Some Measures of Bureaucratic Efficiency and Accountability: Bangladesh Perspectives

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Abstract: *In pluralistic societies, all over the world bureaucracy plays a predominant role for bringing about social change and developnzent. But in Bangladesh bureaucracy represer.ts a disntal picture aizd suffers fronz various ills. Standing on the threshold of the 21st century when the whole world is experiencing cataclysnzic change in the sphere of political transfornzation, globalization, teclznological innovation, media revolution and rapid growth of the nation states- it is now quite. exigent to rearrange or reorganize the state machinery for coexisting with the changed world order. In consonance with the changes- the role, function and responsibility of bureaucracy should be devised in a way that it can ensure its productivity and efficiency by creating an enabling condition for development. Absence of efficiency, transparency, accountability, representational political culture, institutional weakness of political, social and econonzical apparatus and malfunction among those system has made the bureaucratic system in Bangladeslz despicable and disdainful. The paper, ipso facto, aims at unraveling the issues related with the concept of bureaucracy, the role of bureaucracy in the third world with special emphasis on Bangladesh, depicting a brief sketch about the traditional and developnzent bureaucracy in Baizgladesh. Lastly, but not the least, some suggestions to nzake the bureaucracy accountable, efficient and responsive to the people's demands and aspirations have been given.*

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Introduction

Bangladesh is predominantly an administered polity. There is hardly any sphere of public life beyond the purview of direct contact with the government and its functionaries. The entire governmental system is divided into three sub-systems i.e. the executive, legislative and judiciary-with distinctive duties and responsibilities, role and functions, all of which are governed by established laws, rules and regulations. Among these three sub-systems the executive branch has the direct responsibilities for bringing about socio-economic change and development in the country through implementation of public policies and programmers. But due to several problems, dislocations and malfunctions arising out from within and outside of this bureaucratic organization it is not working well for doing good and fulfilling the needs, demands and aspirations of the common people as well as the taxpayers by whom the civil servants are being paid. There is lack of efficiency, accountability and transparency in bureaucratic system. The paper aims at addressing some measures of increasing efficiency and accountability in the bureaucratic system of the country. For greater understanding of **the paper** some related issues i.e. the conceptual framework of the Bureaucracy, its origin and present status, new challenges before bureaucracy and some measures for making it accountable and bringing efficiency are elucidated. The paper is basically written by following the content analysis method incorporating the suggestions and recommendations of various reports on public administration reform commissions and some other legal documents of Bangladesh.

Bangladesh Bureaucracy: The Legacy of the Past, Struggling with Present Challenges

Human institutions everywhere have their roots deep in the past. Bangladesh inherits its administrative system from Pakistan through British rule. The British colonial rulers founded the cornerstone of today's administrative system in a manner that it could facilitate their very purpose of surplus extraction from this self-sufficient repository of enormous resources (Alavi, 1973).

During internal colonialism of Pakistan - which was still very much in the British style - the Pakistan bureaucrats performed in the same manner of what the Britishers did. In the wake of a nine months bloody, armed struggle, Bangladesh achieved its desired independence. Following the independence, with its revolutionary zeal and enthusiasm, Bangladesh government embarked on a multi-functional campaign to refurbish sectors of society *i.e.* its economy and administration. But because of the very real institutional strength of that anti-participatory, centralized British-founded bureaucracy, no reform measures gained momentum. Despite the establishment and attempts of the innumerable committees and commissions to reform civil service - the strategic system of an administrative system - the institutional and structural continuity is going on without having any substantial change till this day (Rahman, 1987). In every society public bureaucracy plays a *sine-qua-non* role in the entire developmental process of the society through a structured social, political, economic and institutional set-up. Bangladesh is no exception to this phenomenon. Bangladesh bureaucracy that is inherited from colonial rulers connotes the idea of a monopolized, omnipotent and overdeveloped organization. The all pervasive role, presence and function of bureaucracy in Bangladesh are essentially deemed to be an instrument of oppression and sufferings and it gives a notion of despondency to the common people. Bureaucracy in Bangladesh is in a mess from the very inception of its origin. It is sagacious to envisage that in comparison with the performance of today's civil service in Bangladesh, colonial bureaucracy was more effective and efficient to cater the needs of that contemporary time (Kabir, 1991 : 243). After achieving the independence, administrative system of Bangladesh required to be mounded and equipped with new structure and function to cope with the new hopes and aspirations of the country. But the performance of our bureaucratic system has been deteriorating day by day. Now-a-days it is in a jeopardy that causes untold

sufferings to the people of this deltaic, riparian fertile land. The dismal feature of Bangladeshi bureaucracy can be epitomized as under.

The structural composition of today's bureaucracy was inherited by the colonial rulers whose legacy we are to adorably continue till date. Despite some ominous features no substantive change is yet to take place. These colonial hangovers in bureaucracy represent an utterly frustrated scenario. The colonial hangover precipitated to the existing bureaucratic system can be epitomized as constant *"sirring"* of the bosses; standing up from the seat when boss enters into room; receiving and seeing off bosses at airports, railway station and lunch terminals; offering elaborate farewells and receptions to bosses through speech making, giving presents, refreshments and garlanding; using subordinate employees for personal put-poses without any compensation; offering banquets during inspection and visit etc. Sometimes offering of these outmoded courtesies or niceties of etiquette are extended to the wives and children of the superior authority (Siddiqui, 1996:9-12).

Another deplorable vile in bureaucracy is factionalism among various groups, i.e. generalist versus specialist group, freedom fighter versus non-freedom fighter, B.Sc. engineer versus diploma engineers, CSP versus BCS, direct officers versus promoted officers, administration cadre versus other cadres, cadre versus en-cadred officers (*Ibid*:18-21). The negative impact of such factionalism hardly needs to be elaborated which actually led to total demoralisations, utter negligence of work, ugly acrimony and serious strife and tension in the bureaucracy. Since 1972 severe erosion of merit based recruitment through introduction of spoil system of recruitment, district and freedom fighters quota etc. posing a threat to regular career advancement. Sometimes these factionalism get patronisation from political consideration. It is more evident in case of giving promotion, transfer and posting of

higher civil servants and strategic positions. It is not a recent phenomenon. Such politicisation of administration hampers bureaucratic performance.

