

**PROMOTION OF ACCOUNTABILITY IN BANGLADESH
CIVIL SERVICE : PROBLEMS AND STRATEGIES**



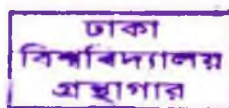
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Ph. D. Thesis

by

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**Department of Public Administration
University of Dhaka
Dhaka**

**PROMOTION OF ACCOUNTABILITY IN BANGLADESH
CIVIL SERVICE: PROBLEMS AND STRATEGIES**

A thesis submitted to the
University of Dhaka
in conformity with the requirements
for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

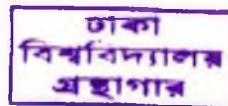
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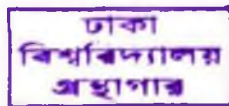
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2005

Certification

Certified that the work incorporated in this thesis entitled "Promotion of Accountability in Bangladesh Civil Service: Problems and Strategies", submitted by Syed Naquib Muslim, was carried out by the candidate under my supervision. Information culled from other sources has been duly acknowledged in the thesis.

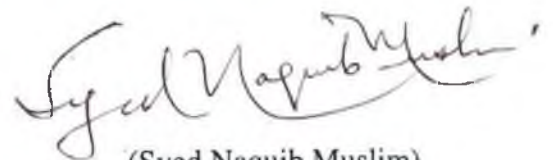

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis or any part of it has not been submitted elsewhere for the award of any degree or diploma.



(Syed Naquib Muslim)

Contents

	Pages
Certification	iii
Declaration	iv
List of Tables and Figures	vi
Abbreviations/ Acronyms	vii
Abstract	ix
Preface	xii
 Chapters	
I Introduction	1
II Accountability: Demystifying the Concept and Drawing a Conceptual Framework	15
III Re-inventing the Bangladesh Civil Service: Need For New Professionalism and Paradigm Shift	26
IV Public Perception about the Civil service: Uncivil Service or Civil Disservice	45
V Codified Operating Values: Missing Ingredient of the Bangladesh Civil Service	69
VI Strategies for Achievement of the Codified Civil Service Values	101
VII Reforming the Performance Appraisal System: Strategy of Enhancing Accountability.	128
VIII Organisation Development Orientation: A Strategy for Changing Civil Servants' Mindset.....	157
IX Professionalising the Civil Service: Accountability of Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre	179
X Institutionalizing On-the-job Training and Fostering Healthy Senior-Junior Relations in Civil Service Agencies	206
XI Major Political Constraints on Administrative Accountability	234
XII Conclusions	254
Annexes	267
Bibliography	282

List of Tables

III.1	List of Twenty-nine BCS Cadre Services	31
VI.1	Taxonomy of the Mechanisms of Value Achievement	102
IX.1	List of 25 Key Training Institutes for BCS Officers	182

List of Figures

II.1	Schematic Representation of the Conceptual Framework	22
V.1	Cluster of Twelve Core Civil Service Values: Interconnectivity	77
VI.1	Citizens' Dissatisfaction List	123
VII.1	Annual Cycle of PRIP	145
VII.2	Four Pillars of PRIP	154

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ ACRONYMS

ACR	Annual Confidential Report
ACAD	Advanced Course on Administration & Development
ADB	Asian Development Bank
APO	Asian Productivity Organisation
ASC	Administrative Staff College
ASPA	American Society of Public Administration
ASRC	Administrative Services Reorganisation Committee
BASC	Bangladesh Administrative Staff College
BCS	Bangladesh Civil Service
BIAM	Bangladesh Institute of Administration & Management
BIM	Bangladesh Institute of Management
BPATC	Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre
BSTD	Bangladesh Society for Training & Development
CAPAM	Commonwealth Association of Public Administration & Management
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COTA	Civil Officer's Training Academy
CR/CP	Confidential Reports and Career Planning
CC	Citizen's Charter
CS	Civil Service
CSO	Countersigning Officer
CSP	Civil Service of Pakistan
CSS	Central Superior Services
DSS	Decision Support System
FC	Foundation Course
GSC	Government Servants' Conduct
GB	Grameen Bank
GO	Government Organisation
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
HRD	Human Resource Development
ICS	Indian Civil Service
INTAN	Institute Tadbiran Awam Negara (National Institute of Public Administration)

IT	Institutional Training
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
LD	Land Development
MAMPU	Malaysian Administrative and Management Planning Unit
MoE	Ministry of Establishment
NGO	Non-government Organisation
NIA	National Innovation Agency
NIPA	National Institute of Public Administration
OD	Organisation Development
OJT	On-the job Training
ORU	Officer Reported Upon
OSD	Officer on Special Duty
PACC	Public Administration Computer Centre
PATP	Public Administration Training Policy
PP	Project Proforma
PRIP	Performance Review and Improvement Plan
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
PSC	Public Service Commission
RIO	Report Initiating Officer
RPATC	Regional Public Administration Training Centre
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SSB	Superior Selection Board
SSC	Senior Staff Course
SSS	Staff Suggestion Scheme
TA	Team Approach
TIB	Transparency International Bangladesh
TNA	Training Needs Assessment
TOT	Training of Trainers
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
US	United States
USD	United States Dollar
WIT	Work Improvement Team

ABSTRACT

Installing an accountable Civil Service is a formidable challenge for Bangladesh which claims to practise democratic governance. The extant studies on accountability and the problems of civil service performance in this country suggest copious but repetitive measures that mostly include modernisation of auditing procedures, streamlining budgetary process, reforming the judicial system, strengthening parliamentary oversight, revision of macro-economic policies etc. The psychosocial or socio-emotional dimensions of civil service accountability hitherto remain unaddressed. The core objectives of the thesis are to identify those constraints that are affecting the practice, enforcement and promotion of administrative accountability in the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) and those that have not received elaborate treatment, and to recommend a few doable strategies for the solution of the identified problems.

The study is based on a conceptual framework drawn from the personal experience of and survey of available documents by the researcher on the subject. While much use has been made of the primary and secondary data, the researcher's personal observations, perceptions and experiences support the contents of the thesis. In fact, his role has been that of a participant observer having ample chances to interact intimately with all levels of the BCS members and that enabled him to gather their perceptions on civil service performance through informal and unobtrusive discussions, consultations and interviews. The respondents comprise active and retired civil servants, civil service trainees, academics, relevant officials of international aid-giving agencies, and responsible members of the business community. Assumptions, observations, remarks and facts about civil servants' conduct and performance have been drawn from the study of noted books, Reforms Commission/ Committee reports, syndicate papers and research journals. Views and perspectives of the enlightened members of the citizenry published in the leading national dailies, weeklies and journals have also been used.

The thesis posits that the dominant dysfunctional dispositions that are deterring achievement of administrative accountability and affecting efficient performance in the

Bangladesh Civil Service are: *waste, delay, corruption, arrogance, and sycophancy*. Inefficiency, weak interpersonal and interagency coordination and lack of professional commitment of the civil servants stem mainly from the absence of a declared and codified set of common operating values and a pragmatic Code of Ethics for them, practice of traditional supervisory style, absence of an objective performance appraisal system, and growing apathy of officers towards work because of low incentive. In addition, absence of team spirit, lack of a healthy senior-junior relations, leadership gaps at various levels are hindering the growth of innovation and quality decisions in the Civil Service agencies. Moreover, the existing civil service training system is characterized by improperly assessed training needs, ill-designed training curricula, ill-administered training content for using traditional instructional methods, unstable institutional leadership, undeveloped and unstable faculty and lastly the growing apathy of the civil servants towards training. All these constrain the growth of professionalism affecting the quality of administrative performance and consequently that of service delivery. Added to these are the problems of unwarranted interference in the day-to-day affairs of administration and increasing politicisation of administration that impede achievement of accountability of the working civil-servants.

On the basis of the public perception and the researcher's personal insight about the quality of Civil Service performance, a set of twelve common Civil Service values (*accountability, transparency, the rule of law, the public interest, neutrality, responsiveness, equity, civility, probity, austerity, innovation, and efficiency*) have been identified and the professional Code of Ethics formulated; a set of measures on how to inculcate or enforce them has also been suggested as a strategy to promote accountability. A key element in the creation of a sound performance management framework is the practice of an objective, performance-based and results-oriented performance appraisal system. Keeping this imperative in view, the pitfalls of the existing performance appraisal system in the BCS have been brought forth and an alternative appraisal format designated as *Performance Review and Improvement Plan* (PRIP) aimed at enforcing true accountability of the BCS officers has been suggested. The thesis recommends a partial shift from the traditional bureaucratic paradigm to organisation development (OD) framework as a strategy for modifying the traditional mindset and work style of the BCS members and for improving quality of performance

at each echelon of the Civil Service offices. It is expected that the behavioral problems like malice, arrogance, fear, fault-finding and buck-passing tendency that are observed both in the senior and the junior alike will be neutralized once the OD concepts are truly put into practice. As regular training, institutional and on-the-job (OJT), contributes significantly to improving efficiency, coordination and teamwork, institutionalisation of OJT and strengthening of in-house training in the Civil Service offices have been recommended as a major strategy to upgrade the quality of performance. An exclusive discussion has been devoted to suggesting measures to streamline the faulty design and delivery of institutional training for the BCS based on the identified weaknesses. The thesis concludes with comments of the researcher emphasising, in particular, the role of an empowered and responsible citizenry or electorate to act as a built-in guarantee against abuse of power, arbitrariness, arrogance of civil servants and politicisation of administration by the higher politicians in power.

PREFACE

In recent times, the notion 'accountability' has received the attention of the public both in developed and developing countries including Bangladesh. Accountability has become a prominent subject of academic deliberation, debate and discourse for administrators, politicians, scholars, researchers and academics. A plethora of measures have been and are still suggested for the achievement and promotion of this essential governance value.

My interest in the concept of accountability developed while I, as a faculty member of Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC), had been assigned with the task of conducting instructional sessions on the subject for the junior as well as the senior trainee-civil servants during the period 1991-2000. As part of the assignment, the syndicate exercises which I had the chance to facilitate and which were aimed at demystifying the concept and identifying the problems that inhibit achievement of the civil service accountability reinforced my interest in the subject and prompted me to take up the venture of writing a doctoral thesis on the topic. As a matter of fact, this thesis is the outcome of twenty-three year experience of mine as a member of the administrative cadre of Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS), which of course includes fourteen-year experience as a civil service trainer. I have tried to observe analytically the intricacies in the changing role of the BCS, to identify the underlying causes of perceived substandard performance of the civil servants, the possible reasons behind the failure in achieving their full accountability despite continued claim of the practice of democratic politics in this country.

I am grateful to a host of BCS officers, active and retired, junior and senior, responsible members of the public, and a few academics who generously afforded their valuable time in responding to various questions and queries I made in carrying out my study. I am also grateful to all the authors whose scholarly publications on the Civil Service I have consulted and who are genuinely concerned about improvement of the Civil Service in this country.

I will not be able to repay the debt I have incurred to Dr. Syed Giasuddin Ahmed, Supernumerary Professor, Department of Public Administration, University of Dhaka, who worked as my supervisor and without whose unflinching moral support and invaluable technical guidance, it would not have been possible for me to produce this thesis. The journey to this academic venture had never been smooth. At times when I was about to abandon my scheme owing to incessant interruptions caused by

professional pre-occupations, Prof. Ahmed never ceased to encourage me in continuing the work and bore with all patience and humility the inexcusable delay in the submission of my thesis.

I must keep on record my thankfulness to my former student Afroza Khan Rita who used to phone me regularly from London to know the progress of my work and who very genuinely wanted that I should accomplish the work anyhow. My friend Mir Musharraf Ali always felt proud of my achievement and assured me of all possible assistance. I must thank him for this noble gesture. My thanks also go to Deloar Hossain who word-processed the draft thesis of mine and took smilingly and sportingly the painful task of adjusting the changes I made from time to time and often at intolerable frequency.

I recall with gratitude all those devoted students and respectable teachers of the Department of Public Administration, University of Dhaka, who took interest in reading the essays I wrote for the national dailies and who inspired me to embark upon a Ph.D programme by way of synthesizing my thoughts, views and ideas on the improvement of the Civil Service performance in Bangladesh.

Lastly, I owe a special feeling of gratitude to my wife Rini, daughters Amy, Rapy and Noureen, son-in-law Jobayer and grandson Aadit for their patience in sharing the strains and stresses that accompanied my work on this study. Their undiluted love, affection and support sustained me throughout the entire period of my research prior to the completion of this thesis.

