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- MAHMUD SHAH QURESHI

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IBS PUBLICATIONS

DOCUMENTS

AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER OF DINESH CHANDRA
SEN TO SYLVAIN LEVI & LEVI'S TESTIMONIAL
FOR MUHAMMAD SHAHIDULLAH

- Mahmud Shah Qureshi *

Here is a letter of Professor Dinesh Chandra Sen, B. A., D. Litt., Rai Bahadur of Calcutta University to Professor Sylvain Levi of the University of Paris (Sorbonne), hitherto unpublished. It was written on 10th January 1924 from 7 Biswakosh Lane, Calcutta and fell into our hands some 30 years ago by sheer chance. It is now nearly 70 years that the great *doyen* of Bengali literary history and a good writer by all means Dr. Sen wrote the letter to Dr. Levi who was universally acclaimed as a foremost scholar of South Asian Studies during the first half of this century. Dr. Levi was wellknown to Tagore, Calcutta scholars and to Japanese orientalists. Besides his published lecture on *Eastern Humanism*¹ at the University of Dhaka, he became familiar to us for a special reason. The reason is nothing else but the fixation of the date of *Caryapada* part of which are supposed to be samples of the earliest Bengali poetry. Dr. Muhammad Shahidullah, a pioneer in this study and for sometime an assistant to Dr. Sen put the date as early as 7th century just by referring to Dr. Sylvain Levi's book *Le Nepal*.

It is evident from a casual reading of the letter that Sen found in Levi a great friend and admirer. But his Vaishnavite tendencies are also predominant in the pathos expressed. According to the wishes of Levi, Sen sent him a copy of *Mymensingh Ballads* edited by himself and expecting "good opinions" from the receiver of the gift. At 57, he was also apprehensive of his own early death. So, he is not only seeking Levi's favourable comments but almost "begging" for it. He was, however, apologetic for his doing so which he termed as "abnormal sentimentality", as expressed in the letter.

Besides a good number of scholarly and popular books, Sen's autobiography is another landmark which reveals not only his humanity but also certain aspects of Bengali cultural history. In it he quotes from a letter of Levi who after having received Sen's *History of Bengali Language and Literature* writes exuberantly:

I have began this very week, and I cannot leave it off, I cannot give you praises enough. Your work is a Chintamani, a Ratnakar, full of science,

* Professor of Cultural and Intellectual History, the author is currently Director of the Institute.

and of life. No book about India would I compare with yours. It seems as if I were wandering through your beautiful country and through the heart of your people. Never did I find such a realistic sense of literature ; literary works with you are no dead writing, but living beings, where the spirit of generations breathes freely, widely, embodied for a time in their author, expanded afterwards in the multitude of readers and hearers, Pundit and peasant, Yogi and Raja mix together in a Shakespearian way - should I say too "a-la Sudraka" on the stage you have built up. I am eager to send you my sympathy, nay to express you my admiration.

This was probably in 1907, just after the publication of the book. The French Professor also published in January, 1913 a review of which an excerpt is given below:

One cannot praise too highly the work of Mr. Sen. A profound and original erudition has been associated with vivid imagination ... The historian, though relying on his documents, has the temperament of an Epic poet. He has likewise inherited the lyrical genius of his race. His enthusiastic sympathy vibrates through all his pages The appreciation of life, so rare in our book-knowledge, runs throughout the work. One reads these thousand pages with a sustained interest; one loses sight of the enormous labour which it presupposes; one easily steps into the treasure of information which it presents.²

Needles to say that Dinesh Chandra Sen (1866-1939) left immense legacy to the posterity through his works and achievements.

While presenting this unpublished letter of Dr. D. C. Sen, we thought that it would be proper to insert the true copy of a testimonial from Dr. Sylvain Levi. This letter of recommendation was written by the French Professor in favour of Dr. Muhammad Shahidullah who, in 1931, applied for the position at Calcutta University just vacated by Dr. Sen. This letter also had never been published earlier and it remained a classified document. We received it through the courtesy of Professor Shahidullah's son Mr. Muhammad Takiyullah. It would further reveal what Levi thought not only of Shahidullah but also of his mentor, Sen ; furthermore, one can easily detect Levy's special feeling for Bengal studies.

Fortunately for us, Shahidullah did not get the job as Levi wished he should. Thus leaving his native West Bengal and his *alma mater* the University of Calcutta he remained nearly four decades in the erstwhile East Bengal, perhaps to become, what we now consider as a pioneer of Bangaldesh studies.

1. Invited by his class mate at the University of Paris (Sorbonne) Mr. Hartog, the first Vice-chancellor of Dhaka University levi delivered this lecture on February 4, 1922; *Eastern Humanism* was published by Oxford University Press in 1925.
2. Both the excerpts are from Sen's autobiography *Gharer Katha O Juga Sahitya*, Calcutta: 1st ed. 1329 B. S., 2nd ed. 1969, pp. 227-228.

7. BISWAKOSH LANE,
BAGHBAZAR, CALCUTTA

10.1.24

My dear friend,
From your letter to Sir Asutosh I learn that you have returned to our house. I remember the day very well when I first met you at the Senate house. There is a goodness in your face so striking and palpable, that it makes an indelible impression on those who behold it, and I can never forget its inspiring charm. It was a great disappointment to me that in your hurried visit to Calcutta I could scarcely enjoy the pleasure of your company to my heart's content, so coveted not only for the atmosphere of scholarship and high thinking that your personality carries with it, but for that geniality and comradely love which it are inherent in you.

Yours truly,
Raj Bahadur

[illegible]

DR. DINESH CHANDRA SEN B.A. D.LITT.
RAI BAHADUR

DINESH CHANDRA SEN B.A. D.LITT.
 RAI BAHADUR.

registered packet took away for will?
 hope appreciate my great labours in
 connection with them - for three
 months I have been in bed with
 death in sight. I care not for the
 destruction of this body but for the
 were this gift - let them take what the
 gave - I am only sorry that the Lord's gift
 were the baby's body, fresh little a
 new-blown flower and the baby's mind
 pure as a thing of fine my body and
 at my 4th year of mind loaded with sins and unworthy
 of his acceptance I am a poor wretched man
 and my only joy in life rests in the
 good will of our Kindness of friends. Yet
 I feel a great hesitancy in seeking good

I am
 Yours
 Dinesh

[illegible]

DR. DINESH CHANDRA SEN, B. A. D. LITT.
RAI BAHADUR

7, BISWAKOSH LANE
BAGHBAZAR, CALCUTTA
10. 1. 24

My dear friend,

From your letters to Sir Asutosh I learn that you have returned to Paris.

I remember the day very well when I first met you you (sic) at the Senate house. There is a goodness in your face so striking and palpable, that it makes an indelible impression on those who behold it, and I can never forget its inspiring charm. It was a great disappointment to me that in your hurried visits to Calcutta I could scarcely enjoy the pleasure of your Edifying company to my heart's content, so coveted not only for the atmosphere of scholarship and high thinking that your personality carries with it, but for that geniality and cosmopolitan love which are inherent in you. Unfortunate as I am, you could not make time to hear the Kirtan songs which I wanted to arrange at my house. It might not have proved quite congenial to your taste. But it would have been a source of great pleasure to me to hear them in your company. For people want to enjoy the thing they love in the company of those whom they love and admire most. Still more was my disappointment and of the members of my family, especially the ladies, when at the last hour I received a note from you regretting your inability to come to our home where my wife and daughters-in-law had prepared sweets with great pains and eagerly expected to be introduced to you.

You wanted to hear the Mymensing ballads. The first volume in two parts are sent to you per registered packet just today. You will, I hope, appreciate my great labours in connection with them. For three months I have been in bed with death in sight. I care not for the destruction of this body. Body & mind were His gifts. Let Him take what He gave. I am only sorry that the Lord's gifts were the baby's body, fresh like a new-blown flower and the baby's mind pure as a thing of Heaven. And now at my 57th year I find my body and mind loaded with sins and unworthy of His acceptance.

I am a poor wretched man and, my only joy in life rests in the good will and kindness of friends. Yet I feel a great hesitancy in seeking good good [sic] opinions on my books from scholars of world-wide fame. For people are unreasonably cruel and look with envy on one who should be but an object of their compassion. Only had they known my great sufferings and disappointments in life. But inspite of everything, a kind word from you is so valuable that I cannot help begging its of you. The Doctors say that, I have not many months to live and Sir asutosh wishes me to give up all my literary work as he apprehends my End at a near future. I await your opinion on the Mymensingh ballads with eagerness. If I

die in the meantime kindly think of me graciously and mention me in your prayers.
Kindly Excuse the almost abnormal sentimentality of this letter.

Dr. Sylvain Levi.
Institut de Civilisation
Indienne
Sorbonne

Yours very sincerely
Sd/- Dinesh Ch. Sen
3rd November 1931.

I am happy to state that, in my opinion, Prof. M. Shahidullah (Dacca University) is fully qualified for a chair of Bengali language and literature in the University of Calcutta. I had the pleasure of meeting him first on the occasion of the 2d Oriental Congress, at Calcutta. Even among so many distinguished scholars coming from all parts of India, I found something peculiar in his burning enthusiasm for linguistic and historical researches on Bengali. When he came late to Paris in order to prepare a thesis for doctorate, I could see that this enthusiasm of his was not merely lyric, but practical and efficient ; he is a man who enjoys working, searching, discovery. Although standing apparently at the opposite pole, he reminds me of my dear friend Prof. Dinesh Chandra Sen ; Bengal is the country of his heart and mind, the centre of studies, however wide they may be. But this passion does not stand in the way of his critical judgment ; as a scholar, his mind is sound, well - balanced, free of prejudices. May I add that, as an Honorary Doctor of Calcutta University I wish that my statement, itself free and unprejudiced, will be taken in consideration by my colleagues there.

Sd. Sylvain Levy.

Professeur au College de France.

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF DISTRICT STUDIES IN BANGLADESH

- Mohammed Mohibullah Siddiquee*

1. INTRODUCTION

Beyond dictionary meaning district studies may be defined as study of a district based on history, geography, statistical accounts, trade, commerce, land revenue, customs, traditions, cultural, social, political and economic life of the people of a district. All types of such studies in Bangladesh from the beginning of its concept have been examined in this article.

2. Importanc of District Studies

Importance of a subject varies from man to man and from time to time on account of the difference of attitude. Different authors of the district studies have their own points of views and they have outlined the importance of their works in their own ways. Some writers tried to justify their studies, while others totally avoided this matter. Out of these, we have tried to trace out the significance of the district studies in Bangladesh in the following words: Firstly, there are wide gaps between the older historians who worked on the all India framework and the newer and modern historians who limit their studies in a narrow provincial level. The sociologists and anthropologists even limit their studies to the village level. Between these extremes district provides the natural framework for such type of study.¹ Secondly, district studies are essential both in their own right as a local history and as the means of understanding, interpreting and enriching the history of Bengal.² Thirdly, the district has been the basic unit of administration for a long time. But the impact of and responses to policy decisions of government have not always been uniform in all districts, because local conditions and demands have differed from one district to another and led to regional variations in costoms and traditions, and social and economic life. Under such circumstances, only multiple local investigation can bring forth the true richness and variety of our past history

* The author is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Islamic History & Culture, University of Rajshahi.

which will form a useful basis for a proper understanding and interpretation of the socio-economic history of Bangladesh.³ Fourthly, district is a vital unit of administration and the Deputy Commissioner is the *Ma-Bap*⁴ (guardian) of the common people for a long time. In British system, he was the pivot round which the administration moved. As a primary agent of the central government he comes in direct contact with the mass. Consequently, all the development of the district directly or indirectly depends upon the efficiency of the Deputy Commissioner. If he is ignorant of the history, geography, language, literature, culture, traditions and the socio-economic condition of the people of his district, he will be a failure in running the administration and all the development projects will go in vain.

The district studies, therefore, are essential for two reasons: first, these will serve as guide books to the officers responsible for development administration, and secondly, they will help finding out the real history and culture of the country and the people.

3. Origin of the District

It is commonly acknowledged that the administrative framework inherited by us has a very long history and our historians are tracing the lineage of Deputy Commissioner to Ashoka's time.⁵ But the history of the administration of the pre-Muslim period is not as bright as those of the Muslim and the British periods. This is due to lack of historical materials for the ancient period. We, therefore, begin our enquiry from the Mughal period since when written materials are readily available.

For the first time Mughal emperor Akbar (1556-1605) divided his Indian Empire into *subahs*, *sarkars* and *parganas* corresponding to modern provinces, districts, and villages. Perhaps, it was done mainly to facilitate revenue administration. But these became gradually the units of general administration.⁶ At that time the '*Subah Bangalah*' (the province of Bengal) was divided into nineteen unequal parts and each part was called '*Sarkar*'. In 1717 Murshid Quli Khan was appointed a *Subahdar* (provincial Governor) of Bengal and in 1722 he rearranged the *subah* into thirteen unequal territorial divisions called *Chaklahs*.⁷ In area a *Chaklah* was larger than a *Sarkar*.

After the battle of Boxar, the *Diwani* of Bengal was transferred to the English East India Company by the Mughal emperor Shah Alam II on the 12th August, 1765⁸ and the Company by adopting the Mughal system of administration developed it further. In 1772 Warren Hastings, Governor General of India divided the Province of Bengal into 23 districts,⁹ when the British rule was going to be established in Bengal. Thus we see that with the passage of time from the Mughals

to the British the system of 'Sarkar' was replaced by *Chaklah* and *Chaklah* was replaced by the district which is still in existence. Whatever may be the nomenclature, *sarkar*, *chaklah* or district, the idea of region as a fundamental unit of administration provides unique opportunity for the study of history of these basic units.

4. Origin of District Studies

The idea of writing local history was known to the Muslims of Arabia and first local history was compiled by Hazrat Ali, the fourth *khalifah* of Islam.¹⁰ But the idea of compiling local history in Bengal was conceived by the British from the later part of the eighteenth century when European Supervisors¹¹ were appointed in 1769 in the districts who among other things were ordered to investigate and submit a brief report on topography, history, trade and commerce, land revenue, local customs, agriculture, administration of justice and economic survey of the districts placed under their supervisions¹². In fact, these unacquainted, inexperienced and linguistically unqualified officers failed to submit general survey reports on districts.¹³ But the company did not withdraw their order or give up their attempt. As a result, a letter was written by the Court of Directors on the 9th May 1797 to John Taylor, the Commercial Resident of Dhaka with an instruction to collect materials of his jurisdiction for the use of the Company's historiographer.¹⁴ At that time Nawab Nusratjang was the Naib Nazim of Dhaka.¹⁵ In course of collecting information John Taylor requested Nawab Nusratjang to help him by supplying information on history, monuments, trade, commerce, European settlements etc. in Dhaka. The Nawab complied with his request by sending him a booklet on the history of Dhaka in 1799. This booklet is known as *Tarikh-i-Nusratjangi*,¹⁶ Which is the first local history ever written in Bengal. On the basis of the *Tarikh-i-Nusratjangi* and other sources John Taylor compiled *An Account of the District of Dacca* in 1800.¹⁷

By this time Sir Sinclair planned a statistical account of Scotland in 1790 and his findings were published in twenty volumes in 1791-1799.¹⁸ When the directors of the East India Company went through the volumes of Sir Sinclair they felt encouraged and patronised the compilation of similar statistical studies in Bengal for the better understanding of the administrative problems of their newly acquired territory about the history and culture of which they knew very little. Later on, with a view to promoting such scheme the company took a great step. They commissioned Francis Buchanan in 1807 to make tours to various districts of the Bengal Presidency and to compile reports on them. His reports were sent to the East India Company House in 1816 and its first volume was published from

Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta in 1833 after his death under the title of *A Geographical, Statistical and Historical Description of the District or Zilla Dinajpur in the Province or Soubah of Bengal*.¹⁹

5. Development of District studies

The writing of district history was introduced by the Mughal nobility in Bengal.²⁰ But the trend was popularised by the British Indian Civil Servants who produced a bulk of writing on the subject. From the beginning of the writing of district history a large number of such studies had been prepared by the civil servants, scholars, historians and the learned member of the noble class.

On the basis of the nature of the books and the views of the authors we may classify the district studies in Bangladesh into three categories: (a) Works of Civil Servants (British, Pakistani and Bangladeshi); (b) Works of the historians and (c) General Works (in Persian, Urdu, English and Bengali).

5.1.A. Works of the Civil Servants: British

There are some factors which are related to the writings of district history by the British Indian Civil Servants. Some of them were appointed in the district in order to investigate and submit a report on history, geography, and statistics of that district. As a result of this order a natural process of writing district history was evolved. But at first the process was not so smooth because the factors of East India Company become the Supervisors of the district. The Company as well as the Supervisors of the district considered themselves not administrators, but agents of the commercial concern.²¹ They were not trained for the task of writing history or collecting materials. In fact, they were the real ministers and officers of the powerful sovereign. Lord Wellesly, the Governor General of India, established a College at Fort William at Calcutta in 1800 for the education and training of the young civil servants and to change their mentality, manners, habits of life etc. But it was not so fruitful. After the great Sepoy Revolution in 1857, the young British Civil Servants were more and more interested in acquainting themselves with the language, literature, religion, culture and traditions of the local people and the binding slogan was "to study the structure of Indian society".²² In such a way the mentality, views and the attitude of the civil servants were changed and they were sincerely engaged in the study of the districts of Bengal.

On the other hand, some of the British Civil Servants were very greedy and all of their works were directed to make financial gains. For instance, about W. W. Hunter it was said that "on an inquiry it is found almost all of his publications has been conceived, planned and executed always keeping in view of the prospect of

financial gains and to that effect he employed his time and talents. His too much care to open new financial opportunities for himself made him thoroughly unpopular among many of his colleagues who regarded him as a very self seeking and untrustworthy kind of gentlemen'. Even Lord Dufferin opined, "Hunter has many faults and is positively hated principally, I believe, on accounts of his unblushing manners in monetary matters".²³

Most probably a large number of district studies under different titles such as General Reports, Geographical and Statistical Accounts, Gazetteers, Final Survey and Settlement Reports etc. had been published by the British Government. These were prepared by their civil servants. About the subject matter of these books A. M. Serajuddin wrote, "They began with a description of topography, antiquities, and history, then proceed to the people, agriculture, trade and commerce, manufactures, and means of communication and end up with an account of the working of various branches of district administration."²⁴ Most of the authors admit that their works are incomplete, imperfect, sketchy, inadequate, merely helpful or useful to the district officers and partly interesting to the inhabitants of that district as well as to the general readers. Some exceptional and popular works had been done by the 'distinguished members of the civil service'.²⁵ Among these mention may be made of Beveridge's Bakergong, Westland's Jessore, Taylor's Dacca, Cotton's Chittagong, Gilzies's Rangpur and Jack's Faridpur.

The shortcomings of some of these works were admitted by the authors themselves in the prefaces of their books. However, a glorious history of the social and economic life of the rural people of Bangladesh had been preserved by the works of the civil servants during 19th and 20th centuries. We may easily consider all these works as primary source of our district history and herein lies the importance of these works.

5.1.B Works of Civil Servants: Pakistani and Bangladeshi

The Indian people had entrance into the British Indian Civil Service after a long struggle. But at that time they were called 'Native Civil Servants' and we have taken up their works with the works of British civil servants. As a matter of fact, there was no original work done by the Civil Servants of Pakistan and Bangladesh. Almost all of their works are revisions of the works of the British Civil Servants. However, just after the partition of 1947, Government ordered the revision of district gazetteers and entrusted the work to the Divisional Commissioners who found neither time nor the aptitude for such an undertaking. Again the government ordered its revision by a senior official by name; but that decision also could not materialise.²⁶ Later on, in 1961 the Government set up a committee to recommend

the ways and means to revise and rewrite the district gazetteers which were mainly based on the British District Gazetteers. In 1963, the Government issued an order agreeing with the recommendation of the committee that a separate organization headed by a general editor should be set up to undertake the works.²⁷ Only three district gazetteers were published before the creation of Bangladesh in 1971 and the rest were published after independence.

Besides the gazetteers, there was another important work done by our civil servants. They could bring out the census reports of 1961 and 1974. The first step of census was taken in 1951 when a complete list of all villages containing total population, number of houses, and some other local details for each village was published in separate volumes called "Village List" for each district of Bangladesh. The 17 district census reports were prepared by the civil servants of Pakistan and published by the government in 1961. Along side the village list of 1951 the publication of the Census Report was the product of highly ambitious project. The district census reports of 1974 were edited by the respective district committees headed by the Deputy Commissioners. They were arranged in separate volumes containing detailed data of population and housing, analytical results of the census and information about physical, administrative, economic and social condition of the districts. The census reports of 1974 were published in 1979 under the direct supervision of Director General of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics. Apart from these, reports on the final survey and settlement operations of East Pakistan were prepared by the civil servants. They were published by the government.

All these works were designed in accordance with the views of the government. Treated as output of government decision they were all compiled in the same way. Above all, these works provide manifold information about people, society, economy and culture of Bangladesh.

5.2. Works of the Historians

The research works of the historians of Bangladesh in this field are insignificant in number. Most of those published works have grown up with the help of Commonwealth Scholarship Commission of the United Kingdom. There are three district studies of almost similar nature which were submitted as dissertations for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London under the supervision of Major J. B. Harrison in the sixties of this century and these three are:-

The Revenue Administration of the East India Company in Chittagong 1761-1785 of A. M. Serajuddin and published by the University of Chittagong in 1971

is a thorough study of the early British revenue administration of Chittagong.⁴⁰ The author analyses the stages in which the English officers handled the revenue problems, bottlenecks and group interests that impeded their process of evolving a system of their own. He also explores laws, provisions and revenue demands of the Mughal Government and how far they were congenial to the healthy growth of the new administration. He traces the process by which a British district revenue system and rural administration evolved from the decaying Mughal institutions and also drew a pen-picture of the conflicts of the various groups which were directly related with the revenue.²⁹

The Revenue Administration of Northern Bengal 1765-1793 of A. B. M. Mahmood was published by the National Institute of Public Administration, Dacca in 1970. The author wrote a critical history of the rise and fall of the *Zamindari* of Rajshahi, hesitation and confusion of revenue policies of *Dewani* rule in Bengal, stressing the farming system and various types of revenue settlement.³⁰

"Revenue Administration of Sylhet District, 1765-1792" is an unpublished Ph. D. dissertation of K. Haraksingh "Which brings out the special features of the revenue system of this frontier district of innumerable peasant proprietors and shows that many of the generalizations about Bengal are quite inapplicable to Sylhet as they are to Chittagong".³¹

There are two other research works on Dhaka done by famous scholars of Dhaka University. These are recognised as the most valuable studies on Dhaka.

The first study on Dhaka is *Dacca: A Record of Its Changing Fortune* by Ahmed Hasan Dani and it was published by Mrs. Safiya S. Dani from Dhaka in 1956. In the first edition of this book, the author describes in details the cultural history and the archaeology of the city of Dhaka. But in the second revised and enlarged edition which was published in 1962, the entire material has been recast and the book took the form of political, social and cultural history of Dhaka. The author discussed the topography and history of Dhaka city down to 1950 with special reference to Mughal life, nobility and monuments.³²

Another study is *Dacca, the Mughal Capital* by Abdul Karim and it was published by the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Dhaka in 1964. It is an historical analysis of the growth of Dhaka as provincial capital of the great Mughal empire, centre of trade, commerce and administration and also the economic life of the people of Dhaka.³³ Besides these, this book contained 13 appendices consisting of most important documents which give us useful information about trade, commerce, land revenue customs and *zamindari* of Dhaka during eighteenth

century. All these valuable historical documents were collected from the India Office Library, London.³⁴

Research works on district history is going on in the different institutions in Bangladesh. But in this respect, Institute of Bangladesh Studies in the University of Rajshahi is the most successful organisation. Three research works have been completed in this institution under the supervision of Professor S. A. Akanda. These works were accepted by the University of Rajshahi as dissertations for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.³⁵

All the above works of the scholars of Bangladesh in this field were never patronised by the government. But their works were sometimes highly appreciated by the scholars, government servants and general readers. Most of the writers were the teachers of various educational institutions, some were retired civil servants and many of them were educated persons belonging to noble class. They got inspiration to undertake such hard task out of their love for their own land. In some cases they were inspired in this respect by the attraction of a particular ruler or administrator. Sometimes inspiration for this also came from their elders or teachers. However, they completed district history in four languages i. e. Persian, English, Urdu and Bengali. We have tried to discuss these works on linguistic basis.

5.3.A. Persian works

During the Muslim period Persian had been the state language of Bengal till 1837. But there were only a few district history written in this language. As already pointed out Nawab Nasratjani (1785-1822), Naib Nazim of Dhaka wrote an important district history on Dhaka in 1799 named *Tarikh-i-Nusratjani*.³⁶ This book was edited by Harinath De and it was published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta. This is a brief political and archaeological history of Dhaka from Akbar (1556-1605) to Nawab Hasmat Jang (1779-1785), Naib Nazim of Dhaka and the brother of the author.³⁷

Ahadisul Khawanin or *Tarikh-i-Hamidi* was written by Khan Bahadur Hamidullah Khan who was a great Bengali scholar and a poet in Persian language. The book was written in 1855 and it was published by Kabiruddin Ahmed of Mazharul Arab press, Calcutta in 1871 as second edition. The information about the first edition is not available.³⁸ The book deals mainly with the establishment of Muslim rule in Chittagong. Among other things it throws light on the history, geography, social stratification of Chittagong. It also tells about building Shahi Jami Mosque by Buzurg Umed Khan. The mosque was not used for sometime as a mosque. The English used it as a magazine. But the mosque was restored to the

Muslims of Chittagong when a strong representation of the Muslims was headed by the author. This is actually the first written history of Chittagong. About this book Dr. Matiur Rahman says, "This Persian book is an authentic history of Chittagong".⁴⁰

Aga Ahmed Ali compiled district history in Persian in 1865 entitled *Tarikh-i-Dhaka*. Unfortunately the book is not available.⁴¹

For long six hundred years Persian was the state language of Bengal. But the number of district history in this language is very meagre. During the Muslim rule local history was not popular and the trend of writing history was centralised to the Mughal Court.

5.3.B. Urdu works

Even during the early British rule the language of noble class Muslim family in Bengal was Urdu, though they had great respect for Persian and Arabic also. But only three books in this field were written in Urdu. *Tawarikh-e-Dhaka* by Munshi Rahman Ali Taish (1823-1908) is a history of Dhaka and its adjoining area.⁴² An inhabitant of Lalbagh, an ancient part of the city of Dhaka the author was an employee in the office of the District Sub-Registrar of Dhaka.⁴³ This book is a monumental work and a good gazetteer in Urdu. The author took great pains to collect information for this book. He laboriously collected the texts of inscriptions and gave accounts of monuments of Dhaka and Sonargaon.⁴⁴ He has also given a good account of the Nawabs, saints and shrines of Dhaka.⁴⁵

Dhaka Pachas Baras Pahle and *Asoodgan-e-Dhaka* were written by Shifaul Mulk Hakim Habibur Rahman (1880-1947) who devoted much of his time and energy in collecting historical and traditional accounts of the tombs and mausoleum in Dhaka.⁴⁶ These are the history of Dhaka and her monuments. The contents of the first book is not systematic, because it was the compilation of a series of Radio Talks broadcast by the Dhaka Radio station.⁴⁷

Only Dhaka has her district history written in Urdu. Perhaps some of the Urdu speaking people were living in Dhaka, a Mughal provincial capital from long time past. Urdu was their mother tongue. During the time of Pakistan, Urdu was the state language. But the people of the eastern wing of Pakistan developed a passionate love for their mother tongue Bengali. As a result of the Language Movement of 1952 Urdu gradually lost importance in this country. Consequently, the works on district history in Urdu could make no headway.

5.3.C English Works

English replaced Persian as state language in 1837. Muslims were not happy with this declaration and they were reluctant to learn English during early British rule. As a result, they were ousted from government services and from external and internal trade and they gradually became poorer. Therefore, they were unable to write history especially district history in English. As an advanced section of the Indian society, the Hindus started learning English from the very beginning of the British rule. But they also did not write any district history in English. However, there are six books on district history written in English by the Bangladeshi scholars. Of these two are on Dhaka,⁴⁸ three on Chittagong,⁴⁹ and one on Kushtia.⁵⁰

Four of the authors⁵¹ of the above stated six books are the *Saiyads*⁵² (descendent of the holy prophet Muhammed S. M), or the upper class people of the society. It partially showed that upper class Muslims of society were able to understand the necessity of learning English in British period for the better interest of their existence. Secondly five authors⁵³ of these books are government servants. They are not professional historians and they wrote their books exclusively with their own interest and without any government patronage. Only one book was written by a professional.⁵⁴

Almost all these authors tried to begin their books with the history of Bengal. Then they tried to throw light on geography, statistics, political, social, economic and cultural history of his own district. Some of the authors tried to write the history of tombs and monuments of his districts. More or less all attempts are good contributions in the field of district history.

5.3.D. Bengali Works

The prose writing in Bengali started after the establishment of Fort William College at Calcutta in 1800.⁵⁵ During these 190 years, only few district histories were written in the mother tongue of the people of Bangladesh. First district history in Bengali is *Sherpurer Bibaran* (Account of Sherpur) which was compiled by Harachandra Chowdhury Bidyabinod.⁵⁶ It was published by the author from Sherpur in 1872.

Table-A gives us a complete pen-picture of the number of the district histories written by the Muslims, Hindus and other writers of Bangladesh in Bengali during British, Pakistan and Bangladesh periods. The period it covers runs from 1872 to 1990. It shows clearly an increasing trend of writing district history

Habibullah Pathan, "Bangladesher Anchalic Itihas Bishayak Prakashana (1949-1990)" *The Boi: A Monthly periodical on Books*, Vol. XXVII, no. 4. August, 1991, pp. 33-36

It can be recalled that the first district history in Bengali was written by a Hindu. But the trend of writing district history in Bengali by the Hindus decreased specially during the period of Pakistan and Bangladesh. There is no denying of the fact that they compiled good number of district histories in Bengali during British period. But after the creation of Pakistan in 1947, most of the Hindu scholars left this country. As a result their contribution in this field practically made no headway.

The contribution of other writers of district history in Bengali are also negligible in number. On the other hand, the overall picture of the development as a whole the condition of writing district history is quite satisfactory.

The Table shows that as against 36 district history written in British period, Pakistan and Bangladesh periods, register the numbers 45 and 91 respectively.

5.3.E. Evaluation of the General Works

There are some limitations and shortcomings of the general works discussed above. For example, We can say about the defects of their source-materials. All authors were silent about the source of information. Their source of information is mainly the district gazetteers, statistical accounts, published reports of the district collectors and general books, articles and other secondary sources. Secondly, none of these writers of district history used manuscripts or primary sources. For writing district history primary sources consisted of district records preserved in the *Zillah Muhafezkhana* (District Record Room) situated in the district headquarters and Bengal Government records preserved in the National Archives of Bangladesh at Dhaka, West Bengal State Archives at Calcutta, and India Office Library at London.⁵⁷ It is very unfortunate that these essential sources were not utilized or even discussed by the authors of the district histories. Thirdly, some of their books are the copies or exact translations or modified versions of the district gazetteers which were prepared and published by the government in different times. In this connection Dr. A. Karim remarks, "their works were not merely a history, but these were the historical miscellany or in modern terminology, it may properly be called an improved type of gazetteers."⁵⁸ Fourthly, there is a well-established scientific process of historical writings which is formally called Historical Research Method. By using this method a writer can reach a decision by utilizing the available facts, data or information. But none of them followed any particular rule or any scientific methodology.⁵⁹ Fifthly, periodization is an essential

by the Muslims in all periods. There are some valid reasons behind this. Different political changes specially the creation of Pakistan and Bangladesh created favourable atmosphere for the development of historical writings in Bengali by the Muslims. Secondly, the great Language Movement of 1952 created a suitable situation for the development of Bengali language and literature. As a result, the number of district history in Bengali increased substantially after 1952. Thirdly, after the independence of Bangladesh Bengali, the mother tongue of the people became the state language. This served as a veritable impetus for the rapid development of writing district history in Bengali by the Muslims.

Table-A

Condition of the number of the district history written in Bengali by the Muslim, Hindu and other writers of Bangladesh during British, Pakistan and Bangladesh Periods (1872-1990)

	British period 1872-1946 =75 years.	Pakistan period 1947-1970 = 24 years.	Bangladesh period 1971-1990 = 20 years.	Total 1872- 1990 = 119 years
	Number of books	Number of books	Number of books	Number of books
Works of the Muslim Writers	6	37	78	121
Works of the Hindu Writers	30	7	11	48
Works of the other writers	Nil	1	2	3
Total	36	45	91	172

Sources: (a) Ali Ahmed, *Bangla Muslim Grantapanji*, Dhaka: Bangla Academy, 1985; (b) Md. Abdur Razzak, *Bangla Bhashaya Muslim Grantapanji 1400-1984*, Vol. I-IV, Rajshahi : Mrs. Rokeya Khatun, 1988; (c) Dr. Saikat Asgar, "Bangladesher Anchalic Itihas Bishyak Rachana-o-Prakashana 1833-1990" *The Boi: A Monthly periodical of Books*, Vol. XXVI No. 12. April, 1991, pp. 14-22. and (d) Muhammed Habibullah

historical writings. But in this respect too proper attention was not paid by the authors.⁶⁰ Sixthly, most of the books contained similar contents and their style of writing is also similar in nature. At first they described the topography of their area and then wrote history of various aspects of their district from Hindu period to their time. As a result, in spite of containing enough historical data all these have become more or less sketchy patchworks.

There are some reasons for the limitation and shortcoming that characterised their historical writings. Most of the writers of these district histories were not historians but litterateurs. They were not conversant with primary sources of information, scientific historical research methodology, periodization and the styles of writing history. Secondly, scarcity of fund created obstacle in collecting information, preparing manuscripts and publishing their books. Most of the writers admitted their financial difficulties without any hesitation. Some of them wrote in the preface of their books that they collected money for their works from the *Zamindars*, *Naibs*, pleaders, Business magnets and some autonomous and private organisations and institutions.⁶¹ This statement showed that these works were never patronized by the government.

Despite these limitation and shortcomings, all these works are the great contributions towards the development of writing district history in Bangladesh. Evaluating such an work Dr. Enamul Hoq wrote, "ইহাকে ইতিহাস বলা যায় কি না জানি না, তবে ইতিহাসের মৌলিক উপাদান যে এ গ্রন্থ থেকে গৃহীত হবে তাতে সন্দেহ নেই।"⁶² Moreover, some of the books are highly appreciated by the scholars. For example, criticising A. C. Chowdhury's *Srihatter Iubritta (History of Sylhet)*, the *Daily Empire* wrote, "The book shows careful reading and research. Mr. Chowdhuri has shown how a history should be written. If Bengalee writers will follow in his steps they will be able to produce many excellent historical works in due course."⁶³

6. Conclusion

From the very beginning of the British rule in India, district has been the basic unit of administration. The idea of writing district history in Bengal was conceived by the British in 1769. But first district history in Bangladesh was *Tarikh-i-Nusratjangi*. It was written by Nawab Nusrat Jang, Naib Nazim of Dhaka at the request of an English officer John Taylor. Now a days, district studies are essential as the means of understanding, interpreting and enriching the history of Bengal. It also serves as the guide book to the officers responsible for development of administration. As a result, a good number of district history was written by the British and the Bengalees in different languages.

With the change of the state power, state language was also changed. As a result, Persian, English, Urdu and Bengali, one after another- became the state language of Bengal or Bangladesh. Both the Hindus and the Muslims learnt these languages for their professional interest. In case of learning foreign languages, the Hindus were more advanced than the Muslims. But only the Muslims compiled the district history in foreign languages. On the other hand, the Hindus compiled district history only in Bengali. It shows that although the Muslims were lagging behind the Hindus in learning foreign languages, yet they were far advanced than the Hindus in the sphere of compiling district history.

Foot note

1. K. M. Mohsin, *A Bengal District in Transition: Murshidabad 1765-1793* (Dacca: Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, 1973), P. II.
2. A. M. Serajuddin "Observations on District Studies in Bengal" *Journal of Asiatic Society of Bangladesh (Hum)* Vol. XXIV-VI (nd. 1979-80) p. 117.
3. *Ibid.*
4. Quazi Azher Ali, *District Administration in Bangladesh* (Dacca: National Institute of Public Administration, 1978) p.3.
5. A. B. M. Mahmood, *The Revenue Administration of the Northern Bengal, 1765-1793* (Dacca: National Institute of Public Administration, 1970) p. I.
6. A. M. A. Muhith, *The deputy Commissioner in East Pakistan* (Dacca: National Institute of Public Administration, 1968) p. 6.
7. A. Karim, *Murshid Quli Khan and His times* (Dacca: Asiatic Society of Pakistan, 1968), p. 79.
8. R. C. Majumder, *History of Modern Bengal* (Calcutta: G. Bharadwaj and Co. 1978). p. 1.
9. Qazi Azher Ali *op; cit*; p. 3.
10. For the first time, we have found the idea of local studies in *Nahajul Balagha* by Hazrat Ali (R), the fourth Khalifa of Islam in seventh century. The 17th and 18th chapters of this book deal with the region of Basra, its history, geography, statistics, religion, people, culture, language, literature, etc. which is comparable with the modern district studies. In 814, Ibn-e-Zabala one of the renowned Muslim historians wrote a regional history under the name of "*The Historical and Geographical Accounts of Medina*" in Arabic. Most probably, it was the first complete local history of the world. Balajurie's great contribution was the

Futhuh-al-Buldan which was written in 869. In this book his treatment of Makkah, Madina and Basra conforms the most modern standard and conception of a gazetteer. Later on *Tarikh-i-Bagdad* by Hafiz Abu Bakar, *Tarikh-i-Damashq* by Ibn-e-Askir and *Tarikh-i-Madina* by Nooruddin Ali Samundi were written in the 9th century. All these are recognized as valuable local history.

11. Subsequently the Supervisor was redesignated as the District Magistrate and Collector.
12. A. M. Khan, *The Transition in Bengal 1756-1775* (Cambridge: University press, 1969) p. 200.
13. Dr. Abdul Karim, "An Account of the District of Dacca dated 1800" *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan* Vol. VII No. II p. 289.
15. *Ibid.*
16. For details information about *Tarikh-i-Nusratjangi* see Mohammed Mohibullah Siddiquee "Tarikh-i-Nusratjangi: An Evaluation" *Journal of the Institute of Bangladesh Studies*. Vol. XV (May, 1992), pp. 1-12.
17. This is an earliest known account of some historical and economical aspects of Dhaka, towards the end of the Eighteenth and the beginning of the Ninetenth centuries. The account with a forwarding letter dated 30th November, 1800 and a postscript dated 2nd November, 1801, form the volume no. 456F of the India Office (now Commonwealth Relations Office, London) Records in the Home Miscellaneous Series. The volume is entitled, "Account of the district of Dacca" by the Commercial Resident Mr. John Taylor in a letter to the Board of Trade at Calcutta dated 30th November, 1800 with P. S. 2nd November 1801, and inclosures (Sic), in reply to a letter from the Board dated 6th February 1778 transmitting copy of the 115th paragraph of the general letter from the court of Directors dated 9th May, 1797 inviting the collection of materials for the use of the Company's Historiographer". The title of the volume explains the orgin and purpose of the account of Dacca. See A. Karim *op. cit.*, p. 289.
18. Md. Delwar Hussain "Some Aspt of Henry Baveridge's History of Bakergonj" *Bangladesh Historical Studies*, Vol. IV, (nd. 1979), p. 90.
19. *Ibid.*
20. Dhaka was governed by the Naib Nazims from 1717 to 1843. Jesarat Khan was appointed the Naib Nazim of Dhaka by Nawab Alivardi Khan in 1755 and he died in 1779. He was succeeded by Nawb Hasmata Jang, his grandson through his daughter. He died in 1785 and was succeeded by his brother Nusrat Jang. Nusrat jang was the Naib Nazim of Dacca from 1785 to 1822. He is the writer of *Tarikh-i-Nusratjangi*, first district history of Bengal.

21. N. I. Khan (ed.) *Bangladesh District Gazetteers Noakhali* (Dacca: Bangladesh Government press, 1977) p. 1.
22. *Ibid.*
23. Md. Dellwar Hussain "Economic Consideration Behind W. W. Hunter's Literary Works" *Bangladesh Historical Studies*, Vol. II (nd.1977) p. 122.
24. A. M. Serajuddin *op. cit*; p. 121.
25. *Ibid*
26. S. N. H. Rezvi (ed.) *East Pakistan District Gazetteers, Dacca* (Dacca: East Pakistan Government Press, 1969) p. I.
27. *Ibid.*
28. A. M. Serajuddin, *The Revenue Administration of the East India Company in Chittagong 1761-1785*. (Chittagong: University of Chittagong, 1971), p. 2.
29. *Ibid.*
30. A B. M. Mahmood *op.cit*; pp. III-IV.
31. A. M. Serajuddin "Observations on District Studies in Bengal" *op.cit*; p. 123.
32. A. H. Dani, *Dacca: A Record of Its changing Fortune* (Dacca: S. S. Dani, 1956) p. IX.
33. Abdul Karim, *Dacca, The Mughal capital* (Dacca: Asiatic Society of Pakistan, 1964) p. VII.
34. *Ibid*, pp. 109-497..
35. These dissertations are preserved in the libraries of the University of Rajshahi and the Institute of Bangladesh Studies. These three Works are: (a) Md. Mahbubur Rahman, "Village Life in Colonial Bengal: Change and Continuity in Rangpur District, 1870-1940". (1988); (b) Mohammed Mohibullah Siddiquee, "Socio-economic Development of a Bengal District: A Study of Jessore, 1883-1925", (1989) and (c) M. A. Motalib, "The Socio-economic History of Pabna District, 1872-1935" (1990).
36. Mohammed Mohibullah Siddiquee *op.cit*. p. 4.
37. *Ibid*, pp. 4-8.
38. M. Abdullah, *Bangladesher Persi Shairiya* (Dhaka: Islamic Foundation, 1983) p. 268.
39. *Ibid*,
40. Matiur Rahman, *Aynaya-e-Wasia* (Patna: University of Patna, 1978) p. 90.

41. M. Abdullah, *op.cit.*: p. 136.
42. For details see Munshi Rahman Ali Taish *Tawarikh-e-Dhaka* translated by A. M. M. Sharfuddin (Dhaka: Islamic Foundation, 1985).
43. Syed Iqbal Azim, *Masriki BangalmaUrdu* (Dhaka: Cooperative Book Publisher, 1954) p. 79.
44. S. M. Taifoor, *Glimpses of Old Dacca* (Dhaka: S. M. Pervez, 1952). p. II.
45. Syed Iqbal Azim, *op.cit.*; p. 71.
46. *Ibid*, p. 112
47. S. N. H. Rezvi (ed.) *op.cit.*; p. 348.
48. These two are- (1) Syed Awlad Hasan, *Notes on the Antiquities of Dhaka* (Dacca: Author, 1904) and (2) Syed Muhammed Taifoor, *Glimpses of Old Dhaka* (Dhaka: S. M. Pervez, 1952).
49. These three are-(1) Syed Ahmadul Hoque, *History of Chittagong*, (Chittagong, Author, 1948); (2) Syed Martuza Ali, *History of Chittagong* (Dacca: Standard Publishers Ltd. 1964) and (3) Suniti Bhushan Qanungo, *History of Chittagong*, (Chittagong: Author, 1991).
50. Information about the book on Kushtia is given here. Z. A. Tofail, *History of Kushtia* (Dacca: Ziaunnahar Khanam, 1966).
51. The name of the four authors are Syed Awlad Hasan, Syed Muhammed Taifoor, Syed Ahmadul Hoque and Syed Martuza Ali.
52. 'Saiyad' is an Arabic word. It means leader. In Islamic history, the descendents of the holy Prophet Muhammad (SM) are called *Saiyad*. For details interesting information about *Saiyad* see A. K. Nazrul Karim, *Changing Society in India and Pakistan*, (Dacca: Ideal Publications, 1956); Abdul Karim, *Social History of the Muslims Bengal*, (Dacca: Asiatic Society of Pakistan, 1959); M. A. Rahim, *Social and Cultural History of Bengal*, (Karachi: Pakistan Historical Society, 1963); H. K. Arefeen, "Muslim Stratification Patterns in Bangladesh: An Attempt to Build theory" *Journal of Social Studies*. no. 16, and Muhammed Mohibullah Siddiquee, "Bangladesher Muslim Samaj Star Bineash: Ekti Oitihashik Parjalochana" (Social Stratification in the Muslim Society of Bangladesh: Historical Overview) *Bangla Academy Patrika* Vol. XXX, no. 3, Kartic-Paus, 1394, B. S. pp. 139-150.
53. Syed Awlad Hasan, Syed Muhammed Taifoor, Syed Ahmadul Hoque, Syed Martuza Ali and Z. A. Tofail- all of them are government servants.
54. In this connection, Dr. Suniti Bhushan Qanungo, the writer of *History of Chittagong* is the only professional historian.

55. A. R. Mallick, *British policy and the Muslims in Bengal 1756-1856* (2nd. ed. Dhaka Bangla Academy, 1977).
56. After the examination of the following published bibliography we reached a conclusion that *Sherpur Bibaran* is the first district history in Bengali. Examined bibliographies are: (a) Ali Ahmed, *Bangla Muslim Grantapanji* (Bibliography on Bengali works of the Muslims) Dhaka: Bangla Academy, 1985; (b) Md. Abdur Razzak, *Bangla Bhashaya Muslim Grantapanji 1400-1984 Vol.I-IV* (Bibliography on Bengli works of the Muslims 1400-1984 Vol.I-IV) Rajshahi: Mrs. Rokeya Khatun, 1988; (c) Dr. Saikat Asgar, "Bangladesher Anchalic Itihas Bishayak Rachana-o-prakashana (1833-1990)" *The Boi: A Monthly periodical on Books*, Vol. XXVI, no. 12, April, 1991, pp. 14-22 and (d) Muammed Habibullah Pathan "Bangladesher Anchalic Itihas Bishayak Prakashana (1849-1990) *The Boi: A Monthly periodical on Books*, Vol XXVII, no. 4, August, 1991, pp. 33- 36.
57. For details about the primary sources on the district history see. S. Islam, *Rural History of Bangladesh: A source study*, (Dacca: Tito Islam, 1977).
58. S. M. Ali, *History of Chittagong* (Dacca: Standared publishers Ltd. 1964), p. III.
59. For details about historical research method see Donald V. Gawronski, *History: Meaning and Method*, (Glenview: Scott, Foxesman and Company, 1969).
60. Mamtazur Rahman Tarafdar, *Itihas-O-Aytihasik* (History and Historians) (Dacca: Bangla Academy, 1981), p. 21.
61. A. C. Chowdhury author of *Srihatter Itibrita*; R. R. Shaha author of *Pabna Zillar Itihas*; P. C. Sen author of *Bagurar Itihas*; K. M. Meser author of *Rajshahir Itihas* and many author of district history wrote it freely.
62. K. M. Meser, *Rajshahir Itihas* (Shibgong: Syeda Hosne Ara Begum, 1965) p. III.
63. *The Daily Empire*, dated 20th November, 1911, Calcutta.

MUSLIM RESPONSE TO WESTERN EDUCATION IN COLONIAL BENGAL : A CASE STUDY OF BOGRA DISTRICT, 1850-1947.

- A. B. M. Shahjahan*

Historical research is not confined, at present, to the delineation of mere political events of any particular country or people, because conception regarding historical researches has undergone great changes with the passage of time. Scholars have now devoted their attention to the study of socio-economic and cultural life of the people. Hence, particular aspect or area studies are being preferred in modern time, because in this way it is possible to study a smaller area or particular aspect in greater depth. This paper is in conformity with this trend. The aim of this paper will be to ascertain the aptitude of the Muslims to western education in colonial Bengal especially those of Bogra district in the period under review on the basis of Hindu-Muslim students' enrolment in the different educational institutions and to some extent review its impact on the socio-economic spheres and political outlook of the people of the area.

Prior to the British supremacy in Bengal, the Muslims were the dominating political force in the country. The 'battle' of Plassey (1757) paved the way for coming of the British as a political power in Bengal. This body, however, was able to extend its sphere of influence over the whole of India in subsequent time. After the Sepoy Mutiny (1857), the last vestige of the Mughal rule ended. The British Crown assumed directly the ruling power of India by the charter of 1858. The Muslims, who held the sceptre of rule in their hands during the long and great Mughal period, were treated by the British as a subjugated nation - a nation who could in no circumstances, be allowed to raise their heads again.¹

To champion this, the British followed the policy of 'divide and rule' from the very beginning. They adopted policies favourable to the well-being and development of the Hindu community from the very inception of their rule. The Muslims were deprived of all sorts of facilities. Consequently, the Muslim society

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had fallen to the lowest depth of decadence and backwardness in the later part of the 19th century. The British initially did not bring any change in the prevailing educational system of the country. But this isolation of the British did not last long. Gradually they began to introduce English and western education in this country. It was Charles Grant, one of the British civilian who first advocated for immediate introduction of English education with a view to bring about a change in the notion and outlook of the natives for accepting western culture and western way of life.² The role of the christian missionaries was also noteworthy at this stage. It was the christian missionaries who took initiative at first in this respect to attract the attention of the local people to the Christianity as well as to the English language and education.³ It was, however, not till 1817 that a concerted attempt could be found for the diffusion of English education in Bengal, particularly in Calcutta and its immediate neighbourhood.⁴ The Hindus responded quickly to the new system of education.⁵ They even did not hesitate to send their boys to the missionary schools from the very outset.⁶ But the Muslims kept themselves aloof from it. They rather adhered to the traditonal system of education. Subsequently, the British took different steps for further development of English and western education in the country. A good number of educational institutions were set up by the British in and around Calcutta.⁷ But the activities of the missionaries in this respect were so great that the period between 1830 and 1857 has been regarded as the "age of mission schools"⁸ The defferent reactions of the Hindus and Muslims to English rule and English education profoundly affected the subsequent development of the two communities. While the Hindus had welcomed English rule with enthusiasm, the Muslims regarded it as a calamity. Their failure to adjust themselves to the new situation not only brought about a sharp deterioration in their position from which they took a long time to recover, but also widened the gulf between the two communities.⁹

The keen and growing interests of the Hindus for English education encouraged the British Government to set up in 1823 a 'General Committee of public Instruction' to devise polices for promoting education in the country. At that time, a serious controversy arose among the Orientalists and the Anglicists over the question of medium of instruction. At this stage some of leading Hindus like Raja Ram Mohan Roy put emphasis on the promotion of western education and English language.¹⁰ The controversy ended with the adoption of the famous minute of Lord Macauly, President of the General Committe of public Instruction, who advocated the cause of the Anglicists. Meanwhile, William Adam, who had been appointed to survey the existing institutions of Bengal and Bihar for the need of oriental and vernacular education, submitted his report at three stages i. e., on July 1, 1835;

December 23, 1835 and April 28, 1838. The last report embodied a concrete scheme of vernacular education and trenchantly exposed the absurdity of any scheme of national education through the medium of English.¹¹ But no attention was given to the main theme of the report. However, in spite of difference of opinion, English was made the medium of instruction in the institutions of western learning. To give utmost stress to this point, and for its, successful implementation, English came to be adopted as the official language in lieu of Persian from April 1, 1837.¹² The Muslims thus received a fatal blow since their Islamic oriented educational institutions and the system of religious education were shattered. Persian educated Muslims, who till now, monopolised powers and status in Government offices and courts, lost them. It closed the doors of further employment for the Muslim youths. The British Government then gradually resumed the estates of charitable trusts by which the madrasahs were maintained, and stopped grants to the teachers. The funds of educational institutions and religious endowments were either misappropriated or used to set up new schools. Muslim public schools could, therefore, no longer exist.¹³

For further development of English education, the General Committee of public Instruction was replaced in 1842 by the Council of Education, a more powerful body. The aim of this body was to formulate various rules and attract the attention of the people to higher education in large number. Then after the Education Despatch of 1854, a University in Calcutta and a number of first grade Government colleges were established in Dacca, Rajshahi, Comilla and Chittagong. As a result of British endeavours, the period between 1882-1902 witnessed a remarkable development of colleges not only in Calcutta but also in Mufussil towns.¹⁴

In spite of the increase in the number of educational institutions, the cost of education throughout the 19th century was very high. This was particularly applicable in case of higher learning. This was because of location of a limited number of higher educational institutions in the metropolitan towns. The parents of bulk of the students of rural areas were not in a position to bear educational expenses for their wards in the metropolitan towns. So, the English and higher education remained mainly within the grip of the rich, rising Hindu aristocrats and wealthy people of metropolitan cities and district towns. The vast majority of population of rural Bengal, and poor Muslim cultivators could not obtain English education due to economic hardship and Government's one eyed education policy. The high influx of Hindu students in comparison to Muslims and other in the educational institutions of Bengal and Assam in the following table bears its testimony.

Table-1¹⁵

	Hindu	Muslim	Others	Total
School	1,49,717	28,096	15,489	1,93,302
College	1,199	52	36	1,287
	1,50,916	28,148	15,525	1,94,589

It is seen from the above table that the Hindu students constituted 77.45%, the Muslims 14.54% (appro), and others 8.01% of the total number of students who attended the schools. Again in the colleges, the Hindu students constituted 96.16%, the Muslims 4.04% and the others 2.80% (appro) of the total number of students.

There is no denying the fact that historic forces, which worked against the Muslims since the loss of their sovereignty in Bengal, caused their fall from the heights of prosperity to the depths of poverty. But the pride of the Muslims and their apathy to adjust themselves to the changed environment of the time was also partly responsible for their backwardness and impoverishment.¹⁶ Moreover, the Muslim parents were not willing to send their boys to English schools because they could not shake off their prejudice and hate for the English language. They feared that their sons would be prone to Christian and Hindu culture and religion.¹⁷ In addition, the Hindu oriented secular education at schools, the high cost education and absence of Muslim teachers and sympathetic treatment to the Muslim boys in schools, stood in the way of the educational progress of the Muslims.¹⁸

The backwardness of the Muslims was also largely due to their ignorance of their historical and cultural traditions. The loss of their past traditions had caused their apathy to intellectual and political life.¹⁹ The system of education, that introduced under state patronage up to 1835, revealed the fact that the Muslims had very limited opportunity of acquiring it. Again, the early efforts of the Company to educate the people were made in the city of Calcutta where the Hindus predominated. The overwhelming Muslim majority districts of East and North Bengal were not given adequate attention. The policy of the Government was often faltering, and in most cases, it served to benefit the Hindus rather than the Muslims.²⁰ Consequently, in the Muslim majority districts of East and North Bengal, the state of education in the first half of the nineteenth century, appears to have been very disappointing.

But since late nineteenth century the situation began to change. The Muslims came forward for accepting western education. By this time, the policy of the Government also changed. It was in 1871-72, the attention of the Government was directed to the needs and requirements of the Muslims, when the provincial Government were directed by the India Government to give more systematic and emergent recognition to classical and vernacular languages of the Muslims, to appoint teachers in schools located in Muslim areas, to offer grant-in-aid liberally to Muslims to enable them to open schools and to give encouragement for the creation of a vernacular for the Muslims.²¹

The role of the Muslim leaders was also noteworthy in this regard. In the period of crisis of the Muslim in the nineteenth century, the Muslim community produced several leaders to guide them. They were Syed Ahmad Khan of Northern India, Nawab Abdul Latif and Syed Ameer Ali of Bengal. To improve the lot of the Muslims, they adopted two-fold programme of promoting loyalty to the rulers and propagating English education in the Muslim community. With the Beginning of the 20th century, the Muslim leaders seriously gave thought to the English education of their fellow brethren. Since the largest Muslim population in Bengal was in Northern and Eastern districts of the presidency, the Calcutta based higher education was beyond their reach. As a result, the great majority of the Hindu students got various academic degrees in comparison to the Muslims.²² So, the Muslim elites of this zone came forward with the intention of establishing a University in Dacca early in 1912, which officially started functioning in 1921. The establishment of Dacca University created much opportunity for the vast multitude in rural and urban areas of north and eastern Bengal to enter the threshold of higher learning.²³ The political organization of the Muslims and the sanction and implementation of quota system in jobs in the first half of the 20th century, encouraged the Muslims to a great degree in the advancement of education. By this time, the lot of the cultivators also improved due to world war I, which resulted in price hike of agricultural products and enable them to afford their wards' education. The following table shows gradual increase in the number of literates among the Muslims of Bengal during the first half of the 20th century.

Table-2²⁴

Literates per 1000 and aged 5 and over

Year	Male	Female
1901	77	2

Table-2²⁴Literates per 1000 and aged 5 and over

Year	Male	Female
1901	77	2
1911	93	3
1921	109	6
1931	116	17

The British occupation of Bengal had brought some major changes, first in the administrative machinery of the country and then in the economic and cultural aspects of her people. The period, beginning from mid nineteenth century and ending in 1947, was eventful for the people of Bengal. And the district of Bogra was not an exception to it. The changes introduced by the British left marks on the overall condition of the people of Bogra. Bogra, a small part of northern Bengal, was created district in 1821 in order to conduct British administration smoothly. The district is divided in to two parts i. e, eastern and western Bogra by two rivers namely the Karatoya and the Phuljur. It is interesting to note that the characteristics of each part of the district is different from the other in many points.

The eastern portion is smaller, containing somewhat less than two-fifths of the entire area of the district.²⁵ Consequently, the population of the western part was to be greater than that of the eastern part. Eastern Bogra, having a long coastal belt is a low land area; while the western Bogra consists of slightly high land than the eastern part and is generally above flood level. The soil of this part suitable for cultivation. The people living eastern Bogra have to struggle much against the natural calamity for their existence, and as such they are more hardworking and industrious in comparison to the people of western Bogra-who are to some extent ease-loving and lazy. This difference in the nature of the people of both the wings of Bogra has had reflection on the pattern of their cultures and attainments.

It has already been mentioned earlier as a result of introduction of English as official language in British India, English knowing persons were recruited for official jobs. Higher English schools offered courses on different modern subjects which were considered to be suitable to train up people for government jobs. Inhabitants of eastern Bogra had tremendous need for government jobs, since they were poverty stricken due to devastating flood and other natural calamities. This necessity led them to respond to the western education. In this way they qualified themselves for the government services in British India and advanced rapidly to western education. Institutions of western education were enthusiastically set up in various important places of eastern Bogra. It is interesting to note that almost 80%

of the total number of students of the different educational institutions of Bogra town were from eastern Bogra. Thus the percentage of literacy also increased in this part of the district. It may also be assumed that the needy students of eastern part would come to study in the educational institutions of western part because of the availability of food and lodging which the people of this zone generally offered. The picture is quite different in the western part of the district. In spite of the greater number of population the response of the people to western education was comparatively lower than that of the eastern part though there existed almost equal number of educational institutions in both the wings before thirties. This may be attributed to the physical feature of this part of the district as well as the very mentality of the local people. People of this part of the district had sufficient fertile cultivable land which were free from natural calamities. Hence, they fully depended on agriculture and did not feel any necessity of seeking government jobs. This was one of the important factors which made them less responsive towards western and English education. Consequently in comparison with the eastern part of the district endeavours for setting up institutions for English education in the western part of the district were not satisfactorily made before forties. Hence, the percentage of literacy was discouraging in this part of the district. Gradually changes took place in the notion and outlook of the people of the district. The people of this part in the district began to devote their attention to the western and English education. Steps were taken for setting up schools for western education in different places of this part of the district. The people showed their eagerness to learn English education with a view to have a government jobs and uplifting their social status. Then after forties of this century marked enthusiasm for English education was noticed among the people of the western part of the district. A good number of high schools were set up in various places in this part of the district. Thus the gap in the percentage of literacy was bridged up between the two parts of the district. But female education in rural areas of the district was not encouraged. Co-education was not allowed. The economically solvent and enlightened persons, if wanted, used to send their daughters and female wards to V. M. Girls school in Bogra town for English education. No difference could be found at present in regard to English education and percentage of literacy between eastern and western Bogra, since the situation has been all-together changed.

In total 42 high schools including one girls school were set up in Bogra district during the period under study. Some of the schools were government aided and the others unaided.²⁶ The following table gives a chronological picture of the development of English and western educational institutions in Bogra District.

Table-3²⁷**Bogra Town**

	<u>Name of Schools</u>	<u>Thana</u>	<u>Year of establishment</u>
1.	Bogra Zila School	Bogra	1853
2.	V. M. Girls' School	do	1869 (Started as vernacular school)
3.	Coronation Institution	do	1912
4.	Bogra Jubilee School	do	1935
5.	Bogra Municipal School	do	1946 (Startd as <u>Muktab</u> an Minor School in 1844)

Eastern Bogra

	<u>Name of School</u>	<u>Thana</u>	<u>Year of establishment</u>
1.	Noakhila P. N. School	Sariakandi	1901
2.	Sonatola Model School	Sonatola	1908
3.	Sukanpukur School	Gabtali	1914
4.	Sariakandi School	Sariakandi	1917
5.	Nagail K. K. School	Gabtali	1918
6.	Gossaibari School	Dhunat	1918
7.	Chachaitara Madla high school	Bogra	1931
8.	Mokamtola School	Shibganj	1938
9.	Dhonut N. U. School	Dhonut	1941
10.	Gabtali School	Gabtali	1942
11.	Durgahata School	Gabtali	1942
12.	Jorgachha School	Sariakandi	1942
13.	Daridah School	Shibganj	1946

Western Bogra

	<u>Name of School</u>	<u>Thana</u>	<u>Year of establishment</u>
1.	Sherpur D. J. School	Sherpur	1868
2.	Kalai M. K. School	Khetlal	1913
3.	Sunamukhi School	Akkelpur	1916

4. Khanjanpur School	Jaipurhat	1917
5. Talora Altaf Ali High School	Dupchachia	1918
6. Adamdighi School	Adamdighi	1918
7. Santahar B. P. School	Adamdighi	1929
8. Namuja School	Bogra	1931
9. Shibganj School	Shibganj	1931
10. Panchbihi Z. B. School	Panchbibi	1940
11. Khetlal School	Khetlal	1942
12. Santahar S. M. I. Academy	Adamdighi	1942
13. Nandigram School	Nandigram	1943
14. Gohail Islamia School	Bogra	1943
15. Nasratpur School	Adamdighi	1944
16. Jamalgonj School	Akkelpur	1944
17. Kahaloo School	Kahaloo	1944
18. Khalsa A. U. School	Adamdighi	1945
19. Demajani S. M. R. School	Bogra	1945
20. Gukul T. N. School	Bogra	1946
21. Bhatra K. C. School	Nandigram	1946
22. Dupchachia School	Dupchachia	1946 (Started as minor school in 1923)
23. Raikali School	Akkelpur	1946
24. Tilekpur School	Akkelpur	1947

It can be inferred from the above table-3 that in the second half of the nineteenth century, the progress of the establishment of schools and the Muslim response to western education was not encouraging in the district. This was in conformity with the Muslim tendency throughout Bengal when they stood aloof and kept their wards refrained from sending to English instruction schools to receive western education. But gradually the situation changed with the beginning of the 20th century. Propaganda of the Muslim leaders for English education contributed to a great extent in this regard. The Government also gradually changed

of the 20th century. Propaganda of the Muslim leaders for English education contributed to a great extent in this regard. The Government also gradually changed its attitude towards the Muslims and took favourable policies towards the interest of the Muslim community since late nineteenth century. All these had contributed largely to the establishment of English schools in Bogra.

Table-3 further shows that the establishment of schools in both the wings of Bogra took similar turn in the beginning of the 20th century. But the number rapidly increased in 1940s. The roll strength in the school began to increase considerably. This happened because of guardians' growing awareness regarding the importance of English as an official language which enabled an individual to find employment in the Government offices. It is to be noted here that even under the changed circumstances, orthodox Muslims did not allow their children to go to English schools but they preferred, 'reformed scheme madrasah education' in lieu of English education.

Since there was no College in the district before 1939, the students of Bogra, on completion of secondary stage of learning had to go to Rajshahi college; Presidency College, Calcutta; Carmichael College, Rangpur; or any other colleges of distant areas for higher education. But only zamindars and landed aristocrats could afford higher education since it was costly and confined in capital city and other district towns. Hence higher English education was confined to a limited few of the bulk of the population of the district. Gradually the people of the middle income group also felt the need of sending their wards to the college for higher education with possible minimum expense. To meet up need of the general people of the district, a college was established on 9 July 1939. Initially, it was an Intermediate level college. But ultimately in 1941 it became a degree college having honours in Economics, Arabic and Islamic History & culture. It was a recognized college of the Calcutta University. At that time Khan Bahadur Sir Azizul Haq, the speaker of the then Bengal Legislative Assembly was on the chair of the Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University. Subsequently he became a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council. This is why the college was named after him as Azizul Haq College, Bogra.²⁸

To analyse the response of the Muslims to western education in Bogra district, our study is based on five sampled schools -one in the heart of Bogra town, two in the eastern wing and two in the western wing of the district. The year-wise enrolment of the Hindu-Muslim students of the sampled school is presented in the following table. It is clear from the table that the district was predominantly a Muslim majority area and Muslim response to western and English

education showed an increasing trend in the period under review. It may be mentioned here that this trend in Muslim attitude brought, in subsequent periods, changes in ideas and institutions of the people of the district over the years.

Table-4²⁹

<u>Name of Institution</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Classes</u>	<u>Muslims</u>	<u>Hindus</u>	<u>Total</u>
1. Bogra Zila School	1943	VI-X	174	129	303
	1944	do	181	119	300
	1945	do	177	123	300
	1946	do	167	120	317
	1947	do	225	132	357
2. Noakhila P. N. High School	1918	VII-IX	118	20	138
	1919	VII-X	153	22	178
	1921	do	115	15	130
	1922	do	115	09	124
	1932	VIII-X	36	09	45
	1940	VI-IX	164	27	191
	1942	do	91	15	106
	1946	VI-X	137	18	155
	1947	VI-IX	130	18	148
3. Chachitara-Madla high School	1936	VI-VII & X	40	46	86
	1938	VI, VIII-X	61	30	91
	1946	VI, VIII&X	43	29	72
	1947	do	38	27	65
4. Kalai M.K. School	1929	VI-X	71	12	83
	1930	do	96	17	113

	1935	do	92	11	103
5. Talora Altaf Ali High School	1941	VI-X	54	30	84
	1942	do	66	55	111
	1943	do	86	38	124
	1944	do	88	46	134

Above data further shows that the number of Muslim students gradually increased in comparison with the Hindu students in the different educational institutions of the district with the passage of time. This may be attributed to the fact that, in Bengal the Hindus were mainly urban dwellers; While majority of the Muslims who were cultivator used to live in rural areas. So the Muslim boys after completion of primary education in rural areas generally flocked to the town for higher secondary education. The increasing trend in the number of the Muslim students after thirties of the present century may also be attributed to the leaving of the upper class Hindus for India and the introduction of quota system for government jobs that brought a change in the outlook of the Muslims and made them more responsive to western and English education. Even in the early part of the 20th century the Muslim boys constituted nearly half of the total number of students in the schools. This indicates increasing response and enthusiasm of the Muslim parents for English and western education for their children. It is also found in the table that some school were started as middle vernacular schools and *maktabs*. But subsequently, as a result of parents' demand for English and western education for their children, these schools were converted in to middle English schools.³⁰ The positive response towards western Education of the Muslims of Bogra worked for this development.

In addition, it is to be mentioned that the percentage of male and female literacy in the district was respectively 7.1 and 5 in 1881. According to the census report of 1901 it was found that 96 male and 3 female out of every thousand able to read and write. The percentage of literates in the district was, however, recorded as 8.55 in 1921, 9.31 in 1931 and 15.75 in 1941.³¹ This gradual increase in the rate of literacy undoubtedly bears the testimony of Muslim response to western and English education in a colonial Bengal district, Bogra.

Our study reveals that initially there was a difference in attitude towards western and English education the people of eastern and western part of Bogra. But it gradually subsided with the passage of time. However, from the beginning of the present century the people of the whole district started showing keen interest in educating their wards to make them capable for suitable government jobs and thereby elevating their status in the society. Ultimately, a great enthusiasm was marked by the middle and lower middle class people of the district for western and English education. The socio-economic as well as educational and cultural changes brought about by the British led to the emergence of a new middle class in course of time in the district. Gradually a new professional group like doctors, engineers, teachers, journalists and writers emerged from among the middle class. Many of them spent much of their time as social workers. This professional group started formation of organizations to realize their professional demands. Subsequently, organizational strength of this group got momentum and they became pioneer in political field as well. This development in Bogra district in conjunction with similar development throughout Bengal and other parts of British India led to the emergence of the nationalist movement which ultimately brought independence of the country from colonial rule in 1947.³² The role of the educated and enlightened Muslims of Bogra district can never be denied in this context. So, the educational development in the period under study will remain noteworthy in the history of the district of Bogra.

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NATURE OF MORTGAGES IN THREE VILLAGES OF BENGAL, 1920-1947

- Md. Wazed Ali *

Introduction

Mortgages are a security for loans given by mortgagors to mortgagees. Mortgages may be of various types with varying degrees of severity to mortgagors. They may be interpreted as an index of either prosperity or poverty of the areas where lands are mortgaged. They may demand different rates of interest. Very few writers have dealt with the various aspects of mortgages. Mukherjee, writing on the six villages of Bengal for the years 1942-45 and the Dacca University Socio-Economic Survey Board, dealing with East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) for the year 1956, simply mentioned various types of mortgages.¹ They did not describe the mortgages in details nor did they analyse the relative severity of each type of mortgages to mortgagors, mortgages as an index of economic conditions and the rates of interest demanded by them. The present article deals with the description of the various types of mortgages, types of mortgages with varying degrees of severity to mortgagors, mortgages as an index of prosperity and poverty and the rate of interest in them in the villages of Bacharigaon, Sikarpur and Jharira in the district of Rajshahi (Bengal) in the period 1920-1947.

Nature of the Villages

Bacharigaon, a village of Naogaon *thana* of Rajshahi (now Naogan District since 1980) district, was a rich village, Sikarpur, a village of Mahadevpur *thana* of the same district, was a village of medium fertility, and Jharira, a village of the same *thana* of the same district, was a poor village.²

Sources for the data

The analysis of the various aspects of mortgages is based on an examination of a sample of 470 mortgage deeds, copies of which are available in the record room of the District Registrar of Deeds, Rajshahi, Bengal. Of 470 deeds 211 are from Bacharigaon, 138 from Sikarpur and 121 from Jharira. In Bacharigaon 27.23 per cent, in Sikarpur 93.23 per cent and in Jharira 84.62 per cent of the

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deeds have been studied. The selection of samples was random except that some care was taken to achieve a scatter of data by size-by avoiding collecting too many samples of similar size in each year.³

Types of mortgages

Five types of mortgages were available in the villages of Bacharigaon, Sikarpur and Jharira during 1920-1947: *rehan*, *sud sangstha*, *khai khalasi*, *sartiya kabla* and *rehani kistibandi*. *Rehan* and *rehani kistibandi* were simple mortgages and *sud sangstha*, *khai khalasi* and *sartiya kabla* usufructuary mortgages. Simple mortgages provided for easy redemption. According to their provisions land remained under the possession of mortgagors. Usufructuary mortgages could not be redeemed easily and provided for the transfer of land from the possession of mortgagors to that of mortgagees who enjoyed the crops as interest or interest and principal. The following analysis discusses the nature of each in order of their importance in the three villages.

Rehan (simple mortgage)

A *Rehan*⁴ was economically most advantageous for a mortgagor. Under *Rehans* mortgaged lands remained in the possession of mortgagors. As a result, lands, which are the principal sources of income, were in no way affected. Secondly, there is considerable flexibility about redemption of *rehans*. The redemption of a *rehan* depended upon the choice of the mortgagor. He was to fix the time of redemption in the mortgage deed. Redemption could be made at any time after the deed's execution although the specific time limit was to be recorded, thus ensuring the mortgagor's option to redeem. For example, one *rehan* provided for its redemption in the third month of its execution,⁵ another in the fourth month⁶ and a third in the fifth month.⁷ In all these cases the mortgagors could redeem their mortgages before the expiry of the due date. Thus loans under *rehans* were of a very short-term nature. As a result, as soon as mortgagors could accumulate money, they could repay the principal and interest and release the land from the mortgage.

Rehans provided for interest in cash as against in kind charged under usufructuary mortgages. Interest was charged either in paisas per Rupee per month or annas per Rupee per month or in Rupees per cent per month. For small loans, interest was charged in paisas and annas per Rupee per month and for large amount of loans in Rupees per cent per month. For example, an interest of two and a half paisas per Rupee per month (46.88 per cent per annum) was charged for a loan of Rupees 50,⁸ that of half an anna per Rupee per month (37.50 per cent per annum) for a loan of Rupees 60,⁹ and that of Rupees 2 per cent per month (24 per cent per annum) for a loan of Rupees 500.¹⁰

Table 1

Showing the proportion of rehans, sud sangsthas, khai khalasis, sariya kablas and rehani kistibandis to total sample mortgage deeds in the villages of Bacharigaon, sikarpur and Jharira in the period 1920-1947.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Villages & p. c. of	Total no. of sampled mortgages	No. & p. c. of sud rehans	No. & p. c. of khai sangsthas	No. & p. c. of khalasis	No. & p. c. of sariya kablas	No. & p. c. of rehani kistibandis
Three villages together 100%	1066 44%	465 25%	266 22%	241 6%	61 3%	33
Bacharigaon	(211) 775 100%	(102) 375 48%	(43) 158 20%	(44) 162 21%	(14) 51 7%	(8) 29 4%
Sikarpur (138)	(39) 149 100%	(52) 42 28%	(37) 56 38%	(8) 40 27%	(2) 9 6%	2 1%
Jharira (121)	(41) 142 100%	(44) 48 34%	(33) 52 36%	(1) 39 27%	(2) 1 1%	2 2%

* In this Table one hundred per cent figures have been worked out from figures obtained from samples.

Figures in the bracket are derived from samples (27.23% in Bacharigaon, 93.23% in Sikarpur and 84.62% in Jharira). The unbracketed figures are 100 per cent worked out from sample

Source: Calculated from 470 mortgage deeds of the villages of Bacharigaon, Sikarpur and Jharira registered in Naogaon and Mahadevpur Sub-Registry offices in the period 1920-1947 (District Registrar's Records).

The loans under *rehans* were short-term loans, but when mortgagors failed to repay loans according to their pledge they were to pay compound interest. In such cases interest was compounded after each year. But a few *rehans* also stipulated that interest be compounded after every six months.¹¹ When a mortgagor failed to redeem his mortgage according to his promise, interest was compounded at the first month of the next Bengali year.

Table 1 (column 3) shows that in the three villages together *rehans* constitute 44 per cent of the total mortgages. There are inter-village variations. Bacharigaon had more *rehans* (48 per cent) than Sikarpur (28 per cent) and Jharira (34 per cent). Bacharigaon could have more *rehans* because it was relatively prosperous. It is a common economic phenomenon that banks flourish in prosperous areas more than in poor areas. Table 2 (column 2) shows that loans by banks were more important in Bacharigaon (32 per cent of the amount lent) than in Sikarpur and Jharira (2 per cent and 9 per cent respectively). All bank loans were *rehans*.

Table 3 shows that banks gave 29 per cent of *rehans*. It is noteworthy that in the villages under study bank rates were lower than the rates charged by private lenders.¹² Because banks were an important source of credit in Bacharigaon and lending there was more competitive than in the other two villages. This may explain the preponderance of *rehans*.

Table 2

Showing the proportion of loans made and the proportion of money lent by banks, non-peasants, and peasants to total loans and total amount of money lent in the villages of Bacharigaon, Sikarpur and Jharira during 1920-1947.

Villages	1		2		3		4	
	Total loans	Total amount of money lent in Rupees	Total loans by banks	Total amount of money lent by banks in Rupees	Total loans by non-peasants	Total amount of money lent by non-peasants in Rupees	Total loans by peasants	Total amount of money lent by peasants in Rupees
Bacharigaon	(211) 775 100%	(27,470) 100,881 100%	(30) 110 14%	(8,712) 31,994 32%	(18) 66 9%	(3,064) 11,252 11%	(163) 599 77%	(15,694) 57,635 57%
Sikarpur	(138) 148 100%	(21,374) 22,926 100%	(2) 2 1%	(350) 376 2%	(18) 19 13%	(2,771) 2,972 13%	(118) 127 86%	(18,253) 19,578 85%
Jharira	(121) 143 100%	(11,941) 14,111 100%	(4) 5 3%	(1,025) 1,211 9%	(7) 8 6%	(737) 871 6%	(119) 130 91%	(10,179) 12,029 85%

* In this Table one hundred per cent figures have been worked out from figures obtained from samples.

Figures in the bracket are derived from samples (27.23% in Bacharigaon, 93.23% in Sikarpur and 84.62% in Jharira). The unbracketed figures are 100 per cent worked out from samples.

Source: Calculated from 470 mortgage deeds of the villages of Bacharigaon, Sikarpur and Jharira registered in Naogaon and Mahadevpur Sub-Registry offices in the period 1920-1947 (District Registrar's Records).

Table 3*

The proportion of rehans which came from banks to total rehans in Bacharigaon village.

(1) Total rehans	(2) <i>rehans</i> which came from banks	(3) <i>rehans</i> which came from non-peasants and peasants
(102)	(30)	(72)
374	110	264
100%	29%	71%

* In this Table one hundred per cent figures have been worked out from 27.23 per cent samples.

Figures in the bracket are derived from samples. The unbracketed figures are 100 per cent worked out from samples.

Source: Worked out from 211 mortgage deeds of Bacharigaon village.

Sud sangstha

To a mortgagor a *sud sangstha* mortgage¹³ was less advantageous than a *rehan*. Under *sud sangstha* mortgages a mortgagor surrendered the mortgaged land to his mortgagee. The borrower allowed the lender to cultivate this land with the lender's own ploughs and labour and to enjoy the full crop. Thus the mortgagor had to lose full crops of the mortgaged land for at least one year.

Sud sangstha mortgages provided for the payment of interest in kind, i. e., by giving up the crops of the mortgaged land. This mode of paying interest could be a disadvantage to creditors when prices of agricultural products were falling. However, if the crop from the mortgaged land was food crop they could consume this thereby minimising the disadvantage.

Under *sud sangsthas* mortgages would continue to take the crops of the mortgaged land as interest until the principal had been repaid in cash. *Sud sangstha* mortgage was redeemable after the harvesting of one crop.

Table 1 (column 4) shows that in the three villages together *sud sangstha* mortgages constitute 25 per cent of the total mortgages. There are inter- village

variations. Sikarpur and Jharira had more *sud sangsthas* (38 per cent and 36 per cent respectively) than Bacharigaon (20 per cent). The preponderance of *sud sangsthas* in Sikarpur and Jharira is an index of their relative poverty. Table 2 shows that bank loans were an insignificant factor in these two villages. As a result, lending was less competitive in Sikarpur and Jharira than in Bacharigaon. Hence the preponderance of this harder mortgage type.

khai khalasi (mortgage providing for payment of interest and principal by taking crops of the mortgaged land)

For mortgagors *khai khalasis*¹⁴ could be disastrous. Mortgagors had to endure complete loss of income from their mortgage lands for a period of time, sometimes very long, although they had to repay nothing for the redemption of these mortgages. The continuous loss of income would impose a great strain on their household. Moreover, there was no flexibility for their redemption. Mortgagors had to wait for the stipulated time before they regained possession of their land.

Under *khai khalasi* mortgages interest as well as principal was repaid in the form of crops grown on the mortgaged land. Like *sud sangstha* mortgages, *khai khalasi* mortgages made provision for transferring the mortgaged land to the possession of mortgagees, cultivating it with their own ploughs and labour and taking its entire crop.

Under *khai khalasi* mortgagees were to take the crops as payment of interest and principal for definite periods of time (see Table 4). At the end of the stipulated periods the mortgage was redeemed.

Table 4 shows that the duration of *khai khalasis* varied from one to twenty five years. But the most common durations were between three and ten years. The average length of *khai khalasis* was 7 years. The duration depended on the size of the land mortgaged and the amount of money borrowed. When the amount of money borrowed was small and the area of land mortgaged large, the duration was short. Conversely, when the amount of money borrowed was large and the area mortgaged small the duration was long.

Table 1 (column 5) shows that in the three villages together *khai khalasis* constitute 22 per cent of the total mortgages. There are inter-village variations. Sikarpur and Jharira had more *khai khalasis* (27 per cent each) than Bacharigaon (21 per cent). The preponderance of *khai khalasis* is, like that of *sud sangsthas*, an index of the relative poverty of the villages of Sikarpur and Jharira.

Table 4

The durations of 114 khai khalsi mortgages of the villages Bacharigaon, Sikarpur and Jharira in the period 1920-1947.

(1)	(2)	(3)
Durations of <i>Khai Khalasis</i> in years	No. of <i>Khai khalasis</i> in each duration	Average length
1 year	3	7 years
2 years	5	
3 years	11	
4 years	3	
5 years	15	
6 years	8	
7 years	17	
8 years	11	
9 years	16	
10 years	11	
11 years	1	
12 years	5	
13 years	1	
14 years	1	
15 years	4	
18 years	1	
25 years	1	
Total <i>khai khalasis</i>	114	

Source: Worked out from 114 *khai khalasi* mortgages from among 470 mortgage deeds.

