

DOC

DECENTRALIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT: SOME ASPECTS OF UPAZILA ADMINISTRATION

34
KHD

JSC

4/8

10/7/86
10/7/03

BY

COLONEL A A Z AMIN KHAN
ARMY HEADQUARTERS
DHAKA CANTONMENT



SL No. 10/7/86

PAPER PREPARED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF REQUIREMENTS
FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF FOURTH SENIOR STAFF
COURSE HELD AT THE BANGLADESH PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
TRAINING CENTRE, SAVAR, DHAKA DURING AUGUST 2 TO
OCTOBER 30 1986

B P A T C/Photo-print 42 Copies

September 16, '86

CONTENTS

<u>Serial</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Page No</u>
1.	Introduction	2
2.	Purpose	3
3.	Scope	4
4.	Sequence and Key Definition	4
5.	Meaning and Dimensions of Development	6
6.	Meaning and Dimensions of Decentralization	10
7.	Role of Decentralization in Development	13
8.	Administrative Decentralization in Bangladesh	16
9.	Mobilization of Financial Resources	20
10.	Local Level Planning	27
11.	Conclusion	32
12.	Recommendations	35
13.	Tables	38
14.	References	43
15.	Bibliography	44

INTRODUCTION

General

1. It is easy to be overwhelmed by the intractable forces to work within and among nation especially in the current decade. The interdependence of nations the divisiveness of their ideologies and the seeming inevitability of the resource depletion all appear likely to diminish efforts for nonviolent and creative change. Change often seems hostage to unmanageable dynamics and energies. Notwithstanding these factors, a curious search is being made on the means to bring about a purposive change in developing countries. ¹
2. It is a fact that development is an increase in both growth and equity. This study is based on the conviction that public institution can contribute to development; even if such institutions are often part of the problem, this can also be part of the solution. It will not be out of the way perfunctory to assert that administration and political institutions are partly to blame for the current excess and failure which has sown the seed of social discontentment and moral distortions in the developing countries. An amendment in the macro paradigm of institutional discourse of those involved in politics and administration may reverse the existing frustrating situation rather than looking for some alternative which may turn out to be far worse. It can not ofcourse be concluded avowedly that any of these can accomplish needed changes or can make development more difficult or problematic.
3. Although developmental changes may come from several sources, efforts will be made in this paper to focus on the role that organizations and administrators can play. Often behaviour and events that appear unrealistic and perverse are actually responses to organizational patterns and incentives. It is, therefore imperative to examine changing organizational structures and designs and to determine which forms are most compatible with the developmental task. Some prescriptions towards attainment of development are found in decentralization of administration.
4. There are a good number of interpretations of decentralization given over the past three decades. Although it has been widely accepted that decentralization contains in it the aggregate wisdom of development, there were at times signs of insipid reluctance to offer amenability towards this direction, Decades between 1950s and 1980s, except for a relative lull in the majority of the sixties, saw a zealous growth of

decentralization of administration as a recipe for development. It has been explained that the increasing tendency of decentralization of administration from central government to state, region, district, local agencies, field units of central ministries, local governments and parastatal bodies arose from the three converging forces. These are :

a. Disillusionment with the result of central planning and control of development activities during 1950s and 1960s.

b. Implicit need for participatory management of development programmes to conform to the growth with equity strategy of 1970s.

c. The realization that with expansion of government activities and resulting complexities, it is difficult to plan and administer all developmental activities from the centre.²

5. It is recognized that the shift involves changes that are not "just technical and administrative; they are political". They involve a transfer of power from groups who dominate the centre to those who have control at the local level.³ It is contended that although major attention was focused on decentralization in the 1950s and 1960s, these two decades witnessed more centralization of administration and planning. It may have been due to the inherent organic weakness of local government institutions to shoulder the added responsibility delegated for community development which entailed both planning and execution. This may probably have contributed to consolidate the belief of sharing the power under a particular form of governance. To enable a clearer understanding of the issue at hand, an attempt is being made in the subsequent paragraphs to discuss the issue in greater detail.

PURPOSE, SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

Purpose

6. The purpose of this paper is to study the role decentralization plays in the developmental effort of less developed countries (LDC). Some aspects of Upazila(UZ) administration will be examined for this purpose with reference to criteria pertaining to viability of decentralization in Bangladesh. Such an examination of the system within the theoretical framework of the decentralization will help draw some tentative conclusion as to what needs further to be done for about the viability of UZ system.

Scope

7. The subject of development and decentralization is complex and vast. It will not be possible to discuss the subject in any detail. Therefore, the scope of this paper will be restricted to the study of such factors as those that contribute to development. Decentralization, being an efficient vehicle to proliferate development, will be discussed to establish the areas of inter-play of these two factors. As already stated some aspects of the upazila administration will be discussed at length to examine the viability of its ideological precepts in the current environmental context obtaining in Bangladesh.

Sequence

8. The paper will be developed on the following sequence :

- a. Some definition will be clarified to bring about a cohesiveness in thinking with the author.
- b. Dimension of Development will be identified to examine its potency in the LDCs to effect development.
- c. Concept and Dimensions of decentralization will be studied to establish their applicability in the politico- economic environment of LDCs.
- d. The role of decentralization in development will be discussed to focus the linkage with each other in the back stage of development in LDCs.
- e. Administrative decentralization introduced in Bangladesh will be reviewed in the context of its frame of analysis developed earlier in the paper. In view of the vastness of the subject, only the following two aspects will be discussed :
 - (1). Financial Aspect.
 - (2). Local Level Planning Aspect.
- f. In conclusion major areas of emphasis will be retraced to enable recapitulation
- g. Some recommendations will be given at the end to evoke consideration for suitable modification for the viability in the system.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

9. The author has observed that although no two definitions of a term are identical in approach, the context generally is not widely different. The risk of misunderstanding can not therefore be ruled out which warrants clarification. Definitions of only the relevant terminologies will be given here. These are :

a. Deconcentration. This is the handing over of some administrative authority or responsibility to lower level within central government ministries and agencies - a shifting of work load from centrally located officials to staff or offices out side national capital, when it is more than reorganization, it gives some discretion to field agents to plan and implement programmes' and projects, or to adjust central directives to local conditions, within guidelines set by the central ministry or agency headquarters. This has been the most frequently used form of decentralization in the developing countries and LDCs over the past decade. In a number of LDCs it has been encouraged through the transfer of responsibilities and financial grants from central governments, Provincial, districts or local administrative units. Some governments have deconcentrated operations by creating coordinating units at sub-national level or through incentives or contract arrangements.⁴ For our purpose, decentralization will mean assigning responsibility for case decisions to horizontal levels of organization such as deconcentration of the financial powers from the ministry of finance to other ministries.⁵

b. Delegation. This transfer managerial responsibilities for specifically defined functions to organizations outside the regular bureaucratic structure. It implies that a sovereign authority transfers to an agent specified functions and duties which the agent has broad direction to carry out. However, ultimate responsibility remains with sovereign authority. In developing countries, responsibilities have been delegated to public corporations, regional development agencies, special function authorities, semiautonomous project implementation units and a variety of parastatal organization.⁶ In our context delegation would mean more than simply assigning duties to others in more or less detail. The essence of delegation is to confer discretion upon others to use their judgment in meeting specific within the framework of duties. Management leadership must then accept the responsibility for how this discretion is exercised.

c. Devolution. This is the creation or strengthening, financially or legally of subnational units of government whose activities are substantially out side the direct control of the central government. One of the most extensive attempts at the devolution was in Sudan. A more simplified measuring of term is that it is a legal deposit of powers to discharge special or residual function with formal constituted state and local authorities. This type of arrangement has a political as well as an administrative character. Authority for making final decision is rooted in state or local body indicating actual transfer rather than merely a

delegation of functions and powers, even when power is limited and circumscribed by national regulation.⁷

d. Privatisation. Through privatization some governments have divested themselves of responsibility for functions either by transferring them to voluntary organization or by allowing them to be performed by private enterprises. In some cases government have transferred responsibilities to 'parallel organizations' such as national, industrial trade associations, professional groups, religious organization, political parties or cooperatives. These parallel organizations have been given responsibility to license, regulate or supervise their members in performing functions that were previously performed or regulated by government. In some cases government may decentralize by shifting responsibility for producing goods and supplying services that were previously offered by parastatals to privately owned or controlled enterprises. More often government transfers responsibilities to organizations that represent various interests in society and that are established and operated by members of those organizations. These include farmers cooperatives, credit associations, mutual aid societies, Village development organizations, trade unions or women's and youth club. Moreover decentralization may be implicit in 'debureaucratization' that is allowing decisions to be made through political processes that involve larger members of special interest groups, rather than having the decisions made exclusively or primarily by government through legislation, executive decree or administrative regulation. Voluntary organizations in Srilanka, for example, have come to play an important role in delivering services to meet basic human needs. They run day care centres, health clinics, homes for destitute children, homes for old age people, provide vocational training, provide non formal education and conduct recreational programs. They also/rural development projects and community self help programmes that /ru provide social overhead capital - roads, water tanks, irrigations canals, sanitation facilities and wells. These private groups either supplement or exclusively provide services offered in many other countries through government agencies.⁸

MEANING AND DIMENSIONS OF DEVELOPMENT

Meaning.