My low profile assignment as a member of the Bangladesh Handloom Board in June 2004 ultimately acted as blessings in disguise as it allowed me a lull of creative leisure after two decades of tireless work in the Civil Service making it possible for me to accomplish the long pending task of preparing this dissertation.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Accountability and the role of the Civil Service in efficient management of the public affairs form important issues that have received attention of researchers, academics and practitioners of both developed and developing countries including Bangladesh. The value of accountability has assumed wide significance in all governments as it "can contribute to the development of a more effective and efficient public sector structure and system."¹ *The Tokyo Declaration* on public accountability reminded the Asian governments back in 1985 that: "With the steady growth of public sector activities and spending by governments in pursuit of development ... and trends at privatization in some countries, the character, scope and dimensions of public accountability have now extended over greater horizons".² The need for accountability is being felt by all the nations as the number of complaints from the public about maladministration, abuse of authority and corruption of the civil servants is increasing day by day.³ Researchers believe failures in development planning and implementation in many developed and developing countries are not because of the level of state intervention but because of its failures in 'encouraging transparency and accountability'.⁴ Moreover, absence and non-practice of accountability create 'a sense of deprivation' and lead to 'uncomfortable and unsafe living much to the chagrin of the citizenry'.⁵ Accountability is therefore viewed as one of the prime principles to guide the operation of the Civil Service and to maintain stability and dynamism of governments.

1 Sirajuddin H. Salleh & Arabinda Kar, eds., *Administrative and Financial Accountability: The ASEAN-SAARC Experience* (Proceedings of the ASEAN-SAARC Conference on Administrative and Financial Accountability, 16-20 January 1994, Dhaka, Bangladesh), (Asian & Pacific Development Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1995), p. x.

2 *Tokyo Declaration of Guidelines on Public Accountability*, The Board of Audit, Tokyo, Japan, 1985, p. 3.

3 Keynote address by Aslam Iqbal of Pakistan, in Sirajuddin H. Salleh & Arabinda Kar, eds., *Administrative and Financial Accountability: The ASEAN-SAARC Experience*, (Asian & Pacific Development Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1995). p. 86

4 *Commonwealth Strategies for Reform*, Commonwealth Association of Public Administration & Management, 1995. p. 97.

5 Saadat Husain, "Role of Training in Good Governance", a paper presented at a seminar on Good Governance sponsored by Bangladesh Society for Training & Development, November 21, 1995. p. 3.

Governments of many nations have evolved myriad legal instruments and procedural measures to enforce and to enhance accountability of civil servants. These instruments and measures have been employed both at the micro and macro-level civil service agencies to prevent administrative aberrations such as delay, arbitrariness, corruption, fraud, dereliction of duties, arrogant conduct and other negative aspects. Experience has shown that mere enforcement of control and sanctions has not been able to guarantee or to improve performance of civil servants. Questions are therefore raised about the efficacy of the institutional mechanisms or legal instruments that are designed from time to time by many a government to promote accountability of the Civil Service.⁶

Practice and diffusion of the tenets of accountability is the very essence of the democratic system of government. To improve the performance of the government and maladministration,⁷ a UNDP survey team in Bangladesh recommended 'developing a more responsive, transparent and accountable administrative system and a performance-oriented civil service to support parliamentary democracy as well as durable development'.⁸ Therefore, the most challenging issue that faces Bangladesh today as a democratic state is not only the accountability of the Civil Service but also the modalities through which civil servants can be made efficient in the delivery of services and be responsive to the genuine needs of the citizenry. With the reintroduction the parliamentary democracy through free and fair elections in Bangladesh in 1991, the issues of good governance, accountability and transparency have gained momentum. Simultaneously, the successive governments in this country have been able to perceive that accountability should be the cardinal element for improving administrative efficiency and for achieving good governance. 'Good governance is a mindset'⁹ that is manifest through practice of the values of accountability, transparency and the rule of law. Good governance naturally presupposes an accountable,

6 Abdullah Abdul Rahman, "Country paper on Malaysia", in Sirajuddin H. Salleh & Arabinda Kar, eds., *Administrative and Financial Accountability: The ASEAN-SAARC Experience*, (Asia & Pacific Development Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1995). p. 147.

7 See for details K.C Whcare's book entitled *Maladministration and Its Remedies*, (London: Stevens & Sons, 1973). p. 6.

8 UNDP, *Report of Public Administration Sector Study in Bangladesh*, (United Nations Development Programme, Dhaka, 1993), p. 105.

9 Consensual views expressed by the participants of a discussion meeting on 'Good governance, social security and human rights' organised by *Samajik Unnayan O Chetona Bikash Kendra* at National Press Club, September 2, 2005

responsive, transparent and efficient Civil Service.¹⁰ For a democratic country, a responsive and accountable civil service is an asset and its role in and contribution to the development of the nation is vital. Installing an accountable and efficient civil service is therefore one of the biggest challenges for Bangladesh.¹¹

But, unfortunately, any ardent reformer facing the challenge referred to above might get daunted knowing of the criticisms that "most civil servants in Bangladesh are impervious to public sensitivities; highly bureaucratic and self-serving; and increasingly incapable of managing a modern government within a pluralist democracy"¹². It is generally believed that the credibility, efficiency and image of the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) are eroding because of the substandard performance of civil servants or of civil service agencies. On the whole, the accountability of the civil service agencies remains in a diluted and diffused state. Referring to the state of accountability in the government of Bangladesh, the World Bank, in its study report titled *Government That Works* published in 1996, remarks: "The chain of accountability stretching from the parliament to the peon is weak and fuzzy."¹³ Faulty decisions, delayed implementation, poor quality of training, waste, low productivity, environmental degradation, uncontrolled terrorism, arbitrariness, corruption, and nepotism have weakened the civil service agencies and these are linked with the problems of their performance and accountability. Along with these problems, abuse of power for personal gain, delay in the disposal of business, arrogance in interpersonal conduct, improper supervision of activities are rampant. In the opinion of Khan and Siddique, elitism, centralisation of authority, corruption, lack of accountability and transparency and resistance to change are the key traits of the civil service culture in Bangladesh.¹⁴

10 Syed Naquib Muslim, "The Practice of Administrative Accountability and Good Governance: The Bangladesh Experience", a country paper presented at the workshop entitled *Commonwealth Programme on Managing Performance-oriented Public Service* held at INTAN, June 16-28, 1997. p. 1.

11 Ekramul Ahsan and Syed Naquib Muslim, "Administrative and Financial Accountability in Bangladesh", a country paper in Sirajuddin H. Salleh & Arabinda Kar, eds., *Administrative and Financial Accountability: The ASEAN-SAARC Experience*, (Asia & Pacific Development Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1995), p. 234.

12 World Bank, *Bangladesh: Government That Works*, (University Press Limited, Dhaka, 1996), p. 117.

13 Ibid., p. 58.

14 Mohammad Mohabbat Khan & Nure-Alam Siddique, "Public Administration Education and Training in Bangladesh", *Bangladesh Journal of Administration & Development*, Vol. 4, No. 2, July-December 1996,1997. p. 1.

The salaries of civil servants in Bangladesh account for 40% of the government expenditure. This implies that a huge amount of money is spent to pay for the salaries of the civil servants and therefore substantial amount of money is diverted which could otherwise be used in development sector including education and infrastructure building.¹⁵ This raises the question of accountability of the Civil Service. Administrative accountability and the problems of its practice and promotion are therefore frequently discussed in various forums such as parliamentary sessions, inter-ministerial meetings, political addresses, seminars and workshops and the media. Paradoxically enough, the importance of accountability is loudly articulated in societies where it is missing or mystified. A casual glance at the national dailies of this country confirms the initial validity of this fact. Critics are often heard to remark that civil servants are largely responsible for poor performance of the government and for the maladministration that are impeding the development process in Bangladesh. There is a general impression that inefficiency springs mainly from the non-practice of the prime governance value of accountability at various levels of the Civil Service.

According to Fulton Committee report, accountability to Parliament and the public is not a constitutional platitude; it is an integral part of the daily life of civil servants.¹⁶ A democratic government demands practice of accountability not only in politics but also in the Civil Service. With the re-emergence of a democratic government in Bangladesh in 1991, there has been an increased public pressure to improve performance of the civil servants and to make them accountable to the citizenry. Moreover, the growing complexities of social life in Bangladesh, changing needs of the citizenry and the impact of globalisation on the country's economy necessitate revision of the traditional role of the Civil Service. The citizenry demands that consistent pursuit and practice of accountability by civil servants is indispensable to gain credibility as well as to enhance image of the Civil Service which incarnates the permanent government of the country. In other words, the accountability of a civil servant to the public is unavoidable because a civil servant of today is not merely an administrator, he or she is also a social mobiliser and an agent of

15 Md. Rafiqul Islam Talukdar & Tarana Tanzin, "Thoughts on norms and values of our administration", *The Daily Star*, February 15, 2001, p. 5.

16 *The Civil Service: The Report of Committee, 1966-68* (Chairman, Lord Fulton), Vol. I, Cmd. 3638, HMSO, London, 1968, p. 9.

social development. As Bailey says: "The public servant is often a leader in the creation of a new public will, so he is in part accountable to what he in part creates."¹⁷

In dwelling upon the theme of accountability and the problems of civil service performance, the studies so far carried out in this country seem to have suggested copious but repetitive, stereotypical measures. These measures include among others modernising auditing procedures, streamlining budgetary process, reforming the judicial system, strengthening parliamentary oversight, installing the office of the Ombudsman, revising macro-economic policies and so on. The psychosocial dimensions of accountability have however not received elaborate treatment. The broad objectives of this thesis are, therefore, to identify the problems or issues that have hitherto remained unaddressed or unfolded and to suggest how these problems can be overcome without affording massive financial expenditure on the part of the government. More specifically, this study has been designed –

- i) to demystify the notion of accountability and to justify its importance in enhancing the quality of civil service performance in Bangladesh;
- ii) to identify the forces or factors that affect the practice, enforcement and promotion of accountability in the Bangladesh Civil Service;
- iii) to suggest a cluster of core professional values and a Code of Ethics necessary for a new administrative culture and for building a citizens-friendly civil service in Bangladesh;
- iv) to identify the weaknesses in the design and delivery system of the civil service training;
- v) to review the existing performance appraisal system in the Civil Service and suggest an alternative performance appraisal format; and
- vi) to recommend a few doable strategies for the solution of the identified problems in the civil service performance so that a responsive and accountable civil service system in Bangladesh can be installed.

An extensive literature survey has been carried out to demystify the abstract, elusive and nebulous concept of accountability, to clarify its ramifications and to figure out its conceptual and operational linkage with efficiency and credibility of the Civil Service. The thrust of this thesis is promotion of micro-level accountability based on the assumption that

¹⁷ Stephen K. Bailey, "Ethics and the Public Service", in Robert T. Golembiewsky's *Public Administration*, (Rand McNally & Company, 1966). p. 23.

micro-level accountability ultimately affects or reinforces macro-level accountability. After all the system of civil service in Bangladesh is the conglomeration of multiple agencies or bodies whose higher echelons are occupied by the members of 28 cadres which altogether constitute a unified civil service, namely the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS)¹⁸. The BCS consisting of these 28 cadres excludes non-cadre officers, supervisory and support staff (Class II, III and IV employees) and managers and support staff of parastatals (state-owned enterprises) numbering almost a million. For more details on the system of the civil service in Bangladesh, see Chapter 3.

The BCS (Administration) is considered the most important cadre among the twenty-eight BCS cadres referred to above. As of December 2002, it comprised 4166 officers and the twenty-eight cadres altogether comprised 38,958 members¹⁹. The members of the Administration cadre have been singled out as the focal target group for this study. The selection of this group is purposive as well as expedient because the researcher himself belongs to the BCS Administrative cadre. He has had the chance to experience or observe closely the conduct of the members of BCS Administration in the capacity of a field level civil servant and as a civil service trainer at Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC) and Bangladesh Civil Service (Administration) Academy. These two are considered the most important of all the civil service training institutions in the country.

18 It should be noted here that until 2000 the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) comprised 29 cadres. In that year the Supreme Court Appellate Division, while disposing of an appeal preferred by the government arising out of the Secretary, Ministry of Finance V. Masdar Hossain case, issued certain directions and declarations meant for the government. Part of such directions and declarations reads: "It is declared that the judicial service is a service of the Republic within the meaning of Article 152(1) of the Constitution, but it is a functionally and structurally distinct and separate service from the civil executive and administrative services of the Republic with which the judicial service cannot be placed on par on any account and that it cannot be amalgamated, abolished, replaced, mixed up and tied together with the civil executive and administrative services". Implied in this declaration was actually a directive asking the government to create a judicial service separate from the BCS comprising the members of the existing BCS judicial cadre and place it exclusively under the control of the Supreme Court. For more details about the Secretary, Ministry of Finance V. Masdar Hossain case, see Kazi Ebadul Hoque, *Administration of Justice in Bangladesh* (Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Dhaka, 2003), pp. 199-98, 279-82. The government has already initiated a process to constitute a separate judicial service in compliance with this directive. In the meantime a separate body called Bangladesh Judicial Service Commission has been constituted to recruit members of the newly constituted judicial service and advise the Supreme Court on matters relating to the administration and control of such service.