Sartiya kabla (mortgage by conditional sale)

For mortgagors *sartiya kablās*¹⁵ were a dangerous type of mortgage, as it involved the eventual sale out of lands to the mortgagee if the mortgagor could not repay the loans by the time specified in the deed.

Sartiya kablās, like *sud sangsthas* and *khai khalasis*, provided for the transfer of the mortgaged land to the possession of mortgagees, its cultivation with their own ploughs and labour and taking of all the crop.

Under *sartiya kablās* mortgagors were given a definite period of time within which they had to repay the principal in cash. During this period mortgagees would take all the crops of the mortgaged land as interest. If mortgagors failed to repay the debts within the stipulated time the mortgage deeds would automatically become sale deeds. Of course, if they paid off the loans within the period the mortgages were redeemed.

Table 1 (column 5) shows that in the three villages together *sartiya kablās* constitute only 6 per cent of the total mortgages. There are inter-villages variations. Bacharigaon had more *sartiya kablās* (7 per cent) than sikarpur and Jharira (6 per cent and 1 per cent respectively). The greater percentage of *sartiya kablās* in relatively prosperous village of Bacharigaon cannot be explained satisfactorily. However, it can be said that even in the richer village there might be occasions for emergency borrowing such as sudden deaths, flood or drought and on such occasions peasants would have to agree to take out whatever type of mortgage was offered by mortgagees.

Rehani kistibandi (mortgage for paying debt by instalments)

For a mortgagor a *rehani kistibandi* mortgage¹⁶ was an advantageous way of clearing off old debts. As explained below he did not have to hand over mortgaged land to the mortgagee nor did he have to pay any interest. This mortgage thus did not impose any additional economic strain on the mortgagor, although it obviously only involved peasants who could not pull themselves out of indebtedness by any other means.

Rehani kistibandi mortgage were the means by which old debts, usually heavy (secured or unsecured), were either resecured or secured. Mortgages of this type were executed under two conditions. If a debt was secured by any type of mortgage and if it had grown too big to be repaid at one time *rehani kistibandi* was resorted to. Similarly, when an unsecured debt grew too heavy to be paid off by one instalment this mortgage was executed. It was used to enable the mortgagor to

clear off his debt by easy annual instalments. For example, one mortgagor owed to a mortgagee a sum of Rupees 230. The *rehani kistibandi* mortgage deed provided for repayment by eight annual instalments, one of Rupees 34 and seven of Rupees 28 each.¹⁷

A *rehani kistibandi* mortgage was redeemed when the last instalment had been paid. The lands mortgaged remained in possession of mortgors throughout.

Table 1 (column 7) shows that in the three villages together *rehani kistibandi* mortgages constitute only 3 per cent of the total mortgages. There are, as always, inter-village variations. Bacharigaon had a higher percentage of *rehani kistibandi* (4 per cent) than Sikarpur and Jharira (1 per cent and 2 per cent respectively). The preponderance of *rehani kistibandi* in Bacharigaon is indirectly an indicator of its prosperity. Credit was more readily available in this village because of its being prosperous. Hence its peasants got themselves into debt more readily and as a result loans had to be rescheduled.

Rates of interest contained in mortgages

Most writers on rural credit in India have discussed rates of interest for secured (mortgage) debts as well as unsecured debts, but their sources for both kinds of debts were either interviews or report of the district and settlement officer and Banking Enquiry Committees. These sources have their drawbacks. The interviewees might overstate rates if they were borrowers to show that the rates were high and understate them if they were lenders to show that the rates were low. The official estimates of interest rates for secured as well as unsecured loans might also overstate or understate rates, because these were based on interviews, rumours and hearsay rather than on the results of any detailed enquiry based on mortgage deeds or other reliable documentary sources. The present analysis is based on mortgage deeds.

We have already seen that *rehans* provided for interest in cash, *rehani kistibandi* did not provide for any interest at all and *sud sangsthas*, *khai khalasis* and *sartiya kablās* provided for interest in kind via the loss of the crops of the mortgaged lands. Unfortunately, interest in kind, as provided by usufructuary mortgages, cannot be calculated in cash terms. To convert interest in kind to an equivalent interest in cash requires information about the kind of crops grown on the mortgaged lands, the yield per acre and prices of particular crops. This type of

information is unavailable for the villages under study. The following analysis, of necessity, rests on *rehan* mortgages only.

Table 5 contains the different rates of interest provided by the 182 *rehans* which I found in mortgage records. The Table based on secured loans only shows that there existed 19 different rates. The highest rate was 75 per cent and the lowest 10.94 per cent. It is significant that the lowest rates were charged by the banks.¹⁸ The lowest annual rates charged by private lenders were 12 per cent. However, the most common rates were between 24 per cent and 37.50 per cent. The median rate was 36 per cent.

Table 5

The rates of interest contained in 182 rehans with the number of mortgage deeds containing each rate, the average amount of each loan and the average area mortgaged per each loan of Rupees 100 in the villages of Bacharigaon, Sikarpur and Jharira in the period 1920-1947.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Rates of interest per cent per annum	No. of mortgages	Average amount of each loan in Rupees	Average area of land mortgaged in acres per loan of Rupees 100
75.00	5	27.00	1.70
56.25	8	38.38	2.68
48.00	3	103.00	1.35
46.87	2	18.50	4.11
42.00	3	59.67	0.97
37.50	59	54.58	3.50
36.00	16	131.12	0.91
33.00	2	105.00	2.20
30.00	15	129.40	1.44
27.00	5	102.00	3.02
24.00	22	227.41	1.23
21.00	4	228.25	2.11

19.00	1	227.00	0.07
18.00	5	157.40	2.67
15.60	2	342.50	0.61
15.00	2	399.00	0.95
13.50	1	1300.00	1.90
12.00	1	1000.00	1.29
10.94	26	257.69	0.54
Total-	19	182	

Source: Compiled from 182 *rehans* from among 470 mortgage deeds.

The charging of higher or lower rates under *rahans* does not seem to be accidental, for one can detect a relationship between the size of the loan and the rate of interest. Table 5 shows that generally the smaller the size of the loan the higher the rate of interest. The Bengal Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee also found a correlation between the smaller size of loans and higher rates of interest.¹⁹ Table 5 shows that there does not seem to have been any relationship between the amount of land mortgaged and the lower rate of interest.

It is worth- comparing the rates of interest on the *rehans* studied by me with those mentioned by Darling for Bengal in the 1920s and 1930s and those quoted by the Bengal Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee. Darling's work was on the Panjab, but he compared the rates of interest between the provinces. He noted, presumably using official sources, that in Bengal the rates of interest on secured loans²⁰ ranged from 8 per cent to 12 per cent, and on unsecured loans from 9 per cent to 18 per cent for respectable clients and from 18.75 per cent to 37.50 per cent for agriculturists.²¹ While we do not know what data this information is based on, it was noteworthy that the rates on secured loans as mentioned by Darling are much lower than the rates on *rehans* as found in the villages. Even Darling's rates on unsecured loans for agriculturists are nearly the same as those of *rehans* in the villages. This suggests that the calculations which Darling used must have been underestimates. As Table 5 shows the most common rates on *rehans* in the villages ranged from 24 per cent to 37.50 per cent.

The Bengal Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee quoted a large variety of interest rates which prevailed in each district of Bengal. The usual rates of interest on secured and unsecured loans in Bengal varied from 10 per cent to 300 per cent and in the district of Rajshahi from 18.75 per cent to 75 per cent.²² However, the

committee did not estimate the usual rates on secured loans separately. Hence the committee's rates are not comparable with those of the present study.

It is seen that interest on *rehans* in the villages studied were high though they were the easy types of mortgages. What caused these rates to be so high? Three writers have dealt with the question on high interest rates-Islam²³ (on Bengal) Darling²⁴ (on India in general and the Punjab in particular) and Bottomley²⁵ (on underdeveloped countries). Although these writers were concerned with the causes of high interest rates in all kinds of loans and the present article can analyse the *rehan* loans, their hypotheses about the nature of interest rates are illuminating.

Darling and Bottomley stated two factors which were responsible for high rates of interest: premium for risk and administrative costs. Islam added a third one, monopoly profits. Islam, Darling and Bottomley argued that there was a high risk in lending to a borrower with inadequate or no security. Money-lenders feared that they would fail to recover a part of their principal because of default by borrowers, and to compensate for the loss they charged higher rates of interest. Darling and Bottomley also contended that a high cost was incurred by money-lenders in administering small loans and to meet this they charged high rates of interest. Islam went even further and argued that money-lenders had a monopoly of credit in rural areas and therefore could charge a higher rate than was otherwise possible.

Evidence from the villages of Bacharigaon, Sikarpur and Jharira compels us to reject all the hypotheses about the causes of the high rates of interest. The hypothesis that inadequate security was a cause of high interest rates does not apply to the villages. All *rehan* loans were secured by the best security of all- land.

The second reason, that administrative costs were high, is equally unconvincing. Small loans might incur high administrative cost for professional money-lenders who had offices, clerks and peons. But my research on the villages under study shows that lenders came from all categories of peasants rich, medium and poor²⁶ and none of them maintained offices and clerks. Thus creditors incurred no costs when giving and collecting loans.

Islam's argument that monopoly profits were a third element in higher interest rates also seems doubtful. He argues that the Bengal Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee show that interest rates were lower where credit co-operatives were formed. He claims that this indicates that "the failure of the regular financial establishments to fulfil certain essential functions left the money-lenders in a strong position to take advantage of the monopoly control they enjoyed of a scarce factor

(capital) in the rural areas".²⁷ But my research on the three villages shows that money-lenders did not enjoy monopoly control of credit, even if using Islam's extraordinarily wide definition of money-lenders, which includes not only professional money-lenders, but other occupations such as landlords, merchants and pensioners.²⁸

In the village of Bacharigaon bank lending was important, supplying 32 per cent of the money lent (Table 2) and bank lending was also available in the other two villages although on a very limited scale.²⁹ So, 'regular financial' institutions did have a role, but interest rates were still high. Even more important however is that in all three villages the bulk of loans did not come from money-lenders, but from other peasants, who were not mentioned as a part of Islam's wide definition.³⁰

Thus even it could be shown that money-lenders, as defined by Islam, were a coherent group which acted in concert in order to command monopoly profits, as a group they controlled less than half of the total mortgage credit in the three villages³¹ and it does not seem meaningful to talk in terms of monopoly control of credit by money-lenders.

That is not to deny that there was a relative scarcity of money in some rural areas which may account for differences in interest rates but the explanation may rest on a simple supply and demand analysis- it is not necessary to claim that it is an indication of monopoly control.

Conclusion

Broadly in the villages under study there were easy or simple mortgages and hard or usufructuary mortgages. The former had a preponderance in Bacharigaon and the latter in Sikarpur and Jharira. This implies the economic condition of the villages. The easier the mortgages the prosperous the villages. Conversely, the harder the mortgages the poorer the villages. The rates of interest contained in simple mortgages were high. This was not due to premium for risk, administrative cost or monopoly control. In British Bengal agricultural capital was really scarce. This accounted for the higher rates of interest. Even today the situation has not changed. Bangladesh is still a capital poor country, especially in the rural sector of the economy.³² As a result, as before, for borrowing money peasants are resorting to mortgage-those of richer areas mainly simple mortgage and those of poorer areas mainly hard mortgages.*

REFERENCES AND NOTES

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- 1 See R. K. Mukharjee, *Six villages of Bengal* (Bombay: Popular Prokashan, 1971), pp. 217-218; Dacca University Socio-Economic survey Board, *Report on the survey of Rural Credit and Rural Unemployment in East Pakistan* (Dacca: Dacca University Socio-Economic Survey Board, 1958), p.180.
- 2 For details about the nature of villages see M. W. Ali, "Mortgages in Three villages of Bengal, 1920-1947: A Study of the Trend of Mortgages and Causes of Fluctuations", *Journal of the Institute of Bangladesh Studies*, vol. XII, 1989, p. 30.
- 3 For details about the sampling technique see M. W. Ali, "Rural Credit and Land Transfers in Three villages of Bengal, 1920-1947", Unpublished Ph. D. thesis, University of Melbourne, 1986, pp. 58-64.
- 4 For a sample of a *rehan* see mortgage deed no. 802 of 1920 of Naogaon Sub-Registry Office Register vol. No. 5, pp. 12-13 (Records of the District Registrar of Deeds, Rajshahi hereafter District Registrar's Records).
- 5 See *Ibid.*
- 6 See mortgage deed no. 152 of 1923 of Naogaon Sub-Registry Office, Register vol. No. 5, pp. 16-18 (District Registrar's Records).
- 7 See mortgage deed no. 5739 of 1924 of Naoganon sub-Registry Office, Register vol. No. 55, pp. 98-100 (District Reigistrar's Records).
- 8 See mortgage deed no. 538 of 1919 of Naogaon Sub-Registry Office, Register vol. No. 7, pp. 227-229 (District Registrar's Records).
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- 10 See mortgage deed no. 4650 of 1925 of Naogaon Sub-Registry Office, Register vol. No. 47, pp. 104-106 (District Registrar's Records).
- 11 See, for instance, mortgage deed no. 4146 of 1923 of Naogaon Sub-Registry Office, Register vol. No. 40, pp. 108-109 (District Registrar's Records).

- 12 See p. 10.
- 13 For a sample of a *sud sanghstha* mortgage see mortgage deed no. 4559 of 1920 of Naogaon Sub-Registry Office, Register vol. No. 43, pp. 233-234 (District Registrar's Records).
- 14 For a sample of a *khai khalasi* mortgage see mortgage deed no. 765 of 1941 of Mahadevpur Sub-Registry Office, vol. 14, pp. 179-180 (District Registrar's Records).
- 15 For a sample of a *sartiya kabla* mortgage see mortgage deed no. 2441 of 1933 of Naogaon Sub-Registry Office, Register vol. No. 28 pp. 43-44 (District Registrar's Records).
- 16 For a sample of a *rehari kistibandi* mortgage see mortgage deed no. 2117 of 1932 of Naogaon Sub-Registry Office, Register vol. No. 22, pp. 283-285 (District Registrar's Records).
- 17 See *Ibid.*
- 18 All the 26 mortgages providing for 10.94 per cent interest, as shown Table 5, were given by banks.
- 19 See *Report of the Bengal Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee*, 1929/30 (Calcutta: Bengal Govt. press, 1930), vol. 1, para 413.
- 20 While referring to secured loans in Bengal, Darling did not specify that these were simple mortgage loans. Probably these were loans on simple mortgages, called in Bengal *rehans*.
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- 26 For details see M. W. Ali, "Rural Credit and Land Transfers in Three Villages of Bengal", *op. cit* Chapter III.

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28. *Ibid.*, p. 158, footnote 3.
- 29 See Table 2.
- 30 M. W. Ali, "Rural Credit and Land Transfers in Three Villages of Bengal". *op. cit* Chapter III.
- 31 See *Ibid.*
- 32 A. Ahmed, "Issues and problems o Rural Credit programming and Allocation in Bangladesh", a paper presented at the conference on Data Requirments for the Rural Development Planning in the Asian Tropics held on Nov. 9-12, 1981 at Sardang, Selangor, Malaysia (organized by the Faculty of Resource Economics and Agribusiness, UPM & Development Studies Centre, ANU), p. 1.

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Regional Disparities in Distribution of Bank Branches in Bangladesh: An Analysis of Possible Causes and Remedies

- M. Zainul Abedin *

1. Introduction

When a large share of the business of a given industry is concentrated in a few pockets of a country, the situation is usually stated as a case of regional imbalance. Due to legacy of monarchy and colonialism, the past efforts of development in most of the developing countries were unplanned and concentrated in a few cities alone. This led to unbalanced growth of their economics and resulted in skewed distribution of different industries including banking industry. Bangladesh inherited a similar imbalance as she belongs to the group of developing nations of the world.

The practice of modern banking began in 1846 in the present regions (old districts) of Bangladesh with the establishment of Dhaka Bank. The first year (1901) of the twentieth century witnessed only 25 branches of a growing private banking industry. This number rose to 668 in 1946 and then went down to only 148 in 1950 because of closing of business by non-Muslim bankers who migrated to India before and after the partition of 1947. Under private ownership of the banks, the total number of Commercial Banks' branches increased to 1042 in 1970. For various reasons all the banks except the foreign ones operating in Bangladesh were nationalised in 1972 just after the country was liberated on 16 December, 1971.

One of the objectives of nationalization of the banks was to better serve the country sides of Bangladesh economy and to remove regional banking imbalances. Since then bank branches were expanded in a big way and their number swelled to 4085 in June, 1986. As a revision of policy the Government of Bangladesh allowed local private banks to operate in a limited way since 1982 and it denationalized two public banks namely, Uttara and Pubali. By 1992 the number of bank branches rose to over five thousand.

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Past and recent experiences of the operation of private banks let many to believe that the banks under private ownership do not largely serve the interest of majority of the population of Bangladesh. This led the author to frame a hypothesis: the banks under private ownership increase regional banking disparities while those under public ownership mitigate the same. To test this hypothesis the year 1970 was taken as a base year when the banks were under private ownership and the year 1986 was considered as a reporting year for comparison with the base year, since most part of the banking industry was under public ownership in the reporting year. Mere proof of this hypothesis does not indicate anything if the related causes and possible remedies are not high lighted here. So some light is thrown on these aspects also.

2. Findings

Table 1 displays the disparity indices as well as the deviations of the disparity indices from the national average. The disparity index (DI) is calculated by raising the national average number of bank branches per million of population to 100 and then expressing the regional average number of bank branches per million of population as its percentage. The index of variation (IOV) is defined as the difference between the highest and the lowest DIs. But the index of variation (IOV) is also defined here as the national average (index) of 100 minus the disparity index of each region. The IOV determines the extent to which a region is above or below the national average. The plus sign indicates above and the minus sign signifies below the national average position of the regions concerned.* A comparison between the IOV of 1970 and that of 1986 clearly shows the declining trend of imbalances in the distribution of bank branches in different regions of Bangladesh. The alarmingly high IOV of 218 measured by deducting the lowest DI of 30 for Tangail from the highest DI of 248 for Dhaka region shows wide imbalance in 1970. On the contrary, the IOV of 111 attained by deducting the lowest DI of 57 for Mymensingh from the highest DI of 168 for the region of Dhaka exhibits an encouraging reduction in the regional imbalance in 1986.

A comparison between the divisional and regional disparity indices reveals that the inter-regional imbalances were higher than the inter divisional imbalances during 1970-86. The IOV between the top Division (Chittagong with DI of 119) and the bottom Division (Rajshahi with DI of 73) in 1970 was only 46 (119-73) as against 218 (248-30) between the top and bottom regions in the same year. Table I makes it clear that the rank positions of the Divisions remained unaltered during 1970-86. Chittagong Division with the DI of 112 remained on top position in 1986, and Rajshahi Division with the DI of 88 stood at the bottom in the same year.

TABLE-1: Disparity Indices (DI) and Indices of Variation (IOV) in the Availability of Bank Branches per Million of population in Each Region in Comparison with the National Average During 1970-86.

Region and Division	1970			1986		
	No of bank branches per million of popn.	Disparity Index (DI)	IOV From N. A.	NO. Of bank branches per million of popn.	Disparity Index	IOV from N. A.
	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Chittagong	32.93	219	+119	59.08	149	+49
2. Chittagong Hill Tract	24.00	159	+59	63.33	159	+59
3. Comilla	12.50	83	-17	32.10	81	-19
4. Noakhali	9.68	64	-36	38.89	98	-2
5. Sylhet	16.00	106	+6	47.16	119	+19
i) Chittagong Division	17.92	119	+19	44.64	112	+12
6. Dhaka	37.26	248	+148	66.95	168	+68
7. Faridpur	5.38	36	-64	25.71	65	-35
8. Mymensingh	8.08	54	-46	22.62	57	-43
9. Tangail	4.50	30	-70	32.41	82	-18
ii) Dhaka Division	17.61	117	+17	40.97	103	+3

10. Barisal	8.95	59	-41	29.27	74	-26
11. Jessore	11.29	75	-25	30.08	76	-24
12. Khulna	17.35	115	+15	44.90	113	+13
13. Kustia	17.06	113	+13	44.07	111	+11
14. Patuakhali	5.33	35	-65	27.27	69	-31
iii) Khulna Division	12.22	81	-19	37.03	93	-7
15. Bogra	14.29	95	-5	47.81	120	+20
16. Dinajpur	10.83	72	-28	34.21	86	-14
17. Pabna	12.59	84	-16	34.25	87	-13
18. Rajshahi	11.25	74	-26	41.29	104	+4
19. Rangpur	8.82	58	-42	25.84	66	-34
iv) Rajshahi Division	11.04	73	-27	35.14	88	-12
Bangladesh (N. A.)	15.05	100	-	39.74	100	-

Note: IOV= Index of Variation from the national average; N. A.= National Average.

Source: Appendix Table 1.

The IOV of these two divisions was 24 (112-88) in 1986, while the same of the top and the bottom regions was 111 (168-57) in the same year. So, the magnitude of imbalance was smaller between the Divisions and larger between the regions. From the above analyses it is proved that the banks under private ownership (1970) increased regional banking imbalances while those under public ownership (1986) mitigated the same. Findings of Appendix Table I Further substantiate the above statement.

3. Causes of Regional Disparities in Banking:

The permanent Settlement of 1793 under British rule gave rise to a class of Zamindars in Bengal who pulled resources from the remote rural areas to a few urban centres. This also led to creation of an unequalitarian society in the province of Bengal, because the distribution of land (the main source of income) became highly skewed. While discussing one of its many consequences, the Bengal provincial Banking Enquiry Committee (1929-30) observed, "It is to finance the Zamindars and the superior classes of intermediaries like the *patnidars* and the *darpatnidars* and other permanent tenure holders that the necessity was felt for a special class of banking institutions (loan offices) making advances on the mortgage of land."¹ The loan offices were established in important towns and trade centres. Industrial units including textile mills, jute baling centres, engineering firms, food, drink and tobacco factories, gins and presses, etc.² were set up in many of those places. Further, the towns of Rangpur, Bogra, Kushtia, Sylhet and Comilla also grew as industrial and trade centres. With the growth of trade and industry in these areas, banking institutions also developed there.³ Thus concentration of economic activities led to unbalanced growth of banking facilities in different regions of Bangladesh. In the context of undivided India, Muranjan strongly held the view that high speculation of certain areas in certain agricultural products, concentration of financial requirements of different areas at different times of the year and confinement of manufactures to certain narrow belts and areas of the country largely contributed to the unbalanced growth of financial institutions in India.⁴ This was further elaborated by Goldsmith in the following way:

In the period from 1860 to 1913 agricultural indebtedness was almost exclusively non-institutional. The smallness of the commercial banking system, the concentration of its offices in urban areas, and the character of its operations held its direct financing of agriculture to a minimum, although indirect credits in the form of loans to whole salers and exporters were substantial. This was true not only of short term credit but even more so of long term mortgage credit.⁵

By referring to 'the character of its operations' Goldsmith tried to point to the conservative nature of Indian commercial banks which functioned according to the orthodox English principle of 'real bills doctrine' and aimed at maximising private profitability.⁶ Gubbay pointed out that opportunities for suitable investment of banking funds being available in the economically developed areas, the chief business of the joint stock banks was concentrated in the presidency towns, the large seaports and the more important trade centres of the country.⁷ The Bengal provincial Banking Enquiry Committee (1929-30) also stated that in Bengal the loan offices were concentrated in the regions which were more fertile and productive than others.⁸

In the Pakistan period (1947-70) the Government also followed a development strategy which was concerned with securing rapid growth of GNP through effecting the distribution of income in favour of the capitalist sector. In order to feed the growing industrial and trade sectors, agriculture was gradually squeezed. It was natural that the banks followed the overall growth strategy set by the state and diverted their mobilized savings to the trade and industrial sectors as loans.⁹ Recognizing this fact the Credit Enquiry Commission (1959) observed, "We find that small business is inadequately financed and that in this respect the situation has deteriorated since partition."¹⁰ Andrus and Azizali held the view that the commercial banks totally avoided the direct financing of agriculture and they only entered in to the picture at the stage where agricultural produce was processed for transportation to export points leading to foreign countries.¹¹ Along with the sectoral imbalances, Meenai boldly recognized the existence of regional imbalances in the distribution of banking facilities in then Eastern Wing of Pakistan. Thus he stated that in East Pakistan out of a total of 217 (in 1962) scheduled bank offices, more than 70 or 34 per cent were situated in Dhaka, Chittagong, Narayanganj and Khulna only. According to him, that was mainly influenced by "the growth and dispersal of economic activity" which needed "to be corrected in the light of the declared objective of balanced regional growth."¹² In another instance he clearly narrated the root cause of banking imbalances in the context of Pakistan. He stated that most of the banks of Pakistan were sponsored by big industrial and business groups who usually influenced many of the financial decisions, and that might have led to exploitation and unfair advantage in favour of them.¹³ Admitting the above fact *The Fourth Five year plan (1970-75)* of Pakistan documented that concentration of industrial power in a few family groups led to preemption of new sanctions and their easy access to bank credit resulted in a denial of fair opportunities to others.¹⁴ It also stated that the policy regarding regulation of credit institutions including commercial banks should aim at ensuring that potential

borrowers were not in a position to decide the allocation of loanable funds, and that the share of small borrowers was largely increased.¹⁵ It further states:

The choices open to the Government range from outright nationalisation of banks, to a majority control of the shares of the major commercial banks, to a stricter regulation of credit policies and priorities. A choice between these alternatives should be made only after carefully debating the implications of each alternative.¹⁶

The above discussions amply testify to the fact that during the British and Pakistan periods the banks under private ownership adhered to a demand following financing approach to expansion process. This meant that the branches were opened at places wherein already developed economic activities created demand for those. So the growth trend of banking in Bangladesh was true to the dictum: "where enterprise leads, finance follows."¹⁷

The problem of banking imbalances had grown so acute in the past that even one and a half decades after nationalization of the banks, those could not be totally eliminated. As a recent report of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) states, "there has been a concentration of banks in urban areas and thana headquarters with many villages being left unbanked".¹⁸ Theoretically a strong link between banking growth and economic development is generally postulated. An attempt is made here to examine whether the above maxim is also empirically true of Bangladesh.

It is hypothesized that the expansion of bank branches (y) depends positively on the growth of industrial and tertiary sectors' real output (X_1), urbanization (X_2) and the rate of literacy (X_3).¹⁹ These variables are considered here as the main indicators of the level of economic development which invariably creates demand for banking institutions. Accordingly, the following log-linear bank branch expansion function may be estimated for empirical investigation:

$$\log Y = a + b \log X_1 + c \log X_2 + d \log X_3$$

Where:

a = an index of the general state of the economy;

Y = number of bank branches per million of population;

X_1 = industrial and tertiary sectors' real GDP in million taka per million of population;

X_2 = urban population in thousand per million of total population; and

X_3 = literate population of 5 years and above in thousand per million of total population.

The time series data used in the estimation of the bank branch expansion function of Bangladesh pertain to the period 1959/60 -1985/86.²⁰ The ordinary least square method is used for the estimation of the bank branch expansion function. The results are presented below.

$$\text{Log } Y = -16.45 + 1.74 \log X_1 + 1.26 \log x_2 + 4.73 \log x_3$$

(4.56) (4.96) (7.03)

$$R^2 = 0.97$$

$$F = 229.88$$

The 't' values are shown in the parentheses. The signs of X_1 , X_2 and X_3 are positive as expected and their coefficients are statistically significant at less than 1 per cent level, indicating that the expansion of bank branch is positively related to the growth of those factors.

The values of R^2 and F indicate that the statistical fit of the equation is reasonably acceptable. There is significant positive dependence of bank branch expansion on the growth of industrial and tertiary sectors' real output, urbanization and literacy rate, as it is depicted from the observed data of the last 27 years. It is discernible from the estimated equation that 1 per cent increase in industrial and tertiary sectors' real output will raise the number of bank branches by 1.74 per cent, while 1 per cent increase in urbanization will lead to 1.26 per cent enhancement of the number of bank branches. But 1 per cent positive change in literacy will augment the number of bank branches by about 4.73 per cent.

The time series data on urbanization, industrialization and education (Appendix Table-2) amply prove their positive influence on the growth of bank branches in Bangladesh. In the absence of reliable time series data on regional basis, it was not possible to construct an equation for each region for a rigorous regional analysis. However, the technique of composite disparity index²¹ is used here as an alternative method for regional analysis. Regional data for the year 1986 were easily available, while those for the year 1970 were difficult to get. So the data of gross regional product (GRP) for the year 1970 were calculated from the country total GDP by using the ratio of GRP of the year 1977 which was the first year for the availability of such regional data.

In order to classify different regions of Bangladesh in to 'developed' 'semi-developed' and 'poorly developed' regions, 12 different development indicators²² have been used here. These are as follows:

1. Gross regional product (GRP) per million of population of each region in million taka;

2. Agricultural GRP per million of population in million taka;
3. Industrial GRP per million of population in million taka;
4. Tertiary sector's GRP per million of population in million taka;
5. Number of health centres (including hospitals, family planning, maternal and child health facilities) per million of population;
6. Number of primary schools per million of population;
7. Number of cinema halls (recreation) available per million of population;
8. Number of television sets per million of population;
9. Number of telephones per million of population;
10. Number of post offices available per million of population;
11. Irrigated acres (in thousand) per million of population; and
12. Number of urban population (in thousand) per million of population. The census figures of 1974 were used for 1970, and those of 1981 were used for 1986.²³

Taking the regional distribution pattern of each of the above development indicator, 12 separate disparity indices were constructed first, and then in order to obtain a composite disparity index, those were added together and divided the sum by the number of indicators (see footnote 21). The composite disparity index of development indicators (CDI) clearly indicate the level of development of each region. Table 2 shows coincidence of concentration of development indicators (CDI^a) and that of bank branches (DI^b) mostly in the same regions. In 1970 the CDI of top region Dhaka was 226 while the same of the bottom region Faridpur was only 57. The composite index of variation (CIOV) between these two regions was 169 (226-57). This testifies that there were glaring regional economic disparities in the year 1970. Economic disparities eventually gave rise to imbalances in the distribution of banking facilities which were indicated by disparity index of bank branches (DI^b) of the same year.

With the implementation of three development plans (including two five year plans and a two year plan) during 1973-85, the regional economic disparities showed a decreasing trend. The testimony was the CIOV of 149 (in 1986) between the top region Chittagong Hill Tract with CDI of 217 and the bottom region Faridpur with CDI of only 68. The agricultural GRP per million of population of Chittagong Hill Tract was the highest in 1986 owing to its fruits and forest resources.²⁴ This increased its CDI significantly and brought it above all other regions. If the agricultural GRP was ignored, Dhaka region would become the top

TABLE-2: Concentration of Development Indicators in the Regions Followed by the smae of Bank Branches in 1970 and 1986.

Year Region	1970				1986			
	CDI ^a	Rank	DI ^b	Rank	CDI ^a	Rank	DI ^b	Rank
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
1. Chittagong	195	3	219	2	159	3	155	3
2. Chittagong Hill Tract	202	2	159	3	217	1	235	1
3. Comilla	76	13	83	9	76	16	78	15
4. Noakhali	81	10	64	13	76	15	77	16
5. Sylhet	106	5	106	6	96	7	100	7
6. Dhaka	226	1	248	1	179	2	172	2
7. Faridpur	57	19	36	17	68	19	70	19
8. Mymensingh	78	12	54	16	78	14	79	14
9. Tangail	75	15	30	19	66	8	98	8
10. Bogra	99	6	95	7	104	5	109	4
11. Dinajpur	92	7	72	12	88	10	91	9
12. Pabna	71	16	84	8	89	9	91	10

13. Rajshahi	89	8	74	11	79	13	80	13
14. Rangpur	69	17	58	15	80	12	81	12
15. Barisal	75	14	59	14	73	17	73	17
16. Jessore	80	11	75	10	83	11	84	11
17. Khulna	107	4	115	4	106	4	103	5
18. Kustia	89	9	113	5	103	6	103	6
19. Patuakhali	65	18	35	18	71	18	72	18
Bangladesh:	100	-	100	-	100	-	100	-

Note: 1. a = Composite disparity index of development indicators and

b = disparity index of bank branches.

2. $CDI^a =$ Calculated from Appendix Table 3 on the basis of the following formula: $\frac{SDI}{N}$, where

DI is disparity index and N is number of development indicators.

3. $DI^b =$ Obtained from Appendix Table 1.

region in 1986. (However, that exercise was not done here because of its irrelevance to this study). Table 2 exhibits that the CIOV fell from 169 in 1970 to 149 in 1986. It indicates the slight reduction in the regional economic disparities during 1970-86. With the fall in the regional economic disparities the regional imbalances in the distribution of bank branches also decreased²⁵ slightly. So in the case of the distribution of bank branches the IOV of 218 in 1970 fell to 165 in 1986.²⁶ Thus the findings support the argument that generally banking expansion in Bangladesh was influenced by economic development of its regions. This is more clearly exhibited in Table 3. It shows that except a few exceptions bank branches were concentrated in the regions which were relatively developed. The poorly developed regions also had poor number of bank branches per million of population.²⁷

It follows from above that the regional economic disparities ultimately led to growth of banking disparities of different regions of Bangladesh. As the National Commission on Money Banking and Credit (1986) observes, "Disparity in growth of deposits and advances between the Divisions is due mainly to uneven economic development"²⁸ of the regions.

3.1 Uneven distribution of natural resources

The causes of economic disparities may be classified into two broad groups: one is the uneven distribution of natural resources and other include a host of man made factors. The first one is very crucial because nature sets a limit on people to change it. Some regions are more fertile and productive than others and still some other regions are endowed with minerals or water resources. These create great differences among the regions. In Bangladesh the former districts of Sylhet and Comilla have gas, Chittagon Hill Tracts has forest, Bogra has coal deposits, and Chittagong and Khulna have sea port facilities.

The weather of middle, south and south eastern districts is favourable for hard work while the heat of summer in some of the northern districts like Rajshahi, Bogra, etc. set limits on the people's capabilities for hardwork.²⁹ However, Rahman observes that regional differences in the availability of natural resources "cannot be held to be responsible for unequal economic development" of the regions of a country. Such imbalances can largely be removed by public policies.³⁰

3.2 Man made factors

The physical and intellectual capabilities of human being is the main driving forces of economic development. Men sometimes change the earth surface and

TABLE-3

Classification of the Regions According to Class Interval of the Ranks/the Level of Development (1970 and 1986)

Level of development/ Class interval of the ranks	1987		1986	
	Concentration of development indicators	Concentration of bank branches	Concentration of development indicators	Concentration of Bank branches
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1-7				
Developed regions	Dhaka	Dhaka	Chittagong H.T.	Chittagong H.T.
	Chittagong H.T.	Chittagong	Dhaka	Dhaka
	Chittagong	Chittagong H.T	Khulna	Bogra
	Khulna	Khulna	Chittagong	Chittagong
	Sylhet	Kushia	Bogra	Khulna
	Bogra	Sylhet	Kushia	Kushia
	Dinajpur	Bogra	Sylhet	Sylhet

8-14

Semi-developed
Regions

Rajshahi	Pabna	Tangail	Rajshahi
Kushia	Comilla	Pabna	Noakhali
Noakhali	Jessore	Dinajpur	Pabna
Jessore	Rajshahi	Jessore	Dinajpur
Mymensingh	Dinajpur	Rangpur	Tangail
Comilla	Noakhali	Rajshahi	Comilla
Barisal	Barisal	Mymensingh	Jessore

15-19

Poorly developed
Regions

Tangail	Rangpur	Noakhali	Barisal
Pabna	Mymensingh	Comilla	Patuakhali
Rangpur	Faridpur	Barisal	Rangpur
Patuakhali	Patuakhali	Patuakhali	Faridpur
Faridpur	Tangail	Faridpur	Mymensingh

Note: The classification of regions into 'developed', 'semi-developed' and 'poorly developed' is rather arbitrary and strictly related to situations in Bangladesh today. The term 'developed regions' is used here to mean relatively well off regions of Bangladesh. However, in international standard these regions may not be considered developed ones.

Source: Table 2.

even the whole environment of certain locality. Thus because of historical, socio-economic and political factors some regions develop earlier than others.

3.2.1 Historical factors

Because of various reasons, historically some regions could attract the attention of different rulers and administrators of the past and grew at a faster rate than others. Thus Dhaka region was the seat of administration of independent monarchs and colonial rulers. Chittagong and khulna being the port cities attracted traders and business adventurers. So these regions developed earlier.

3.2.2 Socio-economic and political factors

The Socio-economic and political factors are also responsible for creating regional disparities. For example, during the Pakistan period due to the lack of conscious efforts at developing the communication system and exploiting the natural resources in the northern regions of Bangladesh, most of those remained relatively backward even today.³¹ Low level of the supply of physical infrastructure, power, gas and transport facilities was also a main factor for the industrial backwardness of the northern regions in the past.

3.2.3 Political economy of monetary policy and banking

Monetary policy is the management "of a nation's money supply to ensure the availability of credit in quantities and at prices consistent with specific national objectives."³² It largely influences the activities of an economy. As Wooley observes, "In aggregate economic terms, a wide variety of theoretical approaches yield prediction of powerful effects of monetary policy on the economy."³³ The bankers play a decisive role in formulating as well as implementing the monetary policies.³⁴ This is due to the implied delegation of financial power to the bankers for allocation of loanable funds.³⁵ This is the main reason for the political association of monetary policy.³⁶ Lancaster and Dulaney observe:

If the government decides to use expansionary monetary policy through the banking system, it can control the potential level of new loans, but it cannot control, in detail, the direction of these loans. Decisions about which businesses and persons receive the new loans are left to the bankers themselves, a fact that gives these bankers considerable power with respect to the types of economic activity promoted.³⁷

In a system of private banking the immediate effects of such monetary policy, as stated above, are likely to benefit the rich and the business sector.³⁸ The

TABLE 4 : Commercial banks Advances Classified by Securities (1855-86)
(Amount in lakhs of taka)

Year	pre-nationalization period				post-nationalization years				
	1955 (June)	1960 (June)	1965 (June)	1970 (June)	1975 (June)	1980 (Dec)	1985 (Dec.)	1986 (June)	
Securities (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
1. Precious metals	7 (0.47)	62 (1.60)	164 (0.90)	159 (0.59)	382 (0.61)	2302 (0.90)	3393 (0.43)	2972 (0.36)	
2. Stock exchange	27	370	1238	1755	779	5640	5523	6020	
Securities	(1.80)	(9.60)	(6.80)	(6.53)	(1.24)	(2.21)	(0.71)	(0.73)	
3. Merchandise	1157 (77.13)	2534 (65.80)	10082 (55.38)	13043 (48.52)	46996 (74.62)	175921 (68.79)	435102 (55.64)	453387 (55.13)	
4. Machinery and other	116	92	1172	1960	1267	4935	20257	20932	
fixed assets	(7.73)	(2.40)	(6.44)	(7.29)	(2.01)	(1.93)	(2.59)	(2.55)	

5. Real Estate	24	100	1243	2933	1628	6712	29129	34709
	(1.60)	(2.60)	(6.38)	(10.91)	(2.58)	(2.62)	(3.72)	(4.22)
6. Financial obligations (insurance policies & deposits	51	146	797	1978	1171	5033	23337	27200
	(3.40)	3.80	4.38	7.36	1.86	1.97	2.98	3.31
7. Others	118	547	3508	5054	10754	55178	265279	277200
	(7.87)	(14.2)	(19.27)	(18.80)	(17.08)	(21.58)	(33.93)	(33.70)
Grand Total	1500	3581	18204	26882	62981	255721	782020	822420
	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Note:

1. Figures in the parentheses show percentages.
2. Data of 1955 were taken from J. R. Andrus and F. M. Azizali, *The Economy of Pakistan*, p. 385.
3. Data for the year 1960 to 1970 were compiled from BB, *Bangladesh Bank Bulletin* (1973) p. 19 and SBP, *Banking Statistics of Pakistan 1969/70*, pp. 90-95; while the same for rest of the years were tabulated from different issues of BB, *Scheduled Banks Statistics*.
4. Others include securities by guaranties and unspecified secured and unsecured advances.

private banks rarely expand credit to poor people who do not have the capacities for giving securities against their loans. The changing pattern of the securities against bank advances in Bangladesh during 1955-86 is exhibited in Table-4. The share of merchandise in total securities was as high as 77.13 per cent in 1955. Its share went down to nearly 49 per cent in 1970. Its share again increased to about 75 per cent in 1975 and then on ward declined gradually to 55 per cent in 1986. The shares of stock exchange securities, machinery and other fixed assets, real estate and financial obligations decreased in post-nationalization years in comparison with pre-nationalization period. But the share of advances against without any security, securities by guarantees and other unspecified securities largely increased in post nationalization years in comparison with pre-nationalization period. This was because of the public banks' expanded operations in agricultural sector and rural areas in the post-nationalization years.

In fact a well-trained and motivated community is capable for allocating financial resources in a better way than the other alternative way of fiscal policies. This is also true of resource mobilization. As Dagli observes:

The superiority of this method over the fiscal method lies in that where a person pays tax, he loses his money for once and for all. But, when he puts his money in the bank, the money continues to belong to him and its corpus grows. This provides an effective incentive for resource mobilization. On the other hand, when it comes to the use of resources, channelling the savings of the community for investment through banks has the advantage that the banks would be able to enforce greater financial discipline on millions of borrowers and investors.³⁹

A pragmatic monetary policy aiming at maintaining distributive justice may achieve the above goals. The success of such a policy also depends on the bankers who implement it.

However, the bankers frequently raise some problems which stand as obstacles to branch expansion in rural areas.⁴⁰ Among them, the most important is the costs and profitability of the rural branches. As Talwar observes, "Low profitability, resulting from high administrative costs and low level of income was the main factor inhibiting expansion of commercial banks in the rural areas."⁴¹

The National Commission on Money Banking and Credit (1986) observes that the decision making of the scheduled banks of Bangladesh "still remains by and large centralised" which is "greatly impairing the efficiency of the system."⁴² This also stands as an obstacle for spreading bank advances in rural areas.

4. Remedial Measures Taken After Nationalization of the Banks

Amidst the above problems the commercial banks of Bangladesh were nationalized at the beginning of 1972. As it was stated earlier, the main objective of nationalization was to reduce inter regional disparities and to bring banking facilities at the doorsteps of the rural people specially the poor and the small men. Several efforts were made by the banks for attaining these objectives. A brief review of these is presented below.

4.1 Branch expansion

Immediately after nationalization of the banks a programme of branch expansion was undertaken to cover each unbanked Thana (police station) with at least one branch of any one of the NCBs.⁴³ Accordingly 200 Thanas were initially selected for opening of bank branches during 1972-73 financial year. In that year licences were issued for opening of 213 bank branches. However, the ambitious plan could not be materialized fully and by the end of that year only 126 new branches were established.⁴⁴

A new programme of branch expansion started in 1976 with the objective of covering each unbanked union with at least a branch of any one of the NCBs. So from the beginning of 1976, the NCBs were required to set up two rural branches to get a licence for one urban branch.⁴⁵ This imparted great stimuli to the growth of rural bank branches in Bangladesh. Recently Bangladesh Bank gave directives to the newly organized local private banks to open at least one rural branch against one urban branch. It was reported that they do not carry it on regularly.⁴⁶

4.2 Annual credit and monetary programme

With a view to meet the credit needs of the economy and to promote financial stability, the authority formulates an annual credit and monetary plan every year. It has two fold objectives: to ensure adequate but not excess liquidity in the economy and to channel credit to the desired sectors. "The permissible increase in the volume of domestic credit is determined as the sum of GDP growth rate in the past fiscal year, the acceptable (politically) inflation rate (plus the rate of monetization) and the expected percentage change in the balance of payments deficit."⁴⁷ Broadly, the total volume of credit is then distributed between the public and private sectors as well as among different sectors of the economy.

4.3 Special agricultural credit programme (SACP)

In order to involve the commercial banks in the financing of crop production, the Government introduced TK. 100 crore special agricultural credit programme (SACP) in February, 1977. All banks excluding BSB (industrial bank) were involved in the programme. The crop wise allocation of the loan was as follows: Aus Tk. 15 crore, Aman Tk. 20 crore, Boro Tk. 15 crore, wheat Tk. 5 crore, Jute Tk. 5 crore, sugarcane Tk. 11 crore, potato Tk. 10 crore and other crops Tk. 19 crore.⁴⁸ The loan was disbursed partly in cash for purchasing seeds, etc, and partly in kind. In the first year out of Tk. 100 crore, only Tk. 56.88 crore could be disbursed by the banks.⁴⁹ However, the volume of loan disbursement increased over the years. Since the banks already involved themselves in the financing of crop production, the Government discontinued this programme⁵⁰ after the financial year of 1984-85. The banks now finance the production of crop under their normal programme. The total loan disbursed for financing crop production (other than tea) stood at Tk. 514.81 crore in 1984-85 covering all programmes.⁵¹

4.4 Lead bank scheme

With a view to facilitate the disbursement of agricultural loans and to accelerate balanced regional development, the lead bank scheme was introduced in early 1977. The lead bank was selected on the basis of net work of branches and strength of deposits in the concerned district. Involving all banks and development agencies operating in a district, a committee headed by the Deputy Commissioner was set up in each district. A representative (usually Regional Manager/Assistant General Manager/Deputy General Manager) of the lead bank worked as the Secretary of this committee. It met quarterly, monthly or according to the need of the prevailing situation. It also allocated specific number of unions under each bank to avoid duplication and other difficulties.⁵²

Under the scheme a commercial bank was assigned leadership role in one or more districts. Accordingly Sonali Bank covered 5 districts, Janata Bank 4, Agrani Bank 4, Rupli Bank 3, Publi Bank 2 and Utra Bank looked after 1 district (old district/region). Among other the scheme had five main objectives. These are : to conduct survey for identifying credit needs, commercial and business centres for branch expansion, potentialities of agro-based industries, self-employed persons

and weaker sections and to maintain liaison with the other development agencies. Then the scheme aimed at financing all those potential projects.⁵³

4.5 Grameen Bank and other projects

The commercial banks also participated in several other rural development projects which were approved or introduced by the Bangladesh Bank. Among those the Grameen Bank project (1976-82) specially meant for financing the small farmers, landless labourers, working women and other disadvantaged groups of people, was the most important and successful one. It generated income and employment opportunities for the rural poor who repaid 98 per cent of their loans in due time. It also organized the rural poor in to groups and associations. It raised economic and social status of its participants.⁵⁴ Because of its success, the project was up-graded in to a full-fledged specilized bank for the rural poor in 1983.

Another important project is the credit for shawnirvar Bangladesh programme (1975 onward). By the end of 1984 it covered 8, 327 villages of different districts of Bangladesh. At the beginning of 1986 a total number of 442 rural branches of the NCBs and BKB were involved in this programme. The purpose of this project "is to attack the problems of rural poverty through a combination of social and economic programmes aimed at harnessing available physical and human resources and achieving self-reliance at individual and national levels."⁵⁶ But its success was limited mainly because of the weak organization and quick duplication of its activities in new areas. The other relatively new and small projects include rural finance experimental project (1977-81), credit for different modes of rural transport (1981 onward), small farmers' and landless labourers' development project (1976 onward), hand tubewell and power pump financing (1980 onward), banana plantation financing, shrimp culture financing, minor irrigation credit project, commercial poultry financing and credit for low cost rural housing scheme.⁵⁷ The last one gained popularity and limited success. Others are progressing steadily.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

This article briefly states that in the past the growth trends of commercial banking in Bangladesh followed a demand following approach to bank branch expansion programme. As a result, the banks were concentrated in urban and industrial areas. Regional disparities of the spread of economic activities ultimately

Appendix TABLE-1:

Divisional and Regional Locational Imbalances
in Bank Branch Expansion Programme (1970-1986)

Region and Division	No. of Bank branches		population in million		No. of bank branch per million of popn		L.Q		Rank		% variation in the L. Q. of 1986 from that of 1970
	1970 (Br)	1986 (Br)	1970 (Pr)	1986 (Pr)	1970 (Br/Pr)	1986 (Br/Pr)	1970 Br/Pr B/P	1986 Br/Pr B/P	1970	1986	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Chittagong	135	384	4.1	6.5	32.93	59.08	2.19	1.49	2*	3*	-31.96
2. Chittagong Hill Tracts	12	57	0.5	0.9	24.00	63.33	1.59	1.59	3*	2*	0.00
3. Comilla	70	260	5.6	8.1	12.50	32.10	0.83	0.81	9	13	-2.41
4. Noakhali	30	175	3.1	4.5	9.68	38.89	0.64	0.98	13	9	+53.12
5. Sylhet	72	316	4.5	6.7	16.00	47.16	1.06	1.19	6*	5*	+12.26
i) Chittagong Division	319	1192	17.8	26.7	17.92	44.64	1.19	1.12	A*	A*	-5.88
6. Dhaka	272	790	7.3	11.8	37.26	66.95	2.48	1.68	1*	1*	-32.26
7. Faridpur	21	144	3.9	5.6	5.38	25.71	0.36	0.65	17	18	+80.55

8. Mymensingh	59	242	7.3	10.7	8.08	22.62	0.54	0.57	16	19	+5.56
9. Tangail	9	94	2.0	2.9	4.50	32.41	0.30	0.82	19	12	+173.33
ii) Dhaka											
Division	361	1270	20.5	31.0	17.61	40.97	1.17	1.03	B*	B*	-11.97
10. Barisal	34	161	3.8	5.5	8.95	29.27	0.59	0.74	14	15	+25.42
11. Jessore	35	179	3.1	4.7	11.29	30.08	0.75	0.76	10	14	+1.33
12. Khulna	59	229	3.4	5.1	17.35	44.90	1.15	1.13	4*	6*	-1.74
13. Kushtia	29	119	1.7	2.7	17.06	44.07	1.13	1.11	5*	7*	-1.77
14. Patuakhali	8	60	1.5	2.2	5.33	27.27	0.35	0.69	18	16	+97.14
iii) Khulna											
Division	165	748	13.5	20.2	12.22	37.03	0.81	0.93	C	C	+14.81
15. Bogra	30	153	2.1	3.2	14.29	47.81	0.95	1.20	7	4*	+26.32
16. Dinajpur	26	130	2.4	3.8	10.83	34.21	0.72	0.86	12	11	+19.44
17. Pabna	34	137	2.7	4.0	12.59	34.25	0.84	0.87	8	10	+3.37
18. Rajshahi	45	256	4.0	6.2	11.25	41.29	0.74	1.04	11	8*	+40.54
19. Rangpur	45	199	5.1	7.7	8.82	25.84	0.58	0.66	15	17	+13.79
iv) Rajshahi											
Division	180	875	16.3	24.9	11.04	35.14	0.73	0.88	D	D	+20.55
Bangladesh	1025	4085	68.1	102.8	15.05	39.74	-	-	-	-	-

Note:

1. The divisions are ranked by capital letters while the regions are ranked by Arabic numbers.
2. The sing * indicates the Regions and the Divisions above national average and the rest of the Regions and the Divisions fall below national average.
3. 'B' = bank branch; p = population; r = region; 'B' and 'p' without r denote national figures.
4. L. Q = Location Quotient = $\frac{Br/Pr}{B/p}$ measures the position of a region in comparison with other regions as well as the national average. Positive change in L. Q. indicates improvement in the position of a region while negative change in the same means relative deterioration in the position of a region.

Sources:

1. The number of bank branches of 1970 was compiled from SBP, *Banking Statistics of Pakistan 1969-70*, pp. 339-341, while the same of 1986 was tabulated from BB, *Scheduled Banks Statistics* (April-June, 1986), pp. XXIII-XXIV and 182-268.
2. Population Figures of 1970 were obtained from BBS, *1981 Statistical Year Book of Bangladesh*, p. 39, while those of 1986 were taken from BBS, *1984-85 Statistical Year Book of Bangladesh*, p. 125.

led to the creation of regional imbalances in the distribution of banking facilities. The political economy of monetary policy and banking was also responsible for this. Economic development and banking expansion are so interrelated that each one might be a cause or effect of the other. Once the banks were set up in a developed region, they promoted its growth further. Thus disparities were widened. However, after nationalization of the banks some corrective measures were taken by the authorities to gradually remove the banking imbalances. As a consequence, a supply leading finance began to operate at least in rural Bangladesh in the post-nationalization period. This suggests that the continuation of the big commercial banks under public ownership will ensure balanced development of the regions if other things remain constant.

However, expansion of bank branches in rural areas, strengthening of lead bank scheme, bottom up annual credit programme, measures for educating bank customers, training and motivation of bank employees, holding of annual general meetings by public sector banks, extension of advances to priority sectors and increasing credit deposit ratios in the poor regions help mitigate banking disparities in Bangladesh. Building of physical infrastructure, strengthening of administrative support and democratic practices are also essential for achieving this goal.

APPENDIX TABLE- 1

APPENDIX TABLE-2: Time Series Data of population, Bank Branches, Industrial and Tertiary Sectors, Real GDP, Urbanization and Literacy Levels During 1959/60-1985/86.

(From y to X^3 per million of popn.)

No. of observa tion	Total No. of bank branches	Total popu lation in million	y	X ₁ (m. Tk.)	X ₂ 000	X ₃ 000
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1959-60	120	54	2	256	50	173
1960-61	182	55	3	270	51	176
1961-62	217	56	4	281	52	179
1962-63	298	57	5	288	53	182

1963-64	449	59	8	314	55	188
1964-65	568	60	9	325	56	191
1965-66	736	62	12	323	58	197
1966-67	892	63	14	315	59	200
1967-68	970	65	15	331	61	205
1968-69	1048	66	16	332	62	208
1969-70	1124	68	17	341	64	213
1970-71	1136	70	16	309	66	218
1971-72	1179	72	16	245	68	223
1972-73	1351	74	18	257	70	228
1973-74	1486	77	19	282	87	202
1974-75	1569	79	20	301	89	206
1975-76	1781	81	22	331	91	210
1976-77	2064	83	25	344	93	214
1977-78	2755	85	32	353	95	218
1978-79	3339	87	38	378	97	222
1979-80	4147	89	47	397	99	226
1980-81	4378	91	48	413	106	197
1981-82	4470	93	48	418	109	201
1982-83	4603	95	48	400	111	205
1983-84	4817	98	49	414	115	210
1984-85	4963	100	50	431	117	214
1985-86	5114	103	50	441	120	219

Note:

1. Data of bank branches for the period 1959-60 to 1969-70 were taken from Banking statistics of Pakistan while the same for the year 1971 were compiled from GOP, *Pakistan Economic Survey 1970-71* (p. 57), and the same for rest of the years were

APPENDIX TABLE-3 : Region-wise Distribution of Development Indicators (1970-86)

(per million of population)

Region and Indicators	Chitta gong	Chitta-gong H. T.	Commi-lla	Noak-hali	Sylhet	Dhaka	Faridpur	Mymen-sing	Tangail	Bogra
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<u>1970.</u>										
1. GRP (m. Tk)	701	1534	433	560	377	481	339	414	422	480
2. Agri.GRP(m.Tk)	238	1020	220	344	172	135	177	244	240	299
3. Ind. GRP(m.Tk)	202	158	24	16	28	120	6	6	12	26
4. Tert.GRP(m.Tk)	261	356	189	200	177	226	156	164	170	155
5. Health Centres	44	85	27	31	63	44	41	35	42	44
6. Primary School	482	1668	484	528	724	441	531	471	449	559
7. Recreation										
(Cinema Hall)	3	6	2	2	3	7	1	3	3	6
8. Televisions	1328	93	141	35	345	2478	61	81	84	274
9. Telephones	1951	236	306	225	337	3234	131	215	215	536
10. Post Office	90	84	104	120	95	86	101	87	103	90

11. Irrigated

46	35	43	51	117	30	14	69	34	41
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'000' acres

12. Urbanization

221	104	44	22	29	308	30	58	55	40
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'000'

1986

1. GRP (m. Tk)	6807	19125	4380	4209	4767	4892	4086	4417	4495	4766
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2. Agri.GRP(m.Tk)	2314	13985	2092	2094	2430	1358	2210	2593	2490	2773
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3. Ind. GRP(m.Tk)	1911	1214	286	186	285	1164	72	72	138	75
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4. Tert. GRP(m.Tk)	2582	3926	2002	1929	2052	2370	1804	1752	1867	1918
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5. Health Centres	31	104	28	40	55	36	37	30	48	57
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6. primary school	345	1169	402	585	556	318	431	394	398	453
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7. Recreation

(Cinema Hall)	4	10	3	3	4	8	5	4	10	9
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8. Televisions	6968	1742	1153	613	2108	12870	646	1056	1147	3090
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9. Telephones	3264	1923	558	513	942	6740	356	423	512	917
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10. Post offices	64	89	84	96	78	62	82	74	85	67
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11. Irrigated

acres '000'	48	32	49	23	67	30	19	80	75	94
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12. Urbanization

'000'	263	238	69	92	74	327	59	82	64	63
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Region Indicators	Dinaj- pur	Pabna	Rajsh- ahi	Rang- pur	Barisal	Jessore	Khulna	Kushia	Patua- khali	Bangla- desh
1970	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
1. GRP(m.Tk)	536	383	508	437	428	475	510	375	432	468
2. Agri. GRP(m.Tk)	328	203	305	259	235	253	270	183	254	239
3. Ind.GRP(m.Tk)	17	14	9	11	5	16	29	25	4	38
4. Tert.GRP(m.Tk.)	191	166	194	167	188	206	211	167	174	191
5. Health Centres	50	35	47	38	48	37	34	50	32	41
6. Primary School	629	550	506	520	593	499	518	471	612	531
7. Recreation (Cinema Hall)	5	2	3	3	2	4	3	4	1	3
8. Televisions	73	144	253	44	25	93	494	210	5	330
9. Telephones	359	238	340	227	251	275	691	513	241	712
10. Post offices	83	91	74	59	139	110	132	96	122	96
11. Irrigated acres '000'	36	20	55	26	32	15	17	33	26	42
12. Urbanization '000'	47	79	62	52	41	58	153	92	25	92
1986										
1. GRP (m. Tk)	4946	4242	4004	4630	4024	4363	5727	4516	4685	4815

2. Agri.GRP(m.Tk)	2731	2062	2229	2853	2010	2335	2944	2452	2770	2412
3. Ind. GRP(m.tk)	176	208	92	106	48	161	449	237	45	398
4. Tert. GRP(m.Tk)	2039	1972	683	1671	1966	1867	2334	1827	1870	2005
5. Health Centres	35	36	38	39	28	35	34	46	27	37
6. Primary school	658	480	419	424	541	434	446	476	585	445
7. Recreation (Cinema Hall)	6	11	5	5	4	6	5	7	3	5
8. Television	1595	1374	2267	1234	661	1219	2957	2036	313	3105
9. Telephones	498	524	503	496	527	664	1324	837	557	1514
10. Post office	68	57	64	53	105	82	108	72	111	76
11. Irrigated acres '000'	51	49	56	62	26	49	22	101	10	50
12. Urbanization '000'	72	100	88	92	101	93	190	123	75	129

Note:

1. Data were compiled from various issues of BBS, *Statistical Year Book (s) of Bangladesh*.
2. For the year 1970 most of the regional figures were estimated from the country total figures. Indicators for which the data of 1970 were not available (such as Television sets), the same of the nearest available years were used in those cases.
3. GRP figures of 1986 were provisional and the data of other indicators (of 1986) were of 1985.
4. Urbanization means urban population in thousand per million of population.

obtained from various issues of *Scheduled Banks Statistics* of Bangladesh Bank. (Includes BKB & BSB).

2. Population figures were obtained from GOEP, *Statistical Digest of East Pakistan 1966*, pp. 11-12 (for 1969-60); BBS, *1981 Statistical Year Book of Bangladesh*, p. 39 (for the period 1960/61-1980/81); and BBS, *1984-85 Statistical Year Book of Bangladesh*, p. 125 (for the years 1981/82-1985/86).
3. Literate population in thousand per million of population (X_3) was calculated from column 3 on the basis of literacy rates of different census years. Literacy rate of 17.61 per cent (1961 census: reported in *Statistical Digest of Bangladesh 1970-71*, p. 10) was used for calculating literate persons in thousand for the years 1959-60 to 1972-73. While the same of 20.2 per cent and 19.7 per cent (1974 and 1981 censuses respectively: reported in *1986 Statistical Year Book of Bangladesh*, p. 840) were used for measuring the same of the periods 1973-74 to 1979-80 and 1980-81 to 1985-86 respectively. Literacy rate for population of all ages has been defined in *1986 Statistical Year Book of Bangladesh* (p. 840) as ratio of literate persons of age 5 years and above to total population multiplied by 100.
4. Urban population in thousand per million of population (X_2) was calculated from column 3 on the basis of the urbanization rates reported in various censuses. The urbanization rate of 5.19 per cent (1961 census) was used for calculating the data of the years 1959-60 to 1972-73. While the same of 8.78 per cent (1974 census) and of 10.64 per cent (1981 census) were used to measure the data of the periods 1973-74 to 1979-80 and 1980-81 to 1985-86, respectively. See BBS, *1981 Statistical Year Book of Bangladesh* (p. 53).
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17. See Hugh T. Patrik, "Financial Development, and Economic Growth in Underdeveloped Countries", in *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, Vol. XIV, No. 2 (January, 1966), p. 174, citing Joan Robinson, "The Generalization of the General Theory" in *The Rate of Interest and other Essays*, (London: MacMillan, 1952), pp. 86-87.
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- 19 This hypothesis is due to Patrick who says, "the evolutionary development of the financial system is a continuing consequence of the pervasive, sweeping process of economic development". Here the growth of industrial and tertiary sectors' real output (GDP), urbanization and the rate of literacy is considered as equivalent to economic development. Industrial and tertiary sectors, real GDPs are used as proxies for industrialization and commercialization of the economy. See Hugh T. Patrick, "Demand Following or Supply Leading Finance", in *Leading Issues in Economic Development*, p. 296.
- 20 The time series data are presented in Appendix Table 2.
- 21 The concept of disparity index has already been introduced in section 2. The composite disparity index is obtained by adding the different individual disparity indices together and then dividing the sum by the number of items for which the disparity indices were constructed. The formula is: $\frac{\sum DI}{N}$, Where DI=Disparity Indices and N=Number of items or indicators of the level of economic development.
- 22 The examples of using development indicators for measuring the level of development of a country or a region are ample. For instances, see Theodore Morgan, *Economic Development Concept and Strategy* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1975), p. 82; Bruce Herrick and Charles p. Kindleberger, *Economic Development* (Singapore: McGraw-Hill International Book Company, 1983), p. 134; Hemlata Rao, *Regional Disparities and Development in India* (New Delhi: Ashish Publishing House, 1984), p. 60.
- 23 Region wise data of these indicators were compiled from various issues of *Statistical Year Book of Bangladesh* and presented in Appendix Table 3. Non availability of other regional data like per capita calorie intake, the share of labour force in employment, etc, set a limit on the researcher to increase the number of indicators.
- 24 The agricultural GRP is shown in Appendix Table 3.
- 25 Decreasing trend of the regional economic disparities along with the planned expansion programme of public sector banks led to the decrease in banking imbalances. In turn, the decrease in banking imbalance itself might result in the minimisation of economic disparities.
- 26 For details see Table 1 and Appendix Table 1.
- 27 See Table 2 and 3.
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- 29 The maximum temperature of Rajshahi and Bogra was 43 degree celsius and 41 degree celsius respectively in 1984. See BBS, *Statistical pocket Book of Bangladesh*, 1986, p. 102.
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ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF KHULNA NEWSPRINT MILL: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

- Raihana Ansari*

ABSTRACT

The paper aims at studying one important aspect i. e. organisational structure of Khulna Newsprint Mill (K. N. M) on the basis of modern theoretical approach put forwarded by Western theoreticians and personal observation in the mill. In analysing the organisational structure of the mill, the author has widely followed the conceptual framework of "Line" organisation and "Line and Staff" organisation. For critical analysis of the organisational structure, she has developed her attitude by close observation in the mill during her internship programme visa-vis careful study of secondary materials. The paper suggests some improvements in the organogram of the mill, since there appeared to be found some positive defects.

Prologue:

Organisational structure is an important aspect of modern industrial enterprise, which is required to be scientific and perfect of meet the demands of the enterprise according to its character and needs. It is therefore imperative that this important aspect of modern industrial enterprise demands intellectual attention for necessary improvements, with the changing environment and complexity of industrial plants in present world. A good organisation structure would include those attributes of organisations that are relatively static overtime. These include: (1) Organisation size (2) Space of control (3) Number of authority level (4) Authority structure (5) Communication structure (6) Degree of task specification (7) Degree of task inter dependence and (8) Status and prestige structure. Indik¹.

Ordinarily, an organisation is a form of human association for the attainment of common goal. But this flat definition is not accepted now-a-days. By organisation we mean, a planned system of cooperative effort in which each

* The paper is an outcome of the Internship Programme undertaken by the author in September, 1988 in Khulna Newsprint Mill. The author is indebted to the World Bank for financing the Internship Programme.

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participant has recognised role to play and duties and task to perform . Organisation is a formal structure of authority through which work sub-divisions are arranged, defined and coordinated for the defined objectives.

The traditional concept of organisational structure has undergone changes wherein emphasis was given on concentration of power in executive heads, division of works, hierarchy, planning and budgeting. In other words, organisation was a process of coordination of works in a scientific way. Earlier theorists of organisation were content of talk of measuring effectiveness in terms of adequate profit, efficient service, good productivity or effective employee morale. Gordon². But according to recent approach, organisation means structural analysis. In modern organisational structure, a whole work is divided into several units with a view to attaining a single objective, i. e. to achieve maximum production. To achieve this single objective, works are divided and sub-divided according to hierarchy.

Organisational structure is very important aspect of industrial concern since management process is carried out through organisation. Organisational structure should therefore be scientific so that the complex difficult task of administration of industrial plant can be carried out smoothly and the goal of the organisation can be achieved as much as possible.

Various type of organisation have emerged and developed according to needs and character of industrial plant. Keeping this in view, present paper aims at studying:

(1) the type of the organisational structure of Khulna Newsprint Mill that is whether the organogram under study is a "line", "staff" or the admixture of the two;

(2) suitability of the organisation according to the needs and character of the industrial plant; and

(3) finally to suggest some improvements in the organogram in the light of present study.

Methodology

This paper is the outcome of a fortnight long Internship Programme undertaken by the author in the month of September, 1988. The methodology approach for the study include the following:

- close personal observation;

- application of questionnaire among officials;
- interview with key officials and staff;
- study of relevant materials; and
- interpretation of facts in the light of modern approach.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

Before turning our attention to the critical analysis of the organogram of the mill, let us in brief have a glimpse over two popular theoretical approaches i. e. (a) "line" and (b) the "line and staff" structure, since the study, as indicated earlier, is widely based on these two theoretical approaches.

Usually the basic two types of formal organisational structures are found and these are (i) the "Line" structure and (ii) "line" and "staff" structure.

The Line structure:

The line organisation structure also called the scalar structure which is the oldest and simplest type of organisation structure. It permits a clear line of authority to be maintained from the highest to the lowest level within the structure. Each member of the organisation is held directly responsible to only one superior. The line organisation structure is best suited to the needs of the small business, whose operations are divided into the function and elements of organisation, which have responsibility and authority and are accountable for the accomplishment of primary objectives. The line Managers identified as 'line' are not subject to command by staff positions. The line Manager, on the otherhand, does not have authority over "staff" positions but must give consideration to staff suggestions.

The decisive factor in the authority limitation of the relationship is that, in case of disagreement, the line manager has the right to make final operating decisions. The only exception to this occurs when specific delegation is made by the common line principal or when company policy becomes paramount.

The line within the company is the relationship that identifies and connects people working towards a common goal. This relationship may be considered as a chain of command, a chain of communication and a chain of accountability.

The Line and Staff Structure:

On the other hand, the line and staff organisation structure provides for both 'line' and 'functional' authority. The line departments are those, that are concerned directly to the accomplishment of the objective of the enterprise. The staff

departments, on the other hand, provide assistance in those more specialised areas in which the line managers may require help. By utilizing staff assistance, superiors and managers are able to confine their attention to the primary work of their departments. The differentiation between the 'line' and 'staff' is the assignment of roles. At any time, two or more people may work together, the distinction is a means of determining who makes decision directly related to the attainment of end results and who provides advice and service in making those decisions. More clearly to say, staff elements are those which have responsibility and authority for providing advice and service to the 'line' in the attainment of objectives of the enterprise. Dale³.

Staff refers to those organisation components that exist primarily for the purpose of providing advice and service to other units.

Organisational Structure of the Mill: An overview

In the light of conceptual framework discussed earlier, if we study the organisational structure of Khulna Newsprint Mill, then perhaps it would be clear to us that it is a "line" and "staff" organisation since it is an admixture of both "line" and "staff" departments. According to latest organisational structure, there are as many as seven 'divisions' namely; (1) Engineering and Maintenance Division (2) Medical Division (3) Quality Control and Research Division (4) Accounts Division (5) Forest Division (6) Production Division and (7) Administration Division. In addition to these, there are three 'departments' and these are (1) Sales and Shipping Department (2) M. P. I. C. Department and (3) Commercial Department. (See Figure-1)

Now let us give a comprehensive idea of each 'division' and 'department' of K. N. N. with a view to determining their 'role' in the accomplishment of primary objective of the enterprise and viewing their status i. e. whether "line" or "staff" in the structure. This will help understand the position of 'departments' as well as 'divisions' and create insight for further critical analysis of the organogram under study.

(1) Engineering and Maintenance Division:

This is one of the largest divisions of the industrial enterprise which is headed by a Chief Engineer and aided by five Additional Chief Engineers namely (1) Planning and Development (2) Civil (3) Electrical (4) Power plant and (5) Mechanical. Except civil engineering, other units are supported by Deputy Chief Engineers too. Other than these engineers, there are Maintenance Engineer, Instrument Engineer, Shift Engineer, Electrical Engineer and a good number of

Assistant Engineers. This division is equipped by variety of technical personnel such as Design and Drawing officer, General Foreman, Foreman (painting, carpentry, mason) Chemist, Boilior Operator, Turbine Operator, Crane Operator. Filter and a host of technical hands. Number of various personnel of this division exceed 500. This division, needless to say, is the life-blood of the mill and as such, it demands highest priority in all respect. Considering the role, commitment and priority of the division in the production process, it can be undoubtedly said that, it is a "line" deparment in the organisation.

2. Medical Division:

This division, although holds a "staff" position in the structure, is headed by a Chief Medical Officer who is an officer in the rank of Additional Chief Enginner, atleast in terms of salary. This is one of the smallest divisions of the enterprise having an Additional Chief Medical Officer, Deputy Chief Medical Officer and four medical officers.

3. Quality Control and Research Division:

Although this division may be viewed as both "line" as well as "staff" in the organisation, but considering its 'role' and importance and commitment to the organisation under study, may be wise to view it as a "Line" department. It was previously treated as "department" and was headed by an Additional Chief Chemist. Now its position has been enhanced and given the status of a 'division'. It is now headed by a Chief Chemist whose position has been horizontally shown in the structure. As implies, its primary objective is to ensure quality control of the product and conduct research for further improvement. Number of persons engaged in this division, including 2 chemists and 3 Assistant Chemists are around 70.

4. Accounts Division:

This is a division having strength of about 65 personnel of different categories. This division is at present headed by a Chief Accountant, an officer of Chief Engineer category, previously known as Controller of Accounts. His position has been all through juxtapositionally shown with other "Line" managers in the organogram, although it falls in the "staff" category. Although are officers like Deputy Controller and Assistant Controller of Accunt but these are not shown in the organogram.

5. Forest Division:

In the previous organogram, it was placed below the 'division' and was headed by a Deputy General Manager, who was an officer of Additional Chief

Enginner category. Now it is headed by Chief Manager who enjoys the status of a Chief Engineer. In my opinion, it should be treated as "Line" since the primary goal of the enterprise is directly related to this division.

6. Production Division:

This is the largest division in the organisation structure of Khulna Newsprint Mill having four units, namely; (1) Paper mill, (2) Pulp mill, (3) Chemist plant and (4) Finished goods and ware house. Chief Operation Manager is the head of this division, who is assisted by two Additional Chief Operation Managers, assigned with the charge of paper mill and pulp mill. The rest two units are looked after by two Operation Managers instead of Additional Chief Operation Manager. More than one thousand persons of different categories are posted in this division. This is a "line" division having key responsibility of production.

7. Administration Division:

This is the leargest division which falls in the "staff" category having several distinct units such as welfare, yard, colony, security, fire, school, personnel etc. This division is supposed to look after general administration of the mill. Administration of other teachnical divisions are looked after by respective heads of departments/divisions.

1. Sales and Shipping Department:

Sales and Shipping Department is looked after by a Manager. Below manager, there are two Deputy Managers, who are in-charge of sales and shipping. This ia a line department.

2. Commercial Department:

This department is headed by an Additional Chief Manager having two wings, namely local purchase and foreign purchase. Each of these wings are looked after by Deputy Manager. This is also a "Line" department.

3. MPIC Department:

This is a small department being looked after by a Deputy General Manager with the help of two managers.

A Cirtical Analysis of the Organisational Structure:

Sound organisation can contribute greatly to the success of the enterprise. It is not mere a chart rather a mechanism through which management directs, coordinates and controls various aspects of the enterprise. It is indeed the foundation of management. If organisation plan is wrongly designed, if it is a makeshift arrangement, then management is rendered difficult and ineffective.

Fish⁴. On the otherhand, if it is logical, clear-cut, streamlined, to meet present requirement, then the requisite of sound management has to be achieved. Sound organisation facilitates administration of the company and it encourages growth and diversification and help improve the operation of the business as a whole. Organisationally if a company is poor and fails to ensure proper planning, organising, motivating, coordinating and controlling, then the objective of the company will not be fully achieved. Importance of a sound organisation structure is therefore deeply felt by the management.

Now let us critically examine how far the organisation structure of Khulna Newsprint Mill is sound and able to meet the present day requirement of the enterprise.

In the present organisational structure (1986-87) of Khulna Newsprint Mill, seven clear-cut divisions (Engineering, and Maintenance, Medical, Quality Control and Research, Accounts, Forest, Production, Administration) and three departments (Sales and Shipping, M.P.I.C. and Commercial) have been shown. In the previous organogram (1985-86) five sectors were shown as 'divisions' wherein 'quality control' and 'forest' were not given the status of 'division'. There were five 'departments' namely Quality Control and Research, Forest, Sales and Shipping, MPIC and Commercial in the organisation structure of 1985-86. (See figure No. 2).

Mention may be made in this connection that, in Khulna Newsprint Mill 'division' Chief enjoys higher privilege in terms of salary and official 'status' compared to departmental heads. It is surprising to note that, although two areas namely (i) quality control and research and (ii) forest appeared to be very vital and considered to be treated as 'line' and nevertheless these positions had been relegated to other divisions since pretty long time. Quality control and research division is now headed by a Chief Chemist who is an officer in the rank of Chief Engineer. Perhaps the management has realised the gravity of the importance of quality control and research and as such, enhanced its position. Considering the volume of work and importance of the division, it may be said that the numbers of Chemist, Assistant Chemist and Sub-Assistant Chemist are less than requirements. However, the channel of promotion and number of other man power in the division seem to be sound.

Newly enhanced position of forest from 'department' to 'division' seem to be equipped with more officials. Now it is headed by a Chief Manager, an officer in the rank of Chief Engineer, which was previously headed by Deputy General Manager, an officer in the rank of Additional Chief Engineer. Number of Deputy

Forest Manager should be two, instead of present strength one, and their probable areas of action would be maintenance, expansion and research. Number of Forest Officers should be increased from 2 to 3. Three categories of supervisors should be merged into one to avoid duplication of work and their number may be reduced from 24 to 15. Similarly, three types of drivers may also be turned in to a single category, and their number may also be significantly reduced.

Juxtapositionally placement of three support services i. e. Accounts, Medical and General Administration with other "line" divisions seem to be major defect of the organisational structure.

These three services undoubtedly fall in the "staff" category, which can never play decision making role in the enterprise. Therefore, these 'divisions' can never be treated as "Line" and its heads should never be promoted to its topmost executive position. But their horizontal exposure in the organisational structure, similar type of designation and evenness in salary structure are not only confusing but also misleading to others and for the incumbent themselves. These three 'divisions' should have been treated as 'departments' and shown below the 'division' in the organogram (See figure-3). They should also be differently designated to avoid confusion and to give proper identification of their role in the enterprise. Previous designation of Controller of Accounts was much appropriate instead of present designation 'Chief Accountant', because this was helpful to distinguish "Line" and "Staff" departments and their specific role in the enterprise as well. Instead of Chief Medical officer, Chief Manager (Administration), it should have been: Medical Officer, Administrative Officer, due to their nature of role, categorisation i. e. their staff position in the enterprise. Their salary structure and channel of promotion should have been different as well. Salary structure does not, of course, suggest that it should be lesser than "line" departments; it may be even higher, if the post is highly technical and necessity demands. But the channel of promotion should not be similar to that of "line" department; that means "staff" position should not have any scope of holding top most executive position of the enterprise. And, if it be the fact, then why their position be juxtapositionally shown in the organogram and their designation be alike? Management should remember that in the structure every thing should be well defined, meaningful and should bear significance. Therefore, slight departure or slip from conceptual approach to organisation, may lead the incumbent and management towards destruction of the industry. Allen⁵.

Number of Accounts Officers and Assistant Accounts Officers should be reduced to a considerable extent since its present number (13) seem to be very high.

high. Number of L. D. A. Cum-Typist appeared to be extremely high (33) which should never exceed 10. Channel of promotion seem to be sound.

Man power in the medical division appeared to be almost sound. Post of Deputy Chief Medical Officer may be eliminated and the number of Lady Medical Officer may be increased from one to two.

As we have noted, administration division is one of the largest divisions of Khulna Newsprint Mill having distinct seven units. Work load in this division is very high. Each unit is looked after by one or more officers, who are more or less accountable to the General Administration Division. This division is equipped with sufficient man power, say about 350. Personnel of different categories are engaged in this division. In view of work load, number of Administrative Officers should be increased to 3 instead of present strength one.

Engineering and Maintenance Division is one of the largest divisions of this mill, which is more or less sufficiently manpowered. Civil Engineering department may also be supported by a Deputy Chief Engineer since the work load of this department is also high. Number of civil engineers may also be raised from one to two. Channel promotion appeared to be sound.

Production Division being the largest division in the mill, is sufficiently aided by man and materials. Its major two units, Paper mill and Pulp mill are assisted by Additional Chief Operation Engineer, but its other two small units i. e. Chemical plant and Ware House are deprived of Additional Chief Engineer. It is therefore suggested that one Additional Chief Engineer be appointed for these two units.

Strength of other technical hands are found to be sufficient. Channel of promotion seem to be perfect. The placement of three departments such as Sales and Shipping, MPIC and Commercial at the pedestal of the organogram seem to be incorrect. It should not have been under the direct control of the Managing Director. These departments should have come under a certain division or General Manager Co-ordination.

Now let us turn our attention to see how far the objective of the enterprise has been achieved during the last three decades.

The mill started its commercial production in 1959 with two paper machines having total capacity of production of 35,000 metric ton per year. An expansion programme was taken up in 1965 to raise the capacity of the mill to 52,000 metric ton per year by adding machine no. 3. Study reveals that machine no-1 could never

run at its rated speed of 1600 feet per minute and machine no.3 could not be operated trouble free due to serious electrical draw variation. The mill never achieved its rated capacity except in 1964-65. This mill achieved 100.44% of its rated capacity in 1964-65. Calculation shows that the mill achieved only 69.89% of the rated capacity during the last thirty years. Some years may be even detected when it achieved one third of the rated capacity (1971-72 33.86%) and even below one third (1976-77 30.39%) of its rated capacity.

Outwardly the organisational structure of the mill seems to be perfect. But a simple analysis will reveal some positive defects and inadequacies in the organogram. The manner in which the total work is divided and grouped into, seem to be faulty since it could not identify its priority sectors and give due importance to it. The equal treatment of accounts, medical and administration with engineering and maintenance and production division will bear the testimony of the faulty division of work. This ill designed organisation structure ignored the potentialities of technical people and wrongly gave undue importance to non-technical hands. This has failed to give proper incentive to the "Line" managers as well.

Adequate provision could not be made for planning and motivation in the structure. This will create stagnancy in development of potentialities among key position and lead them to frustration. Duplication of work and overloading in some departments, as indicated earlier, are some of the drawbacks of the organogram. Delegation of power, in few cases, has been hampered, as for example, M. P. I. C. sales and shipping and commercial departments have been placed at the pedestal of the organogram and unrepresented by division chief. Lack of provision for optimum use of technical personnel is a positive defect of the organogram. However, major defects detected in the organogram run as follows:

- imbalanced grouping of work;
- inappropriate span of supervision; and
- illogical placement of staff assistance.