Bureaucracy in Bangladesh is castigated for its below-standard performance. Low performance of bureaucracy can be obtained from a recent study conducted by UNDP(1988) on "The Utilisation of Project Aid in Bangladesh" which reveals that the delays in implementation of projects increases the project cost by 35-40% on an average. It increases not only cost but it also prolongs the implementation period by 60% as compared to the time frame anticipated at project approval. Another study titled " Public Administration Efficiency Study" by GOBNSAID (1989, quoted in Task Force Report, 1991:119) discloses that wide spread corruption and inefficiency plague delivery of goods and services by the public sector - from telephone and power connection to supply of agricultural inputs and credits. Inefficient project implementation continues to impose a heavy burden on the economy in terms of cost overruns and delayed flow of benefits. Another side effect of delay is the increase in staff and consultant-related expenditures at the cost of capital investment. New projects are undertaken while earlier investments remain idle or underutilised. Corruption-driven procurement of unsuitable or uneconomic plant, machinery and equipment, is whittling away project benefits and in many cases diverting resources to unnecessary investments. A new administrative culture of subservience and sycophancy has replaced old values of pride of performance and upholding of public interest. The trend has been reinforced by the eager participation of a section of senior officials in a rat race to curry favour of politician or amass wealth (Task Force Report, 1991:222). Due to despondent result emanating from frequent changes of policies and programmes and its aftermath, half-hearted implementation or non-implementation of the undertaken programmes by the previous government, lack of commitment and coordinated efforts, no commendable success is

yet to achieve for its development and thus' to address the problem of grueling poverty, mal-nutrition, mass illiteracy, unemployment, disease and death that engulfed the entire county. Several reform measures to refurbish its local government/ decentralization policy were also initiated but these naive attempts have been thwarted by the anti-participatory bureaucratic system and unfortunately the institutional and structural continuity is going on without having any substantial change in its oligarchic form and practices. These efforts were only carefully confined to electoral process rather than devolution of power to representative bodies who need to engage themselves in the countries decision making process (Rahman and Kamal, 1991). Poor performance occurs from the unaccountability, ineptness, obstinacy, strict rigidity and lack of transparency. Moreover, buck passing, misuse of power, corruption, favouritism, nepotism, fractional practices, procrastination are rampart in our bureaucracy. The culture of avoidance of responsibility and militant trade unions with their illogical demands, labour unrest, unnecessary *hartal*, strike and seizure **causing** low productivity and closure of industrial units every year.

One of the common criticisms of bureaucracy has been its inflexibility and failure to adapt to changing circumstances. Rules and procedures were blatantly violated in pursuit of money and extra favours or benefits. A significant portion of the resources meant for the poor was siphoned off and misappropriated by people with power and authority, the very group from whose clutches the poor were intended to be saved. Institutional checks on misuse and corruption were weakened and cynicism replaced idealism and public morality (Task Force Report, 1991:220). Research shows that in developing societies, rules are used for promoting the self-interest of the bureaucrats and there is a big gap between what is intended and what is affected (*Ibid:* 116). So has been the case of Bangladesh.

Raising "LR fund" by the district administration for meeting up unintended extravaganzas or politico-administration implications has been creating untold sufferings and tangles for the local gentry. Thus public governance is still enmeshed in the outmoded culture in which eating, seating and meeting plays a crucial role for taking decisions and making policies (Siddiqui, 1996:19). Jurisdictional infringements in all strata of administration including secretariat administration are rampant (Huda and Rahman, 1990). To have the work done or having final sanction or decision a file has to travel along way that evokes irritation and helplessness of the common people. In general, without offering speed money or bribe to the cunning clerks most of the files remain clandestine. There are other tyrannical situations in dispatch section, accounts section, store section, transportation section etc. that need to be appeased.

Due to gradual deterioration of the education system and its standards, the quality of manpower is on the decline. Though management training institutions have increased in number, the impact has been minimal due to shortage of qualified trainers, lack of interest of civil servants in in-country training and failure to link training with organisational needs and career advancement of trainees. Training programmes have tended to be routinised and ritualistic, instead of reflecting needed skills and attitudes capable of incorporating new social concerns i.e. women in development, environmental protection and poverty alleviation (Task Force Report, 1991:221).

New Challenges to Bureaucracy: From Traditional Administration to Development Management

In early days, the role of bureaucracy was quite different than that of today's role of bureaucracy. During those days bureaucracy was engaged in performing some tasks of traditional type that can be dubbed as traditional bureaucracy. The main task of the traditional bureaucracy was to maintain law and order and

collection of revenue. But in course of time, colonial bureaucracy has been transformed into a development bureaucracy. In the traditional administration government regulatory bodies i.e. police, tax, administration, customs, audit & accounts etc. play the crucial role in maintaining the day-to-day affairs or activities of government. Today's state is administered with a special purpose. That is why, in order to usher development, Bangladesh bureaucracy needs to engage itself consciously and directly/indirectly in the task of bringing about social change and development either by initiating policies and decisions aiming at change and development or implementing change and development planning. The engagement of bureaucracy in developmental activities can be termed as development administration or bureaucracy. Now-a-days government's nation building departments such as agriculture, fisheries, live-stock, education, social welfare, family planning, health, engineering etc. departments should be the prime concern for accelerating development administration of a nascent state like Bangladesh. Hence, development administration has to play a more positive and dynamic role in fulfilling hopes and aspirations of the general mass in response to environmental changes. Since bureaucracy operates within the society, the bureaucrats have a responsibility both external to the society as well as internal to the organisation of which it is a part. As the society has goals, values, beliefs and the images of what it desires to become, the administration has to be equally concerned with them (Kapoor, 1986:90). According to Alexander H. Leighton (1946: 343 quoted in Dimock and Dimock, 1975:71) who was the first to recognise the importance of the external role of'administration points out that "an administrative body is always a part of the pattern of leadership and authority in the social organisation of the community in which it operates". According to the social view, the function and responsibility of administrative leadership is to rework technological and human materials so as to develop a new organism embodying the new

social value as, *i.e.*, the administration must make administration flexible enough to fit it into the social values. It must be sensitive to change for institutions to develop and grow like human beings (Kapoor, 1986: 91).

