

COAST Trust; Date: 15th June 2020

**To: Honorable Members of Parliament (MP)
National Parliament, Bangladesh**

Subject: Civil Society submission to protect Coastal Areas through increased budgetary allocation for embankment construction following “National Budget 2020-21”.

Reference: On 13 June 2020 a dialogue by civil society held in the context of the proposed National Budget (2020-21) titled “National budget 2020-2021, embankment and protection of coastal population”. We prospect your kind attention to the proposed recommendations and demand. It is our humble request to you communicating the issues in the ongoing budget session of National Parliament.

Our demand in the National budget 2020-21

“To save the coastal people, allocate required allocation in the budget for construction embankment under local government”.

Dear Respected Sir,

1. Greetings from Coast Trust and Equity BD. COAST-Trust (www.coastbd.net) is a national non-profit organization and has been working since 1998 for socio-economic development of the poor in the coastal areas of Bangladesh. Equity BD (www.equitybd.net) is a campaign platform of COAST-Trust, through which COAST-Trust has been conducting campaign and policy advocacy on various development issues at the local, national and international levels for more than a decade.

In 2009 as recognition of the campaign activities at the national and international level COAST-Trust has been nominated as an observer of the International Conference on Global Climate Change by UNFCCC (United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change) and In 2016, it received Special Consultative Status of UN-ECOSOC from the United Nations.

2. Honorable Member, The budget for the financial year 2020-21 has been proposed on 11 June 2020 in the National Parliament. In the proposed budget to protect almost 20-25 million endangered people particularly for the construction of embankment in the coastal area, the allocation is inadequate. Therefore in the proposed budget of the government, we have concentrated on the experience of participated endangered coastal people, their protection issue from disasters. In particular to understand and determine their demand of embankment to protect their lives and livelihoods from high tide and tidal wave.

Local government representatives from the affected coastal area such as Kutubdia, Char Fasson, Galachipa, Koyra, Chairmans of included unions of Shyamnagar Upazila, Hon'ble Member of Parliament for Khulna-5 Mr. Akhtaruzzaman Babu, representatives of local and national development agencies and representatives of civil society, representatives of news media and disaster management experts participated In the dialogue on **Budget for coastal protection**. Besides, in this budget discussion, Honorable Chairman of Palli karma-sahayak foundation Dr.

Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad, Mr. Saber Hossain Chowdhury (MP and Honorable President, Standing Committee on Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change) were present. They discussed the experiences and recommendations of the affected people on behalf of coastal protection.

National Budget 2020-21 and CSO demands

3. Construction and management of embankment, short and long term budget allocation is indispensable

- i. Recently the super-cyclone Amphan slammed into the coastal areas of Bangladesh that damaged around 150 km coastal embankments according to govt. and damages embankment should be repaired on a priority basis. The Govt. should allocate BDT. 400-500 crore in the National Budget. If there would no specific allocation to repair the damaged embankment on an urgent basis, the coastal agriculture sectors would face further difficulties and losses for upcoming floods, as a result, the rate of poverty would be increased intensely. We, on behalf of CSO, urge to the Govt. giving the responsibility to Bangladesh Army for repairing the damaged embankment immediately.
- ii. **For constructing Sustainable Embankment, Tk 10000-12000 crore have to be allocated in every year national Budget.**

The Honorable Member of Parliament (MP) for your kind consent, the length of coastal embankment and polders is around 5,754 km according to Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB). Apart some cahr islands have no embankment where around 5-7 lakh people are living. That means around 6,500 km embankments required to be constructed. According to the expert prediction, for the construction of sustainable embankment within the next 10 years, total Tk 120,000 crore will be required. Considering the perspective, we demand Tk. 10,000-12,000 crore in every national budget.

4. The WDB will be responsible authority only for planning, design and construction of new embankment eventually

To deal with the disaster that will be increased due to climate change, the WDB should be given the responsibility for planning, sustainable design and construction of new embankments. For implementing the above strategies, the WDB will monitor and evaluate the impacts of coastal water management due to climate change. They will make plan, design and finally implement but local people's participation and opinions have to be ensured in every relevant stage for the sustainable embankment construction.