Conclusion:

As we know, three aspects of organisation are considered to be important for analysis and study and these are: structure, process and behaviour. The analysis of organisation implies some definite purpose. Our point of view is that the modern managers' purpose must be organisational improvement. Thus we identified a fourth aspect in this study i. e. modification of organisational structure. This aspect

refers to the process by which managers improve the organisations' effectiveness through the development of a structure which is supposed to be more suitable and ideal for the organisation.

We believe, an ideal organisation is one, that operates with maximum efficiency, profitability and employee satisfaction. Our whole study was directed towards that end in this study. We believe, proposed organogram is more suitable to the needs of the industry under study.

Furthermore we believe, that the most effective organisation structure must be related to the situational factors, environmental demands and technological parameters. During my internship programme in Khulna Newsprint Mill. I studied the above mentioned factors, and in the light of my study and experience. I suggested modified structure. I firmly believe, the suggested organogram will be able to achieve the goal of the organisation in a much better way and be able to cope with the situational factor.

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ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক ১৯৮৬-৮৭

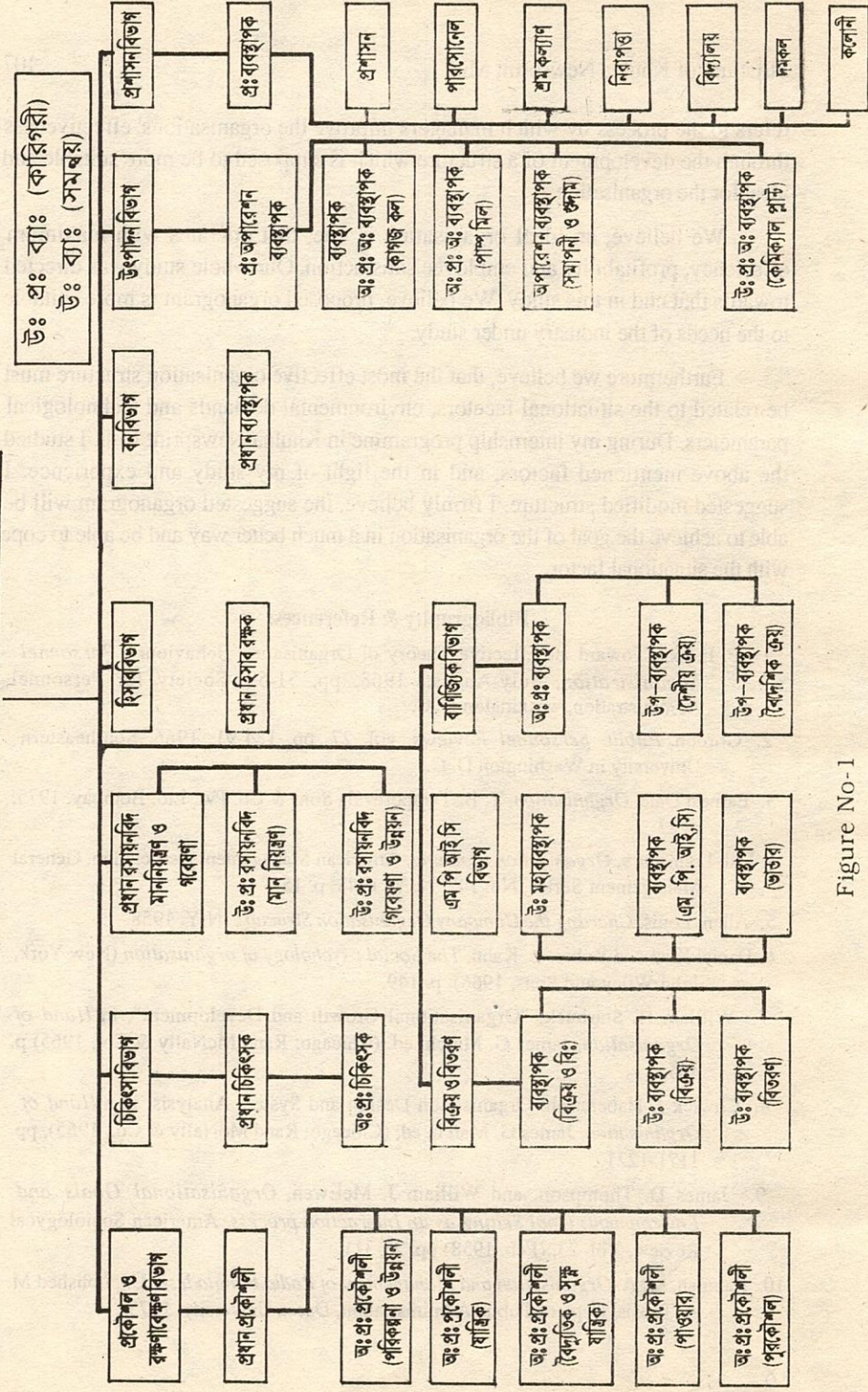


Figure No-1

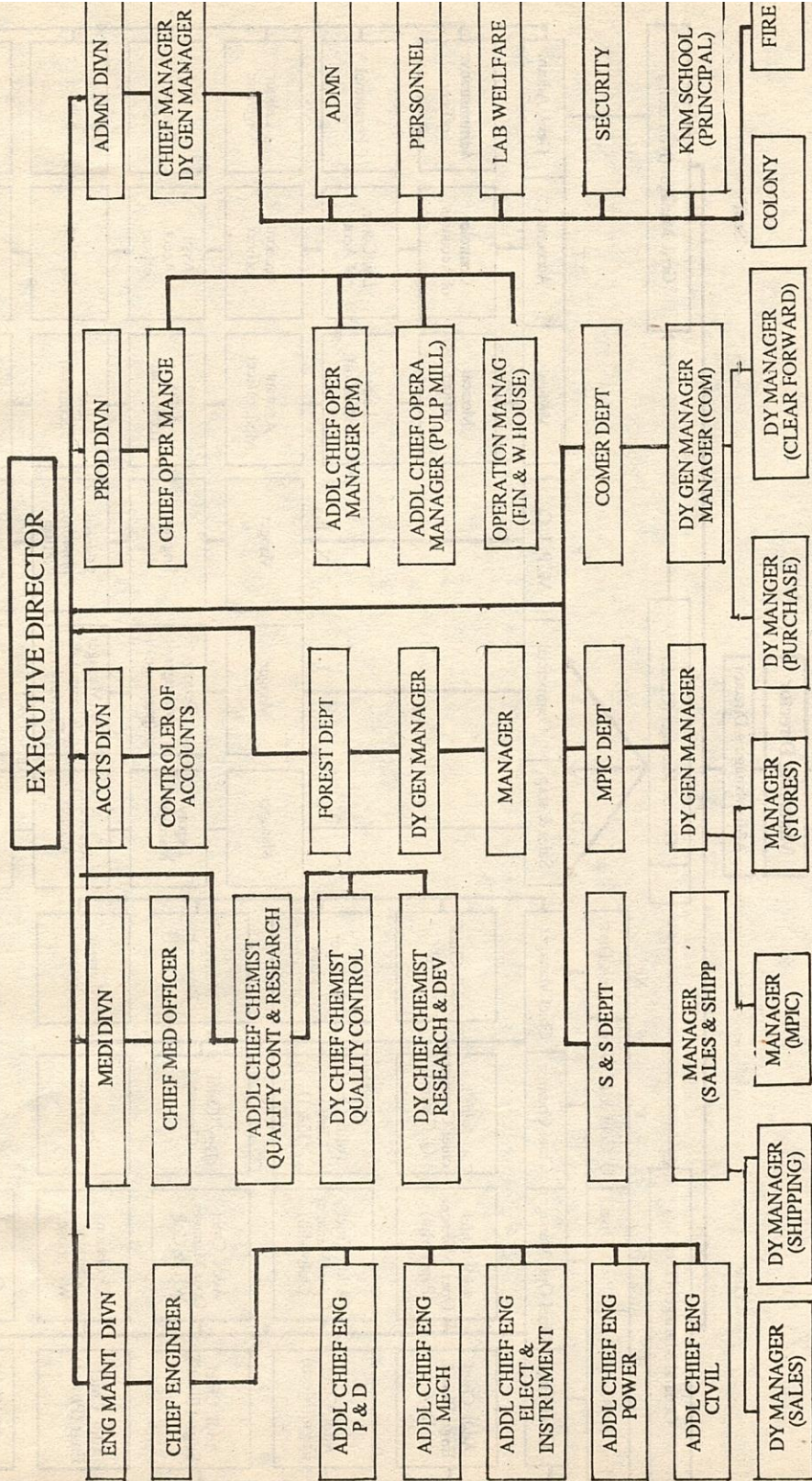
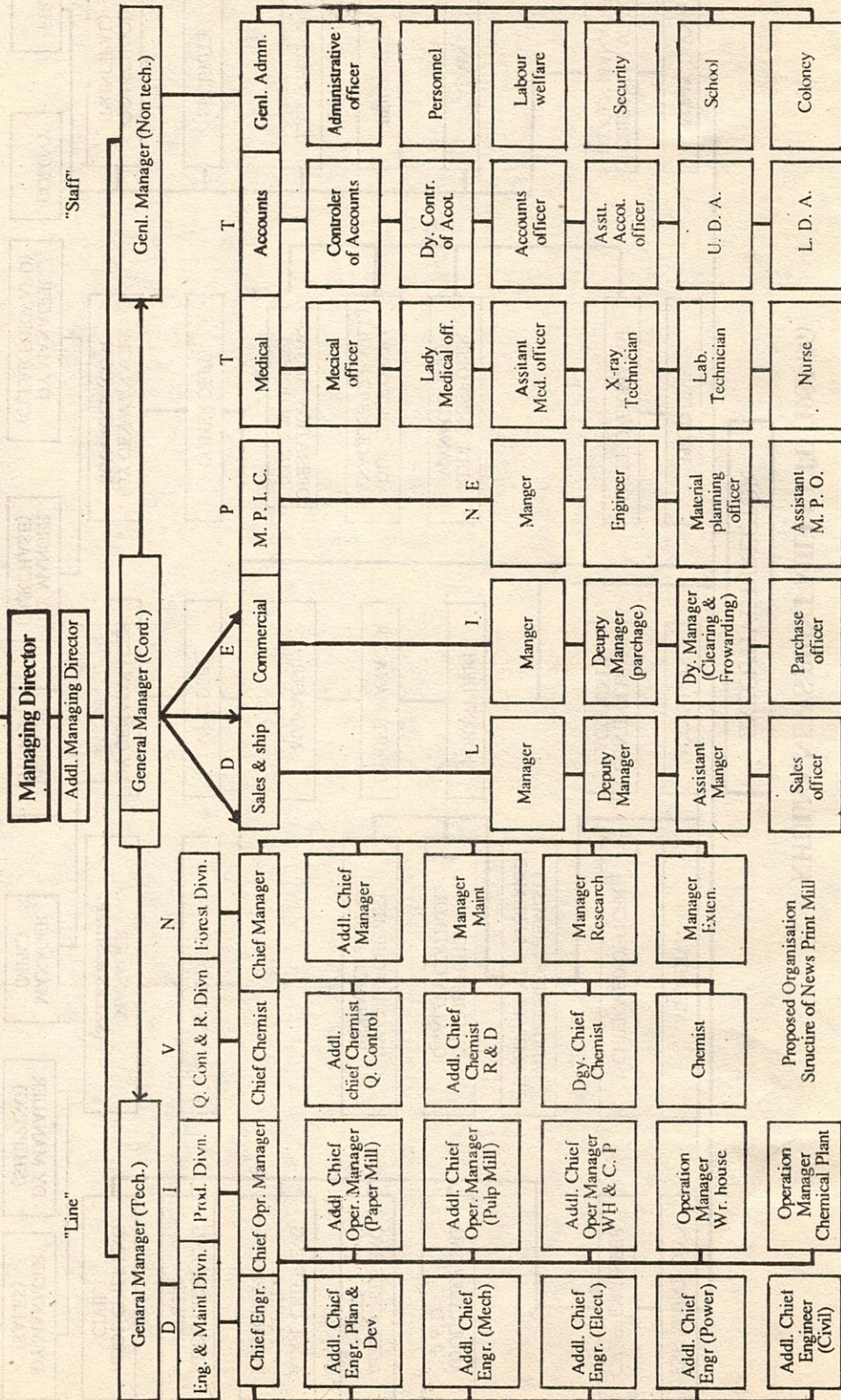


Figure No- 2

Suggested Modified Organogram of Khulna Newsprint Mill



Proposed Organisation Structure of News Print Mill

THE NATURE OF POLITICAL ORGANIZATION AND CLASS POSITION OF THE *BASTEE* - DWELLERS OF DHAKA CITY

- Muhammad Mizanuddin*

Introduction

The *bastee*-dwellers, being an important element of the urban economy, bound to affect the process of urbanization and the concomitant social organization in Bangladesh. That is why there should be serious attempt by the social scientists to study different aspect of their life. The present paper focuses on a very significant aspect of the social life of the *bastee*-dwellers, i.e. the nature of their political organization and class formation which has direct and indirect bearing on the city life on the one hand and on the social organization of the *bastee*-dwellers themselves on the other. Political consciousness followed by political organization is a significant aspect in the transformation of a 'class in itself' to a 'class for itself'. By economic standard the *bastee*-dwellers belong to 'class in itself'. Now the question arises whether they have the potentiality to transform their class position from 'class in itself' to 'class for itself'.¹ That is why the examination of the nature of political organization of the *bastee*-people assumes great importance. The problem is examined both from macro and micro perspectives. More clearly the nature of political organization of the *bastee*-people depend much on the macro political structure of the country on the one hand and their day to day life struggle and experiences on the other. Thus policies and programmes of the major political parties which shape the macro political structure of Bangladesh, where political life of the *bastee* -people is also a part, is examined. Then comes the nature of their political organization at the community that is, micro level. Both these aspects are analysed in this paper.

The Universe and Technique of Data Collection

Dhaka being one of the oldest cities of the sub-continent and presently the capital and main centre for administration, trade and commerce, education and other socio-cultural and political activities of our country attracts major portion of the immigrants who settle in the *bastees*. For these reasons three *bastees* of different

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locations of Dhaka city were selected for investigation in the present study. They were small, medium and large sized *bastees* located in the central, middle and peripheral zones respectively in the city. These *bastees* are known as Magbazar Railgate *bastee*, Agargaon Taltala *bastee* and Bhasantek *bastee*. The first one had about 100 households, the second one had approximately 750 households and the third one had around 2500 households. In these three selected *bastees*, 50 heads of the households (50 per cent) from the Magbazar Railgate *bastee*, 75 heads of the households (10 per cent) from the Agargaon *bastee* and 125 heads of the households (5 per cent) from the Bhasantek *bastee* (total 250 heads of the households) were selected for interview.

Purposive sampling was used to cover different occupational groups of the *bastee*. Data were collected following social survey method. The interviewing was done with the help of an interview guide to facilitate and ensure the depth and reliability of the qualitative data elicited.

Political Organization of the Slum-Dwellers in General

Before examining the nature of political organization of the *bastee*-people in Bangladesh, it is worth considering the findings of scholars in other countries regarding the nature of political organization of the slum dwellers. There are two kinds of views about the political consciousness of the slum dwellers.

The first view characterizes slum dwellers as political apathetic. They are believed to have little interest in politics and little awareness of the political event and lack internal political organization.^{1a} Such apathy or non-participation is so deeper that they alienate themselves from social, cultural, economic and political life of the city.²

On the contrary, the second view does not consider slum dwellers as politically apathetic. They are believed to have local level political organizations and political leaders. The slum dwellers participate in politics, though limited in scale in a number of ways and interact with the political activities of the city.³

However, both these views do not provide details about the degree of presence or absence of political consciousness and organizational structure of the slum-dwellers that have been examined. Therefore, the nature of political consciousness that is related to the question of class position and political organization remains untraceable. It should be made clear here that certain level of political consciousness which is manifested in exercising vote, knowing some political leaders including local level leaders etc. has very little to do with the

formation of political organization of the *bastee*-dwellers. The following sections deal with these problems in detail.

How the *bastee*-people are organized within the *bastee* and how they react towards the process of politicizing themselves depends much on the policies and programmes of the major political parties of the country. They have greater appeal to the people through their wider organizational networks and skills to organize and/or mobilize the masses. The policies and programmes of the major political parties to organize the people of the country also bear significance for the *bastee*-people because they are a part of the population. In other words, *bastee*-people interact with the policies and programmes of the major political parties of the country who demonstrate massive political power. Hence, it is necessary to examine the nature of major political parties and their respective policies and programmes and bring to light their bearings on the political life of the *bastee*-people.

In Bangladesh, the Awami League and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) are recognized as the major political forces of the country. Both parties had been in power successively and BNP is in power again after the general election in 1991. The rule of General Ershad and his Jaty party from 1982 to 1990 will also be examined in this regard.

The Awami League

The Awami League emerged as a distinct political party in the early 50's under the leadership of some dissidents from the ruling Muslim League who were mostly from the then East Pakistan. It was only the hegemony of the West Pakistani Muslim League Leaders but also the extreme disparity in every respect that had been created between the two wings (East and West) of Pakistan that led to the growth of Bengali nationalism and the rise of the Awami League.⁴ The Awami League leaders were mostly from the middle class background but relatively progressive than their Muslim League counterparts. However, their major objectives were to restore Bengali nationalism and promote economic and political/administrative interests of the Eastern wing under the existing economic and political set up but in a more fair and democratic environment. In essence, their struggle was to promote the interests of the middle class and the petty bourgeoisie of the Eastern wing who were being deprived of this power by the West Pakistani ruling elites and the bourgeoisie. Thus tension between the two wings grew and the demand for autonomy in the Eastern wing came in to forefront during the late 60's and the Awami League emerged as the most popular and organised political party. The middle class, the petty bourgeoisie, the students who were mostly the sons of

the peasantry and the professionals of the Eastern wing came forward to support the Awami League.⁵

While Bangladesh became liberated under the leadership of the Awami League, Shaikh Mujib's government had to nationalize all the banks, insurance companies, export-import trade as well as most of the large scale manufacturing enterprises of the country.⁶ The reason for such large scale nationalization was two fold. One was to satisfy a good number of party workers who radicalized themselves during the course of liberation struggle and demanding socialistic measures in state affairs after the liberation. The other and perhaps the more practical reason was that these plants owned by Pakistani capitalists were abandoned thus nothing could have been done except nationalizing them. There was also the absence of developed bourgeois and managerial classes who could take proper responsibilities of these organizations. Mujib's government tried to maintain good relationship with most of the countries of the world to ensure help to reconstruct the broken economy. However, his government's leaning was towards the socialist countries because of the vital support it received from the Soviet Union and her allies for independence. Except for a few of these aspects, the newly founded state remained bourgeois in nature. The petty bourgeoisie, a section of middle class, majority of the political leaders and workers of the ruling party, bureaucrats etc. were the main beneficiaries during the Awami League rule.

The policies and programmes of the Awami League could be better understood, if the nature of its leaders and organization are taken into account. Having political background mostly as Muslim Leaguers, the Awami League leaders came from the occupation background of lawyers, teachers, businessmen and agriculturists. Majority of them had affluent family backgrounds. Their commitment was to promote the interests of the rising middle class, petty traders and small industrialists, prosperous farmers and their children who were students and the lower echelon of civil service.⁷

It should be mentioned here that there had been a process of radicalization among a section of the Awami League. During its formative stage, a good number of left leaning leaders like Moulana Bhasani, a peasant and a grass root level leader and founding chairman of the Awami League, Mohammad Toaha, trade union leader, Muzaffar Ahmed and many others dominated the party. Because of the difference in regard to several policy matters this section of leaders left the Awami League and formed National Awami Party (NAP) in 1957.⁸ Thus shedding its radical forces, the Awami League emerged as a political party mainly of the rising petty bourgeoisie and middle class.

The Awami League could develop a good organizational network in all the districts, sub-divisions, thanas and even in some unions. Each of these party units became the platform for the local rising middle class, rich farmers, businessmen etc. Most of the finances of the party, besides the negligible membership fees, came from contribution by wealth members of the party and the businessmen. It should be mentioned here that there was no proper list of members and neither was a secretariat of the party that functioned regularly.⁹ There was no such democracy within the Awami League and the affairs of the party were managed by 'top echelon' and thus the policies and programmes being formulated were to serve certain classes, i. e. the rising middle class and the petty bourgeoisie of the country.

The Awami League and the Bastee-people

The nature of politics and the mode of operation of the political parties in the sub-continent had been largely determined and devised by the British colonial power. The British handed over political power to the leaders of the Muslim League and the Indian National Congress to rule the newly founded nation-states of Pakistan and India respectively in 1947. The post-colonial politics and the mode of operation of the major political parties (except different factions of the communist party majority of which worked in underground during the 50s and 60s) maintained their colonial legacy in the sub-continent in general and in Bangladesh in particular. It has been shown in the preceding section that the Awami League emerged as a distinct political party having the political legacy of the Muslim League especially its economic policies. Therefore, politicizing the *bastee* people and instigating them to organize and fight for getting social justice remain far from the policies and programmes of the Awami League. But before going to more details about this point, the mode of functioning of the major parties needs to be studied.

A small percentage of the population of the country are said to be involved in the functioning of a political machineries particularly the major political parties. A major political party has a central committee and local to district level committees in an ascending order. The committee members, especially the executive committee members, meet periodically and discuss matters of policies and programmes of the party. Their activities become hectic to build rapport with the masses and bring them into the support base of the party mainly during the general elections and partly during the local elections. When the election is over, the functioning of the political party and political leaders come to a very limited sphere which often shows indifference to the masses. It is only the election that brings the political leaders to

the common people. Since vote is the vehicle for political power, the political leaders try to create vote banks in the way they can.

The growth and proliferation of the *bastee* has direct or indirect link with the way the major political parties and political leaders operate. The political leaders the majority of whom live in the urban centre depend much on the local power brokers for their political leadership. They can not be leaders of a political party unless they can demonstrate their support-base. This is done through the support of the local power brokers who can mobilize people. The local power brokers, on the other hand, support and work in favour of those politicians who can extend to them money and patronization which are usually possible through holding public posts. Therefore, the relationship between the politicians and the local power brokers is reciprocal. Under such political framework, the local power brokers demonstrate considerable amount of power in their respective domains which they try to consolidate further for their own future. The establishment and proliferation of *bastees* have their roots in the way many of the local power brokers work. This is evident from the fact that many of the *bastee* of Dhaka have been established by these local power brokers which are identified by their names.¹⁰ This means the local power brokers encourage poor people of their native place to come to the city and settle in the *bastee* and they provide them with necessary protection. And the ultimate patronization comes from the politicians who receive political benefit out of the whole system. The local power brokers ensure the physical presence of many of these *bastee*-dwellers in the rallies, demonstrations etc. meant for the politicians. The *bastee*-dwellers who participate in these activities get nominal money for the day.¹¹ Though the situation is not so simple now-a-days because of the growth of innumerable *bastees* with large number of population which goes beyond the control of any political party and its leaders, the relationship between the *bastee*-dwellers and political leaders remains almost the same.

While the Awami League came to power after the liberation of Bangladesh in 1971, the leaders of this party followed the same policies and programmes that were being followed by the Muslim League leaders regarding the *bastee*-dwellers. Of the local power brokers who used to work for the Muslim League leaders, the majority rallied behind the ruling Awami League leaders. Therefore, there was no substantial change in the power structure in which the *bastee*-people are to interact and perform the political roles.

The precariousness of existence in terms of living and earning in the city lead the *bastee*-people to look for some sort of protection from the powerful persons. Such a person becomes available in the nearby locality before or after the

establishment of the *bastee*. This is the person who is a power-broker. As has been said earlier, he works for a more influential political leader and thus enjoys political/administrative as well as economic privileges in various ways. Many *bastees* of Dhaka city are identified with the names of these local power-brokers. This system of co-opting the *bastee*-dwellers in the political networks of the local power-brokers did not change during the Awami League rule.

The local power-brokers not only use the *bastee*-dwellers for their own political ends but many of them do make a good amount of money by a number of ways. One way is to build house (single small room made of bamboo coarse-mat) in the *bastee* which are rented out to the *bastee*-dwellers who do not have houses. Another way is to make rickshaw-garage and use the *bastee*-dwellers for rickshaw-pulling out of which good amount of money come to his pocket. The *bastee*-dwellers rely on the local power broker because he appears to be their protector as well as provider of livelihood and shelter. Thus, the local power-brokers happen to be the most influential personality in shaping the political outlook and behaviour of the *bastee*-people and there can be no doubt that their position have been strengthened during the Awami League rule.

The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP)

To understand the nature of a political party, its genesis and growth are to be taken into account. After the liberation of Bangladesh, there were manifold aspirations among the people on the one hand, and crisis and inefficient management of resources by the government on the other. The Awami League government headed by Sheikh Mujib tried to make a balance between the radicals and the rightist forces of the country by adopting centrist policies regarding the economy. Neither the radicals nor the rightist forces were satisfied with this policy. The opposition forces were also very critical about its pro-Indian and pro-Soviet block foreign policy. Because of the Pakistani experience of military supremacy in civilian administration, Sheikh Mujib's government was against a large standing army. There were also serious resentment among the army officers in particular while they found themselves neglected by the Awami League government. It should be noted that the army played a vital role during the liberation struggle of Bangladesh. On the contrary, Sheikh Mujib's government created *Rakhi Bahini*, a separate paramilitary force of offices which came mostly from the Awami League loyalists, to deal with insurgency both from the opposition political parties and the army. The army was very much enraged by this. The unprecedented floods in 1974 followed by famines and largescale starvation deaths in many rural areas of the country discredited the Awami League further. The government's unpopularity and isolation from the people aggravated after the fourth constitutional amendment

on January 25, 1975. This brought the country to Presidential form of government and single political party system under the banner BKSAL (Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League). Though this was a radical programme it appeared as a threat of dictatorial rule in the country to the opposition. There was also reason for the metropolitan bourgeoisie to be unhappy with this.

In this back drop, some of the army officers started the process of coup d'etat by assassinating Sheikh Mujib and bringing an abrupt end of the Awami League regime in August 1975. After a number of coups and counter coups General Ziaur Rahman, being the army chief, consolidated political power of the country and later on became the President in 1977.

After assuming office, the military rules headed by General Zia undertook series of policies and programmes. Their first task was to strengthen the armed forces. Since they had capitalistic political ideology and anti Soviet block foreign policy, the western countries particularly USA, Arabian countries, Pakistan and China became their natural allies. Country's economy was made more open to stimulate the inflow of the metropolitan capital along with the emphasis of privatization and more capitalistic measures in the economy. Close ties with the Islamic countries was given preference with the emphasis of Islam in the domestic socio-cultural life. All these were to please the western and Arab aid donors particularly the USA, Saudi Arabia, Libya etc.

The development funds received from the aid donors were channelled to local bodies to ensure loyalty of the local representatives. Arrangements were also made to distribute loans for different types of enterprises in the rural and urban areas. The regime also allowed the collaboration between Bangladesh private sector and the metropolitan capitalists. The aim of all these policies was to strengthen the growing capitalist (comprador bourgeoisie) class both in the industrial and agricultural sectors of the economy. The military rulers knew that the armed forces alone can not rule the country for long. That is why they needed the collaboration of the rising comprador bourgeoisie and the middle class. Considering this, General Zia took step to form a political platform. He received very encouraging response from the leaders of several factions of right wing and ultra-left parties who were anti Awami League in nature. In this process the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) ultimately came into being in 1978 with president Ziaur Rahman and Dr. Badrudduza Choudhury as its President and Secretary General respectively.¹²

The BNP and the Basteer-people

The BNP's policies of privatization, turning Awami League's policies of mixed economy to absolute capitalistic direction, diverting the development funds

to local bodies etc. strengthened the hands of the local power brokers. Significant changes also took place in the political structure of the country. Instead of increased democratization and people's representation which was one of the goals of the liberation struggle, bureaucratic and oligarchic political set up that began to emerge during the Awami League rule became matured in the hands of the military rulers who worked under the banner of BNP. Common people were already disillusioned with politics seeing the adverse political and socio-economic situation after the liberation that caused them great sacrifice. Prior to this, people used to rally behind the political leaders to uphold the causes of the nation. While BNP headed by General Zia came to power, people were less enthusiastic about the political process. Moreover, the army generals and the host of political leaders who came forward to form the BNP had no such organizational network among the people. In such a situation, they had to depend much on the local power-brokers for several political activities such as participating in the elections, arranging big rallies, demonstrations etc. which were essential to remain in power. The local power-brokers who kept good command over the *bastee*-people of their respective domains, ensured votes and the presence of the *bastee* -dwellers in the rallies and demonstrations in favour of the political leaders. The *bastee* -dwellers who provided such service were either paid for the day or were obliged to do that for some other economic reasons. In this process, the political and economic positions of the local power brokers were further strengthened during the BNP rule. It should be mentioned here that these power brokers belonged not only to BNP but also to the Awami League and some other political parties. But when BNP was in power and able to distribute more economic and political patronages than the others, it could attract major percentage of the local power brokers into its organizational fold.

Under such circumstances the *bastee*-people more on the local power broker who could provide them with economic relief as well as political security to stay in the squatter settlements and work in the city for which they found themselves always vulnerable.

The Rule of General Ershad and the *Bastee*-People

There were factions in the army that arose due to personal as well as ideological conflicts among the Generals and officers during Zia's rule which were manifested in several attempts of abortive coups. The assassination of General Zia by a rebel group of the army on May 30, 1981 in Chittagong, the second largest city of Bangladesh, was also a case in point. General Ershad, who was chief of the army staff at that time, and the majority of the other army units stood against the

coup attempt and it was thus foiled. The army officers including a General who said to be involved in that attempt were killed. Justice Abdus Sattar, the Vice-President of Zia's government, took over as the president of the country and the BNP continued to rule. General Ershad emerged as a powerful personality in this crisis and started to consolidate his position for the future Presidentship, the ultimate power of the country. Within a short period, he seized the power from BNP headed by Justice Abdus Sattar and proclaimed martial law on March 24, 1992 in the country. The main slogan that he put forward to seize power was 'crusade against rampant corruption' which he termed number one enemy of the nation.¹³ What followed was the repetition of General Zia's way of getting into politics and formation of a political party with only slight variation.

The rule of General Ershad and his Jaty Party is marked by more privatization of the public sector and more dependency on the metropolitan bourgeoisie and the Islamic countries in the economic front and more privilege and power to the army officers, the comprador class and the power brokers in the socio-political front. Thus these classes became the main beneficiaries of the Ershad regime. The regime was also more isolated, in comparison to the earlier regimes, from the people because of its weak organizational network. Elections were made a farce and opposition movements were suppressed either through the use of coercive machinery or by bribe that made the regime more isolated. In such a political vacuum, local power brokers grew stronger with more political and economic strength on whom the regime had to depend much for conducting the political activities viz. the elections, rallies, demonstrations etc. The regime could manage to remain in power till 1990 because of the disunity among the opposition parties particularly the Awami League and the BNP. However, most of the opposition political parties came together on the issue of the ouster of General Ershad and the restoration of democracy. The Ershad regime collapsed in late 1990 while the opposition movement took a revolutionary turn. General Ershad was forced to resign and put on trial for his rampant political and financial corruptions, which he declared number one enemy when he captured power.

As the local power brokers grew stronger, the use of the *bastee* -people for meeting their political ends also enhanced during the Ershad regime which became more isolated from the people. In this process the *bastee*-people are caught more in the grips of the local power brokers who maintained their status quo by joining the ruling party after every successive change in the Government. The *bastee*-people find it more convenient to be individualistic and *lumpen*¹⁴ than to be conscious about class interests. This also explains the internal weakness of the *bastee* as a

community to generate cohesiveness and leadership which are the subjects of the following sections.

Community Life in the Baste

The nature of class consciousness, political organization and leadership of the *baste*-dwellers also depend on the way they interact with each other and share a community life. Since the *baste*-people are isolated from the urban social structure and encapsulated within the social boundaries of the *baste*, their community life can be the basis of the fulfilment of some of their fundamental social needs. Family, being the primary social unit, functions in the *baste* in arranging food, shelter, gratification of sex, reproduction and socialization of the new generation and the instincts of love and affection among members. But while many families live together in the *baste* being isolated from the urban social structure some sorts of community activities are necessary for the pursuit some goals viz, having law and order, arranging marriages of the young members, performing religious and recreational activities etc. that go beyond the scope of the family. However, to proceed to examine the community life of the *baste*-dwellers the following questions seems to be pertinent. The questions are: How is their social network constituted? How do they resolve interpersonal and interfamilial conflicts? How do they face any crisis that might arise from within or outside of the *baste*? How do they arrange religious, recreational and other activities that require group involvement?

Social Networks of the Baste-People

Social networks of the *baste*-people can be seen from two aspects. One is their interaction within the *baste* and the other is the interaction outside the *baste*. Though the *baste*-people are socially isolated from the urban social structure, they are not totally cut off from it. The rickshaw-pullers, day labourers, maid servants and all other occupational groups of the *baste* interact with various people of the city for economic reasons. They also interact with social welfare workers and programmes that deal with the improvement of educational, economic and physical conditions of the *baste*. The participation of the *baste*-people in the activities of the major political parties through the local power brokers has been already mentioned. Besides these they also interact with the neighbouring residential areas of the city for having water, watching some one's TV, consulting physicians of the city for having medicine from the health centres etc. All these interactions give the *baste*-people an opportunity to be aware of and linked with the city life. Even then, they remain socially isolated from the city. Such isolation is explained in terms of community activities which is determined by community feeling. Though there is

no community life as such for the city people because of the fact that they are highly individualistic and isolated from each other, they belong to formal organizations and several associations. The offices, industrial plants, markets, parks, clubs, recreational centres and all other things the city has are meant for them. Therefore, the whole city appears like a giant community where its members are socially linked to each other by community feeling or, in other words, city feeling. But the very precarious nature of income and living (including housing) of the *bastee*-people dictate them to think that they are not members of the city. They experience that whatever the city has are not meant for them. They also experience a wide discrepancy between the *bastee* and other residential areas in terms of housing, civic facilities, standard of living, life style and value orientation etc. which can not go together. They find most of the city people are literates while most of them are illiterates. In such circumstances, social interactions in the form of marriage, kinship, religious accomplishments, recreational activities etc. appear to be impossible between the *bastee* and the city. Thus, whatever the linkages the *bastee*-people have with various persons, groups and institutions of the city can not be identified as part of their social or community life though their thinking and interpersonal adjustments are influenced by these interactions.

Our data relating to the social networks within the selected *bastees* reveal the fact that kinship, region of origin, neighbourhood, intimacy or friendship etc. together form the basis of interpersonal and interfamilial relations. This basis of social networks within the *bastee* is associated with the process of their joining the *bastee*. It has been pointed out that the rural migrants come to the city and join the *bastee* through a process. They get the information about how to go to the city and how to get the job and settle down in the *bastee* from the residents of the *bastee* who had migrated to the city from the same locality. These old residents (they may be kin) also help the in-migrants in getting the job and setting down in the *bastee*. Through this process, the rural migrants join the *bastee* one or in a group and form a cluster of people having the same regional background. Kinship and locality are the two important factors at the time of joining the *bastee*. Then they form the neighbourhood. Therefore, the process of joining the *bastee* determines their social networks to a greater extent. But when the *bastee* enlarges with continuous inflow of new in-migrants having the same or different regional background, such social networks no longer remain that much alive. In a life situation which keeps most of them very busy all day, physical proximity in terms of housing (next door neighbourhood) and/or working make their intimate social networks. More clearly, intimate friendship is built up among the close neighbours and working mates on the basis of reciprocal helping attitudes especially during the time of crisis

(accidents, illness, etc.). This is the most intimate social network they make other than the family. This explains their highly individualistic and lonely life within the *bastee* too.

Maintainance of Law and Order and Resolution of Conflicts within the *Bastee*

There is no formal or informal political organization in the *bastee* to maintain law and order and resolve interpersonal and inter familial conflicts. While asked about the nature and magnitude of law and order situation and conflict within the *bastee*, the respondents of all three selected *bastees* mention that they hardly have any such problems that are to be dealt with. They explain that everybody is busy in the *bastee* for their daily earnings. On the other hand, they do not have any property, other than a small hut, that may arise as a source of conflict in the *bastee*. However, they have intrafamilial conflicts that arise mostly within husbands and wives and some occasional quarrels among house wives due to children's misdeeds. But these are often minimized automatically without others intervention. Since everybody is aware about their shared precarious life situation, quarrels on any trivial matter do not sustain long.

While asked about the local level leaders who come to help during their personal, familial and community level crisis, their responses were negative. This means that they do not have any persons who come forward as leaders and help them during personal and community level crises. There is no such persons who can have command over other fellow *bastee* -dwellers on the matters of law and order situation or on any other occasions. Since everybody's socio-economic conditions are more or less similar and they are to work hard all the day, one is in a position to bother about the affairs of the community. For the same reason, they do not have community level religious activities and religious leaders. There is neither a *bastee* union nor trade unions or occupational unions in the selected *bastees*. None of the *bastee*-dwellers belong to any political party. They explain that any such organizational activities require some organizers, membership fee and action plans. Since most of them work individually in the informal sector and busy all the day, there is no time for any one to organize or to be organised. Nobody will be willing to pay the membership fee without which no organization can run. There is also an absence of trust on others especially on financial matters. All these circumstances act as barriers to the growth of local level leaders within the *bastee*. It should be made clear here that the relationship of the *bastee*-dwellers with the local power brokers exists not at the formal but at the personal level. That is why the

the *bastee*-dwellers do not belong to any political party or organization though they are being used by the local power brokers whose political ends are sufficiently met.

However, informal and very loose type of leadership is to be observed in the selected *bastees*. The old resident of the *bastee* who provides moral help to the new comers during settling down and getting job in the city are often consulted in different matters. He advises what to do and what not to do. His role is, therefore, more of an adviser than a leader. He does not have any command over in the way a leader usually has because he lacks socio-economic superiority over others. Other than these, there arises natural leadership during the time of general community crisis or any matter that is related to the general interest of the *bastee*. There can be a threat of eviction of the *bastee*. Also there are some social welfare programmes for the betterment of the community. In either of the situation some persons emerge as natural leaders who can address the problem properly while others rally behind them (the leaders). Therefore, the *bastee*-people have dependency on each other only on matters of general problem of the *bastee* and there arises some natural leaders but not in the conventional sense of the term. These leaders are the products of a particular situation and when the situation changes, they no longer remain relevant and are ignored as leaders in the *bastee*.

Socio-Cultural Activities in the *Bastee*

Several socio-cultural activities take place in a community life. Among these marriage ceremonies, religious rituals and recreational activities are quite prominent. They not only serve to increase cohesiveness among the members but also help to fulfil their natural socio-psychological instincts. Keeping these facts in mind, efforts were made to examine the nature of socio-cultural activities in the selected *bastees*. The *bastee* people were found to be less involved in these activities. As has been already pointed out in the preceding chapter, marriages take place in the *bastee* with very little involvement of members and with very little formalities. The young members of the *bastee* even prefer court marriages for simplification and economy in terms of time and money to observe marriage rituals. The parents and senior members of the *bastee* do not usually discourage it. They have a little say in the matters of their sons who are earning members. The reason is very simple. Once the young son becomes economically active, the parents lose command over him because the parents do not have any assets and properties which are to be inherited by the son. Neither the parents can provide the son any financial help. In such a situation whatever the young earning members prefer to do, the parents pose no obstacles so long as it does not affect others' interests.

Religious festivals especially Idul Fitar and Idul Azha are being celebrated with great enthusiasm by Muslims of all walks of life on Bangladesh. The rural poor also celebrate these day at a community level. But the *bastee*-people are not in a position to celebrate these festivals level. But the *bastee*-people are not in a position to celebrate these festivals at a community level. Most of the male members particularly the rickshaw pullers go for work even on these days. They earn double or triple wages these days because people pay visits to their friends and relatives and give more money to the rickshaw pullers on the auspicious days. Others particularly women, children and old male members go door to door and to religious congregations to collect charities meant for poor in the form of cash, used clothes, food etc. For these reasons the *bastee* people keep themselves busy in earning more money and collecting charities outside the *bastee* during the religious festival days which contribute to the absence of their own community level participation.

In every Muslims residential area, a mosque is built as a general practice so that the members can observe day-to-day religious prayers. In every mosque, there is an *Imam* (Muslim priest). Other than religious activities, the mosque also functions as a source of meeting place where discussion and decisions in the form of consensus on matters of community affairs are generally taken. The *Imam* plays a vital role in this process. Efforts were made in this research to examine the role of mosque and *Imam* in the community affairs of the *bastee*. No mosque even substandard in form and no *Imam*, even an informal one, was found in any of the *bastees* that were investigated. The reason is that the *bastee* people hardly have time and money and do not have the overall culture orientation to observe religious activities. They also lack religious education. Since there is no *Imam* among the *bastee* dwellers there is no initiative to build mosque and motivate the *bastee* people for religious activities. In such circumstances, the *bastee* people lack religious institutions and activities that act as a linking force among the community members.