10. It is of utmost importance that we obtain an unambiguous view of development which is a compelling concept of the present era. There are many claimants to the concept of development and just as its reality is ambiguous, the term itself has many different meanings. The history of changes in the conceptualization of development and successive efforts to reshape its definition is vast that it will be an uphill task to give substantial overview of the subject within the limited scope of this paper.

An attempt, however, will be made to give the current meaning of the term.

11. " Development is a normative concept ; it implies choices about goals for achieving what Mahatma Gandhi called the 'realization of the human potential ! Growth by itself does not accomplish enough and sometimes has unfortunate consequences. As the microbiologist would remind us, the hall mark of cancer is growth without development. Similarly, development is not always interchangeable with modernization, for there are many aspects of tradition that enhance human potential and knit cultures together. Michael Todaro indicates several qualities of development when he concludes that it is a multidimensional process involving major changes in social structures, popular attitudes and national institutions as well as acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and eradication of absolute poverty. Michael Todaro opines that development implies three different core values. These are :

- a. Life Sustenance. The ability to provide basic needs without which life would be impossible. These self sustaining needs indisputedly include food, shelter, health and protection.
- b. Self Esteem. It means ability to be a person. This is the second universal component of good life which developes around a sense of worth self respect and a feeling of not being used as a tool by others for their own needs.
- c. Freedom from Servitude. This means ability to choose. A third universal value that should constitute the meaning of development is the concept of 'freedom' Freedom here is not to be understood in the political and ideological sense, but in the more fundamental sese of freedom or emancipation from alineating material conditions of life and from social servitude of man to nature, ignorance, other men, misery, institutions and dogmatic belief.⁹

12. It is argued that development fundamentally involves both 'being' and 'doing'. Deprivation, degradation and poverty all indicate underdevelopment. " We propose that development means increasing the capacity of people to influence their future ". It is felt that projects and programmes not only need to accomplish physical and concrete future, but also need to do so in such a way that people have a greater capacity to choose and respect to these changes. This view differs from both modernization and growth as they are commonly defined. Modernization is frequently defined in terms of developing specializations and a variety of structures and institutions, but in common parlance it means adopting the symols styles and technologies of developed countries.

Dimension of Development

13. Now let us identify the dimensions of development. These are :

a. Capacity. Development involves the expanding capacity to determine ones' future. As used here capacity includes such economic factors as productive facilities. It is very difficult for a person or a state to increase control over the future if major factors of production are crippled or if basic needs are not met. Thus development encompasses a concern with production and growth. It also includes the capacity of the nation or community to develop political and social institutions responsible for production and allocation.¹⁰

b. Equity. Development is also dependent upon equitable distribution. No matter how ' developed ' an economy is, if only a segment of population benefits from it, development has not occurred. Although the economists have supported the argument for equity, it does not ultimately depend upon economic rationale. In the long run economic development is stimulated by increasing the human resources in a country and by equalizing the ability to consume. Even without this argument, however, equity is a part of development. It is also normative concept that ensuring more equality in access and benefits is a value in it-self.¹¹

c. Empowerment. The third factor is acquiring of leverage for the poor. Since economic growth will not automatically be broadly distributed, the question of its benefits is a political issue. Politics infact can be defined as the resolution of conflicts over the allocation of benefits from growth. The only way to have a built-in mechanism for correcting grossly unfair allocative decision is for people to have influence. ' Loehr and Powelson suggest that ' leverage is gained from the ability to shift the alliances, plus a knowledge of how to do as advantageously ', Thus it is a form of strategic behaviour, and the more information and freedom people have, the more leverage they will have over policy. It will therefore, not be wrong to assert that powerlessness reduces the demands and pressures on political leaders and without such demand leaders are unlikely to focus on distributional issues.¹²

d. Sustainability. Another potent dimension of development is the long range concern for the future; the term that captures this issue is sustainability. Because of such factors as fragile soil, finite energy, limited mineral resources and pollution problem, production decisions need to take future into account. The question whenever present, present production decision will allow us to sustain ourselves over time ? Natural resources that were once taken for granted to be plenty or even abused in the past are now looked

upon with new appreciation and real concern. Developing countries understandably will find this new argument heavy with irony. Just as many of these countries are on the threshold of advances, they are told to beware of the environmental hazards that will come in its wake.¹³

e. Interdependence. Interdependence has considerably increased since the train of development has started rolling. No country is perhaps self sufficient in all dimensions of development. Even it were, it would at least need to trade with others to market the surplus or to procure items that are unavailable within the country. Development of the first world countries are dependent on the third world for their development. The third world countries are also largely dependent upon the goods and services of the developed countries. As the trade among nations increases, so does their interdependence. Contours of interdependence is vaguely understood at international level as politics and economic strength have come to play a role which is conflictual in nature. Although interdependence is considered to be the most potent prescription for development of the developing countries, politics has marred its scope and dimension and people have started looking at it suspiciously as a jargon for economic exploitation in the garb of mutual assistance. While inevitably of dependence of the developing countries can not be obscured, these countries should exercise alertness, tolerance and thrift when offering reciprocity.

f. Administrative Capability. Development raises another pertinent issue as to what machinery will administer it. Within the field of management of development - this question of late has drawn the attention of all those that are concerned with development. As a result, it is central that we consider the management processes and methods that are available to cope with the problems ahead. Management is not just a question of efficient service delivery or of effective control over existing allocative system of the country. It is a change oriented field concerned with the institutional dynamics of social justice which is a relevant indicator of development. The problem in the developing country is that administration in most of these nations is more marked by incapacity than by imaginative, responsive institutions. Unless the approach of the administration is attainable to deliver service towards development, then it is quite possible that the country will become a 'basket case'.

CONCEPT AND DIMENSION OF DECENTRALIZATION

14. Concern for total development has of late busied the scholars and administration practitioners to offer a prescription about how development is to be implemented. Some opines that the fact that "development often does not happen or is uneven ; is partially rooted in management and organizational problem ". There are a number of interpretations given to decentralization over a number of years. These are closely related to the context in which they are considered. It raises curiosity 'why interest in this subject waxes and wanes at different times'. Before entering into any further discussion on the subject, let us now find out how this is defined. G Shabbir Cheema and Dennis. A Rondinelli in their book " Implementation of Decentralization Programmes in South Asia " have defined decentralization, to mean the transfer or delegation of planning, decision - making or management authority from the central government and its agencies to field agencies to field agencies, subordinate units of government, semi-autonomous public corporations, areawise or regional authorities functional authorities or non-governmental organizations (NGO's). Decentralization can range from delegation of authority to devolution of powers to perform assigned functions.

15. A number of arguments have been advanced for transferring more responsibility for development planning and implementation from the centre to local government. Rondinelli argues that :

- a. It can facilitate the articulation and implementation of development policies designed to accomplish growth with equity by strengthening the administrative capacity at regional or sub regional level and enabling local officials or political leaders to identify their own development problems and priorities.
- b. It can reduce red-tape and overcome the adversities of highly bureaucratic procedures.
- c. It can increase national unity and political legitimacy or government by providing more opportunities for the people to identify their problems and to communicate their claims to relevant government agencies.
- d. It can promote more effective coordination of local planning and implementation as it can provide base for harmonizing and integrating development activities undertaken by diverse government organization.
- e. It is often prerequisite for increasing citizen participation in the process of development planning. Widespread participation requires mechanisms and channels through which people can express their views and communicate

their need to decision maker at various level of government. The existence of viable mechanism for participation also leads to increased accountability by government agencies at regional and subregional level.

f. It can be a mechanism to increase the efficiency of central government agencies by relieving senior level administrators of routine tasks which could be more efficiently performed by local officials.

g. It can increase access to government facilities and services by reducing control of local elite on development activities, by allowing timely monitoring and by providing for the evaluation of programmes by beneficiaries.

h. It can lead to more efficient delivery of public services for meeting basic human needs by reducing the cost of providing services, identifying problems in the delivery system and by eliciting popular response to governments infrastructure and social welfare programme.

i. It can increase flexibility of central agencies, field staff and local leaders to deal with unique problems in an area or region, to experiment with programme without having to justify them for the whole country.

16. The long list of dimensions where decentralization can offer efficiency may not be found potent if the contour of freedom of action is not identified. Hasnat Abdul Hye in his book 'Decentralization of Local Government Institution and Resource Mobilization' has suggested that the extent of freedom to be given and the occasions in which they may be given. He says "if the overriding objective of decentralization is better planning and management of rural development project than deconcentration, with delegation may meet the requirement. However, if the objective include the additional criterion of participatory development then some degree of devolution of powers to local authorities becomes essential."

