

## **COAST Foundation ACCORD Project Incident Report in Teknaf**

**Date: 5<sup>th</sup> February 2022**

**Subject: Total 6 COAST employees attacked by Union Parishad member in Teknaf.**

COAST Foundation has been responding the crisis due the Rohingya influx started since August 2017. The organization has been assisting humanitarian assistance for Rohingya community. Many projects has been also undertaking to improve the living standards of Rohingya by providing education, awareness, training, food, shelters etc.

At the same time, the organization has been working with host community people in Ukhiya and Teknaf, especially who are mostly affected by Rohingya influx. For this, COAST took a project named Aligning Communities of Cox's Bazar for Optimum Resilience and Development (ACCORD) in Teknaf. This project supported by Malteser International (MI) and funded by BMZ. This project has started September 2019 and will be ended on August 2022. This project has approval from NGOAB and Cox's Bazar district administration. COAST also informed to Upazila administration and local Union Parishad members and chairman as per government guidelines. This ACCORD project has been implementing in Palongkhali and Hnila union to improve the food security, income generation and livelihood of 1000 affected host community households.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2022, a courtyard session was planned in Hnila union ward no five to collect beneficiaries feedback about the project services, As per plan, on February 2, 2022, six COAST staff visited the place, out of them 2 were female. One of the female staff came from COAST Dhaka principal office and 4 staff from ACCORD Project.

At around 12.00 noon on 2<sup>nd</sup> February, the pre- planned meeting started in new fishermen community near to Naf River in Hnila. During the meeting, sudden the running Union Parishad member Mr. Rezaul Karim (newly elected member, elected 4 months ago) of ward no 5 under Hnila Union came to the meeting place. He asked to know why this meeting and who are we. Tahrira Afroz Tumpa, project manager of ACCORD project tried to explain the objective the meeting and COAST has been working this areas for last three years. Mr. Rezaul Karim did not show any interest to listen anything. He started shouted and ordered to stop the all activities in this areas. He gave threat to COAST staff to leave the place and not perform any activities without his permission. The UP member started slung languages which would not possible to publish. Around 5/6 associates with member physically assaulted 6 staff including 2 feamle staff. At one stage, the anonymous UP member and his associates randomly punched and kicked to COAST staff there. Especially abuse two female staff physically. Total three ACCORD project staff were attacked by the incident (1. Tahrira Afroz Tumpa (Project Manager), 2. Rahim Ullah (Field Coordinator), and 3. Mizanur Rahman (Field Facilitator)).



**Incident Video:** <https://fb.watch/aYs--8TsrS/>

As it was much uncontrolled situations and, COAST victim called 999 for rescue and help. After receiving the call from 999, the police of Teknaf police station came to the spot and rescue. Total 6 staff injured employees went to Teknaf Upazila Health Complex and received first aid from the doctor on duty.

**COAST Response to the incident:**

COAST has lodged a formal complaint with Teknaf Thana on that day. The duty officer has started the investigation of the allegation. Teknaf Thana started a case against the allegations. Thana informed COAST will take actions after investigation.

At the same time, COAST published condemn letter to humanitarian actors working in Rohingya response. Most of the local electronic and print media covered this issue very seriously.

Link: <https://coastbd.net/we-condemn-the-attack-on-humanitarian-activists-and-demand-immediate-punishment-of-the-perpetrator/>

COAST also informed this incident on 3rd February 2022 to Cox's Bazar Deputy Commissioner (DC) Office and Superintendent of Police (SP) office about the incident.

COAST is member of Coxsbazar CSO NGO Forum, COAST has informed the incident to CCNF leadership, they took it seriously as it is related to working space for NGO female worker in Coxsbazar and to promote civil society in Coxsbazar. CCNF has organized a virtual press conference about the incident. Please see the link ( <http://www.cxb-cso-ngo.org/2022/02/05/attackers-on-female-ngo-workers-in-teknaf-must-face-exemplary-punishment-ccnf-issues-ultimatum-member-ngos-will-not-work-in-hnila-if-no-punitive-action-within-a-week/>) where you will find media coverage and others. CCNF announce 6 days of ultimatum to government to arrest the culprit, otherwise it will urge NGOs to stop working in the union. CCNF want to mobilize other NGOs, civil society and opinion leaders of the locality, as it believes in people's power of the locality, otherwise administrations will not take it seriously and the local government will also not take it seriously. They have to understand that NGOs or local NGOs will not always submissive if there are human right and gender right has a concern.

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