Hence to meet up the challenges of development the major tasks of the third world countries are: (i) Establishing domestic and foreign security; (ii) Institutionalization of new technologies and institutions; (iii) Developing and keeping consensus on the legitimacy of the government; (iv) Achieving an integrated national political community; (v) Distribution of formal power and functions between the public and the private sector; (vi) Gradual dissolution of traditional centres of .power; (vii) Propagation of psychological and material benefits; (viii) Mobilization of finances for economic development; (ix) Planning and programming of resources; (x) Establishing continuity by efficient management of facilities and services; (xi) Widening public participation for efficient responses (Arora-ii, 1979: 65-66).

Finding Solutions to Keep Bureaucracy on Track- Some Measures of Efficiency and Accountability

In **a** democratic form of government, the political leaders are pledged bound to translate the electoral pledges or mandates into reality. That is why government has to depend largely on its civil servants to have the work done by them. Coming to power every government promised to set up a transparent, an efficient and accountable public administration, which is now at its serious juncture it has ever found or met. The performance of Bangladesh civil service - unlikely the former I.C.Ss and C.S.Ps which were considered the most distinguished civil service in that contemporary world - has deteriorated and dwindled a lot. More recently, the dominance and despotic power of a certain general cadre has already been challenged by a conglomeration of the specialist cadres - *Prokrichi*. Above all, as corruption, inefficiency, factionalism and mal-administration are rampant in

today's civil service, one may certainly claim that the whole civil service is in a mess now. In a bid to overcome the problems of inefficiency and to make the bureaucracy accountable, efficient and transparent, some measures are suggested beneath:

First of all, the meaning of accountability needs to be elucidated. Accountability in administration is one of the most significant imperatives for better performance of bureaucracy in Bangladesh. Through accountability the performance of administrative organizations can be measured. Every administrative unit has some goals to be full-filled. To ensure administrative accountability, attempts are taken to have an account of how that organization is discharging its functions, duties and responsibilities. Accountability is some extent concomitant to administrative responsibility. Administrative accountability is achievement oriented. It tries to ensure optimization of the available resources and to optimise the organizational objectives. In the traditional sense, accountability was equated with 'answerability'. But there are problems with this equation. As Romzck and Dubnick (1987:227-38 quoted in Zafarullah, 1992;80) explain, from an alternative perspective, accountability plays a grater role in the process of public administration than indicated by the idea of answerability. More broadly conceived, accountability in public administration involves the means by which public agencies and their workers manage the diverse expectations generated within and outside the organization. Frederick (1967:456-66 quoted in Zafarullah, 1992:78-79) identifies the three 'P's -- professionalism, participation and publicity as elements that can cause responsible conduct among bureaucrats. Professionalism produces a form of 'inner check' on 'administrative irresponsibility'. Professionals in administration such as engineers, accountants, medical practitioners and the like generally subscribe to a code of professional ethics within whose framework they operate. It is expected that they would honour the code and refrain from departing from it. Participation involves

interaction between officials and outside interests groups in policy formulation and implementation. Through consultation and negotiation with bureaucrats, citizens may be permitted a greater leverage in the decision making process. It would also make the bureaucracy more responsive and responsible. Publicity relates to the opening of the administrative process to public scrutiny. Administrative secrecy should give way to more open government. Information must be shared between the government and the public to improve the quality of the policy making process. The bureaucrat must be allowed to perform in the limelight of the public arena. This would produce greater responsiveness.

Accountability in bureaucracy can be maintained in administrative ways. Bureaucracy has some in-built instruments for accountability. Hierarchy, span of control, unity of command, supervision etc. are some mechanisms by which accountability can be promoted in bureaucratic organization. Decentralization, delegation, devolution, de-concentration are thought necessary for ensuring accountability. Control and supervision from the higher offices to lower offices through system of hierarchy, span of control, unity of command, inspection, supervision etc. are some well-known instruments of accountability. There are various formal and informal means for making bureaucracy accountable. Outside formal institutions like the legislature and its committee system and the courts serve as potent sources of control; extra-constitutional structures like parties, pressure groups or even the people at large can influence the accountability system (Zafarullah, 1992:80-81). These formal internal mechanisms include: ministers and administrative superiors; central personnel agencies *i.e.* Establishment Division, Public Service Commission and central coordinating ministries/departments like Finance, President's Secretariat, Prime Minister's Secretariat, Cabinet Secretariat, Auditor General; supervising departments; ombudsman and administrative tribunals; conventions and codes

of conduct. Here supervising departments means the organizations to which they are empowered to supervise their activities. For example, Ministry of Establishment, Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives (LGRD & C), Finance as well as concerned ministries can significantly evaluate the performance of the attached bodies and thus ensure considerable level of accountability. The Minister must periodically review the policies and programmers and take corrective measure for ensuring timely fulfillment of the targets. Among the formal external controls there are parliament and parliamentary committees, cabinet and cabinet committees, courts, and enabling legislation. Moreover, freedom of information can immensely help to ensure accountability. The informal internal mechanisms are peers and subordinates; conscience, loyalty, personal values and ethics; professionalism; and anticipated expectations and reactions of ministers and administrative superiors, peers and subordinates. In bureaucracy, certain level of accountability can be obtained through maintaining standards, ethical and moral behavior by the superior authority. The general public, political parties and party committees, interest/pressure groups and their representatives, mass media and media representatives are some of the informal-external means of control that can contribute for an accountable administration. In Bangladesh, the controls included in the last category are not very effective (*Ibid*:83).

