthen the fight against corruption and to create public awareness about corruption. The Commission seeks to involve people from all walks of life in its Anti-Corruption activities.

### **3.10 Inclusive Anti-Corruption Program of ACC:**

#### **Participatory anti-corruption movement of social power:**

It is difficult to control corruption only by enforcing law. Social movements against corruption can play an essential role in preventing corruption. The social structure should be such that no one can even think of corruption. Institutionalized initiatives are needed to create social movements to prevent corruption. The Anti-Corruption Commission is implementing an inclusive Anti-Corruption strategy through a participatory approach.

#### **Integrity Unit: an anti-corruption platform for youth:**

Everything about sustainable development revolves around the future. The new generation will be the focal point for a good reason. The Corruption Prevention Committees have formed Integrity Unit in schools and madrasas of the country to instill Honesty, loyalty and character traits among the younger generation, to enhance insights into the environment and climate change, to inject intense hatred against corruption into them, and above all to involve students in Anti-Corruption awareness activities. According to the charter and guidelines of the Integrity Unit, members of the Integrity Unit will be entirely voluntary, free from the influence of all kinds of political ideologies, and they will not be involved in any activities that are inconsistent with the provisions of law or against law and order. In each Integrity Unit, an executive committee consisting of 11 students from the same educational institution is formed. Besides, an advisory council (head of the educational institution, member of the corruption prevention committee, senior teacher of the educational institution, guardian member of the managing committee of the school/college/madrasa) is formed consisting of five members. All the students of that institution are general members of the Integrity Unit. In consultation with the Advisory Council, the Metropolitan/District/Upazila Corruption Prevention Committee nominates the members, president and general secretary of the executive committee of each Integrity Unit from among the interested students.

#### **ACC's new addition to the development of good practice 'Honesty Store':**

The Commission has taken the initiative since 2016 to set up Honesty Stores in various schools and madrasas for the development of good practice among the young generation, especially the secondary level students. The Commission believes that Honesty is a matter of intensive practice in daily life. There is no substitute for practicing Honesty in building an immaculate society. Young people are fond of imitation. Once they have determined what is right or wrong in their minds, they will not make a mistake in taking the correct position.

To this end, the Anti-Corruption Commission carries out multidimensional activities to inculcate Honesty and morality in the younger generations. An 'Honesty Store' is a store without any salesperson. These stores have biscuits, chips, chocolates, etc., and various educational materials. Every Honesty Store has a price list, cash box for payment etc. but no seller. The students buy the products they need and pay the price in the cash box by themselves. The Commission has not yet received any complaint of immorality in the management of these stores. In this case, transparency and Honesty of the students are giving hope to the Commission. Apart from these initiatives by the Commission, some school authorities and local administration are also setting up Honesty Stores in their local educational institutions by their initiative.

#### **Statistics of prevention activities implemented by the ACC:**

The Prevention Wing of the Anti-Corruption Commission carries out various activities annually to prevent corruption and develop Anti-Corruption awareness. The Corruption Prevention Committee, Integrity Unit and local administration are involved in these activities. Social awareness is being developed by various



Anti-Corruption programs such as Anti-Corruption rallies, human chains, road-march, seminars, workshops, documentaries, cartoon exhibitions, debates and essay competitions. Corruption Prevention Committees, along with local civil society, Integrity Unit, professional organizations, NGOs and various socio-cultural organizations, organize Anti-Corruption human chains, processions, and seminars. People of different professions express solidarity with the ongoing Anti-Corruption social movement. The Commission has always welcomed an inclusive approach that involves the mass people in the fight against corruption. The Corruption Prevention Committee and Integrity Unit activities are carried out voluntarily.