19 For more details on the size of the civil service in Bangladesh including the BCS, see A.M.M. Shawkat Ali, *Bangladesh Civil Service: A Political-Administrative Perspective*, (University Press Limited, Dhaka, 2004), pp. 195-196; Syed Giasuddin Ahmed, "Improving Public Administration Efficiency: The Tasks Ahead", in Abul Kalam, ed., *Bangladesh in the New Millennium*, (University Press Limited, Dhaka, 2004), pp. 141-142.

Another rationale for selecting this segment of the Civil Service is that the functions performed by the members of BCS Administration are of general nature. As generalist civil servants they are to work in close proximity with the elected public representatives as well as the members of the citizenry who seek almost regularly the basic social services that concern their day-to-day civic life.

The researcher must admit his long experiences as a trainer at BPATC and BCS (Administration) Academy and then his assignment as Deputy Commissioner in the capital district (i.e., Dhaka) and as Deputy Secretary/Joint Secretary in the Bangladesh Secretariat did provide him a useful heuristic base. For such experiences/positions proved truly enlightening and rewarding as to develop a few precepts and principles of administrative management, and to validate some of the old and extant theories and concepts on team-building, coordination, leadership, values and ethics that influence considerably in promoting quality performance and thus in achieving accountability in the Civil Service. Throughout the span of this study, the researcher's role has been that of a participant observer having chance to interact intimately and share views with the members of the BCS (Administration) at all levels.

Much of the content in this thesis might appear philosophically and conceptually in place. In fact, the researcher has been able to develop some of the concepts himself basing on his personal on-the-job experiences and observations. Based on long fifteen-year experience as a civil service trainer at the top training institutions and five-year experience as a field administrator as well as a practitioner, the researcher has been able to suggest an array of theories and principles on the psycho-social or socio-emotional dimensions of administration. These include ethics, values, coordination, teamwork and leadership among others and to which extensive references have been made while highlighting the performance issues of the civil servants of this country. While much use is made of the primary and secondary data, personal observations, perceptions and experiences of the researcher also support the contents of the chapters in the thesis. In addition to the personal views and experiences, opinions and perceptions have been gathered from the civil servants at all levels through informal, unobtrusive discussions, consultations and interviews.

The focus of the study has been more on the normative dimensions and socio-emotional aspects than on the legal facets of the civil service accountability in Bangladesh. In other words, the seminal part of the work is the discussion on the professional values and ethics that seem to have not been internalised so far by the Bangladeshi civil servants in operational context. Qualitative data about the perceived role of civil servants and the problems in redeeming their professional mandates in the context of the fast changing environment have been obtained through informal interviews with respondents of different categories. These respondents include entry-, mid- and senior-level active and retired civil servants, civil service trainees, academics, university teachers, relevant officials of international aid-giving agencies, and important members of the business community. Formal interviews were deliberately avoided to elicit natural or spontaneous responses from the interviewees. Assumptions, observations, remarks and facts about civil servants and civil service have been drawn from the study of leading national dailies, standard books, available reports of the Reform Commissions/Committees and research journals. In addition, views and perspectives of responsible members of the citizenry on civil service problems published in leading national dailies, weeklies and journals have been collected and used.

The study is in fact an exploratory as well as a qualitative one based mostly on secondary data and partly on official data. In order to grasp the issues of performance appraisal system and civil service training, annual confidential reports and training course brochures have been reviewed. The researcher had the chance to work as Deputy Secretary in the Confidential Reports and Career Planning (CR/CP) unit of the Ministry of Establishment and this enabled him to gain access to a bunch of annual confidential reports prepared and submitted by officers at different levels. A sample of randomly selected 150 respondents were interviewed to generate data about their perceptions on the conduct, values and attitude of the supervising officers and also their views and suggestions about the efficacy of the existing performance appraisal format known as annual confidential report (ACR) in Bangladesh.

Civil service trainers and trainees were consulted to gather perceptions, observations about the significance of training in improving performance and about the problems or

weaknesses in delivering quality-training services to the civil servants. While working at BPATC as a trainer and examiner, the researcher had the access to various reports such as term papers, syndicate reports and seminar papers prepared by the civil servant-participants of the core and career development courses of BPATC. This enabled him to cull insightful observations, to share views and perceptions and thoughtful discussions and experiential deliberations of the trainee-officers on the problems of civil service performance and accountability and their solutions.

The researcher has also probed how the civil servants are trained in Bangladesh recognizing that imparting proper training is an effective strategy to improve their performance. The training curricula of two top training organizations have been particularly reviewed to identify the strengths and weaknesses thereof. These are BPATC's career development courses such as Foundation Course, Advanced Course on Administration and Development (ACAD) and Senior Staff Course (SSC), and BCS Administration Academy's five-month mandatory departmental training course entitled "Law and Administration Course" (see Chapters IX and X).

Amplifying the conceptual setting of a study like the present one presupposes that a cluster of administrative values is identified and then put into practice to make the civil service ideally functional in the context of a country's democratic administration. The technique of cognitive mapping has been used to ensure this and to build a conceptual framework for identifying the core values that can be commonly applicable to all members of all the cadres of the BCS on the basis of perceived professional needs of the country's civil service. These core values are commonly applicable to all the segments of government because they relate to the generic core competencies required of the civil service members in playing their assigned role with efficiency and credibility.

The thesis comprises twelve chapters including this introductory chapter (i.e., Chapter-I). Chapter-II seeks to demystify the conceptual facets of the notion 'accountability'. After clarifying, discussing and illustrating this and several other notions relied on repeatedly in the remainder of the study, the chapter projects a 'professionalism-performance-accountability linkage'. The objective is to amplify the theoretical setting of the rest of the study. Chapter-III seeks to re-invent the role of Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) in the backdrop of democratic governance in Bangladesh. From the perspective of national

development and welfare, the members of the Civil Service are expected to nurture a common vision, shared understanding and shared concerns. Unfortunately, Bangladesh has been running as a nation without a coherent, codified *vision* since its independence. In the absence of a national vision, the people, the civil servants and the politicians have remained in a state of confusion or ambivalence; they have not been able to determine where the nation is going and where to channelise the human resources. The successive governments in Bangladesh have however failed to formulate, codify and declare any coherent 'vision statement' to be commonly internalised by all members of the BCS cadres. An attempt has been made in this chapter to formulate a clear, brief and simple vision statement in the light of constitutional provisions, national goals and social values similar to what have been done by some of the newly industrialized Southeast Asian countries, namely Malaysia, Korea and Singapore. Framing a national vision is important because such a vision statement provides the prime source of guidance and direction from which administrative strategies, code of ethics, performance standards, training programmes for civil servants can be drawn.

In Chapter-IV an attempt has been made to provide an overview of the public perception about the quality of Civil Service performance. Efforts have also been made to identify the types or patterns of behaviours that influence negatively the quality of administrative performance and that are hindering achievement of a high degree of overall institutional accountability. Understandably, some dispositions are dysfunctional and these ostensibly interfere with success in performance.

Chapter-V is the seminal part of this thesis, which emphasises the need for internalisation of a cluster of common civil service values and suggests a new professional Code of Ethics. With the re-emergence of democracy in Bangladesh in 1991, civil servants are expected to acquire, to practise and to nurture a cluster of common professional values so that they can achieve the national vision and exercise powers in their day-to-day work responsibly. There has been a serious erosion in the morale and morality of the civil servants of Bangladesh since independence. Existence of *The Government Servants' Conduct Rules* and the anti-corruption laws have not been able to contribute to improving the performance and ethical conduct of officers. One of the reasons is that there has been no formal declaration or codification of a set of common civil service values. To install a depoliticised, decolonised and citizen-centric civil service, internalisation and practice of a

new set of civil service values are essential side by side with the enforcement of extant laws, rules and procedures. The twelve core operating values suggested in this chapter are -- *accountability, transparency, responsiveness, equity, the public interest, the rule of law, probity, austerity, innovation, civility; neutrality and efficiency*. These values will expectedly provide a spiritual/normative framework and foster moral force in the civil servants. In tune with the suggested values and considering the prospects of their enforceability, a handy, easily comprehensible and pragmatic *Code of Ethics for the Civil Service* has also been suggested in this chapter. Chapter-VI suggests a set of strategies on how to achieve the proposed civil service values. These include wide publicity of the values, modeling by the senior, oath-taking by the civil servants, developing an exclusive training package on ethics, revision of the existing performance appraisal format, introduction of Citizen's Charter and rationalization of the existing compensation/incentive package in the Civil Service.

A key element in the creation of performance management framework of the Civil Service is the practice of an objective performance appraisal system. Keeping this imperative in view, Chapter-VII discusses the inherent pitfalls of the existing performance appraisal system in the BCS. The existing performance appraisal system (PAS) is dysfunctional as it focuses more on personality traits than on performance indicators; there is no mechanism to measure the results or output or productivity of an officer. This chapter suggests a new appraisal format aimed at enforcing true accountability of the BCS officers. A new format inclusive of a monthly work plan as an important component has been suggested to make the appraisal system objective and performance-oriented. To make the PAS truly functional, it has been linked with training needs assessment (TNA) and on-the-job training (OJT). The new proposed format will be known as Performance Review and Improvement Plan (PRIP). It will enable officers to focus their efforts on achieving results which matter. The system will help them improve their full potentials so that they can assume higher responsibilities. It has been observed that senior-junior relations influence significantly in improving the quality of performance of an agency. The success of OJT which is a complementary device to institutional training relies substantially on the development of a healthy senior-junior relations. Performance appraisal has to be functionally linked with on-the-job training. OJT has to be institutionalized and facilities

for in-house training have to be created in every civil service agency to keep the wheel of training running round the year.

Chapter-VIII suggests a partial shift from the traditional bureaucratic paradigm to organisation development (OD) framework as a strategy for modifying the mindset of the traditional civil servants and for improving performance at each echelon of civil service agencies. Today the Civil Services everywhere are moving away from the traditional hierarchical structures and are leaning consciously towards team-based structures and development of leadership at all levels of the hierarchy. Mal-coordination at the individual and institutional levels, absence of team spirit, lack of collegiality in interpersonal conduct, leadership gaps at various levels are impeding growth of innovation and quality decisions at the civil service offices. This thesis suggests a paradigmatic shift from the traditional work style and application of Organisation Development (OD) concepts in the Civil Service offices in a planned fashion. A massive orientation on OD and inculcation of the value of the public interest through training intervention have been suggested to bring about a transformation in the traditional mindset and work style of the civil servants.

The existing civil service training system is characterized by improperly assessed training needs, ill-designed curricula, use of traditional training methods, absence of post-training evaluation practices, unstable leadership, undeveloped and unstable faculty and apathy of civil servants towards training. All these constrain the growth of true professionalism of the civil servants creating adverse impact on their performance and affecting quality of service delivery. A number of measures have been suggested in Chapter-IX to streamline the existing training delivery system of BPATC; measures include rationalization of training curricula based on properly assessed needs, discipline-specific professionalisation of faculty, use of modern participatory training methods and prevention of training encapsulation through reward system. What is most required is to build competence and commitment in the civil servants so that they are able to fulfill the national as well as the civil service vision as suggested in this document. As training, institutional and on-the-job, contributes significantly to improving performance and accountability, an exclusive discussion has been devoted to identify the problems or issues in the design and delivery of institutional and on-the-job training in the BCS.

Chapter XI seeks to identify the major political constraints or exogenous factors impeding achievement and promotion of accountability in the Civil Service. Even if all the measures or proposals as suggested in this document are implemented, achieving accountability of civil servants still remains problematic or precarious because of a few exogenous factors that pose as major roadblocks on their performance. Two of the major constraints that appear formidable are --i) political interference in the administration of the Civil Service and ii) politicisation of the Civil Service. Most of the civil servants are heard to complain or grumble about the growing unwarranted political interference in the day-to-day affairs of administration. The elected public representatives have grown a tendency to interfere in the normal functions of the civil servants and they tend to give priority to personal or party interest over the national interest. These political behaviours sap the moral strength of the honest and committed civil servants who intend to work in the public interest. In addition to this, there has been a visible trend of politicisation of bureaucracy in Bangladesh. The value of political neutrality or non-partisanship has been affected causing performance problems in the Civil Service. Politicisation is affecting the total civil service performance because officers with overt or covert political affiliation are favoured with powerful decision-making positions in the government whereas neutral, efficient and honest officers are often being marginalised creating demotivation in them.