So far as the recreational activities are concerned, the *bastee*- people do not have any cultural organizations that would provide them with entertainment facilities. Some of the *bastee*-dwellers, particularly the young male members, go to watch cinema, but it is outside the *bastee*. At the *bastee* level, they do not have any recreational arrangement other than chatting and playing cards in a group when they have leisure time to spend. They also meet in the small grocery store or in any such place in the *bastee*. It is not true that all the *bastee* members meet in these places but only those who small groups on the basis of intimacy do meet. These grouping are not fixed and closed. Any *bastee* member can join them. Since the place is

congested and over crowded both males and females participate in gossiping either in the same group or forming different groups of males and females. All these suggest that there is no community level participation in the recreational arrangements of the *bastee*.

Nature of Class-consciousness and Class Formation in the *Bastee*

The social networks and arrangements for law and order, religious, recreational and other socio-cultural activities of the *bastee*-people that have been discussed in the preceding sections clearly testify that they hardly have any community life. Though so many families live together in a congested area, they do not participate in a community life even in maintaining law and order, religious and recreational activities. Family appears to be the only social unit to which they attach themselves in a meaningful way but that is also not so harmonious and stress-free. All these are indicative of their economic hardship and vulnerable life situation which forced them to become individualistic and lumpen in nature. Their vulnerability is further strengthened by the political structure of the country on the one hand and the nature of community life they are forced to accept on the other. This has a wider bearing on the nature of class-consciousness and class formation. When a group of individuals who live together become socially isolated from one another there remain very little change of class formation. This is the case with the *bastee*-people. Though they live in a close physical proximity to each other and they have some political consciousness, they remain socially isolated from one another. Their political consciousness cannot be equated with class consciousness. Class-consciousness could be measured by the existence of a political organization of their own and the identification of the rival class. In case of the *bastee*-people, they can not identify a rival class for whom their economic interests and physical existence in the city seems to be threatened. Rather, they find the middle and upper class people as provider of livelihood. It is true that they experience a great inequality existing between them and the city people (the middle and upper classes). It is very likely that they carry within themselves a deep frustration and anger against the powerful and affluent sections of the people many of whom treat them in a sub-standard way. But their past experience of semi-starvation in the village and present precariousness of living in the city force them to be individualistic and lumpen. Consequently they are unable to form a class of their own with a political organization that could educate them about the broader and real perspectives that create the conditions of their miserable life situation which they need to change in order to change their fate in a group or class.

It is evident from our earlier discussion that the economic conditions and the nature of community life are not solely responsible for deterring class formation and preventing the crystallization of class consciousness in the *bastee*. The policies and programmes of the major political parties and the overall political culture of the country also has a significant bearing on this. It has been shown how the major political parties, with the help of their local power-brokers, use the *bastee*-dwellers for their political ends.

It is, therefore, the economic conditions, the overall political structure of the country and the nature of community life in the city determine the individualistic and lumpenized character of the *bastee*-people, which are unfavourable to the growth of class consciousness and concomitant political organization in the *bastee*. It is also a fact that the *bastee*-people are unable to find a direct oppressor or exploiter class against whom they feel the need to get organized; rather they find the city-people sympathetic towards them. They also find the city-people are the providers of their livelihood which is essential for their very existence. They also cannot forget the fact that they had to lead a life of semi-starvation in the rural areas from where they had migrated. The combination of all these factors result in the *bastee*-dwellers to be individualistic and lumpen than to be class conscious and politically active.

Reference

1. The concepts 'class', 'class in itself' and 'class for itself' are presented in the Marxist literature in the following way.

Marx writes, "In so far as millions of families live under conditions of existence that separate their mode of life, their interests and their culture from those of other classes and put them in hostile opposition to the latter, they form a class. In so far as there is merely a local inter-connection among these small-holding peasants, and the identity of their interests begets no community, no national bond and no political organization among them, they do not form a class". (Karl Marx: *Poverty of Philosophy*, Chapter 2, Section 5, pp. 75-76).

Marxist writers explain further that due to economic exploitation, the mass of the people are transformed into workers (have nots) that creates the common situation and common interests of this class. Thus this mass becomes a class vis-a-vis the exploiters, but not yet a 'class for itself'. The 'class in itself' transforms into 'class for itself' while fully equips with class consciousness and political organization to defend its own interests. See T. B. Bottomore, *Dictionary of Marxist Thought*, Oxford University press, London, 1983, pp. 74-75.

- 1a. See Lewis, O., *La Vida*, Vintage Books, New York, 1968, p. 51.
2. See Abrams, C., *Housing in Modern World: Man's Struggle for Shelter in an Urbanizing world*, Faber and Faber, London, 1964, p. 20.
3. These views are put forward by many scholars. See, Wiebe, P. D., *Social Life in an Indian Slum*, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., Delhi, 1975; Desai, A. R. and S. D. Pillai, *A Profile of an Indian Slum*, University of Bombay, Bombay, 1972, pp. 209-217; Lynch, O. M., "Potters, Plotters, Prodders in a Bombay Slum: Marx and Meaning or Meaning versus Marx" in *Urban Anthropology*, 8(1), spring, 1977, pp. 1-27; Perlman, J. E., *The Myth of Marginality: Urban Poverty and Politics in Rio de Janeiro*, University of California, Berkeley, 1979; and Majumdar, T. K., *Urbanizing poor: A Sociological Study of Low-Income Migrant Communities in the Metropolitan City of Delhi*, Lancers Publications, New Delhi, 1983, pp. 225-52.
4. See Ghosh, S., *The Awami League*, Academic Publishers, Dhaka, 1990, pp. 1-22.
5. See Y. V. Gankovsky and L. R. G. Polanskaya; *A History of Pakistan*, 'NAUKA' Publishing House, Moscow, 1964, p. 194. Also see M. B. Nair, *Politics in Bangladesh*, Northern Book Centre, New Delhi, 1990, Chap. II (Genesis and Development of the Awami League).
6. See Hossain, M., "Nature of State power in Bangladesh", *The Journal of Social Studies*, Dacca University, Dacca, No. 5, October 1979, pp. 24-28.
7. See M. B. Nair, *Politics in Bangladesh*, *op. cit.*, pp. 108-25.
8. See Sen, R., *Political Elites in Bangladesh*, K. P. Bagchi and Company, Calcutta, New Delhi, 1987, pp. 156-165.
9. See M. B. Nair, *op. cit.*, pp. 125-140.
10. See 'Slums and Squatters in Dhaka City', A Report prepared by the Centre for Urban Studies, University of Dhaka, Dhaka, 1988, pp. 51-100.
11. These facts are widely known and spoken in Bangladesh in the informal level. But these hardly appear in the formal level, i. e. in the written form so far. However, many of the *bastee*-dwellers admitted these facts.
12. For more details about General Zia's regime see Mattern, W., "Bangladesh: Day of Generals", *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 14 November, 1975, pp. 10-11; Lifschultz, I., "Bangladesh: The crisis has not passed", *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 5 December 1975, pp. 28-31; Sen, R., *Political Elites in Bangladesh*, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-38.
13. See *Bangladesh Observer*, 25 March, 1982.

14. Marx described the *lumpen proletariat* as the 'refuse of all classes' a disintegrated mass' comprising 'ruined and adventurous offshoots of the bourgeoisie, vagabonds, discharged soldiers, discharged jailbirds pick pockets, brothel keepers, rag-pickers, beggars' etc. The main significance of the term is not so much its reference to any clearly defined social group which has a major socio-political role, as in drawing attention to the fact that in extreme conditions of crisis and social disintegration in a capitalist society large numbers of people may become separated from their class and come to form a 'free floating' mass which is particularly vulnerable to reactionary ideologies and movements. See Bottomore T. B. (ed.), *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought*, Blackwell Publisher Ltd., England, 1985, pp. 292-93.

Appendices

Table-1

Some Basic Aggregate Information About Slums and squatter Settlements (clusters) in Dhaka Municipal Corporation Area

Type of Information	Statistics
Total number of settlements identified	1125
Total area in Acres	1340
Estimated household (in 1125 clusters)	146400
Estimated population (in 1125 clusters)	878400
Total estimated population including mini clusters	1010042
Estimated number of structures	80000
Average number of clusters per ward	15
Average number of households per ward	1950
Average number of population per ward	11700
Average size of a cluster (in acre)	1.20
Average amount of slum area per ward	18 acres/ 54 bighas
Density of population (per square mile/km)	420000/162000
Density of population (per acre)	655
Percentage of clusters upto one bigha (0.33 acre) in size	61
Percentage of clusters upto one acre (3 bighas) in size	81
Average number of household per cluster	130
Average number of population per cluster	780
Percentage of clusters established after 1971	74
Estimated median size of a cluster (area/households/population)	13 kathas/30/180
Modal pattern of monthly house rent	200-250 taka
Percentage of clusters inundated (partly or fully) by 1987 flood	65

Sources: *Slums and squatters in Dhaka City: A Report*, prepared by Centre for Urban studies, Department of Geography, Dhaka University, 1988. p. 24.

Table-2

Percentage Distribution of Occupation of the Respondents

Occupation	Number	Percentage
Rickshaw-pulling	95	38.0
Construction work*	39	15.6
Daily wager**	31	12.4
Maid Servant	25	10.0
Repairing Work	10	4.0
Transportation Work	10	4.0
Service (Guard/peon etc.)	10	4.0
Others***	30	12.0
Total	250	100.0

* Construction workers are also daily wagers because their income is also fixed for a day. But their nature of work is different from those of daily wagers. However, among the construction workers who help the mason by carrying bricks may, along with some daily wagers, be called loaders. But there is a difference between a loader and a daily wager. A loader who generally carry loads in the railway station, bus terminal, ferry *ghat* (station) or in any public place and gets remuneration for carrying each load. Whereas some of the construction workers' and daily wagers' remuneration is fixed for the day though they carry loads like a loader.

** Majority of the daily wagers work in loading and unloading things and therefore may be called loaders.

*** Others include petty businessmen and shop keepers, perambulators, beggars, fishermen, tube-well drillers, barbers etc. whose percentages are less than four.

Table-3

Percentage Distribution of Occupations and Daily Income of the Bastees-Dwellers

Occupation	Daily Income in Taka						
	10 and below	11-30	31-50	51-70	71-90	91 & above	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Rickshaw pulling	-	-	20.0	17.2	0.8	-	38.0
Construction work	-	2.4	8.4	4.0	0.8	-	15.6
Day labour	-	2.0	8.8	1.2	0.4	-	12.4
Maid servant	10.0	-	-	-	-	-	10.0
Repairing work	-	-	2.4	1.2	-	0.4	4.0
Transportation work	-	-	1.2	1.2	0.8	0.8	4.0
Service (low grade)	-	0.8	3.2	-	-	-	4.0
Others	1.6	1.6	5.2	2.8	0.8	-	12.0
Total	11.6 (N=29)	6.8 (N=17)	49.2 (N=123)	27.6 (N=69)	3.6 (N=9)	1.2 (N=3)	100.0 (N=250)

Table-4

Percentage Distribution of Different Sizes of Family in the Three Selected Bastees of Dhaka

Size of Family	Bastees			
	Magbazar* %	Agargaon** %	Bhasantek*** %	Total %
02 and below	1.2	1.2	2.0	4.4
03 - 04	8.0	16.0	15.2	39.2
05 - 06	8.8	7.6	20.4	36.8
07 - 08	0.8	4.4	8.0	13.2
09 - 10	0.8	0.8	3.6	5.2
11 and more	0.4	-	0.8	1.2
Total	20.0 (N=50)	30.0 (N=75)	50.0 (N=125)	100.0 (N=250)

* = Small Bastees

** = Medium Bastees

*** = Large Bastees

ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME: AN EMERGING CRISIS TO HUMAN HEALTH

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INTRODUCTION

In the recent decade, medical science has encountered a new deadly disease, known as ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME (AIDS) which is posing a serious health problem on a global scale. The silent pandemic of AIDS was first detected in USA in 1981 and thereafter is spread like an epidemic in Western Europe, Sub-Saharan Africa and Caribbean countries. Although until mid-1980's, this deadly and fatal AIDS apparently seemed to be a disease of the affluent societies, now it is appearing virtually everywhere across all the five continents. AIDS cases are now markedly increasing in developing countries of Latin America and Asia which were once conceived as 'safe zone' of this particular malady. Most striking, the impact of the AIDS pandemics on women is growing alarmingly. WHO estimates that in the first decade of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, about 500,000 cases of AIDS occurred in women and children, most of whom were unrecognized and initially were not considered to be potential risk group. Epidemiological surveys reveal that AIDS has become a leading cause of death for women aged between 20-40 in the countries of North America, Western Europe, and Sub-Saharan Africa.

M. C. Merson observes on the eve of "Third World AIDS Day" on December 1, 1990: "The impact of AIDS is not just a matter of numbers. AIDS affect women not only as individuals who are HIV infected but also in their multiple roles in society and the family, as health care providers, educators, wives,

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mothers and income providers World AIDS day reminds us that to face the epidemic of AIDS, we must work together sparing no efforts and transcending all differences within and between societies and countries. Future generation will expect no less from us."¹ No matter in whatever ways the HIV virus first originated (an issue yet unresolved), from medical point of view, AIDS is considered today as the greatest public health problem as well as a challenge to science, medicine and society. The lethal disease has threatened millions of people around the world at the brink of death regardless of their age, sex, race, socio-economic status of geographical boundary, in so far as the mortality of AIDS patients approaches to nearly hundred percent. On the basis of accumulated evidences, Roy Anderson, an epidemiologist at London's Imperial College of Science and Technology perhaps rightly noted that "One has just seen the beginning of an epidemic which will move on a very long time scale. As the new deadly disease known as AIDS began killing people throughout the world, it looked to be a straight-forward medical problem, a plague to be combated with intense scientific research and a heavy dose of public awareness."²

MAGNITUDE OF AIDS EPIDEMIC IN GLOBAL CONTEXT

By now, the HIV - the AIDS virus - is already present in some of the modernizing societies of Asia, such as in Thailand, Japan, Hong Kong, India and Bangladesh. What was once seen as an African, American, West European and Haitian disease, is likely to become a potential health threat to many Asian countries. Until recent times, there was little concern about AIDS among health professionals and government authorities in Asian countries, where the number of AIDS cases are relatively still small. Given the fact that AIDS is one of the sexually transmitted diseases (STD), it was believed that Asian countries will remain less vulnerable to AIDS since sexual mores throughout the region tend to be relatively conservative. Jean Claude, Chairman of France's Pasteur Institute said that Asia was in a good position 'to prevent the spread of the virus'. Here, AIDS has yet to become a major problem, he claims, because of high social emphasis on sexual chastity and the low incidence of intravenous drug abuse (a large proportion of drug addicts in Asia smoke heroin rather than inject it).³ However, there is no reason to remain complacent about the danger of AIDS in any particular region of the globe, be it Asia or any other society with conservative sexual mores in an age of increasing tourism, frequent international contacts and resultant genetic outbreeding even within stable marriage union.

The terrifying appearance of AIDS in Bangladesh has already been confirmed officially. The recent confirmation on the entry of HIV virus to

Bangladesh may lead us to assume that there may be many undetected cases of HIV carriers of AIDS cases in our country, especially among our population who have had stayed abroad for many years. They might have been exposed to the virus unknowingly, which can only be diagnosed through appropriate blood test for HIV anti-bodies. Two HIV positive cases have been reported so far, one is a 'seropositive' case (HIV carrier) and other was an AIDS case who died on third March 1991.⁴ Both were repatriated to Bangladesh on being found to have contacted the AIDS-causing virus.

As the AIDS virus has already entered Bangladesh, it is important both for the health professionals and the government to take necessary measures for blood-testing and also to develop preventive programmes to keep the spread of the pandemic under control well before the situation turns grave.

Recently, a report from the World Health Organization shows, while the rate of HIV infection appeared to be slowing in some industrialized countries, it is increasing markedly in developing countries. "The pandemic would be especially hard on poorer countries, whose over-burdened health facilities risk being overwhelmed altogether". The report of WHO claimed, "AIDS cases will continue to develop from the existing pool of HIV-infected persons for some time to come, no matter how successful our efforts to curb the further spread of HIV". As of April 1991, more than 345,000 AIDS cases had been reported to the WHO from 163 countries, but taking into account 'under-diagnosis, under-reporting and delays in reporting', the real global total may exceed 1.5 million. By the year 2000, it is estimated, 10 million adults will have been stricken by AIDS since the beginning of the pandemic, and 80% of those will be from the developing countries.⁵ In Table 1, we are presenting data on the actual diagnosed cases of HIV/AIDS in different parts of the world which may give us some insights into the scale of crisis presented by AIDS epidemic. According to the estimates of the WHO AIDS cases worldwide rose by more than 10,000 in October 1990. The new cases bring the globe total of reported AIDS cases to 298,914. In addition to it, a further 8 to 10 million are infected with HIV virus that causes AIDS. Looking at this Table, one can easily apprehend that AIDS presents a classic health problem in the Western hemisphere. As of 1990, the United States reports 149,498 current AIDS cases, by far the highest reported incidence of any country in the world. The number of AIDS-Related Complex (ARC) cases is even harder to pin down. By the mid 1990's, more than 3 million people in the western hemisphere will be carriers of HIV

according to the estimates of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). Almost 2 million people in the western hemisphere have already been infected with HIV. Of the total, more than 1 million HIV infections are in North America (United States and Canada) and close to 1 million in latin America and the Caribbean. By 1991, PAHO estimates, a half million cases of AIDS have occurred in this hemisphere and about half of those persons have died from this fetal disease.

Table-1

Reported Cases of AIDS in Different Parts of the World: November 1990

COUNTRIES	REPORTED AIDS CASES
<u>AMERICA:</u>	
USA	149,498
Brazil	11,070
Canada	4,427
Mexico	4,941
Haiti	2,456
Dominican Republic	1,368
	180,663
<u>AFRICA:</u>	
Uganda	15,569
Zaire	11,732
Malwai	7,160
Tanzania	7,128
Kenya	9,139
Ivory Coast	3,647
Burundi	2,787
Zambia	3,494
Zimbabwe	3,134
	75,642
<u>EUROPE:</u>	
France	9,718
Italy	6,701

Spain	6,210
Germany	5,285
Britain	3,798
Switzerland	1,462
Netherlands	1,433
Romania	999
<hr/>	
ASIA:	34,986
Japan	290
Israel	116
Thailand	6
Hong Kong	3
Bangladesh	1
<hr/>	
	416
AUSTRALIA	2,040
OCEANIA	2,293
NEW ZEALAND	207
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WORLD TOTAL CASES:	2,98,924

SOURCE: WHO Feature, "AIDS Cases Rise by 10,000 in October, 1990",
BANGLADESH OBSERVER, February 24, 1991.

Some scientists estimate that as many as 5 million central African now carry the virus in roughly equal proportions of men and women. Various African countries together already have diagnosed 75,642 cases of AIDS. Three-quarters of those who contracted the disease will die by 1995. When we turn to the mortality record in the western hemisphere by AIDS, PAHO reported that some 250,000 people have already died of this disease. Official figures reveal that AIDS has killed about 113,000 people in the North and Latin America. In the US alone, 97,107 people have died from AIDS, since the disease was first detected in the early 1980's. The mortality figures for other American (North and Latin America) countries are as follows: 13,253 in Canada, 11,172 in Latin America, and 2,019 in the Caribbean. It is noted that currently, Latin America is experiencing a rapid spread of the epidemic, similar to that in North America 3 to 5 years ago. WHO

epidemiologists are concerned that, as the rate of new infection slows in North America, the rate in Latin America will continue to steep increase.⁶ Judging from the explosive spread of HIV infection in various countries, medical scientists have directed their attention to find out the origin, nature and clinical spectrum of the disease, identified as 'Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome' through medical research in laboratory settings and through epidemiological investigations in cross-cultural settings.

DEFINITION OF AIDS AND AETIOLOGICAL AGENT

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is mainly a profound cellular immunodeficiency which is associated with some opportunist infection and a few malignant tumours. AIDS is the end stage of HIV infection which may take an average of ten years to develop. The diagnosis of HIV infection is confirmed by demonstration of serum antibodies to the virus. Present Stage of knowledge suggests that the HIV virus, once contracted, persists in the body for life and a patient who is HIV antibody positive, known as 'seropositive carrier', must essentially be considered to be infectious. It attacks body's immune system leaving it defenseless against a host of illnesses. The seropositive carriers eventually tend to develop full-fledged AIDS or even without developing it are capable of transmitting the virus to others.

AIDS as syndrome was first detected in the USA and subsequently in Western Europe in 1981. The aetiological agent however eluded identification for quite some time. It was in 1983-84 that the causative virus was discovered by two scientists, Dr. Luc Montagnier of Frances Pasteur Institute and Dr. Robert Gallo of US National Institute of Health. The infectious agent causing this apparently disease was identified as a previously unknown retrovirus which was first called the Human T Cell Lymphotropic Virus (HTLV 111). It was also given the name as 'Lymphadenopathy Associated Virus' (LAV). Now, the nomenclature 'HIV' (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is generally accepted by medical scientists and health professionals. This virus has a 'tropism particularly for helper T lymphocytes' which plays a crucial role in regulating the immune system.⁷

For surveillance purpose AIDS is defined as "an illness characterized by the presence of reliable diagnosed disease at least moderately predictive of cellular immunodeficiency or any defined cause for reduced resistance to the disease".⁸ In this condition, the immune system of the victim is seriously ravaged by the HIV virus and the patient is left vulnerable to many lethal infections. Since the condition is thought to be acquired, the disease is appropriately called "Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome". In order to make diagnosis, one has to be familiar with

clinical and micro-biological patterns of disease in AIDS. Patients are found in a wider range of diseases which are also somewhat different from those in patients with other secondary immunodeficiencies. These include encephalopathy, HIV-wasting syndrome, persistent generalized lymphadenopathy, (PGL) or AIDS-Related Complex (ARC), Thrombocytopenic purpura, Dementia, Psychosis, and especially *Pneumocystis Carinii*. Damage to the lymphocytes leads to the development of a cellular immunodeficiency disease rendering the patient susceptible to a wide variety of infections but particularly to those caused by viruses, protozoa, fungi, and intracellular bacteria. Patients suffering from AIDS also develop various malignancies, most notably kaposi's sarcoma and also lymphomas.

AIDS is, thereby, caused primarily by HIV virus which destroys immunity system of the body and consequently an individual who gets infected with this virus continues to lose bodily resistance to many kinds of diseases. The opportunists infections referred to here means infection by an organism that takes the opportunity provided by a defect in host system (in this case in cellular and hormonal immunity) to infect the host and hence cause disease. The organism may be pneumocystitis, carinic cytomegalovirus, mycobacterium avium, intracellular herpes virus hominis (virus for herpes simplex) hepatitis B (HB virus), mycobacterium tuberculosis.

Generally, the following three groups of patients are defined as indicative of AIDS victim: 1) Those without laboratory evidence of HIV infection. This includes patients who have not been tested for HIV, or if tests were carried out, the results were inconclusive and who have a positive diagnosis of an indicator disease (e. g., esophageal candidiasis, extra-pulmonary cryptococcosis, progressive multifactorial leucoencephalopathy). 2) Those with laboratory evidence of HIV infection, regardless of the presence of other causes of immunodeficiency or any of the specified indicator disease, whether diagnosed definitely or presumptively. 3) Those with laboratory evidence against HIV infection. In this group AIDS is diagnosed only when all the other major causes of immunodeficiency have been found to be present (e. g. high dose/long-term systemic corticosteroid/other immuno-suppressive/cytotoxic therapy for more than 3 months before the indicator disease) and the patient has unequivocal PCP or any other disease indicative of AIDS and a T-helper/inducer (CD4) lymphocyte count of less than 400/mm.

The definition of AIDS for children differs from that of the adult definition in two respects: (a) Multiple/recurrent serious bacterial-infection and lymphoid-

hyperplasia are accepted as indicative of AIDS in children. (b) The laboratory criteria are more stringent for children who are less than 15 months old and where mothers are thought to have had HIV during the child's perinatal period.

MODE OF TRANSMISSION AND POTENTIAL HIGH RISK GROUPS

AIDS is a blood-borne disease; the virus is transmitted mainly through sexual contact and the exchange of body-fluids. The aetiological agent is transmittable by sexual parental and transparental routes. So far the potential high risk groups, as identified, have been the intravenous drug-abusers, homo-sexual men and black Africans. An epidemiological study conducted among the US patients showed that 90 percent of the cases were transmitted by sexual intercourse, and less than 10 percent by blood transfusion or hypodermic needles. Less than one percent were infants who contracted AIDS from the infected mother, but this proportion is increasing to a great extent.⁹ It is also maintained that young age groups are more prone to AIDS, the most vulnerable group being 20-39 years of age. In North America, Europe, and Australia, though 70% of the AIDS cases are homosexual/bisexual men, it occurs almost in equal proportions among males and females in Africa. Other high risk groups include intravenous drug abusers by contaminated needles, recipients of blood and blood products, haemophiliacs and heterosexual partners (e. g., prostitutes), recipients of multiple blood transfusion, infants born of AIDS infected mother, and immigrants.

Public health officials however, warn that the disease is a potential threat to all sexually active populations, particularly those who indulge in unregulated sexual behaviour outside stable marriage union. The known modes of transmission are briefly outlined below:

1. Sexual intercourse (anal/vaginal), when one partner has been already infected.
2. Blood transfusion:- contaminated blood and blood-products.
3. Contaminated hypodermic needle:- Intravenous drug-abusers, needle-strick injuries, injection.
4. Vertical transmission:- mother to child in utero, at birth, and breast-milk.
5. Organ and tissue-donation:- semen, skin, corneas, bone marrow.

There is a misconception among general people that AIDS is truly a sexually transmitted disease. Though sexual perversion may associate with it, AIDS is

primarily a blood-borne disease: any infection in genitalia can cause the virus to contract the blood.

SOCIAL VULNERABILITY OF WOMEN: A CRITICAL ASPECT OF AIDS PROBLEM

Women have an enhanced risk of getting AIDS as a result of their vulnerable social position. Because of their relative weaker position in the society, the impact of the AIDS pandemic is increasing significantly among the women at the global level. The WHO predicts that an estimated three million more women and children are likely to be victims of AIDS in 1990's. Evidences are accumulating that many innocent women who are living in normal monogamous marriage union are getting the disease from their husband who have accidentally received the virus from the transfusion of blood that was infected with HIV. The subordinate position of women in the family and in society, though, differs in degree from country to country, but its impacts is similar everywhere resulting in a 'social vulnerability to infection'. The causes are as follows: They are more likely to be malnourished than men and are sufferer from anamia, gynaecological problem and other health disorders. In view of this growing threat of AIDS for women, an Expert Group Meeting on Women and AIDS was held in Vienna in 1989 and recently in Bombay. These meetings of experts addressed the complex issues of relationship between 'AIDS and Status of Women'.¹⁰ It has been pointed out that even though AIDS prevention strategies have included a wide range of components such as education, counselling, surveillance, testing and research, efforts have not yet been taken to address the underlying problems of subordination as a factor in the AIDS epidemic.

Although in many countries, national bodies for women's advancement have been established to redress their discrimination in education, health services, legal rights, and employment opportunities, such bodies are yet to acknowledge the importance of women's progress towards equality as a solution to curb the pandemics of AIDS on women. The improvement of their social status must be envisaged within the framework of AIDS prevention programme. An ultimate solutions to the AIDS programme will not be materialised without addressing the critical issue of women's status in the society. Mr. Jacques du Guerny, UN Division for the Advancement of Women rightly puts: "The exercise of women of their rights as human beings is perhaps a good preventive medicine for AIDS in the absence of a vaccine or cure".¹¹ In most societies there is little or no voice of women in sexual matters making it difficult for women to ask their husbands to

adhere to safer sex practices. They have an added burden of serving as the caregiver of the family's needs, even when they themselves are ill.

One of the recommendations in those conferences concerning "Womens and AIDS" stressed that society should shift their focus from women's role to women's needs. Such health programmes should especially consider health needs beyoned meternal and reproductive role and should draw attention to health problems which limit women's freedom and choice. The women's lack of control over her own health and sexuality make them more vulnerable to AIDS and the general tendency on the part of men to dismiss gynaeological problems. An women AIDS victim in Australia emphatically urges "Collectively, women and change the behaviour of those who are infecting them. Women's machinaries, organizations and groups must demand this change. As more and more women die and as the burden of care borne by the surviving women increases, women's time will be drawn away from other tasks. The impact of this on the family, on communities, and on the productive sectors of the economy is as yet incalculable".¹² It is important that national forums and bodies should play the positive role in organizing the social response to the threat of women's status presented by AIDS and the impact of their status on the spread of the epidemic. It is, therefore, suggested that all prevention and control efforts should hinge upon the crucial matters of cooperation between men and women.

One should realize that solutions STD including AIDS do not solely rest with medical interventions but with the overcoming of social circumstances from which they arise. As it is known, sexual activity in adolescence entails health risks whether or pot it occurs whithin marriage or outside stable marital union. Sexulal behaviour tends to be influenced by cultural traditions and social institutions. A broader understanding of these processos is critical for findings solutions to reproductive health problems liked with sexual behaviour (e.g., STD or AIDS). There is obviously a need for a change in sexual behaviour in response to increased risk awareness. It means that time has perhaps come to bring about a change in culturally determined gender roles and women's status which affects sexual practices and the patterns of contraceptive use. It should be reasserted that risks for AIDS are affect by the patterns of sexual partnerships over the life course-before, during, or outside of marriage. As such women has a role to play in their decision-making in all such matters.

TREATMENT, PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF AIDS

The explosive epidemic breakout of AIDS throughout the Western and African countries has thrown a major challenge to the medical professionals to

investigate into the basic mechanics in the role of the virus in human disease and its prevention as well in the management of the immunocompromised patients. With the growing realization that its menace transcends all national and geographical boundaries, the World Health Organization in collaboration with national governments in the worst-hit countries have launched intensive medical research and offensive public health programmes to combat the spread of AIDS in effective manners.

(1) Treatment through medical interventions and therapy

The continuing medical research on the molecular structure of HIV virus suggests that AIDS microbe comes in a variety of strains and has the ability to mutate rapidly making the development of effective preventive vaccine highly difficult. Despite serious attempts for developing drugs that will suppress the reproduction of virus as well as stimulate the body chemistry to restore the immune system (Antiviral as well as immune modulating or immune reconstructive drugs), no vaccine is yet available and the management of AIDS until now depends on supportive measures and the treatment of secondary infection. But in all cases, AIDS itself as a disease has been found to be fatal in the absence of any cure of preventive vaccine. There is no specific therapy for HIV infection although certain antiviral drugs, such as zidovudine is claimed to suppress the virus. Studies and scientific research are underway in several western countries for developing AIDS vaccine and some are being experimented as trials. One such drug is known as 'Azidothymidine (AZT)' which may help to prolong the lives of AIDS victims, but its long-term efficacy is not yet known. In Paris, experiments are going on with AIDS drug called 'HPA-23', which is reported to be toxic, particularly for bone-marrow. Another drug Suramin is also found to have activity against HTLV-III virus. But mere inhibiting the multiplication or killing the virus does not help the immune system. Other drugs being tried include Dextran-sulphate, Soluble CD4, DDC, DDA, DDI, Phosphonotormate, Rifabutin, Ribavirin, and Phosphorothioate. Although attempt to develop AIDS vaccine continues, but the scientists are less optimistic about the chances of developing an effective vaccine in the near future because the antigenic structure of HIV is highly complex. AIDS disease seems to be unyielding to any medical intervention.

Even if it ever becomes possible to develop any suitable, working drug against AIDS, controversies continue as to ethical issues concerning its application. P. Brown recently observes, in a feature "AIDS Vaccines: What comes of a fair trial?", 'Many epidemiologists think that trials will have to happen in the developing world, for example in Africa, because it is there that the virus is

rapidly through the adult populations . . . But is it right that the world's poorest populations should be the testing ground for vaccines against a disease that affects people everywhere, especially in the west?"¹³ The more popular approach in this respect is that such trial should be done strictly among individuals who are at high risk of infection: intravenous drug users and the unaffected partners of HIV positive people. However, such questions seem to be out of context for the moment because as yet there is no vaccine ready to be tested for its ability to protect against HIV infection. No vaccine has yet proven to work against HIV infection. The treatment for associated infections are done by specific therapy depending on the organisms found.

(2) Prevention and Control

As the hopes for a quick cure or preventive vaccine faded, more and more once complacent governments have finally begun to act in terms of a major public health efforts. The western countries have moved to develop preventive measures more seriously in recognizing that without a cure or vaccine. Public caution is the only weapon that may curb the spread of the pandemics of AIDS. The prevention of the AIDS has become possible since the mode of transmission of HIV virus is already known. From medical point of view, it is feasible to diagnose the HIV carriers which causes AIDS. Researchers have recently developed a test that identifies the AIDS virus itself. The old virus mainly picked up the presence of anti-bodies to the disease which often takes weeks or months to appear after infection. The screening test now available is quite accurate and can produce a small number of people who are not infected with AIDS virus but whose results come up either positive or inconclusive. Indeed, most governments have been cautious in the area of mandatory screening. Western governments are increasingly putting a high premium on monitoring the spread of the disease. A strong feeling exists in America that legal protections should be adopted for quarantine of the AIDS patients and HIV positive cases. But Government is still against such measures such as, mandatory screening for all, or quarantine of the AIDS cases, because of the fact that the policy of segregation to contain the disease may run counter to the established freedom and civil liberties. The advocates of quarantines and other stern measures insist that government must try to protect the vast majority of the population, those people who do not have AIDS, even if this cause hardship to individual AIDS patients.

The debates over these issues has been far less prevalent in Western Europe. So far there is no evidence that extreme policies of segregation are gaining wide popularity. Controversies continue to prevail in the political circles. For example,

Germany, a recent poll indicates that only 15% of those surveyed believed that AIDS patients should be isolated. What worries many political leaders and public health officials is that deep popular anxiety over AIDS could be translated into pressure for repressive policies, if not quarantine. Some health care professionals contend that any mandatory system of reporting discourages people from coming forward for treatment. It is stressed that nothing less than an all out public health offensive will be adequate if the worst scenario comes true. Dr. Hiroshi Nakajima, Director General of the WHO emphasises: "Judging from the explosive spread of HIV infection, now it is time to marshal all available resources to curb the AIDS epidemic. We know that measures to take to slow the spread of the disease. What is missing are political commitment, stronger management capable of applying existing technology and financial resources".¹⁴

Increased public education on the impact of AIDS is the best preventive method. Such measures must stress on promoting chastity, developing conservative sexual mores, & safer sex through the use of contraceptives. Prevention of transmission of infection depends upon (1) modification of sexual practices particularly with regard to promiscuity and anal intercourse; (2) screening of donated blood and also blood products for HIV antibody, and (3) the counselling of persons found to be antibody positive. Transmission of the virus has very rarely followed needlestick injury, although none have developed AIDS. HIV is readily inactivated by heat and by disinfectants such as glutaraldehyde. HIV infection can, therefore, be prevented if (a) all units of blood for transfusion are HIV-free; (b) The needles, syringes and other skin-piercing instruments are fully sterilized between two uses, and (c) people strictly observe the do's and don't's of AIDS.

AIDS as a disease may only be prevented through improved public awareness. By and large, emphasis on the promotion of chastity should of prime concern. Amid all the fears, some governments evidently in an effort to maintain clam, have chosen to downplay the threat. Belgium, which has one of the highest rates of AIDS in Europe, yet authorities there have limited their campaigns. In Asia, it is an open question, how long AIDS can be kept under control. Several governments have taken steps to minimize the threat. China began requiring all resident foreign students to submit proof that they are free of AIDS or submit to a blood-test. Given the tremendous increase in social mobility and exchange of manpower between countries, some of the Asian countries have already acquired the HIV virus in their population. In anticipation of the escalation of the crisis in this region, representatives of 27 states of Asian Pacific region met in a 3-day long Conference, organized by WHO and took an unanimous resolution to launch a joint attack against AIDS. With the discovery that AIDS also occurs among people who

are neither gay nor intravenous drug users (Asian countries have few occurrence of such risk groups), the spread of the HIV virus needs to be checked in other modes of transmission.

Prevention Efforts in Bangladesh

Like other countries, AIDS has already penetrated to Bangladesh. It was earlier noted that until now two HIV positive cases have been reported, one of whom already died. The country has already formed a National AIDS Committee to promote preventive measures against AIDS. The past regime was against any public discussion on national AIDS situation. The return of the two HIV positive cases from abroad was kept secret as long as it was possible to do so. When the newspaper reported the detection of the HIV carriers, a handout was issued which stated that no AIDS case has been detected in the country. The situation has now changed.

Recently, the Director General of Health Services and National AIDS Committee of Bangladesh together organised a 3-day National Seminar on "AIDS and Media" in January 1991.¹⁵ The objective of the seminar was to expose the media personnel to the global and national AIDS prevention activities and 'strategies of media coverage of health promotion activities for prevention and control of AIDS'. It has been emphasised that one should not attach stigma to AIDS cases so that those who have been affected with the virus can volunteer to seek blood-testing or treatment. So people will need to develop a positive attitude to AIDS. We must prepare ourselves to face the problem that may arise with the detection of more cases in future. It may be pointed out that 5 blood-screening centres for identification of HIV positive cases have been opened up in Bangladesh. These centres are located in the P. G. hospital in Dhaka, Army Pathological Laboratory in Dhaka, Micro-biological Department at 'Gana Shastay Pratistan' in Dhaka, Pathology Department at Osmani Medical College in Sylhet, and Pathology Department, Chittagong Medical College. There is provision for voluntary screening of blood in those centres for identification of HIV carrier.

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Village-Aid: Its assessment as a Community Development Programme

- A. S. M. Nurul Islam*

Introduction:

Village Agricultural and Industrial Development, popularly known as V-AID or Village-AID, was the first organised attempt at the improvement of villages by the central and provincial governments of Pakistan with a view to stimulating self-help and encouraging cooperative activities among the rural people.

The programme, which was the second largest community development effort in the world, was designed to tackle the multifarious problems faced by villagers in the improvement of their standard of living, and to provide them with a happier and more satisfying life and health. Though the programme was planned at the initiative of the government, it provided scope for people to undertake projects of local importance by utilising the resources available in their own communities. The background of V-AID has been explained by Jongh. He states

"..... over 80 percent of Pakistan's population lives in the villages and the great majority of the village population is agricultural. The standard of living in the agricultural areas is often appallingly low, due to antiquated agricultural methods, illiteracy, lack of good drinking water and of sanitary facilities and ensuing high incidence of disease. The 'Basic' human needs are still unfulfilled. The government therefore, following the example of several other countries in this part of this world, has started a programme of rural community development, now commonly known as the Village Agricultural and Industrial Development or Village AID Programme."²

Before undertaking the V-AID Programme, various nation building departments of the government had tried to deal with the multifarious village problems. But each department had an individual programme and approach which could make very little impact in the socio-economic conditions of the villagers. They had very limited trained manpower and resources down at village levels; moreover, development of rural areas was accorded only secondary importance,

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since most of the efforts of the government were preoccupied with the maintenance of law and order, collection of revenue, and establishment of political stability in the country, and insufficient emphasis was placed on rural development. This continued for about four years after partition.