The Chairman, Commissioners and other staff of all levels of the Commission participate in such preventive programs. In order to develop good practice, 1,29,640 posters and 5,500 leaflets containing various proverbs were distributed in 2020. About 4,552 khata, 4,550 scales, 4,895 geometry boxes, 8,091 umbrellas, 772 school bags, 3,223 pens, 2,542 tiffin boxes, 1,600 water pots, 1,050 hand purses, 467 wall-mats and 71,750 greeting cards have been distributed among students with subtexts such as “I will not do bad deeds, I will not tolerate bad deeds”, “I will do good deeds, I will build the country with all”, “I will think for the country, I will follow the path of morality”, “I will speak the truth, I will stop injustice”, “I will abide by rules, I will keep safe”, “nobody believes a liar, “Don’t laugh at seniors”, Take oath of patriotism, drive away corruption” etc. In addition, 7,07,500 Anti-Corruption posters with different slogans were distributed in 2021.

### **3.11 Promotional Activities of Anti-Corruption Commission:**

**Message Dissemination:** Anti-Corruption messages have been disseminated through SMS on cell phones in collaboration with the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) by the initiative of the Prevention Wing.

**Documentary Broadcasting:** In order to create Anti-Corruption awareness in the country, short documentaries titled “Punishment”, “Victory of Truth”, “I will be better, I will make better”, “Wrong”, and “Victory of Honesty” have been aired on various private television channels and Bangladesh Television. Similarly, these documentaries are regularly disseminated through the District Information Office in every district and Upazila, including Dhaka.

**DUDOK Barta (ACC News):**DUDOK Barta is a monthly publication of the Anti-Corruption Commission. Through this publication, all kinds of activities of the Commission, such as filing of cases, filing of charge-sheets, judgments of cases in trial courts, enforcement operations against corruption, ACC related laws and regulations and public hearings of the previous month of the Commission are highlighted. ‘DUDOK Barta’ is distributed to the citizens free of cost.

**Celebrating International Anti-Corruption Day:** In 2021 The Commission observed the International Anti-Corruption Day declared by the United Nations. On this occasion, various programs, including discussion meetings, were held. On this day, ACC Chairman Mohammad Moinuddin Abdullah led a human chain in front of the Institute of Engineers which was attended by officers and staff of the Commission’s Head Office and Dhaka Divisional Office, ACC panel lawyers, members of Dhaka Metropolitan Corruption Prevention Committee.

It was also attended by Girl Guides, Ansar, BNCC, various NGOs, Dhaka Divisional Commissioner, Department of Narcotics Control, Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF), NGO Affairs Bureau, Dhaka District Administration and thousands of ordinary people from all walks of life. Anti-Corruption placards, banners and festoons were also displayed at eight more points of the capital Dhaka in the presence of innumerable people. These Anti-Corruption programs were also celebrated at the same time in every district and Upazila of the country

### **3.12 National and International Partnerships Anti-Corruption Commission:**

Bangladesh is a signatory to the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). As Bangladesh is a signatory to the UNCAC, the Commission believes in a participatory and inclusive approach to curb and prevent corruption at national and international levels. The Commission has continued its efforts to build partnerships with national and international organizations as part of its inclusive approach to combating corruption. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Bhutan Anti-Corruption Commission and Bangladesh Anti-Corruption Commission on 14 June 2017 at the Head Office of the Anti-Corruption Commission. In 2018, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the ACC and the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation (ICRF). Similarly, in 2019, the ACC signed an MoU with India’s Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

The MoUs have been identified as markers of cooperation in various areas, including initial investigation, detection, authentication, exchange of experience, best practices, and Anti-Corruption education programs. The Commission maintains close liaison with relevant organizations in about 22 countries, including Indonesia, China, the United States and Malaysia, to share and develop good practices.

National organizations such as Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), Oxfam, Bangladesh Scouts, and Bangladesh Girl Guides Association have signed MoUs with the Anti-Corruption Commission. The ACC jointly implements various Anti-Corruption programs at the district and upazila levels across the country. Anti-Corruption Commission and Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) are implementing various programs, including the celebration of International Anti-Corruption Day, information fair, public hearing, seminar, symposium and Anti-Corruption human chain based on cooperation in prevention of corruption.

