

Transparency International Pakistan
1st YinG Debate Competition
On 19th April, 2008 at Arts Auditorium, University of Karachi

Theme: Is corruption justified in case of need?

First session: Inaugural session

The chief guest was Prof. Dr. Pirzada Qasim Raza Siddiqui, Vice Chancellor University of Karachi. Mr. Saad Rashid, Executive Director Transparency International Pakistan, Prof. Dr. Tanveer Khalid, Professor political science department University of Karachi, and judges Capt. (R) Ashfaq Agha, Director Bahria University, Prof. Dr. Crd. (R) Aurangzeb, Head Business Admin Dept, Dadabhoy Institute of Higher Learning were also present.

Prof. Dr. Pirzada in his inaugural address termed the society in Pakistan 'self-centred' and said that individuals barely cared about the country as opposed to the advantages of self-interest. He said that a mindset has developed in our society that assumes bribe and other types of corruption are normal. Such attitudes, he said, no longer induce any pangs of moral resentment. He also appreciated Transparency International Pakistan for the efforts to spread awareness amongst the youth of the curses of corruption. He also said that in the time when morality and social ethics are lacking in the society, TI-Pakistan is working to educate the youth about their rights and responsibilities. Earlier Mr. Saad Rashid informed the house of the Quaid-e-Azam, Mohammad Ali Jinnah's advice to the first constituent assembly of Pakistan who had said "One of the biggest curses is bribery and corruption. It is a poison for society and we must put this down with an iron hand". He also informed the audience about the efforts of TI-Pakistan to enhance awareness of the dangers of corruption in the society and how youth can take part to eradicate this evil.

Second Session: Debate session

Resolution: For

The house was open with the strong arguments by the Leader of the house. The participants justified corruption as in their opinion every thing was fair in case of need. They said Transparency International's reported Bangladesh and Chad as the most corrupt states in the world. Chad got independence in 1960s and each year there is an increase in poverty. Both the countries are underdeveloped and people are deprived of their basic necessities. In third world countries taking bribe and extorting money is a matter of survival. In Pakistan the minimum wage is 4,500 or 6,000 and it is impossible to survive in this little money with five children. However in the United States, education is free until high school, there is free health care if one has insurance, and scholarships are provided for higher studies if needed. So what need does one have to be corrupt.

Corruption takes place in the highest level of political authorities. Politicians and decision makers formulate and establish laws in the name of the people but they themselves are corrupt. So why should not the poor take bribes instead of dying from hunger or basic necessities. In their opinion if a child of some poor is dying from starvation and disease, it is justified for the poor to take a bribe to save his child rather than a millionaire to take it to purchase a new brand car. For the poor corruption is justified, justified and justified.

Resolution: Against

The leader of opposition made forceful opening. He stated that if corruption was justified in the eyes of my counter parts then they would surely one day say that murder and other crimes are also justified in case of need. Who knows what would come under need in future.

In their opinion if a poor can take bribe to save his child that means he also can commit murder to fulfill his needs.

The whole world is reeling from the effects of corruption and we should be doing more each day to make it a better place for the people to live in. We should not condone some one charged with corruption, charged with embezzlement, charged with the mass murder of hundreds or charged with building collapse because he was involved in the crime in because of need.

Corruption undermines the integrity of civilization and the frame work of ethical civil society. Corruption can never be justified whether it is due to need or not. Corruption basically is immoral and exploitation of power and has the most adverse impact on the country.

The participants staked out the parameters of the debate by defining of the motion. They said that corruption is defined as the use of official power for private gain. So how can an illegitimate act ever be justified? The countries like Bangladesh, Pakistan or African states where corruption is very deep rooted, one can say that in these countries politicians have no sense of accountability. They do what ever they want to do because of a lack of democracy which can not thrive under such circumstances. These corrupt politicians curb the freedom of press as the free press has the power to reveal the corrupt politicians. These immoral acts are damaging the society.

At the end of the session the leader of the house and leader of opposition strongly & articulately justified their opinions. It was a thought provoking debate that pitted one strong team against another. The debate session ended with laud applause and hooting by the supporters of the debaters.

Third Session: Prize distribution

The participants anxiously awaited the announce of the results by the judges. Despite strong arguments from both sides, the judges Capt. (R)Ashfaq Agha, Director Bahria University and Prof. Dr. Crd (R) Aurangzeb had to choose the winners. Prof. Dr. Tanveer Khalid distributed prizes and certificates. The first prize in English was won by Ms Sundus Arif Khan of Greenwich University, second by Ms Sana Rehman of University of Karachi and the third by Ms Anum Fatima of CAMS.

The first prize in the Urdu debate was won by Ms Farah Ahmad of Sir Syed University of Engineering & Technology, second by Mr. Sheikh Muhammad Zeeshan Tariq of Greenwich University and the third by Mr. Muhammad Saad Khan of Usman Institute. The first and second positions besides being awarded the certificates and prizes were also given cash prizes. Gifts and certificates were also presented to all the participants.

A vote of the house was carried out and the resolution 'Is Corruption Justified In Case of Need' was defeated.