In 1951 the Government of Pakistan constituted a committee, headed by M. H. Sufi, to study different aspects of agricultural extension and suggest a comprehensive rural community development programme in Pakistan. Members of the Committee made extensive tours in different areas in the countryside to know details about agriculture and its related activities, and went to the United States of America in order to obtain comparative ideas on the nature, extent, and operation of extension services in different states. Members of the Sufi Committee spent four months in the USA and attended a summer session organised jointly by the US government and Cornell University. The Committee submitted its report to the government in early 1952 and recommended the establishment of a rural community development programme in line with extension services of the USA with certain modifications to suit local situations. The Committee pointed out in their report the individual approach and compartmentalisation by different department of the government. It observed,

"In each province, the departments of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Forestry, Fisheries, Cooperation, Marketing, Industries, Health, Education etc, are separately constituted and each one of them tries to make separate approach to the people. Each department maintains (its own isolated) vertical field organisation Before we can do any useful educational work in the field of agriculture and other allied subjects, we have to rehabilitate the Extension Staff in the estimation of the rural population."³

The committee was critical not only of the individual approach of each department, but also of the paternalistic role of the government in providing service to the people; as a result of too much government involvement, people, became more and more dependent on outside assistance. The committee commented:

"The old concept of a benign and paternal government trying to do everything for the people must be given up and replaced by the vital principle of self-help To achieve practical results, it will be necessary to translate objectives into concrete programme based on the felt needs of the people. The people will draw up their own programmes which they will carry out themselves under the friendly advice and technical guidance of the Extension Staff."⁴

In 1952, on the basis of the recommendations of the Committee and to remove inadequacies of past efforts to improve village life, the government of

Pakistan set up a broad-based rural community development programme, known as V-AID. The reconstruction of village life assumed the utmost importance in V-AID schemes. The problems which V-AID was devised to tackle, in an organised and concerted manner at the individual and community levels, were pointed out by the Village-AID Five year plan:

- (a) Inefficient agricultural organisation and techniques of production;
- (b) Low level of health and sanitation with accompanying high rates of morbidity and mortality and a short life span;
- (c) Insufficient quantity, low quality, and under-consumption of Cottage Industry products;
- (d) High rates of illiteracy and a low level of agricultural attainment;
- (e) Inadequate participation in local Self government and in the solution of common problems through mutual co-operative efforts."⁵

In order to tackle the problems, as well as to improve the villages by utilising the vast fund of energy and strength, the village-AID programme was undertaken.

Review of objectives: Village-AID programme was launched with a view to achieving self-reliance in all aspects of village life by strengthening the local efforts of the people and initiating co-operative ventures. It aimed at making progress for individual as well as community well being, and developing the potentialities of the villagers. The specific objectives for which the Village-AID was devised were:

- (a) To raise rapidly the productive output and real income of the villagers by bringing to him the help of modern techniques of farming, sanitation and health, co-operatives, cottage industries, and the like;
- (b) To multiply the community services available in rural areas, such as schools, dispensaries, health centres, hospitals, sources of pure water and so on, thereby increasing the national assets;
- (c) To create a spirit of self-help, initiative, leadership, and co-operation among the villagers which may become the foundation of independent, healthy, and self-perpetuating economic, political, civic, and social progress;
- (d) To create conditions for a richer and higher life through social activities including recreational facilities, both for men and women;

- (e) To co-ordinate the working of the different departments of the government and to extend their activities by providing an extension service to the country;
- (f) To give a welfare bias to the entire administrative structure of the Government."⁶

It becomes clear that the material, cultural, and social well being of the village people was the ultimate objective of the Village-AID programme, and these aims and objectives have been analysed further by Honigmann in his study *Economic Development and Cultural Change: A Case study of Community Development in Pakistan*. According to him, the programme strengthened the capacity of the community people rather than increased their material well-being. He went on:

Apart from such specific target goals as strengthening the friendship of villagers, increasing the size and scope of rural groups, increasing earnings, multiplying community services and promoting general social progress, the central value is to establish in rural people greater confidence in their capacity to help themselves. Hence the term "catalyst" is often applied to the entire programme or its representatives, for example, the village worker"⁷

Honigmann identified four important characteristics of the village-AID programme which distinguished it from other nation building departments and rural development activities of the government.

Firstly, Village-AID was a catalytic process. The inner resources of the community were to be fully utilised for the development of the communities at the local level. If the local resources were found to be inadequate, the worker tried his best to contact the technical departments outside the community for undertaking the projects of local importance.

Secondly, self-help and self-planning were considered to be the two essential elements of the village-AID programme. People would be helped to help themselves. In the long run, community people would determine their own course of action. The village level worker would be there to help the people to identify and realise their needs and resources. The main thrust of the village-AID programme was to convince the local communities that progress could not take place in a proper way if community development activities were undertaken under the leadership of outside agencies.

Thirdly, Village-AID programme aimed at providing educational facilities for the people by making services and technical know-how available to local communities. The extension of services of agriculture department and other nation building departments of the government had made the people more and more dependent on outside assistance. The limited manpower and paucity of funds of these departments were the main bottlenecks which made most of the village uplift schemes of the past unsuccessful. So Village-AID was devised to provide strength and to point out that the government would not do everything for village people. People would be motivated to come forward for their own betterment.

And fourthly, village-AID programme put maximum emphasis on the villager who, beset with multifarious problems of ill-health, low income, malnutrition, illness, and ignorance, was the most forgotten person in the development of the country. Economic conditions of other people and their standard of living started increasing in a proportionate dimension, whereas the unemployed, under-employed and unskilled peasant lagged behind. Therefore, the village-AID programme was designed to improve the skills of the peasant and help him to enhance his income.

The above-mentioned four factors were the distinguishing features of the village-AID programme which came into being as representing all nation-building departments of the government to render rural development services in a comprehensive manner. The aims and objectives of the village-AID programme were further analysed by Green. He observed:

"The aim of the V-AID programme is to assist villagers, both individually and collectively to plan and implement self-help programmes designed to eliminate or reduce their common problems and to reach agreed-upon goals. The types of assistance rendered by the VAW's to the villagers are designed to give them the confidence and ability to act through organised effort with a minimum of outside help. V-AID changes the concept of governmental assistance from unilateral government planning and superimposition of programmes upon the villagers in a word, doing thing for the villager to one of supplementing the organised efforts of the villagers in manning and implementing their own programmes."⁸

In the analysis of Green, it is evident that the objectives of the Village-AID programme were directed to achieve individual and community welfare by (1) initiating self-help programmes with minimum assistance from outside agencies and (2) changing the role of the government from that of imposing programmes upon the village people to supplementing their self-help efforts. The self-help aspect of the objectives indicates that the main initiative would come from the

people to solve their common problems by utilising the local resources. If the resources which were available within the community were not adequate to implement programmes, possibilities of seeking outside assistance would be explored. But the extent of outside help would be kept at a minimum level as far as possible.

Government involvement was another aspect of the objectives. The traditional approach of the government departments was to do everything for the village people, whether people liked it or not, whether a particular policy suited local conditions or not; whether programmes benefited local people or not was not the concern of other government department. So village-AID programme was set up with a view to changing the traditional role of the government from imposing and directing to the one of supplementing self-help venture of local communities.

The objectives of the village-AID programme were also laid down, in an introductory manner, in the village-AID and Rural Development chapter of the first five year plan of the Government of Pakistan. The plan described village-AID as:

" the agency for uplifting and developing the rural community

The basic concept of the village-AID programme is to provide a mean by which technical and financial assistance from the government can be used to draw forth the resource of skill, energy and money which exist in the villages, to channel them into productive uses, and to create means by which they can be progressively enlarged."⁹

Here the emphasis of the village-AID programme was on utilisation of the enormous resources and energy lying dormant and unused in villages. People of rural communities had very limited technical know how. Government assistance would be provided in the form of technical advice and the services of specialists in agriculture, health and sanitation, livestock, education, cottage industries, irrigation, and equipment. The resources, energy, and skill of the community people would be utilised and enhanced with the help of the government for productive purpose in both social and economic fields. The Prime Minister of Pakistan, in a letter addressed to the Chief Minister of West Pakistan and to the Chief Minister of East Pakistan, clearly mentioned the specific objectives that the Village-AID programme was to achieve. According to him,

"The programme is intended primarily to stimulate self-help and cooperative effort among our villagers. It is democratic in concept and educative in nature and touches almost every phase of the daily life of the communities. We hope that the programme will help in developing local leadership and self-help effort to a degree which will lead to the accomplishment of many a project without external

assistance. However, the village-AID will supplement, where necessary, the local efforts of the people by providing technical assistance and materials. One of the objectives of the village-AID programme is gradually to coordinate and knit together the existing nation building departments of government and administrative agencies right down to the villages¹⁰

The village-AID programme, it is seen, in the Prime Minister's letter, was devoted to the task of achieving welfare through the process of self-help and co-operative effort. It was intended also to develop leadership qualities in people to undertake nation building activities at local level and achieve co-ordination among the government departments charged of the village-AID, which was used as a common extension of all departments of the government at the village level, may be summarised as follows:

- (i) Utilisation of dormant energy, skill, and resources of the village people for productive purposes;
- (ii) Achievement of self-reliance in all aspects of rural life with least outside assistance;
- (iii) Development of local leadership to undertake nation-building activities;
- (iv) Change in the role of the government from one of imposing and directing rural development programmes upon the village people to that of supplementing their joint ventures;
- (v) Co-ordinated approach to the solution of village problems by bringing together all the different departments of the government;
- (vi) Increased income and productivity of peasants, with a view to helping them to lead a happier life;
- (vii) Increasing existing public utilities and creating new services where necessary, such as roads, culverts, schools, dispensaries, water supply, clinics, and the like.

Nature of the Programme and its Activities: Under the auspices of village-AID programme, a series of activities were undertaken in different areas of the country. The programme was jointly administered by the central and provincial government of Pakistan. The central government provided 75 per cent of funds for non-recurring and 50 per cent of funds for recurring expenditure incurred in connection with organising the services. The rest of the funds were provided by provincial governments. The International Corporation Administration of USA and its

predecessors, TCA and FOA, extended advisory services by providing specialists in community development, agriculture, cottage industries, home economics, public health, and education, arranged orientation and training for instructors of village-AID Training Institutes, development officers, administrative officials, and village level workers, and supplied equipment which was not available within the country. The Ford Foundation, UNESCO, the Asia Foundation, the CARE of USA, and the Church World Service of USA extended finance for stipends of trainees and salaries of instructors of village-AID Training Institutes and part of the cost of construction of buildings; they also made available advisory services for the two Village-AID Academies of the country and contributed agricultural implements, high-yielding seed, and hatching eggs to raise the output and income of the peasants.

The programme was started in 1953 and by early 1955, nine training institutes had been set up in different areas of the country for one-year preservice training for young men and women recruited to serve as village level workers. The workers were taught both theory and practice of community development, and trainees were taught, through lectures, how to improve their skills to help the peasants to adopt better cropping practices, animal inoculation and health practices, and how to organise and form village groups and co-operatives. They were also sent to the nearly demonstration plots and farm lands to get practical knowledge of the work they were supposed to do after completing their studies. The first batch of village level workers started moving into their development areas; each development area, comprising 100 to 150 villages, was headed by a Development officer who was assisted by two supervisors, 20 male and 5 female village level workers.

The activities of the development area were co-ordinated and supervised by the Area Advisory Committee. The Area Advisory Committee was composed of the official and non-official members drawn from representatives of nation building departments, village Council of Elders, Women's Clubs, and Chand Tara Clubs. The Deputy Commissioner of the district acted as Chairman of the Area Advisory Committee and the development officer of the area was entrusted with the task of being its secretary. The functions of the Area Advisory Committee were manifold; it controlled and approved plans submitted and activities undertaken by village Councils of Elders, sought technical advice from nation-building departments to finalise area plans, made periodical or annual budget proposals and expenditures to place before the District Committee for final approval, arranged money, materials, equipment, and technicians for carrying out projects of a technical nature, and guided the lower level village organisations in formulating policy to

situations. Down to the Development Area Advisory Committee, there was village Council of Elders; every village had organised this type of organisation, numbering between 100-150, depending on the size and number of villages each development area had within its jurisdiction. The village council of Elders was represented entirely by all sections of the village community having no official representation on it. The village level worker sometimes helped the Council by providing information, advice, and technical know-how but that was done in an informal way. The village Council of Elders, formed in every development area of the country, was assigned to carry out development activities in the respective village, with the help and advice of the village level workers.

The main functions of the council were to;

- (i) Assess the needs and resource of the village;
- (ii) Determine the extent of contribution and nature of involvement of the community people to undertake projects for the locality;
- (iii) Set up the priorities for various projects and allocate funds to implement them;
- (iv) Explore resources not available within the community;
- (v) Forward plans which required further assistance to the Area Advisory Committee for approval and technical advice;
- (vi) And hold discussion and throw out new ideas on rural development to the village community.

In order to carry out the above functions, Standing Committees on agriculture, animal husbandry, co-operation, education, health and sanitation, roads and streets, local industry, home making and housing, and youth clubs were set up and each Standing committee, was responsible for what was happening in its own field of operation. In addition to the Standing Committees, there were also project committees to implement specific programmes. The functions of Standing Committees were more or less supervisory, Administrative, and advisory in nature, whereas project Committees were formed to implement specific programmes. Above the village council of Elders and Development Area advisory committee, there were District Advisory Committees and Divisional Advisory Committees. The Divisional and District Committees were set up to co-ordinate activities of nation building departments at the district and divisional levels, to pool resources for implementing different programmes, and to approve plans submitted by the Development Area Advisory Committee. The village council of Elders and

the Area Advisory committee were the factfinding and implementing agencies, represented to a great extent by village Committees; whereas the District Advisory Committee and the Divisional Advisory Committee were co-ordinating and policy making bodies, represented by government officials connected with rural development activities at the district and divisional level. The appendix table -1 indicates the composition of the Divisional, District and Development Area Advisory Committees, and the Village Council for Elders.

The basic unit in the Village-AID programme was a development area. Each development area served 100,000 to 125,000 people. One village level worker was in charge of 5 to 7 villages; he was responsible to a supervisor and a Development Officer. The field staff of a development area consisted of one Development Officer, two supervisors, 20 village Level Male Workers, 5 Woman Workers, a number of Social Education officers, and Adult Literacy Teachers. In addition to these personnel, subject matter specialists in agriculture, animal husbandry, education, industry, fisheries, forestry, co-operation, irrigation, health and sanitation were deputed by nation-building departments to render technical assistance in implementing the various activities of the Village-AID programme. The following table indicates the development areas opened during the plan period from 1954-1955 and 1959-60.

TABLE- 1: Development areas of the 1954/55-1959/60 plan

Province	Areas opened or to be opened during						Total No. by 1960
	1954-55	1955-56	1956-57	1957-58	1958-59	1959-60	
West Pakistan	6	13	11	19	21	23	93
East Pakistan	3	3	6	18	23	26	79
Total	9	16	17	37	44	49	172

Source: Government of Pakistan: The First Five Year plan 1955-60, p. 201.

Targets for 1959-60 were not achieved, as the village AID was remodelled in line with the newly-introduced Basic Democracy System in the country. By the middle of 1960, 174 development areas were opened and 18,436 villages were brought under the operational control of the village-AID programme. From February 1954 to March 1959, village Council of Elders in 12,040 villages, 6,118 youth clubs, 423 women's clubs, and 733 co-operatives were set up in the development areas. A wide variety of individual and collective projects for raising and improving livestock, introducing high-yielding fruit and vegetables, producing

and marketing handicrafts, and enhancing income and output of the villagers were set up in the development areas.

Education of village people was another target of the village-AID programme; 879 new schools were opened, 970 old schools were improved, 4,094 adult classes were organised, and 91,462 villagers were admitted to adult literacy classes. One school for every circle of three villages was set as a goal in the field of education; but by March 1959 it had been found that one school for every 10 villages was set up in the development areas. Health services were extended to remote areas; people were taught how to take care of their health and home. 214 dispensaries were opened in the rural areas with a view to providing necessary medicines and treatment to villagers. 3,501,000 people were vaccinated and immunised against smallpox, cholera, typhoid, other diseases, 838, 856 houses were sprayed with DDT, and 10,621 bore-hole latrines were set up in the villages with active co-operation of the village level workers and under the supervision of the staff of the health department. 7,404 tubewell and 6,561 other wells were sunk to provide drinking water and water for washing, cleaning, and other purposes.

To make a major break through in agriculture was one of the objectives of the Village-AID programme. Increase in agricultural output was considered not only a striking improvement for the peasants but also for the economy of the country. Methods of using modern agricultural practices, high yielding seed, line sowing, and the planting of fruit trees and vegetables were demonstrated to the peasants in the field. It was found that improved seed was used by 88,632 farmers, line planting to grow rice was adopted by 74,113 farmers, planting of fruit trees was practiced by 67,557 farmers, and vegetables grown on a modern method were grown by 69,174 farmers. On the other hand, it was found that 59,738 acres of land were brought under cultivation of improved seed, 616,337 acres under line sowing, 83,829 acres were used for growing fruit, and 22,263 acres were used for growing vegetables. Improving physical communication was another effort undertaken by the Village-AID for rural development.

Road and bridge construction drew a lot of attention of the village level workers. In development area, projects for 466 miles of graded road and 2,716 miles of ungraded road were completed and improvement on the existing 194 miles with the help of voluntary workers. Construction of 5,846 small bridge and culverts was completed.

Irrigation was another area where much improvement was made; 787 miles of canals were dug, 178,419 additional acres of land were brought under irrigation, and 40,608 acres of land were protected from erosion. Much was made to improve

animal husbandry; 420,836 animals were treated in rural veterinary hospitals, 1,428,387 livestock and 1,151,342 chickens were inoculated, and 77,601 pure bred eggs were hatched. Bulls raised under the supervision of the village AID field staff and chickens were distributed to the farmers to improve their herds and stock.

Concluding Comments: A careful look at the tangible results and achievements of Village-AID programme reveals that a lot of activities were undertaken with a view to a raising the income and output of the village people through the organised effort of the Village-AID workers carrying to the village people the fruits of knowledge, information, methods, and technical know how. Four distinguishing features were found in Village-AID programme. Firstly, it provided experts, technical personnel, and equipment at the thana level. Secondly, village level workers who were trained in various skills-manipulative as well as human relations skills-were provided to the village people to work as their friends, guides and helpers. They worked with village people to mobilise them to undertake activities for their mutual benefit. The third feature of the village-AID programme was the village council, which had been treated as the base agency to organise rural development activities at village level; this village organisation was called the village Council of Elders, composed of the representatives of various sections of village communities. The fourth feature of the village-AID programme was that it was not a fully self-help programme organised and implemented by the contribution of the community people; rather it was an aided self-help programme which was run on the matching principle of contribution by village communities and the government. The main idea behind the allocation of Government funds was that, since most of the village communities were economically slow to raise their standards of living and increase their incomes, partial governmental financial assistance would supplement and strengthen the self-help efforts of village communities.

But it was observed that the government in its turn depended heavily on the aid and technical guidance of a number of sources from outside the country; the village-AID programme was too much dependent on outside assistance. There was United States involvement in every phase of the programme, from construction of buildings for the Training Institutes to the placement of advisors to the Regional V-AID Advisory Committees and Evaluation and programme Analysis Unit. Equipment, seeds, specialists, transport, and training advisors were provided at different stages of the village-AID programme. As soon as the flow of outside assistance decreased, the strength of the programme faced a serious setback.

The role of the village-AID worker was not clear both within and outside of Village-AID because there were a number of agencies and departments charged with organising rural development activities. Sometimes the worker was called upon to act as extension agent of all the departments represented at the village communities. On a number of occasions, he was treated as a multi-purpose worker of the village-AID department to serve as catalyst in the self-help process and to work in general-purpose as well as multi-purpose roles. So expectations of village-AID workers varied from situation to situation, resulting in great confusion in different administrative, operational, and co-ordinating channels. The failure to co-ordinate the activities at different levels, from thana to district, division, and province, had been a major factor for the discontinuation of the village-AID programme; interdepartmental jealousy and rivalry stood as a great barrier to the successful implementation of village-AID policies. As the activities of the Village-AID expanded rapidly in development areas, village-AID workers found themselves competing with other nation-building departments of the government; unhealthy competition among nation-building departments; including village-AID, created confusion leading to the winding up of the programme as a separate entity. Rural development was merged with the Basic Democracies programme in late 1960.

Job satisfaction, security, and the worker's identification with the particular department were the most important values attached to the jobs in the country; as most of the officials, administrative personnel, and other specialists had been seconded by the government from a number of nation-building departments to work as development officers, instructors of the Training Institute, and field level workers (maintaining their link with their parent departments) they did not identify with the Village-AID. Moreover Village-AID was not given the permanent status of being one of the departments of the government. Employees felt insecure about their continued employment and this insecurity affected their field performance; by late 1959 the village-AID programme had lost image as a big venture in the field of community development.

Though village-AID achieved reportedly a limited success, it laid a solid foundation for a community development programme in Bangladesh. It left a rich heritage by initiating a number of services for tackling the multifarious problems of rural people and set a guide line for the on going rural community development in Bangladesh. Planners, programme organisers and field practitioners should keep in view the shortcomings and constraints village-AID faced at different stages while framing and implementing a national community development programme.

Appendix Table-1 (A)

Composition of Division all V-AID Advisory Committee

Chairman of Committee Division Commissioner		Representatives of Nation-Building Departments.										Secretary of Committee Regional Director of Village-AID	
Divisional													
Agriculture	Animal Husbandry	Cooperation	Forestry	Fisheries	Education	Health	Irrigation	Roads and Finance building	Industry and labour	others			
All District Officers in		Regional V-AID Advisor	One Elected Village Council Member per										

Composition of a District V-AID Advisory Committee:

Chairman District Officer		District representative of Nation Building Departments										Secretary Senior Development officer in District	
Agriculture	Animal Husbandry	Forestry	Fisheries	Education	Health	Roads and building	Finance	Industry and labor	other				
All V-AID Development officers in District		All SDOS in District	Regional V-AID Adviser ICA										
			Two Elected Village Council members per Development Area										

Appendix Table-1 (b)

Composition of V-AID Development area Advisory committees

Chairman District officer		Secretary V-AID Development officer		Representatives of nation-building Departments					
Agriculture	Animal Husbandry	Health	Cooperation	Buildings and Roads	Education	Irrigation and Drainage	Fisheries	Other	

Local V-AID Chairman and staff

All V-AID Workers and Supervisors in Area	Chairman of all Village Councils	All Social Education Officers and Adult of Elders in Area	Literacy Teachers in Area
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Advisory Representatives

Interested local groups	V-AID Advisers ICA
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Composition of a village Council of Elders:

Chairman Elected	Village AID Worker Adviser to council
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Standing Committees

Agriculture	Animal Husbandry	Cooperation	Education	Health and Sanitation	Roads and Streets	Local Industry	Homemaking and Housing	Youth	Clubs	Other
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Special projects Committees

Project A	Project B	Project C	Project D	Others as required
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MARRIAGE CUSTOMS AND CEREMONIES AMONG MUSLIMS IN CHITTAGONG

- Ali Ahmad *

Introduction

Marriage is an important socio-cultural custom among Muslims in Chittagong. It involves numerous marital customs and ceremonies long practised in the Muslim society of the district. In the present article an attempt is made here, in the light of the available source-materials (literary works, histories and interviews) and my personal knowledge about the socio-cultural life of the district gathered through my residence in the region for more than two decades, to highlight a picture of the customs and ceremonies prevalent among the chittagonian Muslims with regard to their wedding.

Views of Marriage in Islam

Marriage is an important social institution of human life. It is a union between a man and a woman sanctioned by the society through the performance of a definite rite for the maintenance of a socio-religious life. Western scholars define marriage as a physical, legal and moral union between a male and a female in complete community of life for the establishment of a family (*Ency. Britannica*, 1966: 950). In Islam marriage is enjoined upon every Muslim and celibacy is frequently condemned by the Prophet (Hughes 1964: 750). It is related in a tradition that the Prophet said, "When a Muslim married he perfects half of his religion and he should practise abstinence for the remaining half." The Prophet is also reported to have said, 'marry to enjoy their (women's) love and to beget children (*Mishkat*, 176).

Marriage customs and ceremonies among Chittagonian Muslims.

From time immemorial certain customs, rites and ceremonies have been associated with the institution of marriage. They also differ from place to place and even society to society in different times. A marriage in Chittagong Muslim society is structured in three parts. The first part starts from the *gharna katha* (primary talk)

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between the boy's and the girl's sides to the *akd* (marital rite) of the wedding. The second part is the *akd* and the third part begins after *akd* and lasts until the *kane-biday* (final departure of the bride from her father's house). The first and third parts have in common the fact that they are based on local customs while the second part is the purely Islamic part of the ritual. Marital customs, rites and ceremonies in a Chittagonian Muslim marriage will be discussed under the following heads:-

1. The marital customs and ceremonies preceding the *akd* (marital rite);
2. The *akd* and
3. The customs and ceremonies after the *akd* (marital rite).

1. The marital customs and ceremonies preceding the *akd*

The customs and ceremonies which are specially related with the bridegroom are celebrated at his house and some of which are mainly connected with the bride are observed at her house while others which are applicable for both are jointly practised at their fathers' residences by turns. Of the several customs and ceremonies which precede the *akd* of the wedding, the main are the following:-

(a) **Gharna-Katha (primary talk):** When both the wedding families are agreed to give their wards in marriage, they mutually take the initiative to see their prospective daughter-in-law and son-in-law by their turns. In rural Chittagong the bridegroom is generally chosen first at a village *hat*¹ (market) while in the urban area he is preferably seen in a public place. An experienced man, who is the leader of the bride's party, tests him asking some questions relating to religion, family background and social status. The prospective bridegroom is sometimes considered to be unfit when he fails to respond to some common queries. After the primary selection of a bridegroom, the bride's family proceeds on to see the condition of his father's house. The east facing dwelling house with its elevated homesteads and a pair of ponds at the front and back sides of the house are always given importance by most of the upper class Muslim families of the district (Chowdhury 1980:164). In the selection of a bride emphasis is always given on the social status and economic background of her family, her training in the house hold affairs and lastly her religious and ordinary Bengali reading and writing knowledge. The bridegroom sometimes confidentially goes to see his future spouse on the bank of a backside pond of her father's house or in the kitchen at night. The bride generally feels embarrassed to see her future spouse before the wedding. Her choice is usually left to her guardians. After the primary selection of the bridegroom and the bride and

the bridegroom and the bride and the mutual seeing of their homesteads, the guardians of the wedding parties give their final consent to the wedding. The elderly members of the parties then meet face to face at a function and settle the needful talk about the wedding which is called *gharna katha* (Chowdhury 1980:164) in Chittagong.

(b) **Bau-jora (engagement):** After the primary talk about the wedding when both the sides become interested, they settle the amounts of *mahar* (dowry), ornaments to be given by both the families, the bridegroom's demand, the size of his party, date, time and venue of the wedding at a meeting holding at bride's father's house. The *sardar* (leader) of the *mahalat* (locality) traditionally presides over the meeting. A set of ornaments or a suite of dress is then customarily presented to the would-be daughter-in-law by her future father-in-law as a token of certainty of marriage. This is called *bau-jora* in Chittagong (Chowdhury 1980:165). Elsewhere the custom is called *kanya-jora* or *baynama* and the ceremony is known as *pancini* (Ahmed 1974:178-9). In the Hindu society this is known as *ashirbad* (blessings). Betel-leaves, nuts and sweets are given to all present there.

(C) **Beyain-matani (making known of the son's wife's mother):** Two or three days after the *bau-jora* ceremony is over, the father or paternal maternal uncle) of the bridegroom pays a visit to his would be *beyain* (son's wife's mother) to make her known about the coming wedding, taking with him some betel leaves, nuts, tobacco-leaves, a dish of *batasa* (sweets) and a few seers of milk. This custom is known in Chittagong as *beyain-matani* (Chowdhury 1980:166).

(d) **Juizya-bauke kuizya khaoan (feeding of dried straw to betrothed bride):** The betrothed bride is given presents of a man's load by the bridegroom's side at different festive occasions. Cow or goat and some spices are given at *Eid-ul-Azha*; *iftari* (tiffin for breaking the fast) during *Ramzan*; *duruch-polao* (a spiced dish of rice and meat boiled in butter) at *Maharram*; *tal-pitha* (cake made of juice of palmyra fruit) and *madhu-bhat* (a kind of boiled rice made of seedlings of paddy and sugar) at the Bengali month *Bhadra*, and *shiter-pitha* or *dhua-pitha* (cakes of Winter season) and date-palm juice at *Paush*. The practice is jokingly called in Chittagong *juizya-bauke kuizya khaoan* (Chowdhury 1980:166). Besides this, *pakkan* (a kind of roundish cake) is sent to the bride's house at the time of *laggan* (fixing of the wedding date) and betel-leaves, nuts, milk, curd, fish and *ghee* (clarified butter) on the occasion of the *mehndi* (henna) ceremony.

(e) **Mehndi-leaves plucking:** Although smearing with mehndi (henna) is conventional, its plucking is quite ceremonial. The day before the wedding, *mehndi*

wedding, *mehndi* (henna) leaves are ceremonially plucked in both the houses of the bride and the bride-groom mostly by the unwedded girls who go to pluck the leaves with a painted *kula* (winnowing fan) in their hands (Ahmed 1974:182). Some of them engage in plucking the leaves and others rejoice in singing the *hanola* (Womanly songs) (Alam 1985:83) which has been a custom among the Muslims of this region.

(f) **Pansalla (meeting of betel-leaves):-** To accomplish a wedding ceremony, and also in case of any other socio-religio-cultural function, the male members of both the bridegroom and the bride's localities assemble at their father's residences at the previous night of the wedding, discuss the matter and then fix the next day's programme. The meeting is commonly known in Chittagong as *pansalla* (Chowdhury 1980:168) which is necessarily held under the chairmanship of the local leader. Taking varieties of sweets and *pan-tamak* (betel-leaves and tobacco products) and *puthi* (old poetry) recitation (specially *Padmavati* (1651) by poet Alaol (1607-1680) are the characteristics of this Chittagonian (Custom called) *pansalla* (Rizvi 1975 : 349).

(g) **Agkula (reception tray):-** The Muslims of Chittagong celebrate the custom of *Agkula* ceremony as an auspicious sign in their weddings. A *kula* (reception-tray) and some other common things (like rice, turmeric, green-grass, an earthen lamp, a water pot with a few mango branches (*amsarti*) over its mouth, incense, cake, banana and a rock, all placing on it) are used by the Muslims in this ceremony as well as in some other socio-cultural function (khandakar 1975:99).

(h) **Sohagkata (Treating with affection):-** This custom purely related with the bridegroom is very common among the inter-communities of the district. It is a women's function where a younger sister of the bridegroom plays the main role. She besmears the eyebrows of her brother who is seated on a mat with the ink of an earthen lamp placed on an *agkula* by the ring finger of her right hand and then helps him putting a gold ring on his finger. The *sohagkata* songs² are then sung by the youthful girls present there on the occasion.

(i) **Mehndi (henna):** Applying the *mehndi* to the hands of both the bride and the bridegroom is a long practised common social ceremony among the Chittagonian Muslims (Prindle 1982:355). This is primarily a function of young girls. In rural Chittagong, the *mehndi* function generally observes at bridegroom and bride's house with their own people while in the urban area it involves reciprocal visits of both sides. Through a series of reciprocal deeds and exchanges this function consolidates the bond of relationship between the two families. The bridegroom's family presents the bride with a red-bordered yellow and a water

discharging *saries*, a blouse, a petticoat and a pair red sandals to be used before and after the bridal bath. The bride's side also sends gifts to the bridegroom a *pajama*, a *lungi*, a *genji*, a *panjabi*, a shirt, a cap and a pair of shoes and sandals for the *mehndi* ceremony. Besides this, both the parties reciprocate each other some common bridal things needed for the *akd* ritual namely, *halud* (turmeric), *mehndi* (henna), cosmetics, a vase with mango leaves, a clay dish with mustard oil and a wick, a low stool, a pair of winnowing trays, flower petals, betel-leaves and nuts bracelets, sweets and snacks, green-grass, rice and incense.

(j) **Ghat-deoa (Water-jars):** The Chittagong Muslims, particularly their illiterate section, celebrate the ceremony of *ghat-deoa* during their marriage. They install a pair of *ghats* (*gharas*) placing at the two sides of the two banana plants planted in the main gates of their houses with two green coconuts and some foliage of mango-tree over their tops.³ The banana-plants and the foliage of mango-tree, used in this ceremony, are the sign of long existence, the green coconuts of the fertility of progeniture while water signifies the vitality of life.

(k) **Bar-kaner gosal and sajani (Bridal bath and dressing of the bridegroom and the bride):** The bridegroom is shaved in the morning of the wedding day. The barber as presents receives *sida* (rice, *dal*, curry, oil, betel-leaves and nuts) in exchange for his work. The bride and the bridegroom are smeared with *halud* (turmeric) and their hands are decorated with *mehndi* designs. They are separately bathed at their respective houses by their close relatives with the water taken from five ponds (Chowdhury 1980:175). While bathing, they sit on low stools, placed on straw mats near the winnowing trays which contain vases of mango leaves and clay dishes with lighted wicks, betel leaves, some uncooked rices and sweets, hennas, *haluds*, flower petals, *durba* -grass and bracelets. Colour throwing is a common occurrence in a Chittagonian Muslim marriage. Brothers, wives and sisters, husbands are favourite targets for the red dye. Before wedding, the bride and the bridegroom are dressed in new bridal clothes sent by the other party. From now they are kept apart and fed sweets.

(l) **Bar-biday (Bridegroom's departure):** The bridegroom is now taken to his mother for her blessings who takes him in her arms and feeds him sweets. The mother then bids him giving a kiss on his forehead. A brother-in-law then help to sit on a *tanjan* (bridal chair). A child is then placed in his lap and a member of his family throws a handful of parched rice over his head.

(m) **Ghatadharani and Agu-berani (Gate money and reception):** In rural area the bridegroom is generally carried to the bridal function in a *tanjan* while in the city he arrives in a car or rickshaw. The bridegroom's party (comprising of only men

(comprising of only men in the rural and men and women in the urban areas) is offered a customary welcome (*agu-berani*) at the main gate of the bride's family. The wedding procession is often blocked at the main gate by the local youths. They demand a lot of money known as *ghatadharani*⁴ from the bridegroom. As soon as they are pleased with the amount given by him, he and his party are then allowed to pass the gate. He is then led up to the *akd*-platform tastefully decorated pitching a canopy over it. Flower petals are thrown on him as he gets out of his vehicle. Once he is seated on the platform, he is fed a glass of *sarbat* (milk). He drinks half of it and the other half is sent for the bride. The bridegroom looks down the whole period covering his mouth with a handkerchief out of shame and respect for the elders present there (Fazal 1965:45). Printed songs are often distributed to the bridal gathering.

2. **The *akd* (marital rite):** With the arrival of the bridegroom the wedding ritual, an Islamically enjoined aspect serving to unite two persons legally and in the eyes of Allah, culminating in the *akd* prayer, commences. After having formal consents from the bridegroom and the bride (in presence of witnesses), a *maulavi* (a Muslim scholar) is asked to recite the *khutba*, solemnize the *akd* and then pray a long and happy life for the newly married couple. The men in the gathering and the women inside also pray for them. The wedding guests are then entertained at a feast and are often amused with cultural functions⁵. A *kabinnama* (marriage deed) is then signed between the wedding parties and some respectable persons from amongst the audience remain as witnesses (Prindle 1982:365).

3. The customs and ceremonies after the *akd*

The third category of customs and ceremonies start after *akd* and continue until the bride finally leaves with her husband to live with him. The customs and ceremonies of this part mostly related with the bride may be summed up in the following:-

(a) **Bau-sajani and mukhdekha (Bridal dressing and seeing of the bride's face):** After the *akd* ceremony is over, all gifts⁶, presents and ornaments (*jeor-jati*) given to the bride are publicly shown and later transferred to her. The bride is now made up and dressed in her bridal clothes and ornaments. She is seen by the female guests from her husband's side in a customary function called *mukhdekha* (Prindle 1982:365). Those who do see the bride's face at this function may be made to pay her either in cash or presents. The bridegroom is then asked to meet her. They take their seats facing each other, feed (sugar and drink) each other and exchange garlands and rings between them. The bride's father then hands over his daughter to his son-in-law requesting him to take care of her. The newly married couple then

newly married couple then take leave paying their reverence to the elders present there. Some uncooked rice, spices, eggs and a sari (*bait-kapar*) (Chowdhury 1980:183) are given with them.

(b) Bau-dhukani (Reception of the bride):- In rural area the newly married woman is generally carried to her husband's house in a palanquin while in the city she arrives in a car or in a rickshaw. A younger sister or a sister-in-law of the bridegroom takes her out of her vehicle (in her arms) and carries her into a room where she is to sit on a mat before an *agkula*. A woman preserves a handful of paddy in the granary, rice in earthen rice-pot and earth in the chicken-house of her father-in-law's residence which she brings them from her father's house tying at the end of her bridal *sari* (Chowdhury 1980:184). Someone covers her with quilt for a while and the other sprinkled water in her face with a view to testing her patience for future house-hold work.

(c) Basar ghar and bichhan deoa (bride chamber and wedding bed):- The bride is then seated in a room where the members of the bridegroom's family and their close relations assemble to see and admire her (*bau-dekha*). The newly married couple are then left in a secluded room known as bride-chamber which is decorated with sweet smelt and beautiful flowers where their wedding bed is arranged and they are to pass their first bridal night there. In their first meeting night the female relations cut jokes and make funs with the bridegroom (Sen 1958:347).

(d) Bau-bhat (Feast for daughter-in-law also known as walima):- On the third day after the wedding, the bridegroom's father gives a feast for his newly married daughter-in-law in which the female relations of the bridegroom's family, the neighbouring women and specially some close relations (at least five) from the bride's side participate. They come to see her and bring the couple back to her father's house for a visit. The guests are deliciously fed by the bridegroom's family in the feast known as *walima* a long-standing practice, current in the Muslim society. The guests from the bridegroom's side then return with her which is called *phiraora* in the Chittagong Muslim society (Chowdhury 1980:192).

(e) Damandi-feast (Feast for son-in-law):- During the couple's visit at the bride's house a contingent of guests coming from the bridegroom's side are richly entertained in a banquet known as *damandi* feast by the bride's father. Foods are also sent for the women of the bridegroom's house. This ceremony has some religious significance and importance because the prophet is said to have observed it at the wedding of his daughter, Fatime (Husain 1976:113).

(f) Beai-bhata (Feast by Fathers-in-law) and maner bhat (Feast of honour):-

Both the fathers-in-law of the couple mutually give feasts to a fixed number of each other's guests at their respective houses on the day of *phiraora* which is called *beai-bhata*. It is a much practised custom among the Muslims of the district. The close relations of the bride, specially her maternal uncles or aunts, invite the couple immediately after the wedding and entertain them at sumptuous feasts in honour of their new son-in-law which is known as *maner-bhat* (feast of honour). The couple sometimes pass nights at such occasions. After all these ceremonies and functions are over, the bride customarily moves to live with her husband. From now she becomes a guest to her father's house. She comes on the occasions of important life cycle rites, ceremonies and calandrical festivals when she and her husband receive special gifts.

Conclusion

Marriage which is a central life cycle ceremony among Chittagong Muslims, has some social significance. It not only unites a male and a female but generates a bond of relationship between two families. It is a occasion which involves numerous transactions and assumes new sets of rights and duties. The participants of a Chittagonian Muslim wedding who are involved in its cermonious and customary functions become closer among themselves and sociable with one another. Marriage in Chittagong Muslim society is an important context for public display of power, of money and position. It is a primary act through which *Khandani* (upper class) ranks are strategically manipulated in public arena. Higher amounts of dowry, heavy gift-giving obligations and entertaining the wedding guests are the main characteristics of a Chittagonian Muslim marriage. Bridegroom's side is always in a better position in Chittagong. Two Bengali sayings⁷ relate to this view. The wealthy class in the society always tend to speak proudly both of what they have received through their son's wedding and of what they have spent for their daughter's wedding. The unnecessary and wasteful expenditure that incurs in a Chittagonian Muslim marriage has a great impact on the society where the poor class is seriously affected both economically and socially. By competing with the wealthy class they also tend to spend more in the wedding of their children. In giving their offsprings in marriage many of this wretched section of the society are compelled to incur debts and even sell out the last plot of their cultivable land.

Notes

1. There goes a proverb in Chittagong that,
*"Dula cha-a hadat
 Bau Cha-a Ghadat."*
 (Trans: The bridegroom is to be seen in a *hat* and the bride at a *ghat*). See (Chowdhury 1980:164).
2. The *sohagkata* songs are like the following one:-
"Sohagi bon sona bhaiyer sohagkatilare,

Agkula sajaiya sohagkatilare."
 Trans: The affectionate sister observes the ceremony with *agkula* at her hands (See Chowdhury 1980:170).
3. *"Kumbha dui jal bhari pantha dui pase,
 Amra dal dia tat rakhichhe harishe."*
 (Trans: Two water-jars are placed in gay at the two sides of a path in the main gates of their houses keeping some foliage of mango-tree over their tops). See Haq and Karim 1935:107.
4. The defence of the local youth with a barricade for gate money sometimes leads to a mutual quarrel continuing from two or three hours to two or three days and even results in the breakage of the marriage. See (Rahman 1972:144).
5. Various kinds of wedding songs are sung at this function and varieties of musical instruments are also played on to mark the rejoicings of the ceremony. See Alam 1985:83-88.
6. The types, approximate values and the givers of the gifts are recorded in list. The wedding gift-list is written because the concerned families want to keep a record of what type and value of gifts are received so that when there is a wedding in the family of one of the givers, they can return an equivalent gift. Bride's father, in a Chittagonian Muslim marriage, is also expected to give at least some ornaments and a full set of drawing and bedroom furniture. If his gifts are found to be insufficient, arguments may raise, and the marriage may in some cases be broken off at this point.
7. The first is *meyer biete name* and *chheler biete uthe* (step down at the daughter's wedding and step up at the son's wedding) and the second *meye oala niche* and *chhele oala upare* (daughter's side below and son's side up). See Prindle 1982:345.