17. Although theoretically it may be possible that all types of decentralization can be implemented under different forms of governance, "there is inevitably a qualitative difference in the evolution of different variables representing process and institutions. The development of polity with stability and continuity under commonly agreed procedures for exercise of political power within a multiparty system can overcome the apprehensions over devolution of powers and when that happens, people's participation through strengthened local government institution can be perceived by the parties as an integral part of political process. Negative attitude of bureaucracy can also be overcome to great extent in that event. This situation may take quite a while to come about in many developing countries

but this also can ensure decentralization with a devolution of powers that will not be more expedient.¹⁵

18. It might have been observed that there have been consistent emphasis on the importance of implementation to make decentralization programme viable. Implementation has been defined as "Process of interaction between setting of goals and actions geared to achieving them." In his review on the literature on policy and programme implementation, Ingle has identified two competing view on the subject; the compliance approach and the politics of administration approach. The first approach, Ingle points out, emphasizes step by step execution of predetermined plans and assumes that subordinates 'comply' with policy guidelines of the superiors, thereby minimizing the significance of the implementation process as routine and apolitical. According to the second approach, policies, programmes and procedures are, in reality, refined, reformulated or even abandoned during implementation.

19. From the above contention we can arrive at the conclusion that implementation has been wisely made the focal point in analysing the viability of decentralization programme. There are several other reasons that confirm the potency of this conclusion. These are : ¹⁶

a. Considerable gap has been identified between statutory provisions for decentralization and their implementation. Critical factors that impede the implementation effort to transfer or delegate authority should be more carefully identified.

b. Central Government most often argue that regional and local level officials point to the lack of political and bureaucratic will at national level to really transfer the authority and resources.

c. The reality of situation of LDCs does not support the proposition that the implementation of development plans and policies is a routine and apolitical process. More often than not, real involvement of interest groups in these countries takes place during programme implementation rather than during plan formulation. Government policies and programmes are presented in idealized form to seek political support, thus raising the expectations of target groups. When implementing agencies fail to meet the expectations serious tensions are generated among beneficiaries.

20. There are a few factors on which depend the efficiency of implementation of decentralization. These are :

a. State of inter-organizational relationship and coordination.

- b. Ability to generate resources for programme implementation.
- c. Capability and characteristics of implementing agencies.
- d. Environmental conditions.
- e. Existence of machinery to evaluate performance and its impact.

Various criteria that warrant attention while considering each of the above factors are shown in table - 1. The conditions that have affected the implementation of decentralization have been identified to be the following :

- a. The extent of support that the political leadership and bureaucracies lend to the organization to which these responsibilities are transferred.
- b. The degree to which dominant behaviour, culture and attitude are conducive to decentralized decision-making and administration.
- c. The extent of appropriateness of policies designed to promote decentralized decision-making and management.
- d. How much of financial, physical and human resources are placed at the disposal of organizations to which the responsibilities are transferred.

To enable an at a glance review of the criterion for implementation of decentralization programme table one may be referred to.

THE ROLE OF DECENTRALIZATION IN DEVELOPMENT

21. An increasing awareness has lately developed in the leadership of the LDCs about the scope of interaction between political and administrative organization and their linkage with the pace and direction of development. It is in the context of achieving national social goal and ensuring economic development including improving the infrastructure and capacity (both economic and political) of the people that many governments have decided to bring about changes in administrative and organizational structure. Even if some governments have been able to identify those as the critical factors of development, administrative or organizational changes brought about to implement the aforesaid goal, have rarely been neutral in past. Experience insinuates at the endeavour of the influential groups to protect their interest at the cost of others even at times by altering the pattern of resource allocation because of their ability to expand or control political powers, change the texture of political environment and even to redistribute income and wealth to suit their interest.

22. Although there have been many plans made throughout the third world countries to develop rural areas to narrow the gap between urbanites and ruralites with regard to their purchasing power, most often than not, these plans have failed to achieve the goal. Why did those fail to transtate the desired goal into practice ? Where are the skilled designers who can mount the project in key areas ? In otherwords how development is to be brought about ? These are the questions of development administrations, these are often the key to whether or not the elusive phenomenon development occurs. On the other hand people find roots of less or uneven development in poor administration and inappropriat organizational structure. Although there is no dearth of the expertise in this sector, the third countries are seemigly suffering from the world direct scarcity of this kind of expertise. Before considering what should be the frame and scope of the organization for introducing development biased economy, we need to place administration in a broader context and explore relationship between underdevelopment and administrative incapacity and also between administrative and political power. They create an enigmatic quagmire when they are considered at the same time as administrative incapacity deepens underdevelopment and strengthened administration - administration retards political development. While political leaders are often threatend by skilled administration as they see this as a stumbling block in their design to expand political power, they also feel frustrated and maddened by administrative weakness as they can not translate their development objective without their efficiency. On the other hand administrators have vested interest in the statusquo and hence has little investment in economic or social change. And therefore they are little or less ready to attempt redistribution of power or resources. But it is also true that problem of less development or stagnancy in development that it is not as much the contrary attitude of administrator towards their reduced power as incapacity, and structural and organizational flaws.

23. In the scenario of development administration, the policy goals like increasing equity and structural change play the predominant role. But this task is particularly difficult when both the areas are considered in isolation. It is in the context of bureaucratic interest and lack of confidence in wisdom of administrator that the control of the central government in the national economy has not only persisted but also has increased substantially since world war II. The central governments not only retained the traditional responsibilities of law and order and collection of revenue, it has also expanded its domain to impose policies in all sectors including mobilization of resources to implement them.

22. Although there have been many plans made throughout the third world countries to develop rural areas to narrow the gap between urbanites and ruralites with regard to their purchasing power, most often than not, these plans have failed to achieve the goal. Why did those fail to transtate the desired goal into practice ? Where are the skilled designers who can mount the project in key areas ? In otherwords how development is to be brought about ? These are the questions of development administrations, these are often the key to whether or not the elusive phenomenon development occurs. On the other hand people find roots of less or uneven development in poor administration and inappropriat organizational structure. Although there is no dearth of the expertise in this sector, the third countries are seemigly suffering from the world direct scarcity of this kind of expertise. Before considering what should be the frame and scope of the organization for introducing development biased economy, we need to place administration in a broader context and explore relationship between underdevelopment and administrative incapacity and also between administrative and political power. They create an enigmatic quagmire when they are considered at the same time as administrative incapacity deepens underdevelopment and strengthened administration - administration retards political development. While political leaders are often threatend by skilled administration as they see this as a stumbling block in their design to expand political power, they also feel frustrated and maddened by administrative weakness as they can not translate their development objective without their efficiency. On the other hand administrators have vested interest in the statusquo and hence has little investment in economic or social change. And therefore they are little or less ready to attempt redistribution of power or resources. But it is also true that problem of less development or stagnancy in development that it is not as much the contrary attitude of administrator towards their reduced power as incapacity, and structural and organizational flaws.

23. In the scenario of development administration, the policy goals like increasing equity and structural change play the predominant role. But this task is particularly difficult when both the areas are considered in isolation. It is in the context of bureaucratic interest and lack of confidence in wisdom of administrator that the control of the central government in the national economy has not only persisted but also has increased substantially since world war II. The central governments not only retained the traditional responsibilities of law and order and collection of revenue, it has also expanded its domain to impose policies in all sectors including mobilization of resources to implement them.

The expansion of government role to this magnitude has created the need for a new administrative structure to enable efficient implementation of development policies. Soon after the independence, many governments had chosen to enunciate or continue with colonial administrative structure as they opted for highly centralized system of economic development because of both the capital intensive industrialization strategies and the insistence of the donor countries to prepare comprehensive plan for national development. But experience evidence that few countries could attain desired economic growth, instead income disparities between urban and rural areas widened and standard of living of the poorer segment of population deteriorated largely. Central planning and administrations failed to accomplish economic growth in a pace that was required to absorb the growing population and to promote meaningful grass root participation in the development process or to improve the access of ^{rural}poor to government welfare scheme.