Therefore, to facilitate development administration some changes in administrative system are crucial. These include appointment procedures, methods of payment, promotion and retirement, hierarchical structures and a body of rules to guide proceedings. Some features including hierarchies, formal rules and career systems need modifications to suit the circumstances obtaining in developing societies. For ensuring an efficacious and smooth functioning of development administration the system of rigid hierarchy and strict super-ordination and sub-ordination relationship is not quite conducive to the new tasks which require

healthy team spirit, collaborative problem-solving approach, collegiate decision-making process and collective responsibility (Kapoor, 1986 :14). Here it should be noted that the essence of team spirit should be internalized properly. But the under the camouflages of team spirit and with a view to sharing and serving the petty interest, creation of more groupings and sub-groupings will no doubt jeopardizes the organisational goal achievement. Therefore, developing of such team spirit should be engineered delicately. Appropriate changes in personnel administration especially recruitment, training, placement, performance appraisal system, promotion etc. can improve administrative efficiency. Openness in administration can be maintained in a manner that citizen can ensure their access to look into it and get required information. This system can make bureaucrats accountable and answerable to public. Administration pays very much importance to the process of doing things. Instead basic emphasis should be given to achievement. That is why it is essential to simplify rules, regulation, procedure and process so that administrators do not have to waste time in maintaining unnecessary procedures. The promotion policy should be based on merit judged on an all-pervasive written test. In other words, performance and potential should be decisive factors along with seniority. An encouragement of professionalism can make the civil service more impressive and thereby it can attain efficiency. In developmental bureaucracy government should open-up and adopt an open-window policy in place of the traditional closed-door approach. Government should maintain healthy rapport and active liaison with professional research bodies, management institutions, training agencies, and (why not) progressive private industrial houses which can help sucking in fresh air of constructive exchange and release the forces of desirable change in attitude, outlook, operational style or even in the substance of decision making work transacted in the government (Dey, 1978:294). In fact, in order to attract and retain the best and experienced personnel in the professional or academic

organizations, pay structure and other benefits should be different from those of other government bureaus. R. K. Arora-ii (1979:132) has suggested that extra compensation should be paid to those individuals who take great interest in the development of other individuals. Result oriented performance appraisal system can help in increasing efficiency and accountability. Therefore, the performance appraisal system should be based on merit and previous performance records of his/her responsibility and duty. Here new system of assessment or performance evaluation can be introduced. Contemporary performance appraisal is done on the basis of ACR (Annual Confidential Report) by the superior authority. ACR helps to impose considerable control over the subordinates by the higher authority. Sometimes this creates utterly problematic situation for an employee who tries to hold a distinct personality and go with his self-willed way of doing things. Excessive control inhibits innovations, enthusiasm of the subordinates. It helps to make the subordinates tame and timid. This system of ACR does not commensurate with every public sector organisation particularly those organisations engaged in innovative activities *e.g.* research, training, project or any other academic activities. In those organisations new system based on some prefixed criteria can be practiced for measuring performance in lieu of the contemporary ACR system. Here research can be undertaken to devise a new system of performance that will entirely be judged on merit principle and efficiency. In the field of career system, the system of position classification in lieu of rank classification can make the civil service more effective and efficient. To enhance the performance of some of the public sector organisations which are engaged in academic activities *i.e.* training, research along with projects certain measures can be adopted. Inadequacy of qualified personnel is one of the chronic problems encountered by such organisations. Different pay scale, performance evaluation, promotion policy along with some facilities can improve the existing situation. Rules regulations of

such organisations should be flexible so that really deserving candidates can be recruited and thereafter retained in such organisations. Sometimes the positions of chief executives can also play very decisive role for its efficiency. Government should consider the role of such organisations very crucial for ushering change, development and innovation. That is why the position of chief executive demands special qualities to take the helm of those afore-said organizations. Here a special body for executive search of such organizations can be established under the cabinet ministry or public service commission. This executive should comply with the requisite qualifications suitable for those organizations. Sometime this can entangle extra pay benefit and incentives for the position to be filled up by a means of open-ended policy through which executives other than regular bureaucratic set up can also be blessed with such positions. Indoctrination of ethical values, morality and training can serve to increase bureaucrats' understanding of the goals of the organization and it helps to promote more responsible conduct among them. Training should be linked with promotion and posting.

Furthermore, in democratic practice vis-a-vis market oriented economy where dominance of private sector is in the offing - the development administration should be achievement oriented, action oriented, performance oriented and goal oriented. Against this backdrop the underscore of a suitable recruitment policy and career system cannot be overemphasized. The recruitment policy should be wide open as to ensure a constant supply of fresh talent of the country. There should be no barriers of age, sex, caste, creed and religion in selection process. The provision of *viva-voce* as a measurement of quality should also be followed by a general standard in the questions asked to the examinee or it should be abolished. Even appointments of senior personnel in administration there should have provision of direct recruitment through the system of lateral entry. These positions may include Deputy Commissioner/Deputy Secretary, Joint Secretary or

equivalent and in above positions too. Professionals comprising of university teachers, doctors, engineers, industrialists, agriculturist, senior officers from other than administration cadre and so on should have equal opportunity to compete with the regular administration cadre personnel. This open-ended policy can make the development administration more dynamic, efficient and responsible. Thus over exaltation of a single cadre i.e. administration cadre over the other cadres can be de-monopolized. While many changes have taken place at national level the pecking order within civil administration at district and upazila level remain disproportionately biased towards the magisterial and the police functions. Office responsibilities in some crucial sectors such as education and social welfare are accorded little prestige and are seen and treated as being near the bottom of the administrative pecking order (Rahman, 1995). In the realm of development administration programmers of the nation building departments should get the optimal priority from the government. In the name of regional disparity and sex discrimination quota system cannot ensure better quality. So the quota system of any category should no more be practiced and it should be abandoned at once.

For combating corruption's among the government departments1 ministries, the Bureau of Anti Corruption plays a formidable role. This organization is working under the direct control of the Chief Executive of the country i.e., Prime Minister to keep it free from any political and administrative pressure. But problem lies with the procedures of framing charge and its final enactment. This tardy procedure should be accelerated so that unnecessary delays can be avoided like other government departments. The officials of the bureau of anti-corruption should thoroughly be equipped with the administrative, judicial and financial rules and regulations of the land. Before framing a charge the investigating officers should meticulously think for the greater interest of the nation. Anti corruption officers should be provided with positive

incentives ·in the form of higher salaries and perks, in order to boost their morale for the difficult and sensitive task they required to perform under trying circumstances (Siddiqui, 1996:22-26). This department should anyhow maintain the sanctity and neutrality in dispensation of their jurisdictional duties and responsibilities. Frequent transfer and posting should be reduced in order to ensure playing an effective role as an investigating officer of a certain case. There are constitutional provisions for mitigating corrupt practices as the Article 20(2) of the Bangladesh Constitution (GOB, 1998:6) reveals that "The state shall endeavor to create conditions in which, as a general principle, persons shall not be able to enjoy unearned incomes, and in which human labor in every form, intellectual and physical, shall become a fuller expression of creative endeavor and of the human personality. The provision is ruthlessly violated in our bureaucratic system. Bangladesh society has been suffering from the deplorable ills of the culture of rent seeking. Inculcation of an ideology of austerity can help in curbing desire for material gain that may cause corruption. Philosophical guidelines of simple living and austerity from both the appointed and elected leaders can be of some help to minimize corruption. Strengthening public service commissions with enormous power to investigate **and** punish corrupt behavior can be adopted as a measure of inhibiting corruption. Instilling ethical and moral behavior through philosophical and theological means can also be useful for checking corruption. There is system of disclosures of annual returns of assets and property. According to this system every government servant has to provide an annual statement of his or her property and assets held by him or her or on his or her behalf, his/her wife, children or dependents at the entry to his or her service and this is regularly reviewed every year by the concerned ministries. This system can effectively be utilized to control for creation of assets and property illegally obtained or created. But it is a matter of great sorrow that this does not imply anything ominous rather it miserably failed to serve its

sacrosanct objective. This has turned in a simple practice of describing such assets and property. In most of the cases the statement given in the prescribed format are false. The authority can devise a system of checking the discrepancy between the given and the actually owned assets and properties which can put a bar to amass enormous resources by the government servants by illegal means. There is no dearth of laws against corruption in the developing countries. Bangladesh is no exception to this case. But these laws and regulations cannot function effectively because of various interference's from different corners. These public laws must be allowed to function rigorously without any exception. The anti-corruption agency should be made free from executive branch of the government so that it can function effectively. The experience of Singapore in this context may be a bright example. In Singapore, an effective control of corruption has been brought about by a leadership which is regarded as honest and up-righteous, a leadership which is prepared to act against corrupt individuals and companies, however important they may be (Chowdhury, 1981:8-33, Quah in Heidenheimer *et. al.*, 1989:841-51). The problem of corruption shall be tackled by exposing corrupt practices in the media that can help reducing the opportunities for corruption. Greater reliance on transparent' and competitive bidding processes in large-scale public procurements and auctions can play a pivotal role in curbing corruption in these affairs. Moreover, efficiency in financial administration can be ushered through introducing improved budgeting and expenditure management system through efficient information systems, effective tax and custom administration. Here necessary technical supports are enormously required from the finance ministries and central banks.

Civil service reform of any category requires reliable data on employees, ghost employees, and payrolls in the first place, and may then proceed to appropriate adjustment measures. The transparency within societies and the access to information may be

improved by promoting diversity of written and broadcasted opinion, increasing the flow of relevant economic information as well as facilitating the establishment and articulation of producer and consumer interests. The Ministry of Establishment has prepared a data bank for the government servants covering the personal and job related information. But it is not functioning well as the data bank system is not updated regularly and does not contain evaluation (ACR) marks of the employees. As soon as an employee enters or joins into service, relevant data should be maintained in that data file that should have to be regularly updated. By maintaining an updated data bank, the service of the government employees may be regularized or regulated, disciplined and well ordered. This data bank can also help in controlling, promotion, posting, transfer, performance evaluation, pay fixation and even pension cases etc. of the employees.

Civil servants are generally ill equipped and insufficiently or inappropriately prepared to do the jobs required of them. In many countries qualified personnel are difficult to recruit and retain because the private or overseas labor markets offer better alternatives. Most third world countries' alminstration has inadequate systems of establishment control, personnel information management and manpower planning. They cannot provide sufficient incentives to motivate staff performance. Appropriate career development and training programmers for civil servants are mainly non-existent (Nunberg, 1992:1-2). In such a situation government job should be made more attractive. Rationalization of pay structure, career planning/ advancement, human resource developmeht planning and capacity building programmers etc. of the employees may fructify the efforts for having and retaining the best and the most talented people in the public sector organizations.

As a sequel of price spiral time-to-time pay commissions are made to restructure or reorganize the pay structure of the

employees of the government sector. Sometimes being politically motivated the ruling party uses such attempts to increase their vote bank. Instead of setting up pay commission restructuring or increasement of pay can be done through adoption a price index system. Bangladesh Bank can prepare a list of price index of some essential commodities and they can update it every one, two or three year/s alternate. In consonance with the price spiral and inflation rate, the authority of the concerned institutions can easily fix salary of the public sector employees. Total amount of pay can be multiplied by that calculated inflation rate fixed by the competent or jurisdictional authority, *i.e.* Bangladesh Bank. Thus amount of pay can easily be ascertained. Among the countries of South Asia the compensation package or emoluments of public sector in Bangladesh is miserably low. This should be meticulously devised in order to enhance efficiency and instill morality among them. This, in turn, can contribute to reduce corruption in the public sector.

An interplay of a vibrant parliament, an independent judiciary and a neutral executive agency, above all a free, fair and responsible press can play a decisive role in making the administration people oriented and an accountable one. Moreover, the system of Ombudsman to hear complaints and grievances of the citizen and criticize administrative action has been a source of inspiration as to make the bureaucracy accountable.

