



Press Information Notice

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The European Union and the Society for Environment and Human Development promote rights of tea workers and little-known ethnic communities

A project to help tea workers and little known indigenous communities to improve their living and working conditions has been launched on Sunday in Dhaka. The project is implemented by the Society for Environment and Human Development. The European Union finances the project with about 240,000 Euros (2.4 crore Taka) under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights.

"The project has an exciting approach as it combines action research and capacity building. All of us are going to learn a lot during the implementation. The most important would be if - as a result of this initiative – the living conditions of these deprived communities would become more humane," said Philippe Jacques, the Head of Cooperation at the EU Delegation at the opening.

The new project "Mapping and capacity building of tea plantation workers and little-known ethnic communities of Bangladesh" will be implemented in tea growing areas in the Northeast, Chittagong, North-Centre, Northwest and the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT). It has a target population of about 1.1 million people (600,000 tea workers and 500,000 members of little-known ethnic communities). The tea workers, often forced in tied and exploitative labour conditions, but also the little-known ethnic communities in the North-center and Northwest belong to the most deprived groups in the country. They are often not able to claim even their most fundamental human rights.

For the European Union, democracy and human rights are universal values that should be vigorously promoted around the world. The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) has a broad scope of action: Its aim is to provide support for the promotion of democracy and human rights in non-EU countries with an annual budget of more than € 150 million (around 1500 crore Taka). Currently the EIDHR is funding more than 1200 projects in over 100 countries.

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The European Commission is the EU's executive body.

"The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders".