

Report
No

ROLE OF MP'S IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

A NATIONAL SEMINAR

Held on

**Wednesday, 27th of October 2004
at Democracy Auditorium Momenbagh
Dhaka 1217**

LOCAL GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE, FUNDED BY USAID AND IMPLEMENTED BY ARD INC.

Organized by
ABDUL MOMEN KHAN MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

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Introduction

The 'Local Government' is an ancient administrative organization in the constitutional history of the country. It has been recognized as a statutory organization for about the last 150 years. In general, the term local government refers to the organization, which is formed and controlled locally in order to accomplish local administrative and socio-economic development activities. The primary objective of introducing the local government system is to deliver adequate power and authority to the local public representatives through de-centralization. 33 years have been passed after the independence of Bangladesh but the true local government system has not yet been established here. However, demands have come out from different levels of the civil society and from the representatives of the local governments to decentralize the administration properly and to establish effective local government organizations. Pressure has also been created in favor of this demand. Especially there are numerous public supports to make the Union Parishad (UP), the root level organization operating in the democratic structure for long, more effective and stronger. Beside the government, the non-governmental organizations have also taken various types of programs to make the local government stronger. The Khan Foundation (KF) is one among those non-governmental organizations.



(From Left) Advocate Rokhsana Khondker, Executive Director, Khan Foundation, Mr Mizanur Rahman Minu, MP, Mayor of Rajshahi City Corporation, Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan, MP, Honorable Minister, Ministry of Science and Information & Communication Technology, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Mr M. Ashraf Hossain, Whip of the National Parliament, Mr Tayebur Rahman, Mayor of Khulna City Corporation, Mr Faroque Khan, MP

KF has been accomplishing different types of programs for more than the last twelve years to make the local government system effective and stronger. Among the

programs, KF arranges a training program for the chairmen, members and for the secretaries of the Union Parishad (UP) to improve their competence and another training program for the woman members of UP to help them carryout their duties and responsibilities properly.

With a view to strengthen the local government organizations, KF has been arranging workshops and seminars to coordinate among the administration, the public representatives, mass media, eminent personalities of the civil society and the general people. In this continuous effort, a national seminar was held on 27 October 2004, Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. to 02:00 p.m. at the Democracy Auditorium of the Khan Foundation with financial assistance of ARD. The caption of the seminar was ‘Role of MP’s in Local Government’.

Dr. Abdul Moyeen Khan, M.P, Honorable Minister, Ministry of Science and Information & Communication Technology, Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh presided over the seminar and Mr. Tayebur Rahman, Mayor of Khulna City Corporation, Mr. Mizanur Rahman Minu, M.P, Mayor of Rajshahi City Corporation, Mr. M. Ashraf Hossain, Whip of the National Parliament, K.M Jahangir Hossain, M.P, Sayed Monjur Hossain, M.P, Mr. Ataur Rahman Khan, M.P, Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Mahbubur Rahman, M.P; spoke in the seminar. Among others, Secretaries, High Government Officials, University Teachers, NGO representatives, Elected Representatives of some local bodies, Lawyers, Teachers, Administrative Officials, Reporters and eminent personalities of the civil society were also present in the workshop.

INAUGURAL SESSION

Welcome speech

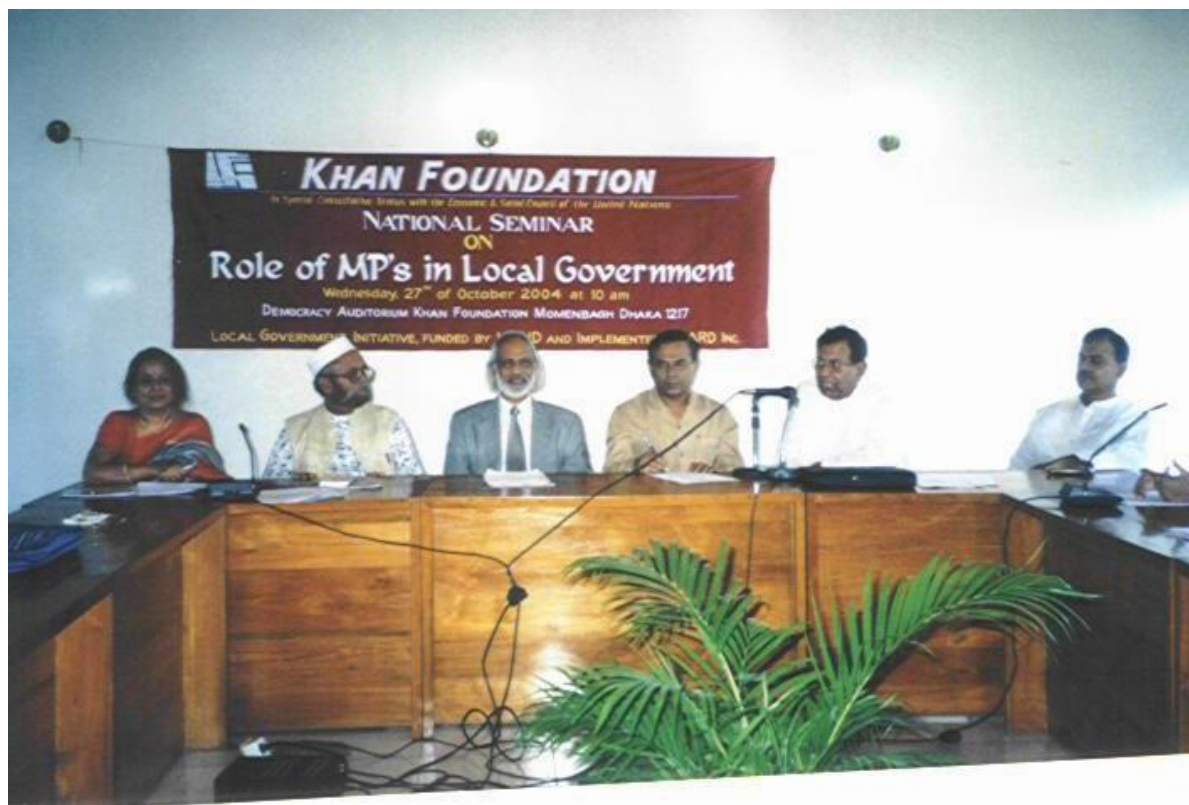
Advocate Rokhsana Khondker

Executive Director, Khan Foundation.

Chairman

Shaishab Bangladesh & Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum

At the outset of her speech, she expressed her gratitude to the guests on behalf of the Khan Foundation. She said, “Khan Foundation (KF) has been working restlessly since 1990 holding the slogan *Development for Democracy and Democracy for Development*. Development is possible only when the democratic system becomes stronger. The Local Governments should be made stronger in order to strengthen the democratic system and to institutionalize the democracy. To strengthen the democracy, KF has been implementing various types of programs since long. A total of 20,000 Chairmen, Members and Women Members of the Union Parishads have been trained by KF so far. This course of action is continuing till today. KF had arranged a District level workshop on ‘*Effective Participation of the Elected Women in the Local Governmental Structure: A Process of Cooperation*’.



(From Left) Advocate Rokhsana Khondker, Executive Director, Khan Foundation, K M Jahangir Hossain, MP Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan, MP, Honorable Minister, Ministry of Science and Information & Communication Technology, Mr M. Ashraf Hossain, Whip of the National Parliament, Mr Sayed Monjur Hossain, MP, Mr Faroque Khan, MP

In that workshop, the elected Women Members of the UPs were given instructions on their duties and responsibilities. In this continuous effort, those women members were brought to Dhaka for a five days long detail training program on the same issue. Among many other topics, planning for local development, family laws, village courts, arbitration, education, health, environment, etc. were included in that training program. To make these efforts more effective, countrywide networks for the Female Lawyers and for the NOGs have been formed by KF. The objectives of these networks are to cooperate and coordinate between the public and their representatives for various development activities of their own area. She said, “This workshop is a part of the continuous effort of the Khan Foundation. We have conveyed those opinions/suggestions to the national forum, which came out at the District and Regional level workshops. Some of the problems have already been solved on the basis of those opinions/suggestions.” She strongly opined, “The issue of this workshop is not an issue of any party but it is a national issue. Therefore, it should be viewed from the national perspective.” She requested the guests to provide their valuable opinions on the desired role of the M.Ps toward the local governments, the relationship that should prevail between the M.Ps and the local governments and the existing relationship between them, etc. She hoped that the opinions of the guests would play a vital role toward strengthening the local governments.

Advocate Tayebur Rahman

Mayor

Khulna City Corporation

Advocate Tayebur Rahman, Mayor, Khulna City Corporation spoke as a guest of honor at the workshop. After extending his good wishes to all the participants, he said, “In Bangladesh we have two types of government, 1) the Central government, and 2) the Local Government. In the central government, there are national parliament, cabinet division etc. Their functions are to enact the laws, to determine the foreign policies and to run the country as a whole. The local government is placed inside of an another government and it is formed and conducted locally in order to implement the local administrative and socio-economic development activities. The local governments are existing in two places, in the cities and in the villages. In the cities, there are two forms of the local governments, the City Corporation and the Municipality. Similarly, the Zilla Parishad, the Upazilla Parishad and the Union Parishad are the forms of the Local Government organizations in the villages. Except in the UP, there is no public representative in the other forms of the Local Governmental organizations. The honorable Members of Parliament may have the right answer regarding this matter”. He said, “The government specifies the structures, financial authorities and the responsibilities of the local governments through laws and regulations. In the article 9 of the Constitution of Bangladesh, it is mentioned that the state would encourage the local administrative bodies formed by the representatives of their respective area. In the article 10, it is mentioned that the woman’s participation should be ensured in all the

national events. In the article 11, it is mentioned that through the elected public representatives, the public participation at all levels of the administration would be ensured effectively. But in reality we are handicapped. Before doing anything, the local government representatives have to get approval from the concerned ministry. Even it requires government's approval to develop a burial ground!" He said, "The local markets are given lease by the ADC (Assistant District Commissioner) (Revenue), but it should not be. In the UPs, the women members have been elected directly but they have not yet given any assignment or even their Identity cards." "It is not that much difficult to get assistance of a Mayor or a public Representative as like as an M.P or a Minister. The capabilities of the UP members should be observed by delegating some authorities on them"-he added. He urged to make all levels of the local governments autonomous. He said, "The roles of the M.P in the local area are significant. The M.P lost their importance in their constituencies if they do not have the scope to participate in the development activities." He gave importance on the system based on the understandings and recommendations of all.



A part of Group Discussion

Mr Mizanur Rahman Minu, M.P

Mayor

Rajshahi City Corporation

Mr Mizanur Rahman Minu, M.P, conveyed his good wishes to all the participants and spoke as a guest of honor at the workshop. He said, "Bangladesh is a land of religious harmony. Most of the people of the country believe in liberal democracy. Previously the relationship between the M.P and the local governments was very

harmonious, which is not found today. The major task of the M.P's is to enact the laws. Nevertheless, they have to play numerous roles at the local level. That why they fall in a critical position. The M.P should cooperate the local governments instead of controlling them. Therefore, everybody should have sympathetic mentality. As simultaneously I am an M.P and a Mayor, I can understand the two things. I try to discuss in the parliament on all the problems of my constituency. Therefore, I work through coordinating among the representatives of the local governments." He said, "Conflict should not exists among the creative people. We have sacrificed a lot for the democracy. To institutionalize the democracy, to help strengthening the local governments, we should work in coordination with others."

Mr Ashraf Hossain, M.P

Whip

Bangladesh National Parliament

Mr. Ashraf Hossain, M.P spoke as a guest of honor at the workshop. He extended his good wishes to all and said, "Previously the M.P were not usually involved in the local development activities, they were busy with their tasks of enacting the laws. As the parliament is not functioning effectively, the M.P have minimum workload at this moment. In this situation, they try to take care of their respective constituency and thus conflicts arise between the M.P and the local representatives." He again said, "The report which is presented in the parliament on annual income & expenditure of the country is called the budget. But no member of the parliament can speak against the opinion of his/her own party. At this time capitalism is being established in the name of democracy. In these days, those who come to the national parliament as an M.P, many of them remain busy with their trade and business. They do no bother to think about the local government. But it puts the politicians in great difficulties. The local peoples have some expectations on their M.P. when the M.P tries to satisfy those expectations, conflicts arise between them and the local public representatives and consequently the development is hampered." After discussing on various problems of the local governments he said, "The U.Ps have the authority to collect the revenues but they can not pay their employees. The U.Ps have the authority to arrange judicial procedure, which the Municipalities do not have. The M.P should get involved in the road development activities so that the roads become helpful also for another Upazilla." He believes that the allocation should be given to the local area in consultation with the M.Ps. "The Upazilla Parishad remains ineffective, the UNO (Upazilla Nirbahi Officer) is working in absence of the public representatives. The Honorable Ministers have their secretaries. The instructions of the Ministers reach to the UNO from the Secretaries through the DC (Deputy Commissioner). But, there is no public representative to accomplish the instructions. The DC and the UNO haven no accountability to the public. If national budget is analyzed, it is found that the poor pay more tax but 80 percent of the allocation of the budget are for the rich and the rest 20 percent are for the poor. Again, the allocations for the local governments are minimal. The local development is hampered if the

M.P can not arrange special allocation through persuasion. The M.P carryout the educational development programs through pursuing the secretariat, although it should be job of the local governments. The M.P should work with the local governments by maintaining good relationship. The local government representatives should leave their adversary attitudes and co-operate the M.Ps.”

Mr Faruk Khan, MP

Mr. Faruk Khan, M.P spoke as a guest of honor at the workshop. After extending his good wishes to all he said, “There should not be any conflict among the M.P and the local public representatives. Because, the responsibilities of the local governments are clearly written in the constitution. The responsibilities of the M.P are also written there. The M.P participate in the question and answer hour of the national parliament. They discuss on various local problems there and request the respective Honorable Minister to provide his/her answers on various issues.” Mr. Faruk Khan believes that the government is responsible for the existing conflicts among the M.P and the local governments. He said, “The M.P are blamed for misappropriation of the allocation they get for various projects and thus conflicts arise again with the local governments. Therefore, the allocation should be given directly to the U.P instead of the M.P.” “We have another problem, which is related to our mentality. We try to discover who is holding how much authority. The government should solve the problem. The public expects solution from the person whom they have elected. In this situation the M.P get involved in various activities and conflicts arise again. Therefore, the M.P should perform as facilitators and as coordinators. The M.P can work as coordinators between the central government and the local governments.” He requested the government to prevent the M.P from going to the secretariat. He gave importance on the lump sum allocation for the M.P. Above all, he requested to make the national parliament effective because as the M.P have nothing to do, they try to impose their power on the local governments.

MrAbdul Qyum

Co-Editor

The Daily Prothom Alo

Extending his good wishes to all Mr. Abdul Qyum said, “ The issue of this discussion is very important. Khan Foundation has been working for long to strengthen the local governments.” He acknowledged KF in this regard.

He said, “The present parliament has become ineffective. The M.P do not go to the parliament as per the decision of their own parties. Therefore, there is no effective participation of the M.Ps in the parliament. If the parliament is ineffective, how the M.P will play their role? The major problem of the local governments is the lack of independence, which is controlled by the central government. The local governments should be given adequate independence especially the independence of getting of

funds, which will lead them to their success.” He requested the M.Ps to work through coordination.

He again said, “About 90 percent of the discussions in the national parliament held on local development. In case of enacting the laws, about in 90 percent cases, there is political pressure. The major role of the M.P should be in the field of making and passing the laws. The M.P should come out from the mentality ‘I am an M.P’. They should coordinate in case of enacting the laws and to make them effective.”

Mr Shirazul Islam

Chairman

Dohar Union Parishad, Dohar, Dhaka

Extending his good wishes to all Mr. Shirazul Islam said, “At this present political setting most of the M.P are rich. Most of them live in the cities and they do not have any relation with their local people. The M.P have been assigned by the government to perform some local development activities. For that reason, the local public representatives require to come to the M.P. In many situations conflicts arise between them. Thus, the local development activities should be carried out through coordination. The M.P should obtain opinion from the public representatives at the Upazilla coordination meeting.” He said, “Huge public awareness is necessary on the Tax Collection process because the local development is dependent on it.” He urged to make the Upazilla Parishads and the Zilla Parishads effective immediately.

Mrs Fatema Shanaz

Woman Member

Fatehpur Union Parishad

Arihazar, Narayanganj

She requested the M.P to discuss on the women members of the U.Ps in the parliament. She said that as their seats had been the reserved seats, the women members were deprived of many things. “In this situation, conflict continues between the women members and the Chairman and among the women members and the male members of the union parishad”-she added. She opined that those conflicts should be resolved. She also suggested that the women member should be given briefing on their specific assignments at the Upazilla Coordination meeting. Thus, the relationship between the women members and the Chairman of the U.P would not be hampered in the future.

Mr. Shah Alam

NGO Representative

He said, “Every government verbally tries to make the local governments stronger but in practical, it is not found. Before the independence of the country, the village court had the power to impose up to Taka 10,000 as penalty. But now the same has

come down to Taka 5,000. The Zilla and the Upazilla Parishads are ineffective, there is no public representative in those organizations. The power of the U.P has been partially degraded. Therefore, everybody should work together to make the democracy stronger. This old institution should be protected.”



A Part of Participants

Lt. General (Retd.) Mahbubur Rahman, M.P

Mr. Mahbubur Rahman conveyed his good wishes to all the participants and said, “The public has great expectations on the M.P. The M.P are treated as cheater if they fail to fulfill the demands of the public. Again, various conflicts arise when the M.P want to take initiative. This problem should be clear to all of us. Everybody should carryout his/her specific assignment. There are many places in Bangladesh where there is no conflict. The M.P are well informed about the local governments. They can help the government in various ways.” He requested the government to clearly specify the responsibilities of the Gram Sharkar (The Village Government).



Participants Noted the point

Shariar Akhtar

Professor, Fazlul Haque Women's College
Representative of the Civil Society

After extending good wishes to all Professor Shariar Akhtar said, "There should not be any conflict between the M.P and the local public representatives. Everyone should be associated with others. It is possible to perform the duties and become successful when everybody is conscious regarding the responsibilities of his/her own and everybody has the mentality to prioritize the common interest instead of the personal interests. Therefore, the duties should be performed based on common understanding. It is often heard that the politics is the major hindrance for the development. This statement is not true. The democracy as well as the development is hindered in absence of the healthy political environment. It is required to setup up a committee/division to prepare the regulations and to implement of the same. There should also be the scope of raising and putting up demands before the committee/division. The problems will be solved if we can uphold the interest of the country and the nation above all and work unanimously."

K M Jahangir Hossain, MP

Former Minister

After extending good wishes to all, K.M. Jahangir Hossain said, "The role of the M.P are somewhat invisible in this present situation. The M.P do not have the scope to participate in the law making process. If the M.P try to do something for the well being of the country, they get negative comments from the leaders of their opponent parties. The country should have a national plan and a local plan. The M.P should have some roles in case of selecting a project. The reason behind this is that the M.P think in a broad sense where as the U.P Chairmen think in a narrower sense. Lump sum allocations should be given to the M.P based on the policies. We should desist our autocratic mentality. At the very beginning, the national parliament should be

made effective. Every level of the local government organizations should be made effective and those should administered by the elected representatives.”



Participants are make their Presentation

Mr Sayed Monjur Hossain, MP

Expressing good wishes to all Mr. Sayed Monjur Hossain said, “Previously the *Jamindar* (the land lord) played the major administrative role in the local areas. In the year 1870, local administrative committees comprising of five members (*panchyeet*) were formed. The local government systems comprising of three levels- the Union Committee, the Local Board and the Zilla Board, were formed as per the law for the local autonomous bodies of 1885. After that, the laws of 1870 and 1885 were superceded by the law for the autonomous bodies of the villages of 1919 and only the Zilla Board was made effective. Until that period, the women did not have their voting rights. Only the property holders could be the voters at that time. As per



Mr Sayed Monjur Hossain, MP deliberate his valuable Speech

the fundamental constitutional order of 1959, the local government systems comprising of four levels- the Union Council, the Thana Council, the Zilla Council and the Divisional Council, were formed. In independent Bangladesh, the Union Council was renamed as the Union Panchayet by the Presidential Order No. 7 of 1972 and that was again renamed as the Union Parishad by the Presidential Order No. 22 of 1973. At present the local governments are administering through the Ordinance of 1983.” He said, “ If the head is begun to rot, the whole body will be rotten consequently. The M.P have the intention to get involved in various activities, but the bureaucrats are the major obstacles to them. Success can not be achieved if conflict continues for the authorities. The administration should be decentralized. The Population is one of our major problems. No planning will be accomplished if the growth of the population can not be controlled. In this regard, the local governments should be involved and they should be given authorities.”



A Part of Participants

Mr Ataur Rahman Khan, MP

Extending his good wishes to all Mr. Ataur Rahman Khan said, “Even being an M.P, I don’t know the duties of my own. We have rare involvement in the parliament. Our opinion is not granted while preparing the laws. All the authorities remain with the Ministers. Everything of us is dependent on the bureaucrats. We should come out from this situation. We should be given the opportunity to say something for the root level people.”

Speech by the Chairperson

Dr. Abdul Moyeen Khan

Minister

Ministry of Science and Information & Communication Technology

At the outset of his speech, Dr. Abdul Moyeen Khan conveyed his good wishes to all the guests of the workshop. He said, “Khan Foundation always carryout issue based discussion programs. Not only in Bangladesh, the local government is known as an important organization to the whole world.” He said, “The conflicts among the M.P and the local governments are very old. In some cases, the conflicts have been solved and in some other cases, those are continuing.” “The central government will be able to give more attention on other important issues by delegating some authorities on the local governments. The responsibilities of the local governments and responsibilities of the M.P are clearly mentioned in the constitution. The M.P have many things to do for the local governments. As a Members of Parliament, I want to get involved with the development activities.”-he said. He opined, “If we work together, we will be successful in human welfare activities and the country will go ahead. The development of the cities is not the development of the whole country. Many issues have been come out from this discussion.” He strongly mentioned, “Politics is not a bad practice. The development will be much easier if all the political parties, from the villages to the cities, work together to accomplish the issue based activities. In India, the M.P are given lump sum allocation of Taka Twenty Million. Provision for this kind of allocation may also be considered in our country.” He urged all to work together for the deprived people. He wrapped up the proceedings by expressing his gratitude to all the participants for their cooperation and to make workshop successful.



A part of Group discussion

Key Note Paper

ROLE OF MP'S IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

National Workshop

27 October 2004 Wednesday
Democracy Auditorium
Momenbag, Dhaka 1217
Bangladesh

ROLE OF MP'S IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Introduction

The administrative organizations, board, committee, etc that are formed by the central government are known to us as the local governments. To make these organizations effective, the government gives them a fixed amount of money so that various public welfare activities, such as construction of roads, distribution of relief and other social welfare services can be carried out by them. The government delegates such authorities and responsibilities to those organizations through instructions. On the basis of the authorities given to them, the local governments carry out their activities in the local areas as the local agents of the central government.

The Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences termed the autonomous local government as, "It is such a government, which has specific area based autonomous social structure, legal framework and necessary establishments, through which they can control their own affairs." In the Indian Statutory Commission's report of 1930, the local government has been described as a representative organization which is responsible to the election commission, holds huge administrative authorities, imposes taxes, acts as a training center and works as a mediator organization with other organizations of the government. The United Nations has described the local government as a political sub-division inside of a country which is formed legally and which has enormous power on all the activities of the local area including collection of taxes and to get the labor, if necessary, for specific purposes.

A. The Preconditions for the Autonomous Local Government

1. The local government is a political system under the legal framework.
2. Based on a specific geographic area, the organization is elected by the local people,

3. The organization is authorized to run the local administration and to impose taxes beside its own activities.
4. The local government is ultimately liable to the central government.

B. The Constitution and the Local Government

The constitution is the foundation of administering a country. The principles of administering the country are proclaimed and the basic rights of the public are acknowledged in the legal structure of the constitution. To administer the country, the constitution determines the establishment of the legislative body or the national parliament, administration of the judiciary division, the framework and the functions of the executive divisions of the government. The constitution gives the directions to administer the country by disclosing the fundamental promises of the country. The constitution is the legal document of the existence of a nation, the Magna Charta.

The basic rights that are mentioned in the constitution of Bangladesh are the equality, liberty of individual, human rights, public welfare, unity and the administration abide by the laws.

Under the title ‘The Principle of Governance’ of the Bangladesh Constitution, it is mentioned that, ‘The state will encourage the local governmental organizations formed by the representatives of their respective area and as many as possible special representatives will be given to these organizations from the farmers, the laborers and from the women.’ (The Principle of Governance, Chapter 2, Article 9, Constitution). Subsequently, regarding the principle of governance it is said, ‘The Republic will be a Democracy, where the basic human rights and liberty will be guaranteed and the dignity and values of human existence will be ensured.’ (Chapter 2, Article 11, Constitution). As a part of the administrative structures, provisions have been kept for the local government organizations in the constitution of Bangladesh to ensure the establishment of democratic values and social and economic legitimacy. Directions have been given to practice the democracy and to make them a habit through the effectiveness of these local government organizations at various levels and through the expansion of these democratic organizations. If we explain the relevant article of the constitution, we can see that the local government organizations have been considered simultaneously as an organization revived with democratic values as well as a development center through public participation. Therefore, the circumferences of the provision of the Bangladesh Constitution are over spreading. Their roles are additional and above on their routine activities. It is mentioned in the constitution that, through conducting in the democratic social structure and practicing right judgment, the local government system will be established as a prospective organization to exert long-term influence on the revolution of the economic system.

In the article 60 of the constitution it is described that, ‘to give the full effectiveness of the article 59 of the constitution, the parliament will empower the local governmental organizations to collect taxes, to prepare budget and to maintain their own funds to meet up the local needs.’

In the article 59 of the 12th amendment of the constitution of 1991(Chapter 3), it is mentioned that

1. There will be representative organizations as per every administrative law of the Republic,
2. The local government will be permitted to perform the following activities as per the laws of the parliament-
 - a) Administrative and public works,
 - b) Maintain law and order situation.

C. Planning and Implementing the Public Welfare And The Economic Developmental Activities.

In a democratic structure, the constitution is the legal framework of an autonomous local government. The prevailing articles of the constitution, mentioned earlier, are the legal arrangements for the local government organizations. It is mentioned in the constitution that all the authorities of the Republic belong to its nationals and the application of these authorities will be effective under the constitution and under its authorities (Constitution, Chapter 1, Article 7/1). As per the extreme evident of the intention of the public, to implement the relevant articles of the constitution regarding the formation of the local governments, the supreme law of the republic promises to all of its nationals (a) to setup democratically elected organizations at various levels, to determine their structures and to establish those organizations, (b) to determine the role of the local government organizations in the administrative and development activities and to take necessary steps in this regard, and (c) to delegate financial and other authorities to the democratically decentralized administration to help them implement their development activities. To comply with the constitution of the country, to uphold the democratic values at all levels of the national life and to institutionalize the democracy, it is very essential to ensure the effectiveness of the local government organizations immediately.

To establish the local government organizations under the constitution, various laws/ordinances had been introduced in the past and regulations were passed under those laws/ordinances. In many cases, these laws/ordinances and regulations are not clear. Again, in some cases conflicts are observed among these. Referring such conflicts prevailing in the rules and regulations passed under the Ordinance for the UPs and for the Municipalities, it is mentioned in a report of the UNDP (United

Nations Development Programs) (UNDP-1994) that through some regulations the autonomy/participation etc were made stronger and at that same time through other regulations, those provisions were either revoked or made ineffective. Therefore, instead of making the local government organizations stronger, those laws/ordinances and the regulations have made them weaker.

Relationship between the Local and National Governments

The local governments have been truly described as the organizations of the central government. The central laws control the scope, functions, authority to impose taxes, etc of the local governments. The central laws do not only determine the major function of the local governments but the central government also supervises and controls their activities. The superior-subordinate relationship is evident by their acts.

Beside preparing the laws for the local government organizations, the central government prepares detail regulations regarding the authorities and responsibilities of the Chairmen and the Members, fixation of taxes, preparation of budget, signing of agreements, employment, vacancy, preparation of accounts, auditing and other emergency affairs of those organizations.

The local government organizations have not been given infinite authorities to prepare their own rules and regulations. As for example, to make effective their own rules, it requires to take approval from the Deputy Commissioner and from the central government incase of the U.Ps and the Municipalities respectively.

Above all, the central government holds the authority to command the local governments. The central government applies these authorities on the local governments through circulars and orders.

Beside the authority to prepare the general laws, the central government has some arrangement to control the local governments such as preparation of regulations, standing orders, approval and circulation of orders, etc. The remarkable elements that maintain the relationship between the central and the local governments and help controlling the local governments by the central government are the structures, functions, financial management, human resources management, control over the local government organizations, etc.

The Role of the MP's in the Local Government Organizations

Many speeches have been given for long on the desired role of the public representative especially the role of the M.P in the future democratic structures of the local government organizations of Bangladesh. The debate is continuing on the existence and on the structure of the local governments, in the bureaucratic structure of the central government. The topic of the debate is, whether the local government

will be established as a directly decentralized part of the central government or, in light with the rationale decision on the articles no 9, 59 and 60 of the constitution, it will be established as a true autonomous organizational structure.

We should be informed regarding the expectations of the public of a constituency on their elected representative(s) and simultaneously the limitations of the later. In that situation, it will be possible to determine the role of the M.P in the local government organizations in the context of the prevailing socio-economic realities of Bangladesh.

It is undeniable that the role of a public representative of a developed country and the role of a public representative of a developing or an under enveloped country can not be the same. The reason exists in the dissimilarities of the developed and the under developed world. As an M.P is simultaneously a member of the Legislative body of a country, naturally many people say that the only duty and responsibility of an M.P is to attach with the law making process.

On the other hand in the developing country like ours, bedside their involvement with the law making process, the M.P have to play vital role at the local level in case of planning and development activities. In case of the realistic local planning process for the development of the living standard of the people at the property line, the contributions of an M.P are very significant. Therefore, the role and the scope of an M.P in the local development planning process should be determined.

Another considerable thing is that the theoretical knowledge of an M.P regarding the huge public expectations on the M.P and the role of an M.P in respect to the imaginations of the people of his/her own constituency. The primary responsibility of an M.P is to play role in the law making process. However, the M.P should also think that, in the context of the scarcity of resources of the country, the public relies on their elected representative as the only mean of their development and solution of their problems. The dependency of the local people on the M.P should be given due importance because the local people considers their respective M.P as the problem solving center in case of their personal, social, economical problems including birth, death, marriage, etc.

It may be an astonishing matter in the developed countries to hear that, due to some critical political/economical problems in the national level, the public do not realizes that the primary and major role of an M.P is to participate in the law making process in the national parliament, rather they believe this is the secondary role of an M.P. For this reason, an M.P's importance is hampered if he/she fails to solve the political, social and economic problems of his constituency. The local peoples consciously and strongly believe that the M.P has been elected with a view to develop their living standard and to change their existing condition. They do not often consider the role that is being played by their representative in the national parliament. However, it is true that as the local governments' representatives live

very closely with the general people, they know better regarding the public demand and the problems of their own area. They know better regarding the hope and expectations of the local people and the scarcity of local resources. Therefore, being public representatives, the person who can play the most effective role in the development planning process at the local level, are the directly elected representatives of the local government organizations. On the other hand, the M.P believe that, they should visualize the general picture of their constituencies. The opinion of the M.P may be very significant to ensure the equal distribution of resources at the macro level through the high-low planning method. Holding the most respectful post among all the public representatives, an M.P is capable to give his deliberate and considered opinion to select and coordinate the development activities at the local level, on the basis of the allocation given to the local government by the central government and the priorities of those development activities. If the principles and the methods of the development planning activities are completed once, an M.P needs not to be attentive regarding the routine implementation of those selected activities. In fact, the program implementation agencies, the public representatives and the local administration can carry out the same job through coordination. If the desired coordination is possible, the existing conflicts between the administrative structure and the public representatives will be solved in most of the cases.

In the local governmental structure, the major objectives of the role of an M.P may be to facilitate the activities of the local governments and to coordinate between the local and the central governments. Without involving in the routine activities, an M.P can take part in various activities of the local government, such as preparation of budget, selection and implementation of the development activities, public awareness activities, and so on. The presence of an M.P, as a consultant, in the routine meetings of a local government organization may help the local government organization to accomplish its job swiftly. Any decision of the local government organization may be taken in consultation and in coordination with the M.P. Beside this, if any conflict arises in the inter-local government organizations while preparing and implementing the development activities at the local level, the M.P can play very responsible role to resolve the conflict through inter-personal communication. The M.P may also play important role to link the root level local government organizations to the top most level of the central government. If we can realize the concept of the public representative in the democratic structures appropriately, it will be clear to us that the role of the M.P in the local government organizations is very much important. If the M.P deals with the local problems and their solutions and follow the mentioned procedures, their contribution in the law making process will be rich. Through this system, the democratic organizations will be able to keep uninterrupted relation with the public and there will be no apprehension of the political parties to be separated from the public while controlling as government.

Conclusion

There is an ancient history of the Local Government systems of Bangladesh. However, it cannot be said that the history was always the same. The local government system has come to this position through evolution. Some people say that the local government system was originated during the British regime with a view to make the colonial administration stronger. In this democratic environment, we will have to determine exactly for what purposes we will use the local government organizations. If one of the major objectives of the formation the local governments is to accelerate all the activities of the central government through formation of administrative structures in the local level and coordinating the activities of those local administrations, then a stronger structure must be formed for the government organizations. Previously, the activities of the local governments were hampered by the local administration. Thus, the local government systems has become a weaker organization. The local government organizations should be made as true representative organizations with adequate authorities in light with the obligations of the constitution. The accountabilities and the transparencies of the local government to the local people, i.e.; to the local community and to the central government must be ensured. For this reason, structural reform of the local government organizations is essential through coordinating among the local government organizations, representatives of all levels of the central government, such as the administrative representatives, representatives from the development agencies and representatives from the political parties. The organizational structures of the local government organizations can be made stronger by clearly mentioning the role of the M.P in those local organizations and by reforming those organizations accordingly. The principal reason behind the failure of the local government organizations, which were formed earlier for the welfare activities, is that there is no provision of accountability of those organizations to the public.



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