Modernization of civil service by providing the necessary modern equipment's like computers, fax, telex, telephone and other logistics i.e. Internet and E-mail facilities etc. can make the civil service more dynamic and efficient. In a bid to overcome the loopholes of current inept and corrupt system and to trim down the monopolize power of our civil servants - bureaucratic reorientation comprising its overall structure, culture, behaviour, norms and standard, attitude and manner - needs to reorganize for ensuring its productivity. In a democratic polity, bureaucracy must

be subservient to political will through representative and participatory system of management and decision-making. An unaccountable bureaucracy is a disgrace to democracy and basically this unaccountable system helps bureaucracy to become monopolized for which every public policy is made by them and almost all policies are implemented by them. A basic value in a democracy is that administration is held accountable for its actions and inactions. It is effectively controlled lest it over-stepped its boundaries and posed a threat to democracy itself (Zafarullah, 1992:77). Adopting democratic system in every sphere of life can help make bureaucracy accountable because the establishment of democratic institution meant loss of authority, power and status for the bureaucracy. Bureaucracy in all countries is made accountable to the general public through the legislature and the executive. According to Weber (quoted in Arora-i, 1979:36-7), one of the important methods of political control over bureaucracy was parliamentary control over the administrative activities of the government. He contended that parliamentary control over bureaucracy could be effective only when parliament may conduct inquiries and cross-examine the administration before commissions of enquiry. He also recognized that parliamentary committees provide an opportunity for politicians to become more educated about administration. In addition, theses committees increase parliamentary control over administration through public disclosures. Parliamentary control is exercised mainly through control over policy, control over implementation of policies through ministries, control over finances through financial committees and Comptroller and Auditor General. Parliamentary committees are an effective means of exercising control by all legislatures whether presidential or parliamentary. The Estimates Committee, Public Accounts Committee, Committee on Subordinate Legislation, Committee on Public Undertakings and Committee on Assurances are all important tools of control over bureaucracy. The aud and accounting system can play a vital

role in making the bureaucracy accountable. So cases of defalcation of any public fund by the bureaucrats should be dealt with iron hand and provision of exemplary punishment should be there. Jurisdictional infringement in secretariat administration and in any administrative unit should be handled with necessary punitive measures. Thus by parliament, public accounts committees, independent judiciary, administrative tribunal, departmental action, political parties and pressure groups, free press and public opinion, the system of censure or reprimand, publication of the reports of the disciplinary actions committees, bureaucracy can be made accountable.

The issue of good governance - a multi-dimensional concept, can also help in ensuring efficiency and accountability. The international aid agencies has stressed for good governance to achieve sustained economic and social development in the third world countries. Here they put emphasis to the rule of law and efficient public sector management. It is beyond doubt that inefficiencies in the legal system increase business costs, discourage investors and construct economic development. Such inefficiencies include the lack of predictability in the legal environment, the lack of an independent court system, delays in handling legal conflicts and insufficient enforcement of court decisions. Independent court system may pave the way for having justice and discipline in the society. The personnel employed in the legal system can be imparted professional training in order to speditate their functions. Here judicial procedure needs required overhauling of the existing system. Computerization of the judicial system with necessary concomitant aids can improve its performance. Of course, the success of all these changes will be dependent totally on its acceptability to the implementers, their commitment and willingness to adherence to those norms. Along with the improvements of the law and order situation, various indicators i.e. democratization of the entire society, participatory

management, institutional or organisational capacity building, human resource planning and development etc. are involved in it.

Capacity building in public sector management can help tremendously in increasing efficiency of bureaucracy in Bangladesh. Capacity building for public service management includes improvements in the ability of the public sector organizations, to perform appropriate tasks. This requires improvements in the ability to identify problems requiring public action, assess options for responding to these problems, formulate policies that constructively address these problems, implement activities required by the policies, and sustain such activities over sufficient time to nave an impact on conditions for economic and social development (MDGD/UNDP, 1995 quoted in Edralin, 1996197:112). McGuire *et.* al. (1994: 426-33 quoted in Edralin, 1996/97:114) from Indiana University used three indicators of development capacity in their study of non-metropolitan communities in the US. Their indicators include : (a) citizen participation that addresses issues dealing with community input and the strength of local political institutions; (b) community structure to address management in governmental institutions, formal linkages with other communities and higher levels of government and participation in development activities; and (c) development instruments to measure the degree to which appropriate and effective policy tools are used by the community. Cohen (1995, quoted in Edralin, 1996/97:114) developed a framework for analyzing capacity-building issues and interventions that aimed at addressing some important issues. His framework consists of five dimensions: (a) targeted personnel capacity (*i.e.*, personnel who carry out critical or high priority government functions such as public sector managers, professionals, and technicians); (b) capacity-building stages (beginning with anticipating, planning, and advocating manpower needs; recruiting candidates into the public service to meet the institution's needs; managing and utilizing effectively the

institution's emerging cadre of skilled personnel; training and upgrading of skills through in-service program's; and ending with promoting an attractive public service through leadership, strategies, and rules); (c) training capacity (*i.e.* the need to identify external educational and training institutions that facilitate governments' and aid agencies' efforts to build human resource capacity); (d) external institutional, manpower, and systems support (*e.g.* obtaining support from institutions in charge of training, managing and retention of manpower, institutions that play a role in supporting their capacity-building efforts; information, communications, and institutional co-ordination systems; support by political leaders, decision makers, and stakeholder; and budgetary and financial resources); and (e) public-sector task environment factors that affect institutional efforts to recruit, effectively use, and retain skilled personnel (these include priorities for economic growth, government revenue, national plans, and budgetary allocation; public sector rules and regulations; educational sector plans and priorities; poaching of skilled personnel by the private sector and aid agencies; and national political factors, social pressures and client groups. Building capacity of the public sector organizations as well as their personnel in the above-mentioned manner can contribute good governance and efficient public administration in Bangladesh.

For ensuring efficiency in administration civil servants should no way be involved in political spheres and politicians should not encourage the civil servants to involve them in politics either. Attentions should be given so that civil servants can perform their assigned duties with' a judicial mind and they should try to maintain neutrality and impersonality. All cases of posting, transfer, promotion, appointment should be kept above political consideration. Though it may not so easy for the political leadership but maintaining neutrality and sanctity in such dealing

will definitely help in resulting better performance of public bureaucracy.