The Anti-Corruption Commission undertakes various awareness-building programs, such as debate competitions, cartoon competitions, essay competitions, seminars, symposiums, workshops, views exchange meetings, road-show, human chain, and cultural programs. Rover Scouts and Girl Guides Association members also actively participate in the ACC's events. Their active participation in various programs every year on the International Anti-Corruption Day, the founding anniversary of the Anti-Corruption Commission, and the Anti-Corruption week is also encouraging.

The Anti-Corruption Commission and the Bangladesh Girl Guides Association jointly implement training programs for their members on ethics, Anti-Corruption communication strategies, information technology, right to information law, gender development, human rights, climate change, and good governance. Besides, 'Kite Bangladesh' is conducting various creative activities for the members of the Integrity Unit.

### **3.13 Public Hearing for Preventing Corruption and Developing Inclusive Administrative Management:**

The public hearing is an effective strategy for promoting transparency, accountability, inclusive administrative management in the public service, and above all, a fruitful way to build the state machineries as people-friendly institutions. The Anti-Corruption Commission primarily carries out such activities at the grassroots level. As a result, the grassroots mass people gain easy access to lodge their complaints. The public hearing is by nature a platform for holding tripartite meetings where complainants or aggrieved citizens, service providing government officials and local public representatives, and high officials of the Anti-Corruption Commission usually participate in person. Most complaints are generally resolved during or immediately after the hearing session. In some cases, if the issues are not resolved immediately, they are resolved through follow-up meetings. A survey conducted by a private organization has found that the Public Hearing programs organized by the ACC have proved quite effective as it has arranged follow-up public hearings as and when needed, and the public hearing program is working as a popular strategy in developing good governance practice.

#### **Objectives of Public Hearing:**

- Paying heed directly to the complaints/grievances raised by the service seeking citizens, and getting these settled off by the service providing offices/agencies instantly.
- Improving the quality of services meant for the citizens in all public offices in compliance with the Citizen Charter.
- Creating awareness among mass people about the rights of the citizens.
- Increasing empathy between service seeking citizens and service providing officials.
- Identifying the sources of irregularities, red-tapism and corruption, and taking steps to remove them.
- Adopting administrative and legal measures if necessary.
- Making the service providers responsive and sincere about their responsibilities and duties.

### **3.14 Establishment of ACC Hotline No. 106:**

The former Finance Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Government, AbulMaal Abdul Muhith has inaugurated the ACC Complain Center Hotline No. 106 on 27<sup>th</sup> July, 2017. This system has turned into a platform of mass people to inform their allegations to ACC. It is open for 24 hours and take actions when complain received.

### **3.15 Information Management System of the Commission:**

The ACC has been working for implementation of the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2009, with a view to ensure free flow of and the people's right to, information. In response to citizens' demands and in compliance with the Information Disclosure Policy, 2011 formulated on requirement by the RTI Act, 2009. According to the

Information Disclosure Policy, 2011, any memorandum published pertaining to the composition, structure and activities of the Commission, books, statistics, log books, Orders, Notifications, deeds, specimen, letters, reports, financial statements, project proposals, audios, videos-all these have been defined as "information". The Public Relations Officer in the Headquarters, the Directors within their own jurisdictions of 8 Divisional Offices and the Deputy Directors within their jurisdictions of 36 Integrated Offices are holding the responsibilities to provide information in consideration of the natures of the Citizens' demands. As legally empowered by the RTI Act, any citizen can apply to the Commission seeking information, in prescribed formats or in plain white papers. The applications must be responded to, within the stipulated timeline. Providing the information without any valid reasons, will amount to "Misconduct", and accordingly actions shall be taken against him/her under the Anti-Corruption Commission (Employees) Service Rules, 2008.

