Ethical Aspects of Sharing International River Water: The Case of Teesta River
Md. Fakrul Islam, Ph.D., Professor and Chairman, Department of Social Work, University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh
Wardatul Akmam, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Sociology, University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh
Email: hiraharati@yahoo.com

All riparian states have the right to use international river water. This right is equally recognized for all riparian states on the basis of ethical principles and laws on international water sharing. However, sharing of river water has become one of the issues of conflict between neighboring states. Various claims and counter claims are heard of and in order to resolve these issues many cooperative bilateral treaties have also been signed. But politically induced treaties that neither include provisions for economic benefits nor follow ethical principles on humanitarian grounds of the riparian states are not likely sustain for long. Continuity of such treaties is indispensable for the sustenance and development of the riparian states and ethical principles and humanitarian grounds should be the basis for these treaties. Nowadays, it is observed that states situated at the upstream control the water flow of rivers for their own benefits without considering its consequences on the downstream state. As a result inhabitants of the downstream countries suffer untold miseries. Nevertheless, there are some good examples of international water sharing. In this paper, I discuss these examples along with the case of sharing of the Teesta River water between India and Bangladesh. Some policy proposals are also made in this regard. The paper emphasizes the necessity of upholding morality and ethical principles in formulating and implementing policies regarding sharing of international river water. Riparian states must cooperate and be sympathetic for the cause of one another.

Ethics and Integrity in Public Service in Bangladesh: Institutional and Comprehensive Approach
Iftekharuzzaman, Executive Director, Transparency International Bangladesh
Email: edtib@ti-bangladesh.org

This paper is an attempt to examine the challenges to prevent erosion of ethics and integrity in public service in Bangladesh. It first presents an overview of corruption as a development and governance challenge. We then identify the entry points of erosion of integrity which account for the depth and breadth of corruption in public service. In the next section the paper goes on to examine the prospect of preventing erosion of integrity and ethics, and propose a few tools and processes. Finally the paper proposes an institutional and comprehensive approach without which ethics and integrity in public service will be hard to promote and institutionalize.

The main theme of the paper is that corruption exists everywhere in the world; it also involves every sector and level where there is scope of abuse of power. The public sector tends to be exposed to erosion of ethics because of institutional and individual factors. When depth and breadth of corruption are associated by a growing culture of impunity and erosion of values and ethics, corruption threatens to become a way of life. Policies, decisions and actions of public interest at national level are taken in private interest, while at the local level citizens’ access to basic rights and entitlement become contingent upon the capacity to make unauthorized payments.

The issue of ethics and integrity in public service is crucial to addressing corruption. Whatever well-meaning may be reforms in other sectors, these cannot bear fruits nor can any of those be sustained without establishing that appointments, promotions, postings and transfers in public service are based on performance and merit and not on
political influence, bribery and other means of subjective influence. So long as discretion is wide and the scope remains for abuse of power with impunity, and as long as effective legal and ethical standards are not in place with enforcement mechanisms for zero tolerance to corruption, no true results can be expected or sustained in enhancing ethical and moral standards.

No less important is the issue of salaries and benefits, which must be viewed as investments for future. Much would definitely depend on the extent to which anti-corruption values and ethics can be mainstreamed in the public service. A key role would be played by preventive measures against erosion of public service integrity and honesty by enforcing public service code of ethics including positive and negative incentives.

Ethics and integrity in public service are more than a project of value or moral education, however well-designed it may be. It cannot be viewed in isolation from systemic challenges, and must be part of a holistic institutional structure and process that would promote and sustain integrity in the public service as well as other aspects of life in a holistic infrastructure of integrity. A comprehensive and institutional approach strongly backed by highest level political commitment is indispensable.

**Ethical Dilemma and Research Methodology of Social Sciences**

Prof. Ahmad A.N. Neaz, DSSc., American International University-Bangladesh , Email: aneaz@aiub.edu

Today, when the galaxy of knowledge, be it social, political, economic or scientific is expanding at an unprecedented pace, new questions and new interests require us to enter into a new search for a new answer. For many millennia knowledge was exclusively confined under the grip of subjectivity and pre-conceived ideas. Although, Greek scholars started to think objectively the Newtonian paradigm came as a major breakthrough in this regard. The ultimate outcome turned out to be the development of a ‘Positivistic methodology’, solely relying on empirical evidence.

Social scientists also pretended to follow scientific method and their search for objectivity was the foundation of research endeavor. They also followed Newtonian philosophy by considering a closed autonomous system, ruled by endogenous factors of highly selective nature, self regulating and moving to a determinate predictable point in terms of linear, stable and equilibrium analysis. Social science, particularly economics ahead of others, claims itself as a ‘value free science’ in order to follow positivistic methodology, depended solely on empirical evidence. Consequently, it discards ethics, values and any subjective involvement as idealistic rather than realistic. For nearly a century, in order to become increasingly scientific, ethics has been abandoned by many disciplines and ultimately, ethics has been tethered around and nurtured by philosophy only. Einstein tried to synthesize the positivist accommodating the ‘world of idea’ in the field of research. M.K Gandhi was the first person to challenge economists as a ‘value free’ subject.

Bioethics could be termed as a landmark in order to rehabilitate ethics. It is for sure that within near future ethics will be the guiding philosophy of all the disciplines of knowledge. In order to achieve that, education and research method need to be redesigned to developed epistemology. It is a fallacy of the positivistic methodology that there will be no subjective involvement. In the field of social sciences where events or phenomena have unique particularity and have no scope for repeated experiment, empirical evidence must be supported by rational thinking. Otherwise it will lead to empiricism which may not be considered as knowledge even. Application of intensive observation, RRA, PRA and other methods have been supplementing and complementing the limitations of positivistic approach. Amartya Sen tried to introduce values in economics but in vain.

Development economics initially considered ‘economic growth’ or GNI as the yardstick of development. Since mid 1970s it has been shifted to ‘human development’ which has been intensified under Millennium Development Goals. Economists yet to conceive ethics as a guiding philosophy which may further shift the discipline from human development to ‘humane development’ emancipating human civilization from the realm of poverty, greed and inhumanity to the arena of welfare, peace and global harmony.