On the other hand, a vibrant civil society is probably more essential for consolidating democracy ensuring efficiency and accountability in administration. L. Diamond (1995, quoted in Robinson, 1995:72) conceptualizes that "civil society is a vital instrument for containing the power of democratic governments, checking their potential abuses or violations of the law and subjecting them to public scrutiny". The organizations of civil society represent many diverse and sometimes contradictory social interests which are shaped to fit their social base, constituency, thematic orientations (*e.g.* environment, gender, human rights) and types of activity. They include church related groups, trade unions, cooperatives, service organizations, community groups and youth organizations as well as academic institutions and others (Riddell and Bebbington, 1995 quoted in Robinson, 1995:74). Basic to democratization is the development of a pluralist civil society comprising of a wide range of institutions and associations which represent diverse interests and provide a counterweight to government. Interaction between the formal political regime and civil society contributes to, and also requires, a responsive government, which is one of the characteristics of a functioning democracy. Supporting pluralism, e.g. the development of autonomous civil association, professional and interest organization, is an important step for fostering democratization. Democratization without a serious effort to reform and/or strengthen the state machinery *i.e.* bureaucracy may mean that a diversification of political elites through multi-party competition will just mean more snouts in the trough and successful private-sector development will just mean fattening more frogs for snakes. The democratic developmental state will need to have a broad writ with at least three basic socioeconomic functions: regulative, infiastructural and redistributive (White, 1990:31). This involves areas of traditional political engineering such as electoral systems,

decentralization and devolution of government, administrative reform, legal systems, division of powers and the nature of legislatures. Periodic free, fair and neutral elections are considered to be an essential feature of functioning democracies. For improving the functioning of representative political institutions, electoral processes and consultative mechanisms- a pluralist political system, a free but responsible press and better access to information are exigent. White (1990:31, quoted in Robinson, 1995: 74) argues that the growth of civil society can contribute to democratic governance in four complementary ways: by (i) altering the balancing of power between state and society to achieve a balance opposition in favour of the latter; (ii) enforcing standards of public morality and performance and improving the accountability of politicians and the state officials; (iii) transmitting the demands and articulating the interest of organized groups in the process for providing an alternative sphere of representation; and (iv) instilling and upholding democratic values. However, White (1990:75) points out, while civil society holds real potential to influence the process of democratic consolidation, its role and significance in any given context is contingent on the specific character and power of the state and the international political environment. The role and functions of the democratic political institutions are heavily influenced by the character and behaviour of the organized groups in 'civil society'. These also depend on the heterogeneity, the capacity to coalesce and the nature of the relationships the civil society maintains with the parties and state institutions. This area of discussion includes the issue of corporatism as a specific way of organizing the links between state, political society and civil society so as to create the political consensus, stability and capacity needed for longer-term developmental decision-making. Sometimes organised and strong civil society group can change some political and administrative policy directives when it seems to be harmful for the public or environment or for any other causes. It is now an axiomatic truth

that civil society can play a role of a watchdog and thus they can substantially contribute for consolidating the democratic process. As mass parties grew up leaders not dependent upon the bureaucracy but on mass support at elections and that is why, the stronger the political institution, techniques for controlling the bureaucracy would grow stronger. The more groups outside the state, in business, agriculture, the labour movement and the professional developed and produced their own organizations, the more the bureaucracy was further held accountable to other groups of policy makers.

Practice of participatory management in every government institution can play a pivotal role in strengthening democratic process. J. D. Sethi (1983:537) remarks that bureaucracy has now become the biggest barrier in the way of the emergence of any participating model. But there is no denying the fact that the popular pressure and participation from the grassroots organizations are necessary prerequisites for political change and economic progress. Participatory development or management is defined as a process by which people take an active and influential hand in shaping decisions that affect their lives. Empowering groups, communities, and organizations to negotiate with political institutions and bureaucracies are deemed essential for influencing public policy, providing a check on government discretion, as well as enhancing effectiveness and sustainability of development programmes (Nunnenkamp, 1995:10). Most development economists have put significant emphasis on human resources development for augmenting popular participation. They considered human resource development is one of the preconditions for increasing popular participation. Concerning human resource development, the empirical evidence reveals that the return of investment in primary education is much better than that of higher education (Psacharopoulos, 1993). NGOs are playing a seminal role in augmenting social mobility and popular participation in the sub-national level i.e. grassroots. If NGOs

undertake voters' education programme in the grassroots areas, such programmes can facilitate awareness building and conscientisation that, in turn, can help ushering good leadership in the local level. This leadership will play a positive and dynamic role in increasing responsible conduct among the bureaucrats. Bureaucratic centralism and the control of the local government, weakens the educative effects of political participation. The devolution type decentralization can buttress/prop to make bureaucrats accountable in all levels of administration. The system of participative management and decentralization of policy making authority in the field level and a bottom-up planning machinery can also help for establishing an accountable, efficient and a transparent system of public administration. That is why the devolution type of local government system needs to be responsive to stakeholders' interests and needs which requires a participatory approach not only in service delivery but also in planning and decision-making. In this regard, the tasks of local governments are to identify and support the development of local partnerships, for example, with CBOs, NGOs, and the private sector, and ensure commitment to a partnership/participation-enabling strategy (Edralin, 1996197:140). In our country decentralization of devolution type does not represent a very encouraging result and issue of local government accountability does not get enough footing like that of national level. But it has been argued by Davey (1993 quoted in Edralin, 1996197:121), that local accountability is the "hallmark" of local government; it makes local government more responsive to local needs and officials more directly answerable for their decisions and perfomiance. To develop participation it is essential to support grassroots organisations and intermediary organisations such as professional associations, consumer groups and trade unions; to involve all project stakeholders in programme design and implementation and to provide support for decentralisation programmes. For participatory development it is essential to

ensure better access of marginalized groups to the formal economic and legal system that requires a change in political and bureaucratic attitudes by definition. The success of participatory development cannot be harvested overnight rather it is an issue of long term exercise - which requires better economic policies and more investment in human capital, infrastructure, and institution-building, along with better governance. Sometimes the ruling party tries to suppress the efforts of participatory development in fear of losing the base of its own power. Genuine participation of the people in administration and implementation of the government programmes can also help in smooth functioning of democracy which otherwise can make ground for holding bureaucracy accountability at the grass roots. Capacity building in local governments can accelerate the decentralization process. But its sustainability cannot be based only on a capacity-building strategy. It also requires a substantial effort and commitment from local governments to improve their political accountability to their constituents for discharging their responsibilities in accordance with local needs. Among the limitations found were the lack of a local political culture in some countries, the lack of any agreed or accepted view of the place and role of local governments within a decentralized system, the expansion of the concept of accountability from conventional housekeeping and support activities such as financial management to a more general concern for service quality, and persistent national government intervention due to continued financial dependence of local governments on national government - which restricts local initiative, discretion, and accountability.