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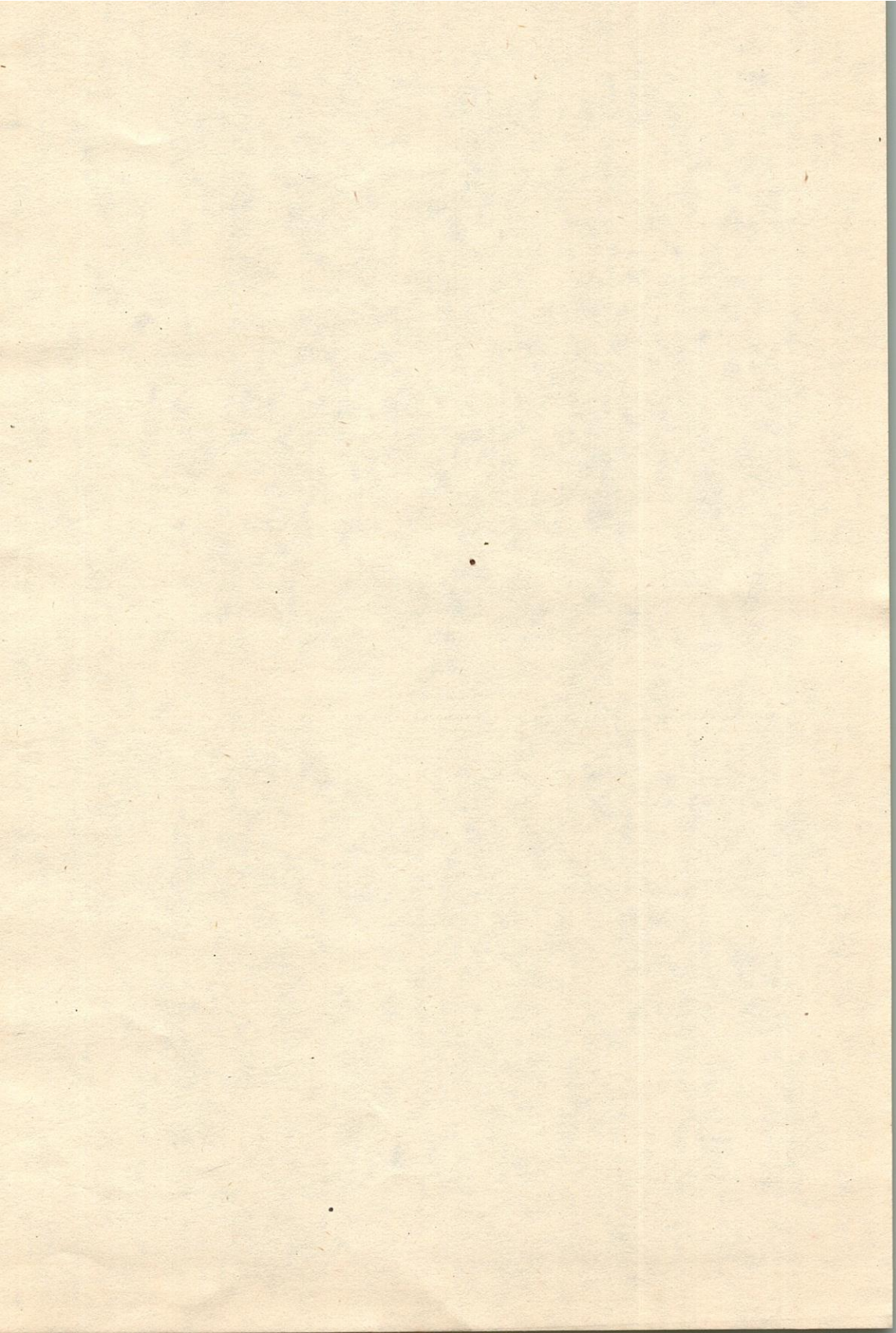
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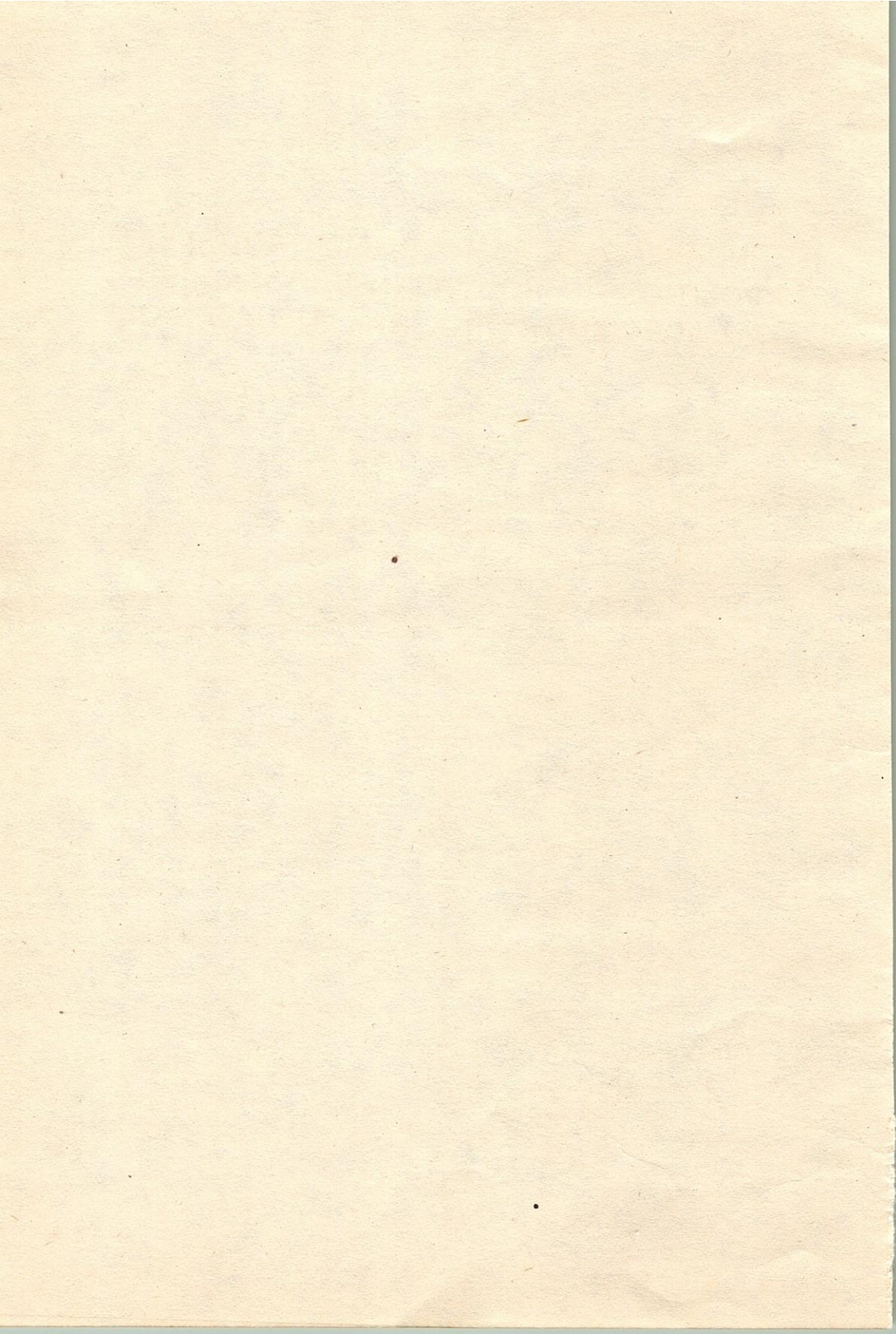
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NOTES & QUERIES

INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT AND LEFT POLITICS IN NORTHERN BANGLADESH : A CASE STUDY OF ATRAI, AT NAOGAON.

- Syed Nesar Ahmad Rummy*

(This study tries to reveal the position of the leftist movement of Atrai in 1971, '72, '73 and '74. The author lived and visited the different places at Atrai and its adjacent Thanas during the year of 1986, '87, '88 and '89. So, the author tried his best to acquire knowledge of the independence movement in this area. Apart from giving some idea on the struggle at Atrai it is just an exploratory study).

INTRODUCTION

Atrai is a Thana situated in the south-eastern part of the district of Naogaon. The area of this Thana is 285.9 sq. km. and the population of this area is 138756 according to the population census of 1981.¹ Basically this Thana is a low-lying area. People are poor in comparison to the other Thanas of Naogaon district. But the people are very conscious politically because twice a peasants' conference was held in the early sixties under the leadership of Moulana Bhashani. Youths and youngsters of this area were considerably motivated by those conferences. Later on those youths and peasants took an active part during the mass upsurge in 1969.² A large number of youths, students, daylabourers took part in the war of independence in 1971 as a result of that mass upsurge and motivation.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

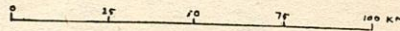
1. The gain or acquire knowledge about the independence movement and class struggle at Atrai.
2. To know the present condition of the leftist movement at Atrai.

INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT AT ATRAI

The Principal, lecturers and students of the local college as well as the elite of Atrai took the decision that they would resist the Pakistan army in 1971. That

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GREATER RAJSHAHI DISTRICT



THIS AREA SHOWN IN THE MAP CONSISTS OF
ATRAI, RANINGAR, BAGMARA, MANDA
AND NIAMATPUR THANA.



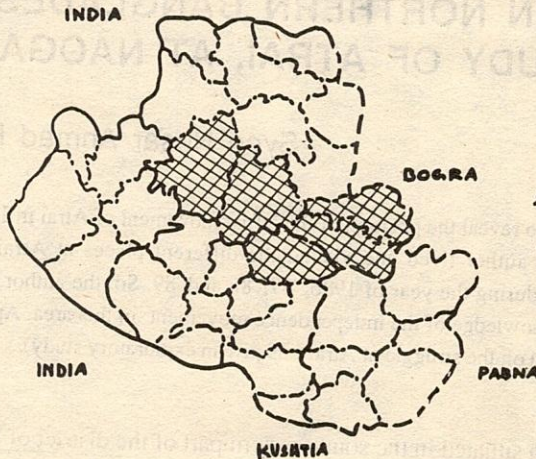
THANA BOUNDARY



DISTRICT BOUNDARY



INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY



was why they got together under the leadership of Ohidur Rahman and formed an armed group with the Mukti-Bahini (freedom forces), students, Communist workers, village youths, members of former EPR, Ansar, VDP, and Bengal Regiment. By and large, there were more than ten arms operations carried out by that armed group and the Mukti-Bahini of the then provisional Bangladesh government against the Pakistan army and their collaborators. Descriptions are given below:

- They attacked Atrai Police Station and looted all the arms and ammunitions. It was the first operation at Atrai during the days of the independence war.
- The Pakistan army was attacked by that armed group at Nal-Dighi of Raninagar P. S. in the middle of May, '71. The fight continued for four hours and seven Pakistani soldiers were killed. It was the second operation.
- Thirty to thirty five members of the police force and the Bihari militia were defeated at Bagmara P. S. A group of armed guerillas attacked the police

station. One police constable was arrested and four or five were killed. Two L.M.G's, three sten-guns and thirty-five 303 rifles were captured.

- d. The fourth operation was carried out on the Naogaon-Mohadebpur road against a convoy of Pakistan army. It was mid-July '71. Freedom fighters trained in India and the communist guerillas³ jointly conducted this attack. After this event all the operations against the Pakistan army jointly carried out by the communists and freedom fighters under the leadership of Ohidur Rahman up to the 16th December of 1971. The communists were about 1500 in member and the freedom fighters 800 in number. Prominent colleagues of Ohidur Rahman were Badal Dutt, Alamgir Kabir, Saad Ali, Abdur Razzque and Alauddin.
- e. The Pakistani forces was attacked by that joint command near Bandaikhara. At that time, they were returning to their camp from Bandaikhara after looting, raping and killing innocent people around. It was some time in August, '71. Seventy-two Pakistani soldiers were killed in this fight.
- f. In Septembe, '71 a camp of the Pakistani forces were was totally destroyed at Maynam in Manda P. S. one freedom fighter was killed in this fight.
- g. In Banshgacha at Bagmara Thana, a group of five hundred Al-Badar and Razakars were attacked by the freedom fighters. The fight continued for ten hours. At the end of that clash some of the Razakars and Al-Badars were killed. Some surrendered to the freedom fighters and communist guerillas and a few of them managed to escape. It was sometime in October in 1971.
- h. At the end of October, a military train was attacked near Shahagola Railway station. About four hundred Pakistani soldiers were killed or injured in that operation. The train was going to Shantahar from Natore.
- i. Heavy mortar shelling was suffered by Naogaon town in the month of November, '71. But after creating a panic the freedom fighters were not able to enter Naogaon town.
- j. The Pakistani military and para-military camps at Tahirpur of Bagmara P. S. was captured in mid November, '71. The freedom fighters captured many arms from that operation.
- k. Lastly, there were many other operations carried out by the freedom fighters from the end of November to the 2nd week of December, '71. During that period Manda, Atrai, Raninagar and Bagmara P. S. were captured by the

communists and freedom fighters. A vast area was declared free by the communists and freedom fighters.

After 16th December, '71, a fare-well meeting of the communist guerrillas and freedom fighters who were trained in India was held. This was very emotional in nature.

INDEPENDENCE AND ITS AFTERMATH

A regional communist party was formed at Atrai during the time of the independence war. It was known as the Rajshahi Anchalick Communist party.⁴ After 16th December, '71 these communists started thinking seriously as to what to do next. The majority of them opined that they should proceed after observing the policy of the government. In December '71 the communists got a letter from Mr. Baytulla (a former Awami League M. P.). Following the directive of the letter some of them handed over part of arms to the government authorities. Meanwhile Matin, Alauddin, Tipu Biswas took shelter at Natore as they were driven out from Pabna and Kushtia. About 60 of them found shelter in the Atrai area on humanitarian grounds and for past relationships. Differences of opinion were also dormant at that time. The Communists of Atrai discussed seriously with them about their future line of action. At last they accepted the Naxalites line.⁵ All relationship and communication with the then Bangladesh government was totally discontinued during the month of February, '72.

Operations were performed by the police, BDR and Awami-Sechcha Shebak Bhahini (Volunteer Corps of the Awami League Party) to recover the Arms in Artrai, Bagmara, Manda, Raninagar and the adjacent areas. Meanwhile, the Anchalik Communist Party was merged with the Communisst Party of East Bengal (M. L.), then named as the EBCP (M. L.). They remained ready to go for armed clashes with the government forces.

From March '72, combing operations were being carried out by the Army, BDR and Police against the guerillas of the EBCP (M. L.) at Atrai and its adjacent areas. The communists conducted small attacks at that time. But their military line became aimless very soon. And after that their arms struggle became defensive rather than offensive. Government forces and communist guerillas were equal in number in the attack of Zhikra area under the Bagmara P. S. At last the BDR camp was withdrawn from Zhikra Village. The EBCP (M. L.) guerillas were following the "Hit and Run" policy from April '72. Some skirmishes were held at that time.

Communist guerillas were busy attacking the dacoits from jails and newly motivated dacoits as they were doing their operations in the name of Naxalbari movement.

Communists Guerillas were surrounded by government forces when they met to review and discuss the total situation at the village Gondogohali in mid-June '72. Late at night they began firing. After breaking down the barricade of the government forces the guerillas (about one hundred in number) under the leadership of Ohidur Rahman took shelter at the village Madandunga at 10 A. M. But the government forces attacked them. The fight continued for about two hours. The communists retreated to the village Rasulpur. A decision was taken to scatter as small groups to different places. Ohidur Rahman with about ten of his followers came to a village named Raipur, after crossing the river Jamuna (choto). But there they were surrounded by the government forces in a marshy area. Firing continued from 2 P. M. to 7 P. M. Ohidur Rahman was arrested with a bullet injury and 4 to 6 of his followers were killed.

But small fights frequently took place under the leadership of Badal Dutt, a teacher of Molla Azad Memorial College of Atrai up to March '73. Badal Dutt was killed in a fight at Damnas in Manda P. S. But indeed, After 1973 there was no Naxalite movement in this region of greater Rajshahi district.

The Activities of the EBCP (M. L.) were about to be stopped from that period. Some of the communists were scattered and some went underground by 1974.

CONCLUSION

The left leader of Atrai are somewhat indifferent in their role and activities at Atrai and its adjacent areas in 1972, '73 and '74. A large number of their workers joined CPB and latter Awami League. Some are now the active leaders and workers of different national political parties. And some are totally inactive. Only they remember their past activities. A group of them now believes that they made a blunder to the left movement by their past activities. But some of them still believe that they did the right thing at that time. The author discussed various matters with the leaders who were either active or inactive in politics. Killing the dacoits after the liberation of Bangladesh drew mixed reaction and shortly it appeared as a wrong policy. Very soon the people of Atrai became indifferent to the left politics.

It appeared that the people wanted stability and peace at that time. However, some influential men were being killed mysteriously. Common people believed that these were done by the leftist activists, but all the time it was not true.

In view of the above facts, we can assert that in 1971 a war of liberation was launched under the leftist leadership at Atrai and now it has become a part of our history. After independence, they were totally liquidated for their wrong policies. In the long term perspective, their hard-earned victory was negated by their own activities during 1972 and '73. Yet there are people who think that those inspiring struggles must be remembered.

FOOT NOTES

1. Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, *Bangladesh Population Census 1981, District: Rajshahi*, December 1984, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, p. LV, LVLL.
2. In 1969, a mass upsurge occurred in Pakistan and for that reason Ayub Khan, the President of Pakistan had to resign.
3. Communist guerilla-the term is also used as armed group in this paper.
4. Talukder Maniruzzaman called it the Atrai communist party in his paper "Bangladesh: An Unfinished Revolution", in *Bangladesh Politics* edited by Emajuddin Ahmed, pp. 30- 65.
5. A movement was held in Naxalbari of Darjeeling district in the Indian state of West Bengal during the late sixties. This movement was against the big farmers and landlords. Gradually it spread up to the whole of West Bengal and some parts of states of Bihar and Andhra Pradesh in India. A section of communists were greatly motivated by that Naxalbari movement.

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BOOK REVIEW

A NEW STUDY OF MUGHAL BENGAL*

- Abu Imam **

A new history of Mughal Bengal from the pen of a scholar who has spent a life-time in the study of medieval history of the sub-continent and particularly of Bengal should be most welcome. More so when it deals with a subject that badly needs a reappraisal after nearly half a century of publication of the *History of Bengal, Vol. II* of Dhaka University edited and mostly written by no less a historian than Sir Jadunath Sarkar. Professor Karim justifies his new venture by saying : "while writing *Murshid Quli Khan and His Times* I noticed that there were inaccuracies and incompleteness about the Mughal period also in the *History of Bengal, Vol. II* and from that time I cherished a hope of writing a History of Bengal for the Mughal period." Further, "materials which escaped attention of the previous scholars, or facts which were shady in their time, may appear in close perspective through the passage of time." *History of Bengal, Vol. II* was but a pioneer effort and as years passed its many weaknesses and lapses came to notice. This is however, no reflection on Jadunath Sarkar's pre-eminence as a historian. As one acquainted with the historian's craft knows only too well that it is not possible to say the final word in history. New findings and new interpretations go on challenging accepted facts of to-day. But it should always be borne in mind that the priceless source of our knowledge of Mughal Bengal during the reign of Jahangir viz., the *Baharistan-i-Ghaibi* was Sir Jadunath's discovery and we must remain eternally grateful to him for this. And Karim has acknowledged this gratitude to the fullest. Abdul Latif's travel *Diary* was also brought to the notice of the scholarly world by Sir Jadunath Sarkar. The *Baharistan* was long lost and Sir Jadunath discovered a manuscript of the book in the *Bibliothèque Nationale* of Paris. Sir Jadunath first brought it to the notice of the scholars and historians by publishing a few articles in the Bengali monthly journal *Prabasi* and in the *Journal*

* Abdul Karim. *History of Bengal : Mughal Period*, Vol. I, Institute of Bangladesh Studies, Rajshahi University, Rajshahi, 1992, 747 pages. Tk. 600.00

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of the Bihar and Orissa Research Societies in the early twenties. A rotograph copy of the manuscript was procured for the Dhaka University Library and Dr. M. I. Borah of the same University translated it into English in two volumes which was published by the Government of Assam in 1936. To quote Karim : "Unlike other sources this book deals only with local matters i. e. the History of Bengal and the adjoining area. The book was probably written outside Bengal, but it was written by an officer who passed his military career in Bengal and he wrote not on the basis of reports received from other sources, but from his own experiences" and it is the only contemporary history of Bengal for the period which it deals with. Indeed we are one with the author that "The importance of the *Baharistan-i-Ghaibi* may be summed up by saying that no part of the History of Bengal in the pre-British period is not fully known as the history of the reign of Jahangir i. e. the period covered by this book." A copy of Abdul Latif's *Diary* was made available to Sir Jadunath Sarkar by his friend Professor Abdur Rahman of Delhi. Sir Jadunath translated the *Diary* both into English (1928) and Bengali - abridged and portions left out. "This is also a very important source of information, particularly for one year, 1609, when Islam Khan went to Ghoraghat from Rajmahal." But for these two sources we would have remained in the dark about many areas of the history of Bengal of this period. Thus it is undoubtedly a good news that a new history of Mughal Bengal has been written by a greater utilisation of the *Baharistan* and Abdul Latif's *Diary*, a greater and skilful analysis for making them yield facts which had so far been ignored, conclusions that had so far eluded us. These two sources were so far "underutilised"--if we may use an economic term. The Scholarly world was waiting exactly for the kind of work that Karim has presented- greater details and re-examination of facts-dealt with erudition and maturity mastered over the years of the practice of his craft.

This is a history conceived by its author on a grand scale. The project covers the history of Mughal Bengal as a whole and the volume under review--a formidable *tome* containing 747 + pages--is only the first volume of a series to be completed in four more volumes. The first (i. e. the present) volume covers about half a century from the fall of Daud Karrani to the death of Jahangir i. e. 1576 to 1627.

The other projected volumes are :

- Vol. II - History of Bengal (Mughal period) from 1627 to 1707 (the reigns of Shah Jahan and Aurangzib.)
- Vol. III - History of Bengal (Mughal period) from 1707 to 1757 (from Murshid Quli Khan to the battle of Plassey.)
- Vol. IV - History of Bengal (Mughal period) Social and Cultural History.
- Vol. V - History of Bengal (Mughal period) Economic history.

The period covered in the first volume is very important since it represents an era of transition when after protracted struggle the independence of the local chiefs was ruthlessly suppressed. Islam Khan advanced fighting every step as his adversaries fell one by one. Bengal once again became part of an imperial system and imperial exploitation-in exchange it got the *Mughal Peace*. The author comments : 'As a Mughal *subah*, Bengal attained a geographical unity unknown before."

Karim unfolds this fascinating story through 13 chapters, of necessity, of unequal size. After an introductory chapter follows a chapter about the rise of the *Bhuiyans* and the *Bara-Bhuiyans* of *Bhati* --fixing their time, place and number (Chapter 2). Then in the 3rd chapter Karim goes on to deal with the Mughal campaigns in Bengal under Akbar. Then very appropriately follows four chapters (IV to VII) all devoted to the *Subahdari* of Islam Khan Chishui. Thus, considering the importance of his viceroyalty and also the wealth of details available for the period, the bulk of the book is given to Islam Khan Chishui. After Chapter VIII, dealing with *Subahdar* Qasim Khan, follow three chapters (ix, x, xi) devoted to *Subahdar* Ibrahim Khan Fath Jung. Chapter XII deals with "Bengal under the rebel Prince Shan Jahan and the restoration of Imperial Authority." Chapter XIII forms the conclusion. A bibliography and index are appended.

Karim also has another dimension to his justifications for undertaking the new history, namely the patriotic. Following Bhattasali and discarding Sir Jadunath, Karim looks at the *Bara-Bhuiyans'* struggle from a nationalistic point of view. To him the struggle is a kind of Bengali struggle for independence in which to quote him "the Bengalees, Hindus and Muslims, joined together to fight the Muslim Mughal aggression." In his words, ".....Sir Jadunath and his team of

experts wrote in imperial perspectives, so the *History of Bengal Vol. II* has been mere a history of the Mughals in Bengal, rather than a History of Bengal in the Mughal period.The scholars showed an indifferent attitude to the patriotic feelings of the Bengal zamindars, bhuiyans and chiefs. Sir Jadunath himself called the Bara-Bhuiyans and Chiefs "upstarts" and "captains of plundering bands." The Bara-Bhuiyans who put up stiff resistance to the Mughal aggression for three decades, and who checked Akbar's forward policy successfully, have not been given their due in the *History of Bengal Vol. II*. They were denied the prestige and dignity they deserved and their patriotism was questioned." A perusal of the book makes it clear that all sorts of questions have been asked by Karim for answer from his sources--particularly the *Baharistan*--and ability to ask right questions is a great quality in a historian--and it is amazing on how many aspects of the period under review the sources have shed light. However, the most important contribution made by the author in this book has been in the domain of the history of Bengal's resistance to the invading Mughals--"The Bengal Chiefs" struggle for Independence" in the language of N. K. Bhattasali. Karim has thrown new light on the early years of the Mughal conquests in Bengal and has illuminated many an obscure corner of this history, by dispelling many misconceptions and by putting particularly the history of the *Bara-Bhuiyans* in proper historical perspective, by putting it in correct time and place. Karim is indebted to his predecessors--among many others particularly to Hosten and Bhattasali and above all to M. I. Borah, the translator of the *Baharistan* and he duly acknowledges his debt to them. About M. I. Borah he says, "My debt to him is heavy." Karim has cleared our misconceptions regarding the *Bara-Bhuiyans'* rise, date, their number and the area where they flourished by judicious use mainly of the *Baharistan* but also of other sources. Karim has made the most important discovery--the discovery of the list of the *Bara-Bhuiyans* given in the *Baharistan* and thus has been able to assert that the *Bara-Bhuiyans* were indeed twelve in number (13 including the chief) (the *italics* are ours) and not indefinite--a fact all the time staring in the face of the historians since the discovery of the *Baharistan* and yet not noticed by anybody until Karim did. It is amazing how we tend to ignore the obvious. This is another reminder that the *Baharistan*, that mine of information has indeed been underutilized and can be made to yield unexpected and startling information. So for the first time the controversy regarding the number of the *Bara-Bhuiyans* has been settled--the *Baharistan* gives exactly twelve names besides the name of the chief. Formerly the most widely held belief was that 12 was an imaginary number as there were many

more of them. Karim says : "Mirza Nathan in his *Baharistan-i-Ghaibi* gives the list of Bara-Bhuiyans in one place, but unfortunately modern scholars have failed to find it out. Sir Jadunath Sarkar rather terms the list as a "string of names" and says, "the greatest strength of Musa Khan lay in the 'Twelve Bhuiyas'the *Baharistan* does not definitely tell us who the Twelve Bhuiyas were. In only one passage it supplies a string of names." Sir Jadunath was labouring under the preconceived notion that the Bara-Bhuiyans were spread throughout the whole of Bengal and the term 'twelve' was used to denote an indefinite number. So he termed the list as a "string of names" without examining the statements of Mirza Nathan carefully."

After identifying the "twelve" Bhuiyans following Mirza Nathan, Karim points out that however in both the lists of Abul Fazal and Mirza Nathan--there are thirteen names because the chief was counted separately. Abul Fazal says : "Isa acquired fame.....and made the twelve Zamindars.....subject to himself;" and Mirza Nathan always stated, "Musa Khan and his twelve zamindar allies." "So the number of Bhuiyans was twelve with the chief (Isa Khna in the time of Akbar and Musa Khan in the time of Jahangir) they were thirteen."

Karim by an acute and painstaking analysis has also been able to locate the areas where they ruled and flourished. Former scholars who dealt with the subject laboured under the misconception that these *Bara-Bhuiyans* were spread all over Bengal despit's Abul Fazl's and Mirza Nathan's categorical mention of *Bhati* being their domain. Karim has been able to draw the limits of the so-called *Bhati* areas and according to him it was as follows : "The river Ichamati in the west, the river Ganges in the south, the kingdom of Tippera in the east and to the north Alapsingh pargana in the greater district of Mymensingh stretching towards north-east to Baniachang in Sylhet. The low-lying area of the greater districts of Dhaka, Mymensingh, Tippera and Sylhet, watered and surrounded by the three great rivers, the Ganges the Brahmaputra and the Meghna and their numerous branches constituted Bhati in the days of Akbar and Jahangir. The Bara-Bhuiyans, rose to power in this region."

The third important contribution of Karim is the settlement of the question when and how did the *Bara-Bhuiyans* rise? Karim after an analysis of newly found numismatic and other evidence quite convincingly dispels the widely held belief following Bhattacharya that "the rise of the Bara-Bhuiyans of Bengal is to be dated

from 1576 A. D., the year of the fall of Daud, the last karrani king of Bengal." Karim points out that "Bhattasali did not remember that Isa Khan gained strength enough to defeat the Mughal navy under Shah Bardi *even before the fall of Daud.*" (the italics are ours.) According to Karim, during the two years of unrest in Bengal, i. e. between 1538 when Sher Shan first occupied Gaur and 1540 when after the battle of Bilgram he defeated Humayun and occupied Delhi, when there was practically no authority in Bengal--*Mulk-ut-Tawaif* (disorder, chaos and disintegration. Karim acknowledges his debt to Dr. Abdus Sayeed, Associate Professor of History, Chittagong University for this interpretation of the term *Mulk-ut-Tawaif*) -- that the Bhuiyans became independent in their respective territories. Traditionally the Bengalees were known to Delhi Sultans as a people prone to rebellion (*Balghakians*) and "they had the taste of independence for long two hundred years" and so they must have taken advantage of the absence of a strong central government. So Karim comes to the very important conclusion that "in eastern Bengal in the region of Bhati, the Bhuiyans rose to position and after the overthrow of the independent sultanate and particularly taking advantage of the *Mulk-ut-Tawaif* of Sher Shah." "*The Bara-Bhuiyans were heirs to the two hundred year old independent sultanate of Bengal.*" (the italics are ours.)

So what has Karim achieved? He himself sums up beautifully : "In this volume we have given the Bengal Bhuiyans, the credit, dignity and prestige, due to them and we have cleared the misconception of the previous scholars about the Bara-Bhuiyans, Bhati, and the Bara-Bhuiyans have been identified, properly interpreting the evidence of the *Akbarnama*, the *Ain-i-Akbari* and the *Baharistan-i-Ghaibi*. We have paid due attention to the resistance offered to the Mughal aggression by the Bhuiyans, chiefs, Zamindars and particularly the Bara-Bhuiyans and their chief Isa Khan Masnad-i-Ala and his son Musa Khan Masnad-i-Ala. Our attention has also been paid to Khwaja Usman's battle and its results. Important dates of some events of this period, which could not be fixed by previous scholars properly, have been corrected after close scrutiny of Abdul Latif's Diary and the narratives in the *Baharistan-i-Ghaibi*. The renowned generals of Akbar, Khah Jahan, Khan Azam, Shahbaz Khan and Raja Man Singh failed to complete the conquest of Bengal, but Islam Khan Chishti successfully accomplished the task within only three years. The factors leading to Islam Khan's success, have been examined and highlighted. The success and failures of the later subahdars, Qasim Khan and Ibrahim Khan Fath Jang have also been given due importance. This

book has also thrown light on many obscure points, which escaped notice of the previous scholars. The rebel prince Shah Jahan's rule in Bengal, briefly discussed in the *History of Bengal*, Vol. II has received due attention in this study."

Apologies for pointing out a few lapses. One notices an unfortunate dearth of maps in the publication, more so since Karim himself suggests "the map of medieval Bengal may be redrawn with the help of the *Baharistan-i-Ghaibi* and the *Ain-i-Akbari*." It appears the book has been rushed through the press and printing errors are rather too many--*italics* are not used where necessary, particularly for non-English words. May I also point out that the paper used, the standard of binding and printing are not commensurate with the importance of the publication.

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

**MUGHAL MOSQUE TYPES IN BANGLADESH
ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT ***

- Muhammad Abdul Bari **

If architecture is considered as the greatest achievement of all the Muslim artistic activities, the supreme triumph of Islamic architecture is undoubtedly the mosque. In all ages throughout the whole Islamic world mosque had been constructed abundantly by the caliphs, sultans, emperors, governors and individuals alike in comparison to other forms of Muslim building art. Muslim Bengal was no exception to this general rule. The present work aims at looking into origins and development of the varieties of mosques in Bangladesh, which were erected within a span of little less than three hundred years starting from the Mughal conquest of Bengal in 1575 to the final collapse of the Mughal rule in India in 1857.

The thesis contains four chapters. The first two chapters form the background study, while the third chapter with several sections constitutes the main body of the thesis.

Chapter-1 gives a brief history of the gradual Mughal annexations of the outlying province of Bengal, and summarises the circumstances that led to the emergence of the Independent Republic of Bangladesh, the area of the study. Along with this attempts have also been made to focus how gradually the cultural transformation in Bengal was effected during Mughal rule.

Chapter-2 offers an outline history of the formation, growth and development of the mosque architecture in different Muslim countries of the world. Attempts have been made from this context to study the Mughal mosque architecture in Bangladesh.

Chapter-3 presents a descriptive and critical account of Mughal mosque scattered over in different parts of Bangladesh with the largest number of erections at Dhaka, one of the two important capitals of Mughal Bengal. A total of ninety-five mosques have been included in the study, of which forty were previously unknown and

* Ph. D./1989/ History.

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unpublished. Some of the rest fifty-five were simply mentioned by different scholars, while others partially studied. With a view to providing and adequate documentation each and every monument was personally visited, studied and recorded.

In dealing with these mosques a typological rather than a chronological order has been followed. The mosques have been listed and arranged under two major heads: Rectangular Mosques and Square Mosques. Mosques of both these groups again produce varieties of sub-types, which were more or less grown out of the synthesis of the Sultanate Building styles of the land and the Upper Indian Muslim cities especially the Mughal art traditions of Delhi, Agra, Fathpur-Sikri and Lahore.

A large majority of these mosques are discussed in detail including the history of their restoration and repair works upto the present day. In the process the mosques which have been turned to give a modern look have also been mentioned. A critical estimation has in each case been attempted, and dates of mosques, where not known, have been suggested through formal comparisons with firmly dated buildings.

Chapter-4 summarises in the form of conclusion what have been discussed and studied in the previous chapters.

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

FUNCTIONAL ROLE OF THE PERIODIC RURAL
MARKETS OF NAWABGONJ UPAZILA *

- MD. EKRAMUL HAQUE **

This study concerns with the characteristics and functions of the periodic rural markets of Nawabgonj Upazila in Chapai-Nawabgonj district. The main theme of this study is that the peasant way of life of the study area is closely interlinked with the rural markets. In addition to exchange mechanism, the periodic rural markets or *hats* also perform a wide range of other functions such as social, economic and cultural. In analysing these functions both the primary and secondary sources of data have been used. Required data were collected by the author during July 1978 through February 1979 and later updated from all the 303 permanent shop-keepers and traders as well as service holders from each of the 44 institutions of the 13 *hats* of Nawabgonj Upazila on the basis of a pretested questionnaire. Information was also gathered from respondents representing each category of the non-permanent sellers of different commodities. Interviews were also made by pre-arranged informers at market entry points in order to determine each of their command areas. The approach of the study is mainly geographical and empirical one.

The basic idea for this study has been drawn from Charistaller's concept of central place theory and the functional role of the periodic rural markets has been examined in the context of his hexagonal model. It has been observed that the number of *hats* and their service areas do not follow the norm of Charistaller's model and this is due to the variation in topography, soil, productivity, population density and also level of economic development in the study area. But we can not deny the basic idea of his theory i. e. certain amount of productive land supports a central place, and central place performs essential functions or services for the surrounding areas.

The *hats* have been graded into three classes on the basis of some variables. These three orders are higher, intermediate and lower order hats. This hierarchical order

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of the *hats* is reflected on total number of establishments, revenue collection, catchment area of the *hats* and total population of the service areas. The higher order *hats* have the highest revenue collection, larger number of establishments and command generally large service areas. The intermediate and lower order *hats* show gradual decrease in the revenue collection, number of establishments and also the service areas. The distribution of the *hats* is closely associated with physiography, soil condition, population density, etc. Due to the variation of these elements, the distributional pattern of the *hats* of the study area has been random.

As to the economic function, the marketing system of the study area reveals some interesting features. The study area shows both a vertical and horizontal marketing system. The vertical flow takes both upward and downward movement. In case of downward movement, a product moves from the capital or district town to the large or intermediate order *hats*. In case of upward movement, a product moves from large or intermediate order *hats* to the district or even to capital city in the hierarchical ladder of marketing system. In horizontal movement, the itinerant peddlers or petty dealers move from *hat* to *hat* with their products. Thus it is the joint economic participation of intermediate and higher order *hats*, Upazila market, district towns and so on which binds the local or village economies with regional economies and ultimately with the national economy.

The periodicity of *hats* helps both the buyers and sellers in various ways. Due to this periodicity of markets the petty traders can move to more than one *hat* in a week and can combine their products with sales efficiently. This also minimises the travel distance of the consumers.

Besides economic function, the *hats* have significant social, political and cultural role. The *hat* is the venue for socialisation among multivillage groups. *Hat* Izzaradars and local influential persons form *hat* committee to settle disputes between parties. Clubs and *hat* committees arrange competition in games and other forms of recreational activities. Moreover the *hat*-committees also arrange religious festival within or near the *hat* sites. The tea-stalls are the most important venues for social gathering and exchange of ideas among different people. During election period, the political parties deliver lectures in the *hat*-sites and they become the centre for electioneering.

The *hats* were established in the past by Zamindars or influential persons at open spaces away from the settlement. At the initial stage of establishment these *hats* were small nuclei of commercial activities and most of them had only one or two permanent shops or even none at all. Tremendous growth of population along with

the technological and infra-structural changes, has transformed some of the *hats* from their poor beginning to the higher order rural markets and ultimately stable markets. The growth and transformation of the rural markets have substantial impact on the commercial and developmental activities, which in turn, are responsible to a large extent for bringing about gradual change and development in the peasant society. Organisation and management of the *hats* are by *Izaraders* and Hat Management committees. Present committees seem to be more democratic in the large and intermediate order *hats* but due to interior location and inaccessible roads, the lower order *hats* are still under the command of influential persons. In general, the conditions of the *hats* of the study area are very poor. The roads in the interior become muddy during rainy season and dusty during dry season making it difficult to travel through these roads. The drainage and sewerage system is practically absent in the hats of the interior location. Some observations relating to the general problems of *hat* establishment, management and development have also been made from the experience of this study. The establishment of *hats* in Bangladesh took place in the past without any planning, but this should not be allowed any longer in the national interest. The establishment and growth of hats must be planned and promoted for efficient social, economic and other functions. There is an urgent need to link the *hats* with their service areas by adequate and improved road system. The drainage, sewerage and other sanitary facilities should be improved. Water supply should be assured in the *hats* by sinking adequate number of tubewells. These problems need to be examined and evaluated by experts and physical planners in order to provide and create healthy rural markets for the community.

the technological and infrastructural changes has transformed some of the rural areas from their poor beginning to the higher order rural markets and ultimately stable markets. The growth and transformation of the rural markets have substantial impact on the commercial and developmental activities, which in turn are responsible to a large extent for bringing about radical change and development in the rural sector. Organisation and management of the rural areas by KUTAP and the Rural Management Committees. Present committees seem to be more concerned in the large and intermediate order areas but due to internal location and inaccessible roads, the lower order areas are still under the command of influential persons. In general, the conditions of the area of the study are very poor. The roads in the interior become muddy during rainy season and thus during dry season making it difficult to travel through these roads. The drainage and sewerage system is practically absent in the area of the interior location. Some observations relating to the general problems of rural development, management and development have also been made from the experience of this study. The establishment of KUTAP in Bangladesh took place in the past without any planning, but this should not be allowed any longer in the national interest. The establishment and growth of KUTAP must be planned and promoted for efficient social, economic and other functions. There is an urgent need to link the rural with their services areas by adequate and improved road system. The drainage, sewerage and other sanitary facilities should be improved. Water supply should be assured in the area by suitable adapting number of tubewells. These problems need to be examined and evaluated by experts and physical planners in order to provide and create healthy rural market for the community.

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