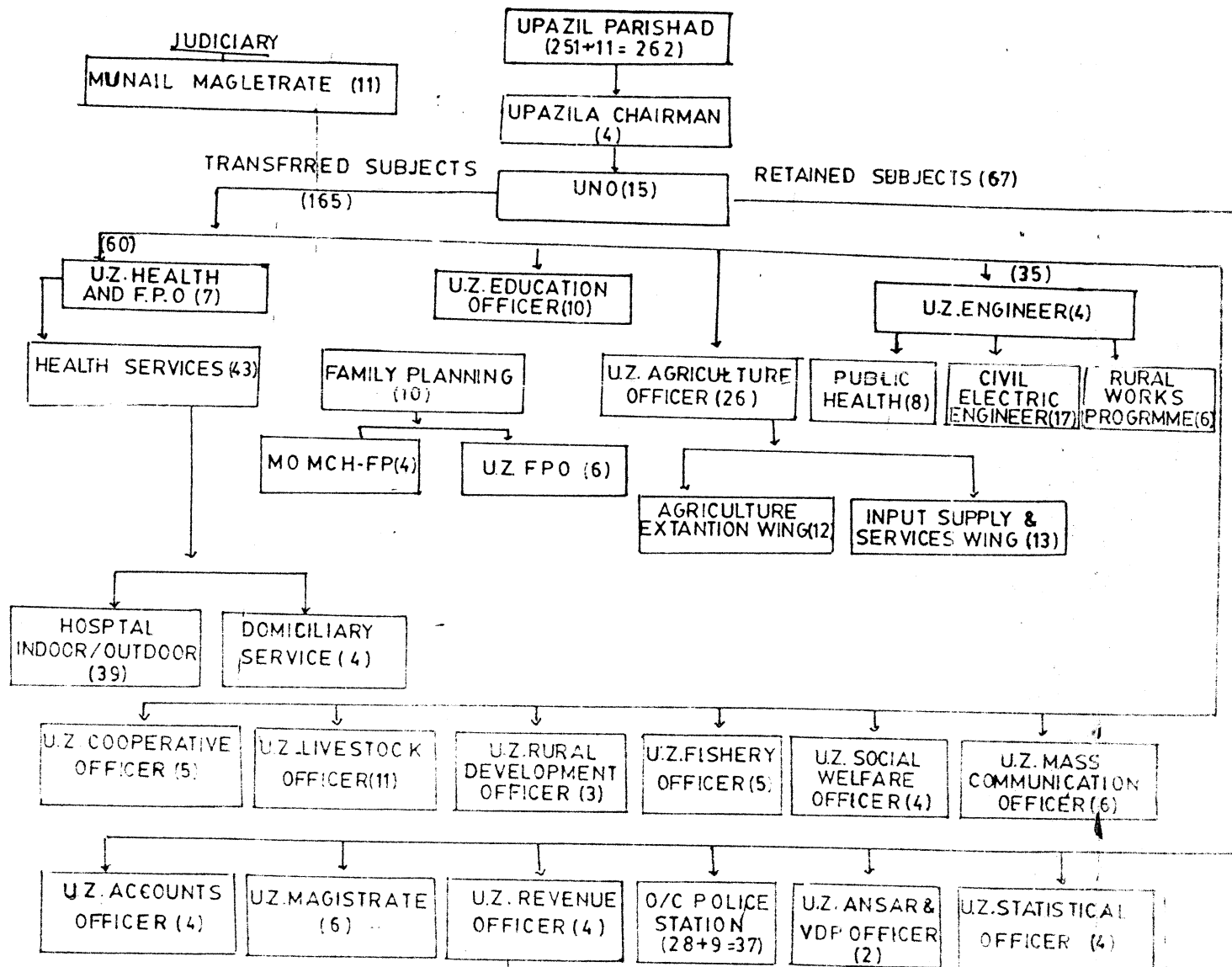
24. The major reasons for the failure of central planning could be attributed to :

- a. Lack of organization among the target population.
- b. Difficulty in procurement of financial and manpower support.
- c. Inability to comprehend the requirement of coordination between and among the ministries and the inherent inter-ministrial rivalry.
- d. Inefficient distribution of resources which was characterised by red-tape, Parochialism and political motivation.
- e. Inability to disaggregate goal into investment projects due to constraint imposed by donor agencies.
- f. Scarcity of timely and accurate statistics to enable preparation of coherent plans.
- g. Fluctuation in world economy.
- h. Inadequate or upto date and intimate knowledge of people and the areas where development is to take place.

All these above causes were partially instrumental in the failure of most of the well theoritized and apperently eloquent central plans made by technical elites. But in later part of 1970s the priorities of development saw a considerable shift in the mode and apparatus of execution. Planers appreciated the need to change the political and economic structure to enable the poor to increase their productivity and income.

TABLE-5

UPAZILA SETUP



The emergence of growth with equity strategy for development created the demand for a new organizational structures to plan and implement equitable growth. Central planning was no longer considered to be an efficient means of advancing rural development and alleviating widespread rural poverty. It was also felt that manpower and material resource utilization could be best possible through administrative structures and planning process that were more decentralized and that greater responsibility for development management had to be devolved to local level. In the light of this, the policy makers started emphasizing the need for spatial decentralization and the creation of regional and local organization to plan and implement equitable growth policies. This is the reason why a rapid proliferation of organizations down to lowest level of development took place. Inherent in this measure was a concept of bottom-up planning and decentralized administration.

ADMINISTRATIVE DECENTRALIZATION IN BANGLADESH

25. Bangladesh inherited a colonial pattern of administration which was geared to meet the functions and purpose of provincial government. Soon after the independence the new government appreciated the necessity to :

- a. Reorganize the secretariat so that it can effectively meet the needs and aspirations of an independent sovereign republic.
- b. Restore the civil administration in the field to meet the challenging task of relief and rehabilitation besides other functions.

To implement the above, the Bangladesh government appointed a committee headed by Mr M M Zaman to suggest interim measures which it did within 7 days of its institution. The committee suggested a reorganized set up of national secretariate and measures and principles to rehabilitate the administration at divisional, district, sub-divisional and thana level. Under its recommendation national secretariate was organized into 20 ministries with related directorates/departments and corporations. Immediately after the completion of rehabilitation, the government appointed Administration and Services Reorganization Services Committee (ASRC) with Prof Muzaffor Ahmed Chaudhuri as its chairman. The chief task among many others were to :

- a. Determine the future structure of Administration keeping in view the functional needs and requirements of the government.
 - b. Prepare and recommend a comprehensive scheme for administrative reorganization
- the fundamental difference between the ASRC and those that preceded it is the

political context in which the reform was examined, analysed and proposed. Among other recommendations, the committee called for increasing devolution of authority to the elected local government and clearly delineated the areas of responsibility between national and local government. Recommendations that have relevance with our subject are :

- a. That there can not be any fixity or any unalterable rigidity about the devolution of functions from national government to local government (P-295).
- b. That a service should be administered by a local body that can administer it effectively. (P-294)
- c. That the subdivisions with necessary adjustment should be converted into districts in a planned manner over a period of time.
- d. That a Boundary Commission should be constituted to go into the whole problem of the size of the future districts from all conceivable point of view. (P-287)
- e. That Division should disappear as an unit of administration and that the post of commissioner should be converted into that of a Vigilance Commissioner.
- f. That Regional planning Authority should be created.
- g. That thana should become the basic unit of administration.
- h. That an elected thana parishad should assume full responsibility of development administration at this level.
- i. That the services of all officers in thana engaged in development administration, not necessary to be retained by the national government, should be placed at the disposal of thana. (P-303)
- j. That there should/a thana development officer who would be responsible /be to coordinate the activities of all officials engaged in development administration in thana under the overall guidance and supervision of the chairman of thana parishad who will be elected by people.

Since the report of this committee was classified as 'Secret' document which was submitted to the government in October 1973, the recommendations were neither made public nor were they implemented.

26. While most of the countries that won independence from colonial rule brought changes in their administration to tailor it to their socio-political requirements, Bangladesh could not do so until 1983. Except for a short lived endeavour in 1980 to introduce Gram sarker. The government at that time induced by the success of ULASHI Programme which was the part of a self reliant movement, proposed the

spread of swanirvar Gram Sarkar (Self Reliant Village Government) as an instrument for rural planning and for people's participation. Gram Sarker was to consist of 12 members with adequate representation of women and other interested and functional groups. The functional groups were to be federated at village level into village cooperative which would serve as the economic arm of Gram Sarker. The village plans including identification of local resources and inputs were to be combined into union plans which were finally expected to be integrated at thana level. In addition nearly 1200 Rural Growth Centres were to be created to serve the needs of rural community by providing agricultural inputs, support services as well as storage and banking facilities. The Gram sarker concept did not catch the ground for a number of reasons. Of these the major ones are :

- a. The office bearers of the Gram Sarker were not given any training in performance of their functions.
- b. No functional linkages were created with the established system of local government at the union level or TCCA cooperative system at thana level and therefore the Gram Sarkers remained isolated.
- c. Poorer sections of the village community that contributed immensely to form part of self help labour did not receive substantial benefit as increased agricultural production which was the cardinal aim of Gram Sarker did not bring benefit to them as most of these people are landless. This perpetrated domination of the vested ~~interest thus negated~~ the spirit and objective of establishing Gram Sarker.

27. In 1982 the government had set up an administrative reorganization/reform committee (ARC) with following objective to recommend an appropriate and effective system of administration based on devolution of authority and responsibility with a view to taking the administration nearer to people. The report identified lack of popular participation in administration, complete absence of coordination of field services and difficulties of access to the government as the major premises of inefficiency of the current system of administration. To obviate these difficulties the committee recommended :

- a. That all functions of development administration should be taken over by elected local government at district, thana and union level.
- b. That elected local government should be supported by a decentralized planning and budgetary system to enable local government to plan and implement projection of local importance.

- c. That identification and itemisation of various administrative functions be made and these along with other statutory functions of district administration be transferred to elected government. Table 2 shows the list of transferred subjects.
- d. That the chairman of district, thana and union parishad should be directly elected for a period of 03 years.
- e. That officials to be members of the councils/parishad at respective levels without voting rights.
- f. That unnecessary levels like subdivisions and divisions should be eliminated. Table 3 shows views of a cross section of people about the subject.
- g. That all chairmen of union parishad/municipality falling within the jurisdiction of an upazila will be the members of upazila parishad (UZP).
- h. That the executive power of the UZPs are to be vested in the chairman of upazila who will exercise his power either directly or through upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO). No clear suggestion about ZP has been given about who should head the ZP. Table 4 shows the opinion of the people in this regard.
- i. That the organization of administration should be remodelled in the way suggested at Table 5 to pave way for efficiency and effectiveness of suggested administrative reorganization.

The major advantages of this system of administration are :

- a. Posting of UNO (chief executive officer) who will be of the rank of additional deputy commissioner, magistrate (empowered to try criminal cases) and munsifs (to try civil suits) will make the upazila the site of most judicial decisions and upgrading of technical staff. This will make upazila directly linked to districts which make abolition of subdivision possible. Table 3 will substantiate this statement.
- b. The recommendation for a typical upazila to have an area of about 125 square miles with an average population of 200,000 will enable officials located at the upazila headquarters to reach the population with available essential services. This area and population seem adequate for implementing projects designed to promote employment but not so large as to preclude the effective participation of the local population in decision making.
- c. As all the officials posted at upazila have been made accountable to

the UZP, this is likely to make coordination between line ministries more effective. A NIPA study on the decentralization confirms that coordination at upazila level is most desirable. A glance at table ^{5A} will substantiate the statement.

d. The increase in strength of officials of line ministries should have a positive influence on the quality of services provided at the Upazila level.

e. Transfer of subjects shown in the Table ² indicates at greater freedom of action which ultimately will expedite decision making and quicken the dispensation of problems in the related subjects.

Having given the broad outline of the current decentralized form of the government I would now discuss only two aspects of the upazila administration for the reason that any attempt to discuss all the aspects within the premise of this paper will mar the expected brevity. The two aspects that will be discussed in this paper are :

- a. Mobilization of local financial resources aspect of upazila.
- b. Local level planning aspect of upazila.

Mobilization of Local Financial Resources at Upazila Level

28. The government of Bangladesh has decided to delegate authority and devolve administrative and development functions at the grass root level. "The main objective as stated in the guidelines for upazila level administration stated by the planning commission in 1983, is to induce faster and appropriate development at local level through direct participation of the local people. This will help in identification, planning and implementation of government projects which will benefit local people most more easily than before. In other words the implication of this devolution process are :

- a. Reduction of dependence of rural people on the national government for meeting the needs which can be met locally and thus develop self reliance in the process.
- b. Mobilization and utilization of local resources which have hitherto remained untapped.
- c. Reduction of direct involvement of the national government in planning and implementation of projects which are purely local in nature.

These guide lines clearly indicate the importance on local level planning and

mobilization of local financial resources in a self reliant growth process. Local plan without provision for adequate budgetary allocation and a built-in mechanism to enable mobilization of local resources can not be executed effectively.

29. In order to highlight the present financial resources at upazila level we have to identify the sources of financing the Annual upazila Development plan (AUDP). Major sources of finance at upazila level are :

- a. Revenue surplus of UZP.
- b. Development assistance fund provided by the central government.
- c. Fund available from other sources.
- d. Voluntary contributions.

It has been found that over 30% of local revenue receipts comes from national government either as grants in aid or as works programme grants. Local revenue also comes from tax and non-tax revenue. Table 6 will show revenue receipt of Mirzapur upazila for the financial year 1984/85.

TABLE-6
SOURCES OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE OF MIRZAPUR UZ

<u>Serial</u>	<u>Sources of Revenue</u>	<u>Amount in Tk</u>	<u>%</u>
1.	Local Revenue Receipt	-	-
	a. Tax Revenue	-	-
	b. Non Tax Revenue	94,910	1.86%
	(1) Lease money from Jalmahal	4950	
	(2) Fees for License and permits	2630	
	(3) Lease money from hat and bazar	87,330	
2.	Grants (Non Development) received from central government	50,00,000	98.14%
3.	Total receipts (revenue account)	50,94,910	

(Source : Reproduced from Nasir Uddin Ahmed's paper titled 'Mobilization of Local Financial Resources for Upazila Development plan.) It can be seen from above table that no income came from tax revenue during the period under review. Lease money from hat and bazar constituted 92 % of local revenue but the revenue mobilized

from local resources represents a poultry percentage of 1.86%. Therefore, the government had to provide tk. 50,00,000 (98.14%) to meet expenditure on revenue account. The other source of financial resource comes from the central government as grant. As the source of income is limited, the central government has to finance the major portion of development programme. These grants are given on the condition that UZP has to abide by the instructions and guidelines issued by the government. The third major source of income at UZ level is from the voluntary contribution. Although there is surplus of labour in Bangladesh, the spontaneity of response towards volunteering is unusually frustrating. The reason behind this poor response could be :

- a. Failure of the local leaders to motivate due to erosion of traditional social and institutional values and intense polarization.
- b. Increase in Government assistance for creating infrastructure to generate income.
- c. Depletion of income and increasing poverty.

Problems

30. In spite of the current schedule of taxes, tolls and fees that UZP is permitted to collect, the UZP is likely to remain extensively dependant on the central government for financial support. Even if the scope of taxation is enlarged, the likelihood to collect enough fund to finance the day to day expenditure of the parishad is rather remote. Dr Akbar Ali Khan in his article 'conflict and coordination problems in Upazila administration. A note, published in 'The Young Economist' argued that in soft state like Bangladesh collection of direct tax (which is the responsibility of local government) is more difficult than collection of indirect tax (which is the responsibility of central government) and that is why UZP's performance in this area is not likely to be better than central government. The second argument that Dr Khan has advocated is that since the UZP is unable to punish tax evasion, it can not efficiently administer indirect taxes. Observation of Dic Netzer that smaller units of government typically levy a tax at a stage in the process which allows more scope for evasion, appears quite appropriate in our context. Netzer also opined that avoidance of tax liability distinguished from evasion by its legality through shifting the taxable event or asset to another jurisdiction is a problem mostly for relatively small jurisdiction.

31. The other problems that UZPs are likely to face are :

a. Skewed pattern of Agrarian Structure and Power. One of the major hurdles towards mobilization of local financial resources is the unequal agrarian structure and the corresponding skewed distribution of power. According to the agricultural census done in 1977 the pattern of land distribution in our country is highly skewed. A glimpse of the table given below will substantiate this statement.

Table-7

Pattern of Land Distribution in Bangladesh (1977)

<u>Size of Farm</u> <u>(in acres)</u>	<u>No of Farm</u> %	<u>Total cultivated Area</u> %
1. <u>Small Holding</u>		
a. Below 0.5	5.5	0.5
b. 0.5 - 1.0	10.4	2.1
c. 1.0 - 2.5	33.9	16.1
2. <u>Medium Holding</u>		
a. 2.5 - 7.5	40.8	48.9
3. <u>Large Holding</u>		
a. 7.5 and above	9.4	32.4

Source: Agricultural Census of Bangladesh - 1977 (National volume published in 1981)

From the above table it is evident about 32% of the total cultivated areas. 9% control. Information collected by Nasiruddin Ahmed who interviewed 40 UZ chairmen for his paper on 'Mobilization of Local Financial Resources for Upazila Development plan' is presented to substantiate the traditional belief that the UZP chairmen are also contributing to this skewed distribution which has been identified as the chief reason of such poor collection of tax in Mirzapur UZP.

Table-8

Nature of Landownership of Upazila Chairman

<u>Landownership</u> <u>(in acres)</u>	<u>No of UZP</u> <u>Chairmen</u>	<u>%</u>
Landless		
01 - 2.5		
2.5 - 7.5 (Small Farmer)	8	20%

7.5 and above
(large Farmer

32

80%

Total

40

100%

Source :

Reproduced from Nasir Uddin Ahmeds' paper titled 'Mobilization of local Financial Resources for Upazila Development Plan.

b. Government Restriction on Revenue

Although the UZP (Taxation) Rules 1983 provides some financial power to the UZP, it has been made mandatory on the UZP to obtain prior permission of the central government to levy tax and to fix for tolls or fee. This impaires the collection considerably.

c. Exclusive Dependence of Government Finance Existing revenue base is narrow and tax elasticity is low. This affects the revenue collection. A review of the mirzapur upazila's total receipts will confirm this contention.