### **3.16 Summary of the activities of the Anti-Corruption Commission for 2020 and 2021:**

Since the formation of the Anti-Corruption Commission in 2004, the Commission has been conducting enquiries and investigations into offences mentioned in the Schedule of the ACC Act. The Anti-Corruption Commission takes legal action when it receives specific allegations of corruption. The Commission does not consider the social or political identity of the offender. Since the formation of the present Commission, an action plan has been adopted to ensure the quality of investigation and prosecution of the ACC cases. To that end, the strategy of the Commission is determined in consultation with the stakeholders. This strategy seems effective to bring about some positive changes.

This is evident from a review of the judgments delivered by the trial courts in the cases filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission. According to the data obtained, the conviction rate of the Anti-Corruption Commission was 63% in both 2018 and 2019. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the conviction rate was about 72% in 2020, and about 60% in 2021. Analyzing these statistics, it can be inferred that even during the COVID-19 pandemic in the past two years (2020 and 2021), the conviction rates remained at a higher position than those of the previous years. This is a positive achievement of the Commission. The Commission is working to increase the conviction rate in its prosecutions.

In 2021, the ACC started enquiries into 4,614 complaints, completed 1,044 enquiries and filed 347 cases based on the findings. Enquiries of 3,570 complaints are going on. At the same time, 1,449 Investigations are being conducted while 3,434 cases are under trial. Money laundering cases filed by the Commission have resulted in almost 100 per cent convictions.

A committee headed by the Secretary of the Commission has been formed to make the rules and regulations of the Commission more effective and up-to-date. The Anti-Corruption Commission is prepared to set up offices in 14 more districts to increase its capacity. These 14 Integrated District Offices are being added to the existing 22 Integrated District Offices. The ACC will carry out its activities, through the Integrated District Offices in 36 districts. A new integrated district office has just been opened in Cox's Bazar (for Cox's Bazar and Bandarban) on 1 January 2022. More district offices will be opened in 13 other districts from 1 July 2022. Besides, 34 Assistant Directors have been promoted to the post of Deputy Director and 40 Deputy Assistant Directors have been promoted to Assistant Director. Moreover, the recruitment process of 133 new Assistant Directors and 147 Deputy Assistant Directors is in its final stage. With the establishment of new ACC offices and an increase in the workforce, Anti-Corruption activities in the districts will be intensified.

Besides, Maximum use of technology is being ensured in all its activities at the ACC. The ACC's capacity is going to be significantly enhanced by the establishment of its servers, the new forensic labs and IPMS software. The Commission hopes that the use of information technology will play a vital role in preventing corruption.

## **IV. Challenges of Anti-Corruption Commission:**

### **4.1 Challenges of Anti-Corruption Commission:**

Though the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) is created to reduce the corruption from Bangladesh and make Bangladesh a corruption free country, it could not fulfill its aim and objectives properly. Most of the times, ACC started its investigating activity in right way but ended with faulty. There are many complaints received to the ACC about the corruption done by the public and private officials but the concerned authority does not take the sufficient measures to handle them. Because Anti-Corruption Commission has some significant challenges in the way of making itself as an effective institution in curbing corruption in Bangladesh.

#### **Lack of Coordination:**

ACC cannot perform well alone. It is a part of the total system of governance. Many other bodies have unified roles to support the anti-corruption drive and coordinated relations to bring the corrupt people to justice. But in reality there has no coordination between different state organs.

**Small-scale Preventive Activities:**

The range of preventive activities taken by the Commission is small and isolated in character which is not reaching mass people with their awareness message. The number of staff and budget are not sufficient in respect with population as well s financial budget.

**Lack of Political Commitment:**

The independence of ACC depends largely on the political commitment. No organization will be able to perform their duties in efficient manner without the cooperation from the ruling political party's commitment. In Bangladesh most often theruling political parties use this body as a weapon against the other opposition parties.

**Accountability and Oversight:**

The monitoring and evaluation unit of the ACC has lack of accountability and external oversight mechanism as there is no place for public involvement in its structure. No academic or parliamentary discussion holds on its report.