5. The WDB should be planned for long term sustainable embankment design and construction considering the different geological structure of the country

The Honorable Member of Parliament (MP) for your kind consent, we informed you that there are differences in water flow, riverbank erosion between the south-east and south-west coastal area due to the different geological structure. Therefore, the above issue must need to be considered while planning, designing and constructing the embankment. But it is a matter of great disappointment that WDB hardly considers the geological difference when construct embankments as a result the embankments are broken down in the river within a couple of years. As a result, the govt. is wasting crores of money in the name of repairing the damaged

embankment. So, we want a permanent solution from this catastrophe, and urge to strictly follow and consider the geological structure for constructing sustainable embankment.

6. Both short and long term embankment management (especially repair, safeguarding and management) should be given to the local govt that means Union Parishad. WDB will be responsible to monitor the activities and provide technical support.

- i. Honorable PM you may inform that govt. spends around Tk. 25,000- 30,000 for per km for the embankment management which is extremely high. In some cases, we find that WDB wants to show more amount for the management purpose of each km embankment. As the same time, administrative delay and complexity, as well as lack of transparency, hampers the embankment management timely. As a result, frequent natural disasters due to climate change add the suffering of vulnerable people. For this context, if govt. give the responsibility to the local govt. it will reduce the additional cost and authority will able to take timely decision and implementation. At the same time, the local govt. will be obliged and accountable to the local people.
- ii. For repairing the damaged embankments (around 150 km according to govt.) due to Cyclone Amphan, the budget should be given directly to the local government institutions especially Union Parishads and UP will be responsible to repair the damaged embankments. There are good examples of repairing the damaged embankment through local govt. along with mass people in participatory ways after the cyclone Ayla 2009 and immediately after cyclone Amphan. On the other hand, WDB hardly starts repairing the damaged embankment until now.

7. Socio-economic development programs should be taken and implemented based on the embankment for the climate resilience coastal areas

There are some other negative impacts on climate change on the coastal areas apart embankment construction those are salinity intrusion, waterlogging for unplanned irrigation, and shrimp cultivation that hampers the agriculture and increases the unemployment. Despite having embankment, people are moving to the urban areas for livelihoods and job purpose that creates more pressure over the govt. There the issue must be given priority and govt. should focus on economic, social safety and development activities along with the construction of embankment to tackle the negative impacts of climate change.

8. Afforestation will be started and conserved on both sides of the embankment for ensuring sustainability

For sustainable embankment, govt. may follow the Sri Lanka model where there is mandatory to create the afforestation at least km on both sides of the embankments. As a result, dishonest people will not be able to damage the embankment and it would create an opportunity for fishing using reverse and saltwater. There, we cordially expect, the govt. will consider adopting the above-mentioned model and take necessary actions through the relevant inter-ministerial coordination process.

9. Amphan affected people's list should be prepared and govt. have to declare special economic stimulating package for their economic development and social rehabilitation

Honorable Member of Parliament may be informed that cyclone Amphan damages fish farms, crops especially mango, watermelon, pulses etc. It is uncertain whether these farmers will be

able to survive financially in the next five to six years due to the destruction of mango orchards. Therefore, we are demanding a special economic rehabilitation stimulating package for all these affected people from the govt. As we have seen to ensure stimulus package to the industrial entrepreneurs due to COVID-19 pandemic.

10. 'Coastal Development Board' should be established for the sustainable socio-economic development of the coastal areas of Bangladesh

Honorable Member of Parliament you are informed that the coastal areas consisting 47,000 square km which is a heaven of natural resources. At the same time, more than 2 crore people are most vulnerable due to climate change and frequent natural disasters. Considering the risks of the coastal area, economic possibilities, development strategy a survey named 'Integrated Coastal Zone Management' was conducted by the govt. in 2005. It recommended establishing a "Coastal Development Board" for sustainable coastal development. But it is a matter of disappointment that the board was not established yet. We think and expect that govt should be given the highest priority to establish "Coastal Development Board" for the sustainable development and betterment of the climate-vulnerable coastal people.

Honorable Members of Parliament, we would like to raise the above demands in the current 2020-21 Parliamentary budget session through you on behalf of 20 million coastal endangered people. On behalf of them, we kindly request you to raise our demands in the grand parliament.

Courteous

On behalf of the coastal vulnerable people;
Mr. Mostafa Kamal Akand [Mobile +8801711455591]
Syed Aminul Hoque [Mobile +8801713328815]

Secretariat: COAST Trust, House: 13 (Metro Melody), Road: 2, Shyamoli, Dhaka-1207.
Phone: 88-02-58150082 / 9120356, E-mail: info@coastbd.net
Website: www.coastbd.net & www.equitybd.net