Table - 9

Total Receipt (Revenue Account) of Mirzapur UZ

<u>Year</u>	<u>Sources of Revenue</u>	<u>Amount in Tk</u>	<u>% of revenue receipt</u>
1983-84	Local (Lease money on Jalmahal, hats and bazar	1,83,900	2.7 %
	Government	50,00,000	97.3 %
1984-85	Local (Less etc)	94,910	1.86
	Government	50,00,000	98.14

Source: Reproduced from Nasir Uddin Ahmed's paper titled " Mobilization of Local Finanacial Resources for Upazila Development Plan.

As the revenue receipts declined the dependence on government contribution increased. Thus the UZP is not only dependent on government for financing its development work but also for meeting its expenditure on revenue account. So long as UZP remains dependant on the government for financial support, not much of effort is likely to be put in the local bodies' to mobilize local resources.

d. A study of existing grant system to find out why UZP 'does not feel obliged to generate its own revenue to match the forthcoming grant. Currently three types of grant are given. These are :

- (1) General purpose grants.
- (2) Specific matching grants.
- (3) Specific non matching grants.

Grants given for purpose other than works programme is termed as normal grants. A glance of the statistics below will show the specificity and matching characteristics of grants :

<u>Characteristics</u>	<u>1981/82</u> <u>in Tk/%</u>	<u>1982/83</u> <u>in Tk/%</u>	<u>1983/84</u> <u>in Tk/%</u>
(1) General non matching	44.1/9.0	38.1/5.6	87.7/3.9
(2) Specific Non Matching	360.2/93.9	565.6/83.2	2002.7/91.8
(3) Specific Matching	83.1/17.1	75.7/11.2	92.0/4.2

(Source: Reproduced from M Asaduzzaman local government finance in Bangladesh. Problems and potentials, A paper read at 17th biennial conference of bangladesh economic association held Jahangir Nagar University, Savar, Dhaka on 17-20 December 1985.) It can be seen from the above table that the grants have increased by nearly 3 % times and most of it took place in 1983 - 84. There is little scope in the present system of grant for internal increase of resource which is ominous.

Recommendations

32. The various sources discussed so far do not hold promise to improve the local revenue position for meeting increased needs for maintenance and other recurrent expenditure of UZP. Therefore, additional revenue source will be necessary. Such sources, as suggested, in world bank report titled 'Economic Trends and Development Administration, Vol-1, main report, February 27, 1984' should fulfill criterions so that they :

- a. Tax the beneficiaries of development expenditure.
- b. Can be expected to expand in line with economic growth and should be clastic.
- c. Do not go beyond the administrative collection capacity of the UZ.

33. The same report also suggest that one consideration could be to transfer the land development from the local government to the private sector rather than leaving it on the state of revenue. However, private sector, as suggested in the report, could be user charges on roads etc. Upazila demonstration farms could also be run on commercial basis to increase its revenue earning. It is no denying a fact that any length of autonomy no substantial improvement can be expected if there is no

incentive to use the autonomy to mobilize the revenue earnings. The best incentive can be found in governments' block grant. The system of basing the allocation of grant of population 40%, area 20%, poverty level 20% and performance 20% does not seem to reward UZs to put in greater endeavour to mobilize or spend the local resources. Tying a proportion of block grants for mobilization of local revenue could be an effective incentive for improved mustering of local resources. The mentioned World Bank Report suggests two separate measures of performance. One could be physical (i.e ability to plan and implement development projects) while the other could be related to resource mobilization performance since there is no mention about the mode of operation, about the relatively backward areas and criteria to evaluate performance, this practice is fairly likely to falter. To ensure requirement of induced distribution, the government should assess the performance in terms of rates of improvement in resource mobilization rather than on the absolute amount of revenue raised. UZPs may be given the instruction to raise funds from their own constituencies which will enhance their financial responsibility and may even improve quality of planning.

34. A better potential in raising revenue, as suggested by Nasiruddin Ahmed in his article "Mobilization of Local Financial Resources for Upazila development plan" lies in the land Development Tax (Ordinance No 15,1982) which is now levied by the Central government at the following rate.

a. For Agricultural Land

- | | | | |
|-----|---------|-------------|--------------------------|
| (1) | Tk 0-03 | per decimal | on holding upto 2 acres. |
| (2) | Tk 0-15 | " " | " above 2-5 acres. |
| (3) | Tk 0-36 | " " | " " 5-10 " |
| (4) | Tk 0-60 | " " | " " 10-15 " |
| (5) | Tk 0-95 | " " | " " 15-25 " |
| (6) | Tk 1.45 | " " | " " 25 " |

b. For Non Agricultural Land

- | | | | |
|-----|-------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| (1) | Tk 15 | per decimal | for land in commercial area. |
| (2) | Tk 6 | per decimal | for land in residential area. |

A study of demand and collection of land development tax in Mirzapur Upazila during the period from 1982-83 to 1984-85 shows the following :

Table - 10
Demand and collection of Land
Development tax of Mirzapur
Upazila

<u>Year</u>	<u>Demand in Taka</u>	<u>Collection in Taka</u>
1982-83	2,46,150	3,02,280
1983-84	3,99,300	3,19,170
1985-85	3,96,570	3,68,880

Source : Reproduced from Nasir Uddin Ahmed's paper titled, Mobilization of Local Financial Resources for Upazila development plan.

It is therefore suggested that government should consider revenue sharing of land development tax with UZP and make land tax related to prodductivity rather than basing it on holding.

Local Level Planning Aspect of Upazila

35. Local level planning for promotion of producttivity and for improving the quality of life in rural Bangladesh has started in 1952 with the intr duction of V-Aid (Village Agricultural and Industrial Development). This could not be a success because it failed create an institution geared for total development of to rural Bangladesh (Erst while East Pakistan). Although a considerable amount of money was pumped into village unions for public works, no substantial development could be seen due to their poor management, uncalled for interference from the centre, inadequate planning and above all the lack of motivation of all those that were involved.

36. Introduction of Basic democracy in 1959 brought about some structural change in administrative system of local government. A four tier local adminintration was introuced in which Thana parishad was first created. This parishad (TB) was headed by a bureaucrat (SDO) and was compposed of the chairmen of Union parishad (UP) of all unions under the concerned thana and Officials of various government department stationed in thana/members. The main functions as enuniated by Akhtar Hamid Khan in are his Comilla approach for rural development of the TP were coordination of acivities at Thana level, management of Thana Training and Development Centre (TTDC), Rural works Programme (RWP), Food Works programme (FFWD) and Thana Irrigation (TIP). The reason behind selecting TP and Thana Irrigation Programme (TIP) ~~The reason behind selecting TP~~

for implementation of these development oriented programme was to involve local people in the development of their area. The salient features of this scheme were :

- a. To coordinate and direct activities under RWP.
- b. To provide instruction, informations, materials and credit in order to increase agricultural production.
- c. To provide communal services in the form of cooperative credit, mechanised farming, irrigation and brick baking.
- d. To train villagers as extention agents in diverse role.
- e. To establish medical clinics, demonstration centres and experimental laboratories.

This made the thana focal point for preparation, implementation and coordination of various programmes.

37. In 1978 Thana Development committee (TDC) consisting of chairmen of UPs was formed to enable preparation of local planning and implementation of development projects. TDC could draw development schemes and disburse government allocated fund for thana level works programme. Although the objective behind the creation of TDC was to transfer some powers from bureaucracy to the elected representative of the rural people, it did not enjoy that transfer in reality and like TTDC, the TDC was also dominated by the bureaucracy. In 1980 the government introduced Shanirwar Gram Sarker (SGS) which did not survive long as the proposed instrument of rural planning and participation. As it was thought to be the rival body to UP, it created considerable socio-political conflicts.

38. Although the Comilla approach to administrative decentralization and TDC endeavoured to make thana as the pivot for all planning, it did not succeed much due to their 'top down' modus operandi, which meant macro frame of all programmes came from the centre. This resulted into minimum participation of the people at the grass root level in the planning process. This also conflicted with the fundamental objective behind decentralizing the administration which was to ensure equitable distribution of the resources. Instead, it made rich people richer and poor people poorer.

39. In 1982 the government decided to introduce an appropriate and effective administrative system based on devolution of authority with the objective of taking the administration nearer to the people. The committee that was constituted to recommend a suitable change in the system of administration, opined that meaningful and effective devolution of authority is possible only in a frame work of elected local government. The committee also recommended that democratisation of elected local government at thana level be concurrently supported by a decentralized planning and budgetary system to enable local government to plan and implement project of local importance . Creation of 460 upazila came about on the basis of the recommendation made by the committee. It is now a wellnigh fact that decentralization of administration has provided an opportunity to create a new paradigm of development and has also indicated at a new orientation to the development process.

40. UZP under the new system, has been entrusted with the task of preparing local level planning, so that the programme would originate from grass root level which can reflect the local need and aspiration. This is the form which provides the meeting ground for bureaucrats and peoples' representative closed to the local people. This the lowest-tier of administration where the government officials have been subordinated to the peoples' representative.

41. One of the major functions of UZP is the preparation UZ development plan. UZP is required to maintain plan book on the line of Comilla approach of rural development. Thana plan book which contains five year planning with annual phasing covers activities under RWP, FFWP, construction of roads and bridges, reclamation of derelict ponds etc, New sectors recommended to be included in thana plan by the planning commission has not been included till to date. I have already shown a vufoil on these sectors. As per the charter of duties, the UZP chirman is required to formulate policies pertaining to local development, identify projects and schemes, ensure timely implementation and to monitor implementation to enable evaluation. The charter requires an UNO to act as staff officer to the chairman to ensure execution and coordination of the plan that the UZP approves. In the planning process the chairman is expected to consult with the UZ enginner and UZ finance officer to coordinate, but it has been practically seen that UNO and finance officer remain so busy that they can hardly get together for working out the plan.

42. The UZs are to forward Annual Upazila Development plan (AUDP) on the basis of the guide lines planning commission issued, UZP first makes the sectoral allocation of the development assistance fund and then asks the UZ departmental officer to prepare their departmental schemes. Project proposals are prepared by each departmental officer on the basis of ideas received from UP and then the same is placed for consideration of the project selection committee. It has been observed that UZ engineer plays the vital role in the entire planning process. UZP then holds meeting to approve the project proposals.

43. Experience has shown that UZP chairman/UZ level officers often find problem in making AUDP because of a variety of reasons. Some of these are:

- a. Lack of knowledge or training of UZP chairman and other members.
- b. Lack of knowledge and experience of UNO on local level planning and development.
- c. Preoccupation of UZ Engineer and his inadequate manpower.
- d. Extreme dependence on the national government for fund assistance naturally entails strict compliance of the guide lines issued centrally by the planning commission which tantamounts to undermining the autonomy of the UZP.
- e. Though third five year plan (TFYP) has top priority to agriculture, water resources and rural development, fund allocated to UZPs in these sectors has decreased from 30% in July 1983 to 20% in July 1985.
- f. Unavailability of statistics on need assessment resource endowment because of chairman's indifference.
- g. Dual leadership pattern (conflict between chairman and UNO) created due to status consciousness of both the chairman and UNO.
- h. Inadequate cooperation from the officials.
- j. Lack of planning expertise.

44. Having identified the problem related to personnels, attempt should now be made to identify the problems faced by UZP as an institutional framework for planning. A careful examination would reveal the following :

- a. Lack of meaningful participation of people in planning and development because of the continuity of traditional domination of the rich.

- b. Lack of voting right of official members of the UZP.
- c. Philosophical conflicts in UZP is centering around :
 - (1) Conflict over allocation of resources.
 - (2) Conflict over administrative and political control. Conflicts have also been seen mounting between UZP and national government, between UZP and other local government.
- d. The two major problems that impair coordination are :
 - (1) The bifurcation of retained and transferred.
 - (2) Non-delineation of relationship between national and upazila administration and also among different tiers of local government.
- e. Near non-existence of UZ level information system.
- f. Unavailability of adequate training personnel.
- g. Constraints of mobilizing financial resources.

45. A few suggestions are listed to obviate the present enigmatic situation. UZP should be made an effective institutional framework for planning. This may be possible by :

- a. Ensuring representation of poor in the UZP by endorsing mandatory provision in the manual that at least 2 persons belonging to poor group should be nominated to UZP by the national government and they should have voting right.
- b. Delineating the power of between UZP and ZP. The power of ZP should be restricted to supervisory and coordinating functions only.
- c. Head of ZP should be elected representative. The election should be held immediately.
- d. Terms of linkage between ZP and UZP should be worked out before election to ZP is held.
- e. Appropriate distribution of power and function to avoid confusion, tensions and dualism. This should be worked out to make both the UZP and UZ level administration efficient. UZP may be treated as local government mini parliament for policy making while the officials can be made responsible for implementation. They of course will remain accountable to the UZP for their assignment.

- f. Regular and continuous inspection to evaluate performance and to make the defaulters accountable.
- g. Development of effective coordination machineries at UZ level.
- h. Developing sound system of information gathering and dissemination. This is possible by establishing a data bank covering all fields of UZP's activities.
- j. Training of all UZ official on administration and development, Courses run at BPA TC seems adequate.
- k. Arrangement to provide training jointly to UZ chairman and UNO on policy formulation at grass root level, micro planning for local developments for a minimum period of 2 weeks may be considered.

CONCLUSION

46. The task of development which is defined to include redistribution of power and resources to bring about a substantial change in an environment beset with enormous problems is an exercise that warrant total participation of a nation. But departure from a centralized rule bound bureaucratic system, that existed in most of the colonized countries that won independence in last three decades, is known for its unresponsiveness and exploitation. Development would require some degree of decentralization to ensure responsiveness and variation to mobilize public around development. It may be true that nation building requires centralization, it is also true that development requires some local control. The enormity of linkage between the two terms : development and decentralization, can be seen from the reckonable rush of the developing countries to adopt decentralization as the vehicle for development.

47. The wisdom of opting for decentralization for development or development by decentralization has found its way to the 'brain trust' of Bangladesh, Umpteen researches were conducted to evolve an attainable administrative reform. All these reform commissions have given a number of suggestions but none of these saw the light of day because of myriad reasons. Of these, government's apprehension about the viability of the recommendations or its lack of the political resolution can be listed as the prominent ones.

48. Government embarked upon decentralization of administration to take it / has to the door steps of the rural mass of Bangladesh in 1982 with a view to :

- a. Facilititating articulation and implementation of development policies designed to accomplish "growth with equity "by involving people of the areas choosen for development .
- b. Increasing national unity and political legitimacy of the government by involving people in the planning and decision making process.
- c. Promoting more effective implementation and coordination by locating government development apparatus in required areas and that too under an unified local government body headed by a directly elected chairman.
- d. "Increasing flexibility of central government agencies, field staff and local staff to deal with unique problem of an area without having to justify to the whole nation."

49. Although it is premature to comment on the vability of this gigantic programme, some signs of its efficacy have been observed. Decentralization has been able to bring some changes in the erstwhile pattern of colonial administration. A few of the prominent areas of positive response are :

- a. It has been able to manifestly enlarge the capacity of local administrative and political leaders to absorp, ability to sustain and power to implement and control development project.
- b. People of hitherto neglected areas now find easy accessibility to central government resources and institutions.
- c. Administrative and technical capability of both political leadership and administrative machineries have shown signs of invigoration and rejuvenation which is largely contributing to better planning and implementation of projects assigned to them from the centre.
- d. A number of new establishments and organizations have surfaced to dovetail details and guide local level planning and management. This has generated considerable employment in rural areas.
- e. It has added a new perspective in devlopment strategies by promoting increased peoples' participation in the country's development.
- f. It has been able to ensure quicker dispensation of social, political and judicial justice.

50. While the positive sides of the decentralization of administration is paying the desired dividend, there are certain critical areas that would warrant attention if the efforts are to succeed in facilitating development in true sense, Decentralization programme in Bangladesh has not adequately covered the following :

a. Nonfarm area has not received the required attention even though broad majority of the rural population are either not involved in farming or even if they are, it is seasonal which hardly covers six months of a year. Present decentralization "implicitly relies on the recently broadened scope of BRDB activities, other Government agencies and BSCIC without providing for appropriate staff and services at upazila level. As people constitute much of both capital and infrastructure for development in the rural society human resource development by increasing the capacity of rural population to help themselves is critical to rural development"

b. The other critical areas that should receive equal concern are :

- (1) Management and training.
- (2) Local financial Resource mobilization.
- (3) Planning, Monitoring and evaluation mechanism.

c. It seems that the new administrative reform has not clearly defined the status of ZP nor has it made any recommendation about the role it might play in the discourse of planning of development or in the implementation of the plan so made. Although one section of researchers suggest a catalyst role for the ZP, second group suggests supervisory role for ZP during the implementation process and a consultative role in the formulation of upazila development plan while the third group recommends a coordinating role for ZP which should be mainly be done by an elected body headed an elected representative.

d. Another major problem that might impede successful implementation of the same is the inconsistency in defining retained and transferred subjects especially those that pertain to financial resource mobilization. Although the upazilas have been empowered to raise own resource through fess, rates and taxes, revenue sources allocated are unlikely to yield significant level of revenue. Therefore, the upazilas will have to largely depend on central block grants both for development and routine non-revenue expenditure.

e. One of most critical area where decentralization might be check-mated is the possibility that the local institution will be dominated if not controlled by the rural elites. There is an apprehension that where the socio-economic stratification is severe, it is difficult for the majority to make local institution to serve their needs. Therefore, much would depend on having clear and defensible criteria which can be set to guide decision making at rural level.

f. The relationship between the elected representative and the bureaucrats deputised to the upazila parishad needs to be conducive to functional attainment. If the relationship is that of non-cooperation then the functional ability will be in abyss and the progress of work will be stalled. Motivation through joint training can narrow down the possible communicational disharmony.