**Power and Safeguards:**

The beginning of ACC is an attempt tofree the anti- corruption supervisory body from the decision- making. The ACC Act gives substantive power to the Chairman and Commissioners who cannot be removed by the executive.

**Legal Constraints:**

According to the Act of 2004, the government always approves the budget of the ACC which make the ACC dependent on the government for the budget. It hampers the independent status of the commission.

**Lack of Transparency:**

The management of the information system of the commission is poor. There are numerous cases of leaking information from the office. The official website is not well furnished and updated.

**Insufficient Manpower:**

The ACC has, at least in the Head Office, a large number of staff of various categories who were in the defunct BAC and were absorbed in the ACC. On the other hand, in the field level, in addition to issues of credibility and expertise, under-staffing remains a problem. Poor infrastructure, insufficient logistics and lack of manpower are mostly common at field-level ACC offices.

**Lack of Infrastructure:**

The decision to reduce district offices (from 66 to 22) has negative impact on the anti-corruption drive. ACC faces challenges to cover its services in all districts through 22 combined offices. People living in the districts where ACC offices do not exist are deprived of ACC services, because distant offices become disincentives for them to file complaints.

## **V. Recommendation & Conclusion**

### **5.1 Recommendations to Way Forward:**

The legal, political and operational drawbacks are the main hindrances for an independent and effective Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) which are fading for the lack of political commitment. From the beginning ACC has been struggling with various bottlenecks. The bottlenecks can be minimized by following some steps as are givenbelow:

- The rules and regulations described in the ACC Act should be made uniform andupdated.
- The jurisdiction area and the authority of the ACC should be restructured according to the demands of thetime.
- ACC should only be engaged when the interest and asset or resources of the government involved.
- Knowledge, skill and ability is needed in the ACC's workforceto deal thecourt and its procedures.
- Huge technological integration should be madetocopewiththelatestwayofcorruption.The introduction of the digitalization of the institutions, rapid investigation and highly accessible information system isthe prerequisite.
- Merit should be the one and only criteria for therecruitment.

- Culture of zero-level tolerance to the staffs should be established in case of any kinds of irregularities.
- The independence and the effectiveness mainly depend on the political commitment and comprehensiveness thus these are needed.
- Good governance should be ensured at all institutions especially in the police, NBR, Tax, Judiciary.
- Each public and private institution should be brought under strong accountable and transparent system, where people would have easy access to know about.
- Man of strong personality having guts and bravery to challenge any pressure coming from outside, even from the political arena should be appointed as Chairman and members of the commission.
- The Chairman and Commissioners should have non-partisan attitude, personality and boldness to the truth.
- Civil Society can create pressure with the voices of citizens, if they speak out fairly and independently without favor and prejudice.
- Right to Information (RTI) Act should be implemented widely and thoroughly in all private and public institutions for increasing accessibility, transparency and accountability of the institutions.
- Civil society organizations such as TIB, SUJAN, should continue their campaign until they achieve substantive change in governance including strengthening ACC.

## **5.2 Conclusion:**

The above discussion and key findings clearly reveal that the socio economic and political life of Bangladesh are highly affected by the corruption which make Bangladesh as the world most corrupt country for five consecutive years from 2001- 2005. For this reason Bangladesh government created the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) in 2004 to fight against corruption as an autonomous institution. Though it is created to reduce corruption from Bangladesh but it could not fulfill its aim and objectives properly because of some influencing factors like political influence, structural lacking, insufficient manpower, lack of integrity, transparency, accountability, lack of independence and so on. That is the important reason most of the times the commission started its investigating activity in right way but ended with faulty. But from the data it can be said that the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) showing better performance as compare its former Bureau of Anti-Corruption (BAC), specially during the Covid-19 pandemic situation. Recently the commission takes many preventive measures and decisions to combating corruption from Bangladesh and it give some results also.

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