



ECONOMIC REPORTERS' FORUM

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Date: 04 June, 2025

Subject: Organizer Confirmation – ActionAid–ERF Media Fellowship 2018,
Recipient: Md. Kamruzzaman

To Whom It May Concern,

This letter is issued to formally confirm that Mr. **Md. Kamruzzaman**, widely known as Babu Kamruzzaman, currently serving as a Special Correspondent at News24 Television, was selected as a recipient of the **ActionAid–ERF Media Fellowship 2018** while working as a Staff Correspondent at **Channel 24 Television**. The fellowship was jointly organized by ActionAid Bangladesh and the Economic Reporters Forum (ERF).

Nature and Purpose of the Fellowship

The fellowship was established to support journalists in producing investigative reporting on issues of **tax justice, public revenue, and fiscal equity**. The program aimed to promote evidence-based journalism that could contribute to national policy discourse and public accountability. It is regarded within Bangladesh's journalism community as a selective and impactful recognition of public-interest reporting.

Selection Process and Criteria

Although no public circular was issued, the fellowship was awarded through a **competitive internal selection process**. Proposals were invited from among ERF-affiliated journalists and reviewed by a jury panel based on:

- Relevance and originality of the investigative topic
- Research depth and reporting methodology
- Ethical standards and feasibility
- Anticipated public or policy impact

Jury Panel and Selection

From the pool of eligible applicants, **nine journalists** were selected for the fellowship. The 2018 jury comprised:

- **Dilal Ahmed**, then President, Economic Reporters Forum
- **Khwaza Mainuddin**, Senior Journalist
- **Dr Naznin Ahmed**, Senior Research Fellow, BIDS

Mr. Kamruzzaman's proposal, which focused on **progressive taxation and fiscal justice in Bangladesh**, was selected for its strong research foundation and policy relevance.



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Award Event and Grant

The fellowship awards were formally presented on **August 1, 2018**, at the ERF auditorium in Dhaka. The event was officiated by then **Finance Minister Abul Maal Abdul Muhith**, and attended by journalists, policymakers, and members of the ERF Executive Committee. The same event also included the **ERF Best Reporting Award** ceremony and was covered in national media, including **bdnews24.com**.

Each selected fellow received a **certificate and a grant of BDT 60,000**, provided by ActionAid Bangladesh, to support the execution of their reporting projects.

Recipient's Output and Public Impact

As part of the fellowship, Mr. Kamruzzaman produced a **three-part investigative series** that aired on **Channel 24 Television from October 24–26, 2018**. His reporting revealed tax evasion by public agencies and multinational corporations totaling approximately **BDT 18,000 crore**, and highlighted how indirect taxes unfairly burden lower-income populations. The series included interviews with top policymakers and experts.

One of his reports was later presented at a national two-day policy dialogue titled **"Tax Tribunal"**, organized by ActionAid Bangladesh dated November 20, 2018 at the **University of Dhaka**. From among the nine fellows, **Mr. Kamruzzaman and I were both selected to participate as Amicus Curiae (expert guests)** to present our findings based on fellowship investigations. Although we spoke on separate days, I witnessed the program's structure and engagement and can confirm that **Mr. Kamruzzaman's investigative work was featured at this nationally significant event**, reinforcing the fellowship's objective of policy-relevant journalism.

In my capacity as ERF President, I affirm that the **ActionAid–ERF Media Fellowship 2018** was awarded through a **competitive, merit-based process**, and that **Mr. Kamruzzaman's selection and contributions reflect journalistic excellence and meaningful public impact**.

Please feel free to contact me if further clarification is required.

Sincerely,

Doulot Akter Mala
President

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