RECOMMENDATIONS

51. In Bangladesh, there is a widespread concern that economic growth is not bearing any manifestation of equitable distribution of benefits especially in rural areas. Central control on planning and finance has failed to refurbish the dwindling rural/even to the extent that should it have. After the identification of critical areas it would now be pertinent to discuss how the problems identified can be ~~be~~ ^{the} economy obviated. A few recommendations having bearing on those aspects of upazila administration that have been analysed in depth are :

a. A high level of planning and management capacity in upazila organizations is a prerequisite for successful rural transformation through decentralization. This can be done by arranging brief but frequent/repeated training of upazila level officials either at regional or at national level with a view to motivating them to cooperating with the elected representatives who have been empowered to exercise control over the activities of the official in spite of their meagre education, motivation and sophistication.

b. In order to strengthen local capacity to plan/implement projects, national government should :

(1) Transfer adequate authority to local organization to carry out their responsibility.

(2) Give greater control over local resources or decentralized units.

(3) Provide qualified personnel at the local level.

(4) Provide strong training and technical support.

c. A ~~relatively~~ long period of time is required before the positive results of decentralization can be seen. Therefore continuity in policies and programmes is needed to be built on existing foundation by trial and experimentation.

d. Decentralization policies should focus on promoting small scale rural development projects.

e. Although financial, technical and administrative support comes from the centre government, too much of it may lead to the control of routine operation at local level which may become counter productive; Major concern of central agencies should always be restricted to supporting and assisting rather than controlling and directing.

f. The linkages between central government and local government in implementing decentralization should be facilitative rather than control-oriented. Facilities like training of personnel, technical assistance, supervision and assessment of local projects and evaluation can be extended. of The identification, design and implementation of projects should remain the prime concern of the UZP.

g. Expansion of areas of activities of UZP should be done incrementally so that the UZPs have enough financial strength, administrative wisdom and technical expertise to plan and implement such project.

h. ZP may be considered to be activated to act as coordinating body headed by an elected representative to facilitate availability of senior experts opinion with regard to attainability of projects and schemes to be under taken at UZ level. This body may also help relieve the central monitoring cell at national level by giving decision on aspects that seem solvable at that level.

j. Reliance of UZP on the central government for financial resources can be minimized by obtaining support from non-government organisation (NGO) who operate in some of the sectors where government also operates so that the government interference in the UZ administration reduces sizably. Regulatory measures for the NGOs may however remain with the national government.

k. AUDP is suffering immensely for shortage of fund. Existing tax base may be extended to increase possibility of internal financial resources. Additional tax can be levied provided :

(1) Collection of the tax do not go beyond the collection capability of UZ.

(2) The tax can be expected to expand in line with economic growth and should be elastic.

(3) That it would only tax the beneficiaries of development expenditure.

l. UP should discontinue collection of revenue and instead the UZ should do so as it has better and more elaborate machinery to collect tax. UP requirement of expenditure may however be given by UZP as grant.

n. Government should consider revenue sharing of Land Development Tax with UZ and make land tax related to productivity rather than base simply on the size of holding. Unused agricultural land may also be taxed.

o. Local MP should be allowed to play some supervisory role in making of UZ plan either as an ex-officio or as a representative of public Account Committee of Jatio Shangshad.

TABLE-1
DECENTRALIZATION : PROGRESS OF IMPLEMENTATION
PROCESS

ENVIRONMENTAL
CONDITIONS

1. POLITICAL STYLE.
2. POLICY MAKING STRUCTURE.
3. CHARACTERISTICS OF LOCAL POWER STRUCTURE.
4. RESOURCE CONSTRAINTS.
5. SOCIO CULTURAL FACTOR.
6. LEVEL OR ORGANIZATION.
7. ADEQUATE PHYSICAL STRUCTURE.

INTER ORGANISATIONAL
RELATIONSHIP

1. CLARIFICATION AND CONSISTENCY OBJECTIVE.
2. APPROPRIATE ALLOCATION OF FUNCTIONS.
3. STANDARDIZATION OF PLANNING, BUDGETING IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION PROCESS.
4. INTER ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION.

ORGANIZATIONAL RESOURCES
FOR IMPLEMENTATION

1. EXTENT OF CONTROL OVER FUND.
2. ADEQUACY OF BUDGETARY ALLOCATION VIZ-A-VIZ ACTIVITIES.
3. TIMELY AVAILABILITY OF BUDGETARY ALLOCATION.
4. ADEQUACY OF REVENUE RAISING AND EXPENDITURE AUTHORITY.
5. SUPPORT OF NATIONAL POLITICAL LEADERSHIP.
6. BUREAUCRATIC COMMITMENT AT NATIONAL LEVEL.

CHARACTERISTICS AND
CAPABILITIES OF IMPLEMENTING
AGENCIES

1. TECHNICAL, MANAGERIAL AND POLITICAL SKILLS OF THE STAFF.
2. CAPABILITY TO COORDINATE CONTROL AND INTEGRATE DECISIONS.
3. AGENCY'S POLITICAL RESOURCES AND SUPPORT.
4. NATURE OF INTERNAL FLOW OF COMMUNICATION.
5. AGENCY'S SUPPORT WITH POLITICAL GROUP.
6. AGENCY'S LINK WITH NGO.
7. QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP IN THE AGENCY.
8. LOCATION OF THE AGENCY WITHIN ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM.

PERFORMANCE AND
IMPACT

1. DEGREE TO WHICH PROGRESS ATTAINED STATED OBJECTIVE.
2. CHANGING ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY OF LOCAL ORGANIZATION.
3. OTHER OUTCOME AND RESULTS.

TABLE-2

LIST OF SUBJECTS TRANSFERRED TO UZF

1. AGRICULTURE (EXTENSION)
2. LIVESTOCK.
3. FISHERY.
4. HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING.
5. PUBLIC HEALTH (RURAL SUPPLY AND SANITATION)
6. PRIMARY EDUCATION.
7. COOPERATIVE (REGISTRATION AND EXTENSION)
8. SOCIAL WELFARE.
9. DISASTER RELIEF.
10. RURAL WORKS PROGRAMME.

TABLE-3

ADMINISTRATIVE LEVEL
RECOMMENDED TO BE ELIMINATED

SNO.	ADMINISTRATIVE LEVEL	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
1.	DIVISIONAL LEVEL	219	54.75
2.	DISTRICT LEVEL	31	7.75
3.	SUBDIVISIONAL LEVEL	63	15.75
4.	THANA LEVEL	39	9.75
5.	UNION LEVEL	48	12.00
TOTAL		400	100

SOURCE: SHEIKH MOQSOOD ALI M SAIFUR RAHMAN
AND KASHANDA MOHAN DASH DECENTRALIZATION AND
PEOPLES PARTICIPATION IN BANGLADESH. NIPA DHAKA
OCTOBER 1983. P. 491

TABLE -4

DESIRABLE COORDINATOR AT DISTRICT LEVEL

<u>S/NO</u> (a)	<u>POSITION OF COODINATOR</u> (b)	<u>FREQUENCY</u> (c)	<u>PERCENTAGE</u> (d)
1.	DEPUTY COMMISSIONER	444	37.44
2.	ALL DISTRICT LEVEL OFFICER OF THE SAME RANK BY ROTATION	87	7.34
3.	ONE DISTRICT LEVEL OFFICER FOR ONE YEAR ELECTED BY ALL DISTRICT LEVEL OFFICER	106	8.94
4.	DIRECTLY ELECTED PUBLIC REPRESENTATION	371	31.28
5.	PUBLIC REPRESENTATION INDIRECTLY ELECTED	46	3.88
6.	A LOCAL MP ASSIGNED BY THE GOVERNMENT	48	4.10
7.	CHAIRMAN/ MEMBER FROM AMONG THEMSELVE/OUTSIDER	41	3.45
TOTAL		1132	100

SOURCE: SHEIKH MAQSOOD ALI, M SAIFUR RAHMAN AND KASHANADA MOHAN DAS, DECENTRALIZATION AND PEOPLES' PARTICIPATION IN BANGLADESH. NIPA, DHAKA OCTOBER 1983. P