Finally, Chapter-XII concludes this study by recapitulating some of the main civil service management issues and problems treated in the previous chapters. In Bangladesh, the process of politicisation goes unchecked because the citizenry has not yet grown capacity and courage to resist injustice, discrimination and deprivation arising out of a politicised bureaucracy. It is ultimately a responsible, informed, and conscientious citizenry who can control the malpractices and caprices of the greedy politicians and can act as a built-in guarantee against abuse of power, arbitrariness, unrefined conduct and increasing politicisation of civil servants. In fact, accountability cannot be established in an isolated way; accountability has to be perceived as a part of a total system. The people are not immune from their own accountability as accountability cannot be seen as an island by itself. They must exercise their rights and privileges responsibly for the sake of the common benefit and national interest. They must not vote for the unscrupulous leaders who tend to grab power using their ill-gotten money and resorting to 'cadre politics'. What

is therefore required is that people must get empowered and set up a strong civic culture through a comprehensive civic education overcoming inequity, injustice, arbitrariness to secure a credible Civil Service for Bangladesh. A truly professionalised media and an honest politico-administrative leadership have an influential role to play in this regard. This chapter also includes comments of the researcher in the form of suggestions emphasising in particular the role of an empowered and responsible citizenry to ensure an accountable, citizen-centric civil service and a people-oriented politics in the country. Hopefully the role of a responsible citizenry would be instrumental in overcoming those major exogenous factors that impede practice, achievement and promotion of accountability in the Bangladesh Civil Service.

Chapter II

ACCOUNTABILITY: DEMYSTIFYING THE CONCEPT AND DRAWING A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The Civil Service constitutes the major segment of the Bangladesh bureaucracy and the members of the Civil Service form a discrete class assigned with a definite role or a set of responsibilities. The quality of the performance of the civil servants relies much on establishing their accountability at all levels. Accountability is a concept that is widely discussed nowadays in various forums but the term seems not clearly intelligible to the actors as well as to the clientele. The term that construes itself to be a functional value is considered so important to the promotion of civil service efficiency that it is imperative for both administrators and politicians to appreciate or understand what this notion really means. Hence the concept of accountability has to be clarified properly before one is expected to perform his/her responsibility and is made accountable. In other words, if accountability is not properly conceptualised in functional terms, its practice or application is likely to be hampered leaving impact on the total performance of the government. As Maheshwari puts it: "At present, accountability has been greatly devalued and has not been finely tuned. As a result, the public functionaries are not taking decisions or are given to procrastination and delay and their actions pass undetected and unfinished"¹.

An attempt has therefore been made in this chapter to clarify the conceptual facets of the notion 'accountability'. After clarifying, discussing and illustrating this and several other notions relied on repeatedly in the remainder of the study, the chapter projects a 'professionalism-performance-accountability linkage'. The objective is to amplify the theoretical setting of the rest of the study. The discussions throughout are in place in three main sections which exclude this introductory note. First, the terms 'accountability' and 'responsibility' are clarified in order to remove confusions that seem to have been persisting among practitioners and academics alike over their use.

1 S.R. Maheshwari, *A Dictionary of Public Administration*, (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2002), p. 6.

Secondly, the conceptual framework of the study is amplified. Finally, the linkages among three main functional values, namely professionalism, performance, and accountability, are pinpointed in the third and last section. However, the remainder of this introductory note includes more of conceptual clarification of the term 'accountability'.

As concepts accountability and power seem to be abstract and difficult to define. As Kanter says: "It is easier to talk about money-and much easier to talk about sex-than it is talk about power."² What Kanter speaks of power perhaps equally applies to accountability. Accountability is a fuzzy and elusive concept; it is easy to pronounce or preach but difficult to define and practise; 'if it is easy to begin, it is difficult to sustain'. One may however humorously say, 'as we do not need an exact meaning of the universe to sense its existence, we do not likewise require a precise definition of accountability to appreciate its significance'. Self considers the meaning of accountability 'puzzling' and 'uncertain'³. Day and Klein hold the view that: "if there is a great deal of interest in accountability, there is also a great deal of confusion about what this chameleon word means"⁴. Thus before discussing the issue of accountability in the Civil Service, it is perhaps justified to clarify the theoretical dimensions of this notion. A correct perception of accountability will enable civil servants to practise this important value and in turn will enable them to achieve efficiency, professionalism, for themselves as well as credibility for the government.

In the context of organisations, accountability is the obligation of a subordinate individual or institution to answer to the supervising individual or institution for the performance of the responsibility assigned and the use of the authority delegated to him/it. Thus accountability is a relational concept that presupposes the existence of two interrelated parties - the *principal* who/which assigns responsibility and the *agent* who/which accepts it. As Peters observes: "Responsibility and accountability imply a pair of actors"⁵. The individual or institution accepting responsibility has the obligation to report on or to answer for his or her its performance to the supervising

2 Rosabeth Moss Kanter, "Power Failure in Management Circuits" in Fred A. Kramer, ed., *Perspectives in Public Bureaucracy*, (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1981), p. 214

3 Peter Self, *Administrative Theories and Politics*, (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1972), p. 278.

4 Patricia Day & Rudolf Klein, *Accountabilities: Five Public Services*, (London: Tavistock, 1987), p. 1.

5 Guy Peters, *The Politics of Bureaucracy*, (New York: Longman, 1984), p. 265.

individual or institution according to the pre-determined requirements. Dwivedi who is noted for his new concept of administrative theology seems paradoxically conventional in his definition of accountability. In his views, accountability is “a viable instrument of control which can be operational to the extent that public servants have authority commensurate with their responsibility, acceptable measures of performance evaluation are utilized, results of evaluations are communicated both to the seniors and to the person concerned, appropriate, equitable and timely measures are enforced in response to results achieved and the manner in which they are achieved.”⁶ According to Lello, accountability “involves reporting to other people voluntarily or compulsorily. It means having a conscience or a moral responsibility about what you are doing”⁷. In the words of Famularo accountability is “the obligation of the public servants to answer to their superiors in respect of their responsibilities and to account for utilisation of public resources, public time and authority delegated to perform and produce as expected.”⁸ Almost the same features are echoed by Kernaghan and Langford when they view accountability as “the obligation (of public officials) to answer for the fulfillment of assigned and accepted duties within the framework of the authority.”⁹ From these definitional clarifications, thus, the ingredients of accountability may be identified as :

- *performance* of assigned *responsibility* according to the set standards/ criteria and achievement of results;
- proper *use* or exercise of delegated *authority*; and
- prudent *use* of entrusted *resources*.

Responsibility and Accountability

'Responsibility' and 'accountability' are not synonymous or interchangeable terms, although they are indivisibly linked. In fact, responsibility and accountability are the two sides of the same skin. Responsibility is the job or role a person is expected to perform. An individual or institution cannot be held accountable unless a specific

6 O. P. Dwivedi quoted in Aslam Iqbal's key-note address published in Sirajuddin H. Salleh & Arabinda Kar, (eds.), *Administrative and Financial Accountability: The ASEAN-SAAR Experience*, (Asia & Pacific Development Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1995), p. 54.

7 John Lello, *Accountability in Practice*, (London: Cassell, 1993), p. 1.

8 J. J. Famularo, *Handbook of Human Resources Administration* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1987), p. 3.

9 K. Kernaghan and F. W. Langford quoted by Patricia A Sto Tomas in the country paper of the Philippines, in Sirajuddin H. Salleh & Arabinda Kar, eds., *Administrative and Financial Accountability: The ASEAN-SAARC Experience*, (Asia & Pacific Development Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1995), p. 171.

responsibility is assigned to him or her. The question of accountability arises when a responsibility is performed, not a responsibility anticipated or contemplated. Responsibility presupposes ability to perform and authority to act. When responsibility is clear and authority is matched with responsibility, officials can be asked to account for performing that responsibility, for exercising the authority delegated to them and for using the resources entrusted to them. As Kanter rightly points out: "Accountability with power--responsibility for results without the resources to get them--creates frustration and failure."¹⁰ No one can be held accountable for that over which he or she has no authority¹¹.

Accountability is answerability for achieving the expected results of the assigned responsibility. Accountability presupposes performance of responsibility, standards to be met and readiness to explain the conduct. Thus the process of accountability begins with the *performance* of a predetermined set of responsibilities and ends with justification or *explanation*. Accountability has two major dimensions --- internal and external. Internal accountability exists within the organisation itself; at each level officials remain accountable to those who are at the top hierarchy i.e. who supervise their work. Internal accountability can be promoted by introducing new work processes and by creating new role relationships under direct supervision of an official or unit. External accountability is the obligation to give answers and explanations to bodies or the clientele outside the focal organisation.¹²

In answer to the question how accountability should be perceived in the context of the Civil Service, Hamid states: "Accountability in the Civil Service means being answerable to the public to its clients, and to the political authorities in line with the dictates of relevant laws and regulations".¹³ Depending on the hierarchical character of responsibility, every civil servant is delegated certain amount of authority. The more power is concentrated in civil servants, the greater is the need for safeguarding against its potential abuse. In other words, assignment of authority to a civil servant

10 Rosabeth Moss Kanter, "Power Failure in Management Circuits", in Fred A. Kramer (ed.), *Perspectives in Public Bureaucracy*, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1981), p. 215.

11 O. Glenn Stahl, *Public Personnel Administration*, (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983), pp. 375-376.

12 For more details on the processes of accountability, see Stahl, *ibid.*, pp. 375-78; S. R. Maheshwari, *A Dictionary of Public Administration*, (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2002), pp. 1-11.

13 Ahmed Sarji Bin Abdul Hamid, *The Civil Service of Malaysia*, (Kuala Lumpur: The Government of Malaysia, 1996), p. 9.

must be accompanied by a corresponding degree of accountability. Proper use of authority and public resources cannot be left to the unguarded intent of civil servants as well as of politicians; accountability therefore puts a restraint on the whims and caprices of civil servants and impels them to fulfil respective obligations practising the set rules, standards and values¹⁴.

Absence of accountability gives rise to widespread corruption and maladministration; consequently citizens are deprived of their legitimate rights and privileges. In the words of John Lello: "When an organisation ceases to be accountable, it is signing its death warrant"¹⁵. In an accountable civil service, all kinds of discrimination, arbitrariness and discretion are kept in abeyance. Thus in the absence of accountability in the civil service—

- i) the quality of performance is affected;
- ii) the incidence of corruption, arbitrariness and discrimination increases;
- iii) people lose confidence in civil servants as well as political leaders; and
- iv) the cleavage between the citizenry and the Civil Service is widened.

Because of the growing complexity of administrative as well as political functions, the principle of accountability seems to go beyond the conventional meaning of mere sanctions against non-compliance of the prescribed rules and procedures; accountability additionally conveys the absence of non-performance of the assigned responsibilities as well as improper behaviour in that due recognition is also given to efficiency and effectiveness in discharging one's fiduciary responsibilities.¹⁶ The civil servant's job everywhere is often unpredictable. As a French police official remarked: "a civil servant's job is precarious"¹⁷. In a situation of emergency or urgency, our civil servants in most cases cannot act proactively; they feel shaky in making timely decisions as they apprehend that they may be held accountable for applying discretion or for acting in a way that apparently goes beyond the existing rules or procedures. But civil servants are not lifeless paws; they have to devise remedies, make contingent plans to deal with unforeseen situations and when the existing laws and rules do not

14 See Maheshwari, *ibid.*

15 John Lello, *Accountability in Practice*, (London: Cassell, 1993). p. 89.

16 Abdullah Abdul Rahman, country paper of Malaysia, in Sirajuddin H. Salleh & Arabinda Kar, eds., *Administrative and Financial Accountability: The ASEAN-SAARC Experience*, (Asia & Pacific Development Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1995), p. 147.

cover they handle them by using discretion, which is considered '*individualised justice*'. All the activities they are involved in cannot always be put within the frame of laws and rules and these may not help them readily to regulate their performance or to guide their conduct. Thus they have to exercise discretion as the only tool in performing their unscheduled responsibilities.

Today innovation is considered one of the parameters of efficiency for a government that faces scarcity of resources in terms of finance and expert workforce. Innovative decisions are required to be taken to handle unpredictable crises or emergencies. But if and when discretionary powers are abused, injustice finds an easy access. It is the prevailing administrative value system and the code of ethics that ultimately guide civil servants to apply discretion rationally or judiciously.

Conceptual Framework for the Study

In the traditional civil service, accountability as a functional value becomes operational drawing on the civil servants' relationship with politicians in power who in turn remain accountable to the electorate; in this model civil servants are not directly responsible to the citizenry. In the new civil service, accountability exists in civil servants' relationship with supervising officials, with the political leadership and with the citizenry. The role of citizens (clients) in the civil service is parallel to that of the customers in the private sector. Therefore, a client focus should be added as a new dimension to the traditional accountability paradigm. Client focus brings citizens and civil servants in a zone of an intimate interaction through responsiveness, access, and participation.