The Constitution of Bangladesh has laid down magnificent importance for establishing local government in every unit of administration, namely division, district, upazila and union level. It is unambiguously written in the constitution that in every administrative unit, the responsibility of local administration of the Republic will be entrusted to the institutions comprising elected

representatives. Besides, the constitution clearly mentions that all planning and implementation works relating to the functions of civil servants, maintenance of public: law and order and economic development will be made effective through local government at each of the corresponding level of administration. But except the Union Parishad no local government institution is existent in any of the upper tiers/units of administration. Political leadership of the country has failed to reach a consensus for building strong local governments in Bangladesh. Without creation of devolution type strong decentralised local government in every tier it would be tough to make field administration transparent, accountable and efficient..Though every political party promised to do that in their election mandate but after coming to power the ruling luminaries seem to be convinced enough by the bureaucrats that instead of local government the civil servants can better serve their purpose or otherwise in simple sense it can be assumed that they made that pledges without clearly understanding the essence of the local government. However, serious efforts should be taken to fulfill the constitutional obligation for making devolution type local government in every local administrative unit, which can facilitate to get an accountable, efficient and a transparent pro-people administration.

There are huge animadverts against bureaucracy but G. Tullock (1987:26 quoted in Moore, 1992:71)   has criticised in the following manner which may be relevant here to allude for making bureaucracy accountable. Tullock's (1987, quoted in Moore 1992:74) models of bureaucracy gives special emphasis to the behaviour of an intelligent, ambitious and somewhat unscrupulous man in an organized hierarchy. The key steps in his arguments are: (a) the main goals of bureaucrats is to rise rapidly in career hierarchy;   (b) bureaucracies provide great scope for concealment or manipulation of information; (c) the people who are promoted most rapidly are those who are most ruthless and successful in manipulating information to provide a favourable

picture of their own performance; (d) bureaucracies are inherently ineffective and inefficient because the top ranks are filled with unscrupulous and untrustworthy people skilled at manipulation and (e) bureaucracies are therefore unable to fulfill the complex tasks set for them. He has also suggested some measures to reduce the role of omni-powerful bureaucracy. He points out to privatization wherever possible; to as much decentralization as possible so that the local community- the authentic societal realm- can exercise maximum influence over the apostate realm of bureaucrats and politicians and to a minimal public sector, it does not address the questions of how the (residual) public service is to be organised (*Ibid*:74). Moreover, C. Bryant and L. G. White (1982:210 qouted in Maheshwari, 1983:466) deplored saying that when a bureaucracy is unavoidable and inescable, efforts must simultaneously be made to humanise and professionalise it. To develop professionalism in civil service, efforts should be taken to impart them various need-based training. A well-planned HRD prepared by the Ministry of Establishment and Ministry of Planing can help in creating well-groomed and efficient personnel in bureaucracy. There should be no rules and regulations, which debars civil servants to take higher education in home and abroad. Maintaining standard value system, morality and ethics in administration can help get better administration. Moral education in family, society and religious and educational institutions can create good human being. The better way to get human resource with better sense of conscience, honesty and ethics is to enhance the quality of education and thereby initiative should be taken to . that end.

The Weberian bureaucracy- known in many different names *i.e.* the rational model or the mechanistic instrumental or machine model and the critics of bureaucracy viewed that the machine is not auto-responsive it has to be directed externally by the political authority of the state (Tullock, 1987:71). Even Max Weber (quoted in Arora-i, 1979:36) was doubtful about bureaucratic

accountability as he critically observed that in a modern state, day to day administration was in the hands of the bureaucracy, and this enhanced specialized knowledge, coupled with the secretive character of administrative functioning, made the accountability of bureaucrats extremely difficult. Not only that Riggs (quoted in Smith, 1988:8) also found historical and contemporary evidence to support the conclusion that the bureaucratic power and expansion had adverse consequences for the development of political system. So the greatest need for development administration remains at the strengthening of parallel political institutions and authorities for balancing the undesirable concentration of powers and functions in the bureaucracy, and making it responsive to the needs and aspirations of the people and the society (Task Force Report, 1991:117)

Indeed, of all possible methods of holding the bureaucrats accountable, probably none is more effective in the long run than structural self-regulation and self-control. These are the two principles to build a system of bureaucratic accountability. In fact no class or group can be held responsible if it does not feel obliged to some kind of self-correction and self-control (Sethi, 1983:535).

Conclusion

Modern states are welfare states, more explicitly, an administrative and developmental state. Bureaucracy is an inevitable institution for bringing socio-economic development of Bangladesh society. To make the bureaucracy efficient, accountable and transparent qualitative political intervention is essential. Mere structural change and modernization is not enough for that. Rather emphasis needed to be given for bureaucratic reorientation of their behaviour, conduct and attitude etc. In order to ensure efficiency and productivity in development administration research can be undertaken to examine the

recruitment system, pay structure and classification of position, performance appraisal system, promotion policy, establishment, control, transfer policy, HRD, etc. (Nunberg, 1992:40). For having an accountable and efficient development administration democratic sustenance is a must. Unless and until we can understand the need for a democratised and decentralized or representative system of governance by practicing frequent election involving adult franchise in all strata of administration and if the politics of rhetorics and rigmaroles is not eliminated, it would be a quixotic and abortive effort to remove the ills within the state machinery and to keep the bureaucracy on track

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