In the new paradigm, there are two principals --- *politicians* and *the public*; civil servants are *agents*. Civil servants as agents are on the supply side and citizens as principals remain on the demand side. New civil service operating under a democratic politics allows for direct accountability of civil servants to citizens, their greater responsiveness to the legitimate needs of the citizens and their visibility of performance and results. Here civil servants themselves are accountable to the citizenry for their

17 Words of a police officer cited in George E. Berkley, *The Craft of Public Administration*, (London: Allyn & Becon, 1978), p. 249.

performance as well as for the agencies they work for. However, the accountability of supervisors who represent the public sector agencies remains in question.

In Bangladesh, volumes of laws and rules are in vogue to enforce accountability of civil servants and/or government officials. To ensure full practice of accountability by officials, this value has to be both imposed and induced. Laws, rules and procedures are evolved to impose accountability on officials whereas values and ethics are created to induce it. Thus an ethical civil service is an accountable civil service because ethical principles and standards ultimately guide or govern the activities of civil servants as of others.¹⁸ Experience of three decades of the Civil Service in Bangladesh suggests that the profusion or proliferation of restrictive but well-intentioned rules and procedures have not been able to carve out an ethical base in the minds of civil servants; these have rather engendered a risk avoidance culture in the majority of the civil service members. The conventional rules and procedures often strangle the spontaneous initiative and responsiveness of those people-oriented civil servants who intend to work with genuine commitment for serving the public interest. Thus in addition to compliance with rules and procedures, psychic consistency and professional commitment to mandated responsibilities to be shaped through internalisation and practice of a cluster of identified values and a code of ethics need to be incorporated as complementary parameters into the spectrum of accountability. Real sense of accountability generates from within as accountability is fundamentally a psychic process and mental discipline that induces a civil servant to perform the assigned responsibilities unobtrusively and spontaneously.¹⁹ The meaning of accountability is, therefore, much more than a mere regulatory requirement; accountability is intrinsically a state of mind and a matter of attitude to be maintained or nurtured by officials at all levels. There is always a moral content in the professional discharge of duties. Unless the moral is kept strong in the performance of responsibilities, the impact or outcome will be less than satisfactory. Moral force springing from moral values flows direct from the conscience that prompts a civil servant to ask himself or herself — 'Am I using the entrusted authority and the public resources judiciously or in the public interest'? Thus with the revision in the role of the civil service is needed the identification of appropriate professional values, a code

18 Syed Naquib Muslim, "Promoting accountability in civil service: Role of ethics", *The Independent*, May 8, 1995. p. 4.

19 Syed Naquib Muslim, "Training for Accountability in Civil Service", *The Bangladesh Observer*, April 28, 1992. p. 4.

of ethics, a healthy work/organisational culture and acquisition of new professionalism to improve civil service performance and accountability.

Accountability is the kingpin of a democratic administration; it is a core democratic value which cannot be institutionalised without establishing a democratic culture in politics as well as in administration.²⁰ Both accountability and democracy are prerequisites of good governance. Democratic culture is built on a set of specific values equally applicable in administration and in politics. Democracy always demands "publicness" from every activity and thought of administrators and politicians; it creates and nurtures those values that meet public good or welfare. The essential democratic values are *accountability, transparency, responsiveness, equity, public interest, the rule of law, integrity, and neutrality*. If these values are internalised and practised by civil servants, politicians, and the citizenry, a democratic culture can be truly installed. Figure-1 illustrates the conceptual framework through diagrammatic representation.

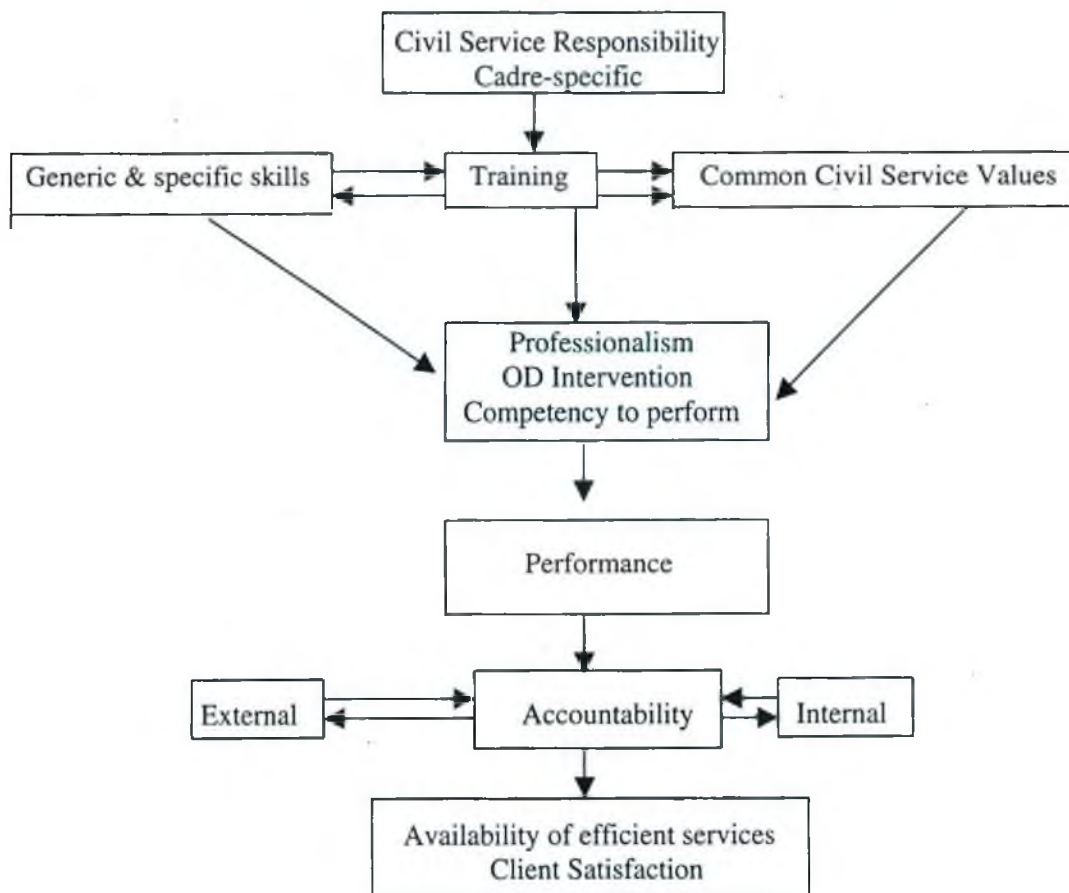


Figure-1: Schematic Representation of the Conceptual Framework

20 Syed Naquib Muslim, "Towards a new professionalism in the civil service", *The Independent*, May 15, 1995, p.4

With the emergence of democracy in Bangladesh, civil servants need to acquire, practise and nurture a cluster of distinct administrative values so that they can exercise their powers responsibly. The benchmark of a democratic administration is that both politicians and civil servants remain responsive to the value of *the public interest* and are accountable to the public (the electorate or the ratepayers) directly or indirectly for their policies, decisions, actions and conduct.

Professionalism-Performance-Accountability Linkage

The Civil Service in all countries is no place for adhocism, amateurism and mediocrity. A pool of professionalised officials is required to conduct the affairs of the public sector agencies efficiently. The opposite of professionalism is amateurish approach that does not help in solving complex problems. Good performance is not dependent on chance, guesswork or on common sense. In fact, efficient performance of civil servants is linked to the acquisition of professionalism. A professionalised civil servant updates himself or herself regularly, works in an ethical manner and assures high quality performance to his or her clients who approach his or her office on genuine cause. The significance of professionalism lies in the fact that a genuinely professionalised civil servant is likely to become an accountable person²¹.

It is commonly believed that civil servants are accountable to the extent that they are legally required to answer for their actions. From the citizens' perspective, accountability of civil servants is confined not only to the legality of their actions but also the manner by which they redeem their professional obligations. This involves the practice of professional values and standards of conduct. Values are an essential ingredient of professionalism in all services. Through a process of professionalisation, civil servants have to acquire a set of professional values that can create in them a sense of accountability. The Fulton Committee stressed the need of civil servants for training to upgrade their skills so that they can undertake greater responsibilities from time to time²². Both 'institutional training' and 'on-the-job' training, leadership by examples, supportive supervision contribute to the growth of professionalism of civil

21 Howard E. McCurdy, *Public Administration: A Synthesis*, (London: Cummings Publishing Company, 1977), pp. 121-26.

servants. Professionalism demands that quality institutional training and intimately supervised on-the-job training by competent seniors are administered to build capability of the junior so that they are able to perform responsibilities efficiently. Moreover, a new professionalism needs to be acquired by civil servants so that they can play a new role in the context of the democratic administration, the emerging growth of the market economy and the private sector, globalisation and fast growing information technology²³.

Improved performance contributes to the achievement of accountability. As traditional methods have become dysfunctional because of the change in the governance process, alternative approaches are required in order to improve performance. As Aacy states: "Civil service is the worst system unless you contemplate the alternatives"²⁴. The quality of civil service performance relies on the improvement of the operative conditions of several factors that seem to have remained persistently procedural as well as processual. Absence of these factors accounts for substandard or poor performance of civil servants. The author has the assumption that the application of Organisation Development (OD) paradigm, although it will be initially difficult, will contribute significantly in improving the motivation of a vast majority of civil servants and the quality of the overall civil service performance. OD is based on a value-loaded approach that encourages full and free communication climate in organisations. More specifically, OD represents to be a major approach to administration based on the application of behavioural science theories and techniques to practical administrative problems. OD interventions are generally conducted under the guidance of a management consultant who works to improve the ability of the focal organisation and its members to solve problems and respond to rapid change primarily by developing a more collaborative work environment and by improving the capacity of people to work together in groups²⁵. Through its application, democratic values that are absent in the traditional civil services like Bangladesh may be

22 *The Civil Service: The Report of the Committee, 1966-68*, vol. 1, Cmd. 3638, (Chairman:, Lord Fulton),(London: HMSO, 1968), p. 36.

23 *Ibid.*, p. 18.

24 John W. Aacy quoted in T.N Chaturvedi's essay entitled "Dimensions of Administrative Performance and Accountability", in Prem Kumar and A K Ghosh, eds., *Management in Government & Public Services*, (New Delhi: Anmol Publications, 1992), p. 38.

25 Howard E. McCurdy, *Public Administration: A Synthesis*, (London: Cummings Publishing Company, 1977), pp. 268-295.

introduced in the existing administrative milieu if the members of the Civil Service are trained how to work in a team in their respective organisations. Moreover, its application will also enable the civil servants to develop leadership qualities and skills to assume higher responsibilities. In the process, the quality of services will improve and the innocent service-seeking citizenry will derive maximal satisfaction.

Chapter III

RE-INVENTING THE BANGLADESH CIVIL SERVICE : NEED FOR NEW PROFESSIONALISM AND PARADIGM SHIFT

This chapter traces the genesis and development of the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) and seeks to ascertain how the role of the BCS has been transformed with the change of the socio-economic scenario in this country since 1971. It concludes with suggesting the vision of Bangladesh as a nation and also the vision of the Bangladesh Civil Service. The content throughout is in place in six main sections excluding what has been discussed in this introductory note. To begin with, however, the term 'civil service' needs to be clarified in the remainder of this note.

In generic terms, the civil service refers to a body of officials who are appointed by a government to assist the elected public representatives in formulating and implementing the public policies.¹ The term also refers to the ministries and departments within which specific aspects of government work are carried out. Normally the scope of the ministries and departments covers both the headquarters and agencies of field administration. The officials of both the headquarters and field administration agencies are called civil servants. The civil service of any country is the indispensable constituent of the government and its members represent the government in the day-to-day delivery of services to the fellow citizens. Explaining the significance of the civil service, Finer remarked: "The function of the civil service in the modern state is not only the improvement of government, without it, indeed, government itself would be impossible"². It is a tested fact that the Civil Service has no substitute. If members of the parliament are the elected public representatives, civil servants are the

1 Syed Naquib Muslim, "Improving Civil Service System", *The Bangladesh Observer*, September 3, 1990. p. 5.

2 Herman Finer, *The Theory & Practice of Modern Government*, (New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1949), p. 709.

selected public representatives; they do not voice the grievances of the public but they solve or redress them.

According to the report submitted in 1977 by the Pay and Services Commission (P&SC), (also known as Rashid Commission after the name of its Chairman, A. Rashid), in Bangladesh the term 'civil service' refers to all government functionaries except those in the defence services³. Civil servants in this country are the permanent officials of the government and do not vacate their office with the change in the government; they stay back in the office whichever is the party in power. The civil service of Bangladesh has evolved from the civil service in Pakistan, which was in turn a derivative of the system of civil service devised by the colonial British rulers in India before 1947. The term 'civil service' was first used by East India Company in India and then was introduced into England⁴. The Royal Commission on the Civil Service, 1931, defined the British Civil Service as "those servants of the Crown, other than holders of political or judicial services, who are employed in a civil capacity, and whose remuneration is paid wholly and directly out of money voted by the Parliament."⁵ However, the British rulers consciously geared the civil service in India to the prevailing environment, replication of their Home Civil Service being unsuitable. They rather relied heavily on the Mughal inheritance, retained the value system of the Mughal dynasty and modelled the administrative system on the prevailing foundations⁶. Land revenue was the focal purpose for mobilising workforce in both the systems. The civil service system was primarily exploitative and extractive in nature and it acted as the main instrument of control and domination aimed at perpetuating the British colonial rule in India and plundering the local resources to 'the mother England'⁷.

3 Cf. Government of Bangladesh (GOB), *Report of the Rashid Commission*, Part 1 - *The Service*, Vol. 1, 1977, pp. 41-51.

4 See section 56 of the Charter Act of 1793 (33 Geo. 3, c. 52), reprinted in Government of Pakistan (GOP), Ministry of Law and Parliamentary Affairs, *Constitutional Documents*, vol. 1, (Karachi, Manager of Publications, 1964), p. 134.

5 E.W. Gohen, "*The Growth of the British Civil Service*" (George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1941). p. 19.

6 Syed Giasuddin Ahmed, "A Typological Study of the State Functionaries under the Mughals", in *Asian Profile*, vol. 10, 1982, pp. 327-345.

7 B.B. Misra, *The Bureaucracy in India: An Historical Development up to 1947*, (Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1977).

The British created the Indian Civil Service that constituted the apex of the Civil Service representing the entire bureaucracy of the undivided India. The members of the Indian Civil Service were not accountable to any authority at the provincial or central level; they were directly supervised by the Secretary of State for India, a Minister of Cabinet rank in England. Control and accountability were hierarchical within the administration and were finally determined in the British capital. The British colonists of course introduced a system of accountability but that remained confined merely within fiscal matters and that aimed primarily at reduction of expenditures. They set up a patrimonial, control-oriented administration and exercised widest possible discretionary powers; they were neither responsible for nor responsive to the needs and aspirations of the common people. As Boyer remarks: "The image of the colonial administration was a high and haughty platonic guardian or mandarin, keeping order and performing routine services by deploying instruments of authority towards a passive and compliant public"⁸.

The primary attention of the Indian Civil Service was devoted to the maintenance of law and order and the enforcement of the due process of law; peace and security was to be maintained at any cost. The second principal task was the maintenance of efficiency in all administrative matters because it was believed that efficiency would ensure stability in the service delivery system and earn credibility of the government.⁹ For example, crime must be curbed; land revenue must be justly assessed and properly collected ; record of rights must be kept in order. A special characteristic of this period was that great emphasis was laid on the necessity for 'complete impartiality between man and man, community and community. The ideal of justice was very firmly held aloft before the administrator's eye'.¹⁰

After the departure of the colonial British rulers and the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947, the newly independent state of Pakistan inherited powerful state

8 William W. Boyer, *A Report on Development Administration in Bangladesh* (Dacca, Asia Foundation, 1975), p. 2.

9 Muzaffar Ahmed Chaudhury, *The Civil Service in Pakistan*, Dhaka: National Institute of Public Administration, 1969. p. 9.

10 AD Gorwala, *The Role of the Administrator, Past, Present and Future*, R.R. Kale Memorial Lecture, Gokhale Institute of Politics & Economics, 1952. p. 38.

apparatus and a disciplined civil service system. The civil servants were the natural descendants of the colonial administrators and were imbued with the orientation and value system of their predecessors. Recruited and trained in the spirit of the colonial administration, they retained their elitist character and emerged as the most powerful social force in Pakistan. Mechanisms to hold them accountable to the public were weak because of the absence of democratic practices¹¹.

Evolution of the Bangladesh Civil Service

At independence in 1971, Bangladesh inherited its perceptions, value system, legal instruments and institutional mechanisms of politico-administrative accountability from the Pakistani rulers. Initially the new government tended to emulate or replicate much of the traditional Pakistani model of the Civil Service except the meritocratic system of recruitment. Subsequently the government realised that the changed socio-economic environment prevailing in that period was not propitious for the continued dominance of an elitist civil service. The process of merit-based recruitment was suspended and the members of the political cadre were invited to assume the administrative leadership and coordination role at various echelons of the field administration. To this end recruitment was made in 1973 and district governors were appointed in 1975¹². As Bangladesh soon after its birth entered the socialist bloc, it did not reconcile itself to an over-emphasised role and aristocratic character of the civil service. The chief argument for adopting this policy was that the traditional civil service inherited from the British in India and then from Pakistan could not suit the ideology of a new country born out of a bloody war. In this situation the rigour, academic discipline and intellectual excellence that were required for recruiting officers to run the affairs of civil administration were compromised. Instead, a loyal and subservient civil service was preferred to a strong and efficient one. The political forces came to the forefront and the improperly trained civil servants could not assert their position in the decision-making

11 For detailed description on the role and power of the civil servants in Pakistan, see Henry Frank Goodnow, *The Civil Service of Pakistan*, (New York, Praeger Publishers, 1970); Charles H. Kennedy, *Bureaucracy in Pakistan*, (Karachi, Oxford University Press, 1987); Muneer Ahmed, *The Civil Servants in Pakistan*, (Karachi, Oxford University Press); Ali Ahmed, *The Role of the Higher Civil Servants in Pakistan*, (Dhaka, National Institute of Public Administration, 1968).

12 Mahbub Husain Khan, "One Hundred Years of Civil Service in Bangladesh", *Holiday*, Dhaka, May 21, 1993.

process of the government. The scenario was portrayed in the First Five Year Plan document: "It is only a political cadre with firm roots in the people and motivated by the new ideology and willing to live among the people as one of them that can mobilise the masses and transform their pattern of behaviour"¹³. Moreover, the civil servants who had their previous roots in three different governments in three countries, viz., Great Britain, India and Pakistan, had to be brought under a single classification system. Again the malice and prejudice among the members of the provincial and central service, the dormant desire of the specialist group to assume the top administrative positions in the ministries along with the generalist civil servants created ready grounds for reforms in the inherited structure of the Civil Service¹⁴.

Accordingly, a reforms committee designated as 'Administrative and Service Reorganisation Committee' (ASRC) was set up in 1972 to streamline the existing civil service system. The Committee opined that the traditional civil service system inherited from the Pakistani structure was inappropriate to meet the challenges of the present day and to fulfill the needs of the people. The civil servants lacked professionalism and they were too much class and rank-oriented¹⁵. Subsequently, on the recommendation of the Rashid Commission (1977), a unified, horizontal civil service structure based on an egalitarian philosophy, as one finds it in operation now, was created with effect from 1st September 1980. Officially, however, process of the introduction of the new system began with the establishment of a unified civil service called "Bangladesh Civil Service" or BCS effective from 1st January 1981. Initially the number of the BCS cadres and subcadres was fixed at twenty-eight, with fourteen subcadres placed under the main fourteen cadres. But, subsequently, all the fourteen 'subcadres' were designated as 'cadres', and the number of the BCS cadres has increased to twenty-nine (see Table 3.1) comprising about 39,000 class I officials as of December 2000¹⁶. It

13 Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Planning Commission, *First Five-Year Plan, 1973-78*, (Dhaka, Government Printing Press, 1973), p. 4.

14 A. M. M. Shawkat Ali, *Bangladesh Civil Service: A Political-Administrative Perspective*, (Dhaka, University Press Limited, 2004).

15 Emajuddin Ahmed, *Development Administration: Bangladesh*. (Dhaka, Centre for Administrative Studies, 1981), p. 44.

16 The government also did constitute in March 1979 an apex civil service cadre called Senior Services Pool (SSP), based on the recommendations of the Rashid Commission, prior to the creation of the twenty-eight BCS cadres/subcadres. It was actually designed to be a unified, open-structured senior executive service. But the SSP was abolished hastily, in 1989, following the protests of some civil servants against the stipulated competitive tests that were to be conducted by the PSC for selection of SSP officers. For more details on the newly introduced system of civil service in Bangladesh, see A.M.M. Shawkat Ali, 2004, *ibid.*; Syed Giasuddin Ahmed, *Public Personnel Administration in Bangladesh*, (Dhaka, University of Dhaka, 1986).

needs to be clarified that the BCS does not include a vast majority of other civilians (about one million) working in both the government and semi-government organizations as non-cadre officers, supervisory and support staff¹⁷.

Table 3. 1: List of Twenty-nine BCS Cadre Services

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1. Bangladesh Civil Service (Administration)
 2. Bangladesh Civil Service (Food)
 3. Bangladesh Civil Service (Agriculture)
 4. Bangladesh Civil Service (Forest)
 5. Bangladesh Civil Service (Fisheries)
 6. Bangladesh Civil Service (Livestock)
 7. Bangladesh Civil Service (General Education)
 8. Bangladesh Civil Service (Technical Education)
 9. Bangladesh Civil Service (Economic)
 10. Bangladesh Civil Service (Trade)
 11. Bangladesh Civil Service (Statistical)
 12. Bangladesh Civil Service (Public Works)
 13. Bangladesh Civil Service (Public Health Engineering)
 14. Bangladesh Civil Service (Roads and Highways)
 15. Bangladesh Civil Service (Tele-Communication)
 16. Bangladesh Civil Service (Audit and Accounts)
 17. Bangladesh Civil Service (Customs and Excise)
 18. Bangladesh Civil Service (Taxation)
 19. Bangladesh Civil Service (Foreign Affairs)
 20. Bangladesh Civil Service (Health)
 21. Bangladesh Civil Service (Family Planning)
 22. Bangladesh Civil Service (Information)
 23. Bangladesh Civil Service ((Judicial)
 24. Bangladesh Civil Service (Postal)
 25. Bangladesh Civil Service (Enforcement: Police)
 26. Bangladesh Civil Service (Enforcement: Ansar)
 27. Bangladesh Civil Service (Railway: Transportation & Commercial)
 28. Bangladesh Civil Service (Railway: Engineering)
 29. Bangladesh Civil Service (Co-operative)
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Source: Establishment Division, Notification No. S. R. O. 99-L/ME/Rectt/1.51 (vol.3)/83, 27th May 1987, published in *Establishment Manual* (vol. 1), Dhaka, Bangladesh Government Press 1995.

¹⁷ See for more details, GOB, Ministry of Establishment, *Statistics of Civil Officers and Staff of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh 2000*, (Dhaka: Bangladesh Government Press, 2003).

The purported objective of the new system was to eliminate in the first place the class consciousness that seemed to have been persisting in the Civil Service since the pre-liberation days, and then to provide career opportunities to the deserving, thereby developing a sense of belonging and harmony, establishing the principle of 'equal pay equal work', and finally transforming a disorganized institution into an orderly one. There would be only one unified level of entry into the various cadres, i.e., ninth pay grade of Taka 4300-85x7-4590-EB-195x11-7740 of the National Scales of Pay, which became effective from July 1997¹⁸.

Among the BCS cadres, three major types of services are noticeable; grouped according to the type of work, these are---generalist-administrative services such as BCS (Administration), functional services such as audit & accounts, taxation and specialist services such as health, engineering.¹⁹ The civil service of Pakistan as the successor of the Indian Civil Service under the British rule was an elite corps of executives among various categories of public services which exercised the most important policy-making functions of the government. Although the ICS was created by the British in India as an elite class, the British Civil Service itself was not used in any restricted sense.²⁰ The elitist civil services in Pakistan and Bangladesh inherited the prestige, awe and admiration of the old ICS as its successors.²¹ But by creating a unified civil service system, Bangladesh and Pakistan sought to remove the elite status of their civil services and open up the Civil Service to the middle classes.²² Thus the administrative trend in Bangladesh is moving away from the elitist bias and is clinging more to egalitarian concepts of management; the pressing need of the people for their economic emancipation has paved the way for the emergence of managerialism.²³ Moreover, because of incessant inter-cadre conflict, resistance from the technocrats, the

18 S.G. Ahmed, "Public Administration in the Three Decades", in A.M. Choudhury and Fakrul Alam, eds., *Bangladesh on the Threshold of the Twenty-first Century*, (Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Dhaka, 2002), p. 338.

19 Mohammad Mohabbat Khan and Nure-Alam Siddique, *Public Administration Education and Training in Bangladesh*, Bangladesh Journal of Administration & Development, vol. 4, No. 2, July-December 1996,1997. p. 1.

20 E.W. Gohen, "*The Growth of the British Civil Service*" (George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1941). p. 19.

21 AZM Shamsul Alam, *Bureaucracy in Bangladesh Perspective*, Dhaka: BPATC, 1999. p. 20.

22 *Report of the Public Administration Sector Study in Bangladesh*, UNDP, p. 56.

23 AZM Shamsul Alam, *Bureaucracy in Bangladesh Perspective*, Dhaka: BPATC, 1999. p. 7.

elitist concept has died down in the Civil Service.²⁴ This change is "seen as an end in itself but not as a means to ensure managerialism, professionalism, responsiveness to citizen's needs which are so vitally necessary for good governance".²⁵ In other words, this paradigmatic shift only in form has not added any new substance to contribute to better governance in Bangladesh.

During the period from 1974 to 1981, civil servants began to recover their position and politicians in power also began to put reliance upon them at the backdrop of the deteriorating law and order situation, insecurity of life and property and continued economic crisis. The period from 1982 to 1990 was characterised by widespread corruption, economic mismanagement and erosion of ethical values. Subsequently with the emergence of parliamentary democracy in 1991, the challenges of development have assumed a new dimension requiring the Civil Service to be more responsive to the needs and grievances of the genuine service-seeking citizens.

The above events show that the Civil Service behaves differently in different political systems; that means it partakes of the qualities of the political system that remain in vogue. In fact, a country's political culture, government structure and economy shape the form and function of the Civil Service. Civil servants become responsive, accountable because the politicians are so. The new civil service is one of the important pillars of a democratic society. The electorate or the citizenry of Bangladesh demands a kind of civil service which is pro-people and pro-democracy. The future of democracy largely depends on the civil service conducts itself to cope with the critical challenges. In a democratic milieu, civil servants are accountable not only to the public representatives but also to the people themselves in the dispensation of services, in the exercise of authority or discretion assigned to them and in the use of resources. The Civil Service today cannot remain alienated from the democratic milieu; it has to be re-oriented to suit the democratic needs. Many of the country's senior citizens testify that during the colonial days, civil servants (excepting a significant few) remained occupied mostly with empire-building rather than institution-building activities and consequently the affairs of socio-economic progress, human resource development of the common people did not receive due attention; the present and the future civil servants need to make a reversal of it and prove their indispensability to the people through dispensation of the required services.

24 Ibid. p. 2.

25 AMM Shawkat Ali, *Bangladesh Civil Service: Political-Administrative Perspective*, University Press Ltd., Dhaka. p. xx.

The Role of the New Civil Service: a Plea for a National Vision

The civil service has to re-define its role, internalise a set of new values as a democratic culture imposes new demands on the abilities and attitude of the civil servants. Any civil service to be dynamic and effective must continuously review its role and new competencies must match with the new role. In other words, the present civil service of Bangladesh has to reinvent itself and redefine its role in the context of the changed circumstances.

Every activity, plan, programme to be initiated by the government must flow from the national vision. Vision is defined as a broad highest level leadership statement of what an organisation aims to become. Vision is seeking a predicted, preferred and alternative future; it represents goals, preferences and priorities. Vision is based on the assumption that the present state of affairs in a social entity is not satisfactory or that maintaining the status quo is not bringing the desired level of satisfaction and progress. According to Glen, an Australian public administration specialist, vision is "a picture of the future that is better than the present".²⁶ Thus vision suggests an image of the future or a sense of direction; it indicates what goals and strategies should be adopted to realise the vision. The role of the Civil Service, the administrative values, national plans, performance standards have to be shaped in consonance with the Vision of the Nation. Vision of a nation reflects the 'will of all', the common aspirations of the people aimed at the common good. Its formulation is the final result of the political process.²⁷ In the absence of the declared national vision and values, citizens, government officials, private organisations, civil societies and the government itself remain confused about what should be their respective roles and obligations in achieving development. The principle of adhocism automatically creeps in every sphere of life and consequently the process of institution-building so essential for sustainable development is interrupted every time. It seems that Bangladesh has not yet been able to construct a vision on the basis of national consensus. Absence of vision has not been the foremost concern in the politicians of Bangladesh. The need for formulation and propagation of national vision based on national consensus remained unaddressed or unresolved in this country probably because all the successive governments have been dwindling over the

26 Tom Glen, "Getting people to do what they want to be, the Public Manager", Fall, 1992, p. 15.

27 Hasnat Abdul Hye, "Good governance and Administration: Challenge of a New Millennium" in Hasnat Abdul Hye's (ed.) *Governance: South Asian Perspective*, Dhaka: University Press Limited. p. 167.

question whether Bangladesh should go for a short-term plan or a long-run plan for achieving a minimum state of development.²⁸

In other words, solutions to our prime national problems demand a broad conceptual framework to be built on the basis of consensual political will.²⁹ This should be the foundation of the national vision. A national vision reflects people's common expectation of securing an ideal situation that is bereft of the core complex problems faced by people. It has however been observed that as a nation, we tend to focus more on 'the peripheral' or secondary issues than on the main problems; we concentrate more on the symptoms than on the sources of malady itself; we quickly emphasise 'simplistic solutions' to complicated problems without searching for the 'sustainable remedies.' "A great deal appears", as Huda says, "tentative and there is an impression that we are living from day to day."³⁰ This seems equally true of those who govern and those who are governed. The politicians in power whichever party they belong to need to remember that in the absence of a realistic vision, a nation is likely to exist in a state of uncertainty and confusion. As a resource-constrained country dependent heavily on foreign aids and having the basic liability of feeding as many as 130.62 million people, it will not be feasible for Bangladesh to formulate a short-term plan for development. Otherwise, as Muhith warns: "there will be no light at the end of the tunnel."³¹ Bangladesh can hope for a bright future if it envisions a rather 'distant future' requiring a long term planning for which it is most important to have a vision. Vision will be the source of inspiration for every citizen for a forward march; vision will transmit "clear signal to the civil society and public institutions of the refined role that political policy-makers see for the state."³² If a vision is properly transmitted in and internalized by a people, it can work like a miracle as it has done in Malaysia. However, the vision will be the subject of continual revision as new needs will emerge and new priorities will be determined.³³ Hence the author deems it important that this country must have a national vision as follows:

By the year, say 2015, build Bangladesh into an open, progressive, vibrant, and economically robust nation capable of providing quality services to the citizens so that they can enjoy a safe, healthy, peaceful and creative life and can contribute to the continuous advancement of the nation as well as to the promotion of international cooperation, peace, justice, equity and fraternity.

28 AMA Muhith, *Thoughts on Development Administration*, Dhaka: Saleha Muhith, 1981. p. 142.

29 Muhammed Nurul Huda, "Cracks in the order and the vision", *The Daily Star*, Aug. 11, 2005. p.11.

30 Ibid

31 Op. cit.

32 World Bank, *Government That Works*, 1996. p. 28.

33 Paul Van Ward's *Dismantling The Pyramid* (Washington: Delphi Press, 1991), p. 9.

Role Diversity in Civil Service

Civil servants combine two categories of roles --- administrative and managerial. It is the senior civil servants who are involved in administrative functions --- rule-making, advising minister in the public affairs or in framing public policies; the managerial responsibilities which include implementation functions and coordinating activities of various nation-building departments are undertaken by the junior members

Services to the Ministers and the Parliament. Senior members of the Bangladesh Civil Service have the obligation to provide advisory services to politicians in power in the affairs that concern public policies and public welfare. They help the ministers in identifying the national priorities. According to Bagheot, the civil servants have “the right to advise, to encourage, to warn and to be consulted”³⁴. They are expected to provide guidance to politicians and indicate to them what the possible policy options are, what may be the cost involved in implementing the programme and what may be the impact of the programme on the citizens. They with their adequate field experience, training, higher education, are able to advise the ministers in determining priorities, or to caution them of the consequences of adopting a faulty policy for which they might be accountable to the citizenry. They can also point out to them the potential barriers that cannot often be thought of by ministers. Shawkat Ali has succinctly epitomized this function: “... assisting the Ministers in formulating policy and in Parliament is a legally assigned function given to the civil servants. Failure to this will amount to dereliction of duty. The political preoccupation of the Minister are too heavy to allow him/her time to go into details let alone operationalise an approved policy. This is the reality and it should not be construed as domination over policy matters by the civil servants”³⁵

The senior civil servants in this country feel that although they are engaged in multifarious responsibilities, they are at the same time “underused in their capacities to act as counsellors and planners.”³⁶ However, in performing these responsibilities, civil servants are supposed to enjoy protection in terms of confidentiality from those who seek advice on public affairs. But they have to do this job without being politicised. Neutrality is the fundamental value they are expected to practise and nurture. The importance of this fundamental value has been discussed in Chapter V.

34 Walter Bagheot, *The English Constitution*, (Collins : The Fontena Library) p. 235.

35 AMM Shawkat Ali, *oc. cit.*, p. 25.

36 Syndicate report of Group-A of the 14th Senior Staff Course on *Transparency in Bureaucracy* presented at BPATC, March, 1992. p. 24.

Custodian of the Public Resources. Civil servants are the custodians of the public resources; they need to ensure that the public resources are not wasted. Lloyd George, ex-British Prime Minister remarked: "Finance is government; take care of the pence and the pounds will take care of themselves"; civil servants are the finance people because they handle the public money, spend it, distribute it and often allocate it.

New Role of and New Professionalism in the Civil Service

The Civil Service of Bangladesh is the product of the old order that cannot remain static. It must always be in a state of evolution and of self-adjustment in response to the changing demands and needs of the time. The common people still perceive the Civil Service as a typical service provider, law enforcer and regulator. It is generally believed that the style of administration as practised by our civil servants today is based on the traditional Weberian model that needs revision particularly in the processual aspects in the context of democratic administration.

Since the re-introduction of parliamentary democracy in Bangladesh in 1991, the role of the Civil Service has begun to undergo transformation. It is neither accountable to the Crown nor to any autocratic ruler. Moreover, with continual accretion of new dimensions to the spectrum of development, the role of civil servants of Bangladesh as in other Asian countries is changing. In the new setting, development is not a movement towards a fixed goal but continuous adaptation to maximise well-being in changing conditions. It demands that civil servants involve people in identifying their own problems and in helping them in finding out solutions based on their down-to-earth experience. The extant environment requires civil servants to acquire new professionalism by reversing their values, roles and interaction pattern and pursue a new paradigm to ensure delivery of quality services to the people of all strata.

In Bangladesh the civil servants have to develop a new professionalism to play a new role and to meet the new challenges of development--tackling high population growth, low literacy rate, low nutrition status of child-woman, low employment rate. Conventional professionalism assumes that civil servants are to act as the lead actors in every significant development initiative whereas new professionalism looks to them more as an 'enabler', the role of which is to encourage poor people to take the lead

through capacity building.³⁷ New professionalism seeks to motivate and involve civil servants so that they can 'help the poor to help themselves'; it considers empowerment of the common people as the central issue of social development. Again women have to come before men, and children before adults.

At times it becomes difficult for the policy-makers as well as well researchers to determine what is the cause and what is the effect of certain phenomenon. Yarmolinsky once very wittily remarked: "What an institution *does* and what it *is* are alternatively cause and effect."³⁸ Without going into a debate as to whether the Bangladesh Civil Service is the offspring of an impoverished country or whether poverty in this country is result of the civil service inefficiency, it can be safely stated that in Bangladesh where 44 % of the people live below the poverty line, the successive changes of the governments could not bring significant improvement in poverty alleviation.³⁹ In the context of the scenario, the key priority development area should be poverty alleviation; a pro-poor civil service has therefore turned out to be a practical necessity. The colonial pattern of administration which so long negated the involvement of the majority i.e. the poor class in the decision-making process hardly fits in to meet the needs of the day. Just like 'the dancer cannot be separated from the dance',⁴⁰ the poor people cannot be kept isolated in the development process because they are the main actors in poverty alleviation endeavours.⁴¹

Besides being the custodian of the law and order, civil servants are to act as catalytic agents to engender economic growth, empowerment of people, and social transformation. Empowerment implies that people will be able to reduce their economic dependence by generating resources and they will also be able to control those resources.⁴² All these entail development of a new perception or mindset and a new

37 Adam Yarmonlinsky quoted in Paul Van Ward's *Dismantling The Pyramid* (Washington : Delphi Press, 1991). p. 173.

38 Robert Chambers, *Challenging the Professions*, (London: Intermediate Development Publications, 1993). p. 5.

39 Shaikh Maqsood Ali, "Understanding Poverty Alleviation, Pro-poor Growth and Sustainable Development Option", a seminar paper presented at Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Dhaka. February 12, 2005. p. 2.

40 Hasnat Abdul Hye, "Good governance: A social contract for the new millennium", *The Independent*, 4 August 1998. p. 4.

41 Syed Naquib Muslim, "Towards a new professionalism in the civil service", *The Independent*, May 15, 1995. p. 4.

42 David Korten and Rudi Klauss, *People-centred Development*, (The United States: Kumarian Press, 1985), p. 4.

package of skills for the civil servants so that they can play their new role effectively. Training has a critical role to play on this. In order to enable the civil servants to play their new role; the apex civil service training institution BPATC and other cadre-based training institutes have to design new training curricula. The discussion on curricula redesign has been devoted in Chapter-IX.

Although much of the role of the government has been taken away today by the private sector and non-government organisations (NGOs) because of the open privatization policy and proliferation of NGO activities, the civil service continues to grow in complexity. The needs, demands and expectations of citizens are multiplying and new or complex problems are emerging everyday. As a senior Bangladeshi civil servant puts it: "even in a highly privatized economy, the government will always be required to carry out powerful regulatory measures, and so its responsibilities for raising taxes, maintaining law and order, administering justice, providing primary health care and basic education, implementing environmental code, etc. will remain, if not increase"⁴³. However, the Civil Service has to extend the hands of collaboration and cooperation to the private sector and NGOs to realise the nation's vision by pooling together the scarce resources, skills and technology for optimal development. It can also extend its hands of support to the private sector in handling the ever-increasing unemployment problem, in carrying out the human resource development activities in the wake of the fast changing technology.

The Civil Service has to be open, flexible and accessible; it has to act as a facilitator, pacesetter and enabler of the private sector which has by now emerged as the major partner in the socio-economic growth and in the provision of job opportunities for the educated youths of the country. As in other developing countries, NGOs have emerged as prominent actors in the poverty alleviation, primary education, water supply, rural development, income-generating skill development training, disaster management areas in Bangladesh. It is not possible for the Civil Service to deliver social service to the poorest of the poor with limited infra-structural facilities. The officials of NGOs have to interact frequently with civil servants in implementing their programmes. Civil servants have to become open to the extent of building friendly and cooperative

43 Kamal Siddiqui, *Towards Good Governance in Bangladesh*, (Dhaka: University Press Limited, 1996), p. 22.

relations with the executives of these private sector agencies where accountability practices are better and which are contributing to the country's economy. They must falsify the prevailing notion that they are arrogant, discourteous and unfriendly in their official demeanour. They must provide access to the genuine people who approach them with diverse issues keeping the public interest in mind.

Citizen-friendly and Pro-people Civil Service

Collection of revenue, maintenance of law and order, defence, and similar many other responsibilities were the main concerns of the Civil Service introduced by the colonial British rulers. Because of different orientation, earlier civil servants used to remain alienated from the citizenry. The civil service everywhere today is people-centred, productivity-biased, market-responsive and customer-focussed. Bangladesh as a developing democratic country needs to have similar category of civil service. The dynamic and competitive environment in and around the country demands that the Civil Service has to survive in competition with the private sector inside and with other countries of the region by proving its efficiency in terms of providing quality services to citizens. Moreover, the influence of the non-government organisations on the government agencies in terms of the work style, communication pattern, client-centredness, responsiveness is also inescapable at a time when market economy dominates and the degree of consciousness of citizens keeps rising.

As citizens are the paymasters as well as customers/consumers of civil servants they demand better and quick services from them. Civil servants have to recognise the primacy of citizens and treat them as customers, i.e. 'who pay the piper', and hence who in return should demand quality and efficient services from them. Thus civil servants, like the private sector officials, have now to appreciate that they operate in an era when the customer is supreme; their credibility relies on the quality of services they produce and on the satisfaction of the customers. Commenting on the attitude of the civil servants to the common citizens the World Bank remarks in one of its publications entitled *Government That Works*: "Public service should be concerned with what the customer wants, rather than what the provider is prepared to give; regrettably, the GOB agencies do not appear to have any commitment to, or even acknowledgement of, the

principle of ultimate responsibility to the tax-payers and the users"⁴⁴. Thus the biggest challenge civil servants now face is how to meet the needs of the citizens and, if possible, to exceed their expectations.

In simpler days, good administration was important but today because of the complexity of issues it has become essential. Today the role of a civil servant is identical with that of a physician. In fact, today's civil servant is a social physician who has to pay attention to the maladies of the community where he operates. He acts as the ears and eyes of that community. A civil servant of today is a moral leader and a coordinator than he is a boss or merely an issuer of orders. The persistent cleavage between the people and the civil servant needs to be reduced. It seems many of our administrators have not yet reached the people and the people have not yet reached administrators. Reaching people is a tough task and so the Tanzanian President Nyerere once remarked, while the United States was trying to reach the moon, Tanzania was trying to reach the villages. This contention is equally true of Bangladesh. Our people and civil servants are still suspicious of each other; the elements of mutual trust and confidence are missing although the time for blaming the British or the Pakistani rulers for misgovernance or maladministration is over.

With the increase in the complexities of the environment and rise in the consciousness of the people, the responsibilities of the Civil Service have become more challenging. In plain terms, the functions of today's civil servants are to deliver services to the people, to help them solve their problems, to supply inputs and technology, to let them manage their own affairs and to provide technical support or advice to them as and when they need. These of course do not mean that the tasks of revenue collection and maintenance of law and order are to be ignored. Revenue collection is necessary to defray the cost of managing law and order and counteracting anti-social activities like terrorism, extortion. Control of terrorism and improvement of law and order is professedly the top priority of the Civil Service. The civil servants have to help the government in formulating pragmatic policies and strategies to eliminate terrorism and ensure security of life and property of the citizens. The revenue administration is no less important because unless there is an adequate revenue base and unless resources are mobilised internally with competence, the government will continue to depend on

44 The World Bank, *Government That Works*, (Dhaka, 1996), p. 7.

foreign aids, grants and credit. Thus, it appears to this researcher that the civil service of the present-day Bangladesh is facing five important challenges. These are the following in specific terms:

- Building institutional capacity to alleviate poverty
- Maintaining law and order
- Combating corruption and malpractices
- Managing development projects to achieve sustainable development
- Managing natural disasters

The main challenge is to prove its accountability to the citizenry and to demonstrate its capability to run in a parliamentary democracy re-introduced in 1991. Another big challenge is combating administrative inefficiency, mismanagement and corruption. Corruption is the chief barrier to socio-economic development; unless it is checked, the welfare of the common citizens will continue to be ignored. The next most important challenge is poverty alleviation, which is now everybody's business. The new professionalism demands that the civil servants become involved in the poverty alleviation activities in a spirit of collaboration and participation.

Need for Scholar-Civil Servants in a Knowledge-based Society

In view of the unavoidable realities of market economy and globalisation as discussed earlier, civil servants have no choice but to appreciate the intricacies of the global system and how it affects a developing country like Bangladesh. As Ali observes: "The challenges of economic and social development in the context of globalization demand new style of management and leadership in civil service".⁴⁵ Bangladesh must recognize this fact and put continued emphasis on performance, quality and professionalism. The civil service has to become more open, efficient and cooperative in the new millenium because the century that just has begun promises to be the one of ideas, innovation and creativity. In the words of Haq, the Civil Service in Bangladesh as elsewhere needs to be 'continually innovative and future looking' to be able to 'cope effectively with the internal dynamics of people-state expectations as well as uncertainties associated with a progressive regime of globalisation and knowledge economy'.⁴⁶ The civil servants should therefore be the major user of the benefits of information technology and should transform

45 AMM Shawkat Ali, op. cit., p. 297.

46 MS Haq, "Street to State and Beyond", *The Independent*, July 31, 2002.

themselves into knowledge workers so that they can aid the policy-makers in making informed and pragmatic decisions. The rapidly growing information technology has an unavoidable impact on the operational aspect of the civil service agencies. The demand for timely, accurate data and techniques makes a highly knowledge-based civil service imperative. Civil servants are to present to the Jatiya Sangshad complete and accurate data objectively and timely so that appropriate policies and strategies can be adopted for the public welfare.

There is an administrative stereotype or myth in our country that the functions of the civil service can be carried out by persons of average calibre. This proposition does not hold good in a century which demands new knowledge, new techniques and then setting up a knowledge-based society capable of making continuous innovation and creativity for solving complex social problems. In this context civil servants of Bangladesh have to adapt themselves continuously to the new domain of knowledge and provide both administrative and social leadership which requires knowledge and wisdom. In this Information Age, knowledge has become the main human capital and is now the weapon of increasing productivity. Civil servants have to acquire all kinds of current knowledge for engendering social development. They have now therefore to revise their old perspective and use their time and energy “to innovate and create, to challenge existing icons and to go beyond existing paradigms, to be risk-takers and fearlessly break new ground in the search of new knowledge and new ways of solving the problems”⁴⁷.

In the light of the national vision that has already been suggested in one of the preceding sections of this chapter, the Bangladesh Civil Service can carve out its own vision and mission which could be phrased as follows:

Vision of the Bangladesh Civil Service

By the year, say 2015, the Bangladesh Civil Service will be a competent and dynamic administrative system of the government to enable itself to build Bangladesh as a self-reliant, forward-looking and vibrant nation.

Mission of the Bangladesh Civil Service

Assist the Government in fulfilling its mandate obtained through the constitutional and democratic process and in providing continuous legitimate and quality services to the citizens maintaining efficiency, neutrality, and equity.

47 Belal E. Baquie, “Knowledge Essential for Our Transformation”, *The Daily Star*, January 30, 2001, p. 6.

Chapter IV

PUBLIC PERCEPTION ABOUT THE CIVIL SERVICE : UNCIVIL SERVICE OR CIVIL DISSERVICE

The main objective of this chapter is to present a picture, at least partially, how the cross-sections of common people, conscious citizenry, researchers, academics, world bodies, national dailies and the civil servants themselves perceive about the quality of civil service performance and about the dominant behavioural traits of the civil servants of Bangladesh that influence their performance. The findings and analyses are based on the researcher's personal experience, reports of important research documents, observations of the concerned citizens published in the print media and discussions with responsible members of the citizenry.

With the increasing rate of literacy or the rise in the level of consciousness, the citizens of Bangladesh have become critical about the quality of performance of the civil servants. The people are more conscious today than they were thirty years ago. Confidence of the public in civil servants of Bangladesh is declining; they do not seem to be satisfied with the quality of their performance. Malpractices of civil servants together with the perennial problems of inefficiency and red-tapism have contributed to this decline of public confidence.¹ While the public confidence is declining, the demand for quality service is rising. The people want to know how much of the taxes paid by them are spent for their welfare. Moreover, with the emergence of a democratic administration the public seems to have increasingly been demanding the need for an accountable, responsive and transparent civil service.

The donor agencies put continual pressure on the government to initiate reform programmes to improve civil service productivity and performance and to make the system

¹ Syndicate report of Group-Mango of the 10th Foundation Training Course on *Strategies for the Promotion of Civil Service Accountability in Bangladesh* presented at BPATC, October, 1992. p. 2.

If the vision and mission as suggested above are to be translated into action, Bangladesh Civil Service 'needs a thorough overhauling from mindset to outcome creation'.⁴⁸ The ways and means of engendering a psychic transformation and of achieving a result orientation form the agenda of discussion in the succeeding chapters.

48 MS Haq, "Street to State and Beyond", *The Independent*, 31 July, 2002.

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¹ Syndicate report of Group-Mango of the 10th Foundation Training Course on *Strategies for the Promotion of Civil Service Accountability in Bangladesh* presented at BPATC, October, 1992. p. 2.

more accountable and transparent. In the World Bank report titled *Government That Works*, the Bank stressed the need for enhancing quality of performance of civil servants and for strengthening their accountability to upgrade the civil service performance. The report emphasised "maintaining an efficient, committed and professional public service without which government can neither be efficient nor responsive".² ✓

A number of reform initiatives were taken up in the past to improve the Civil Service performance. Setting up reform commissions has been a routine or ritualistic agenda of almost all governments. Experience suggests, every reforms commission ends up suggesting a plethora of recommendations most of which remain unimplemented. In almost all earlier studies, attention was concentrated more on the macro-issues and less on the micro issues, more on the legal or procedural aspects and less on the psychosocial dimensions of the Civil Service. Civil Service failures were attributed mainly to faulty policies of politicians, prevalence or practice of traditional, obsolete laws, rules, and procedures inherited from the colonial past. Although the attitudinal or behavioral aspects are discussed sporadically at workshops/seminars, these have never been adopted as the subject of systematic study and reform measures. Performance problems that are easily measurable surfaced as the focal themes of deliberation and study; but the psychosocial facets have always been sidelined perhaps because these are intangible, tricky, complex and hard to deal with. As Gresham wittily puts it: "Trivial matters are handled promptly - important matters are never solved."

Accountability entails performance of mandated responsibilities. In a situation of non-performance or inadequate performance, the process of accountability is automatically subverted. Ordinarily speaking, performance is understood in terms of accomplishment, or implementation of goals and responsibilities. Thus goals and responsibilities can be considered the first and second ingredients of administrative performance respectively. The third ingredient is the process or the means. The fourth element is the mechanism for supervision as to how far the process of accomplishment is proceeding in a way that administrative performance is actualising itself efficiently.³

2 World Bank, *Government That Works*, Dhaka: The University Press Ltd., 1996, p. xvi.

3 T. N. Chaturvedi, "Dimensions of Administrative Performance and Accountability", in Prem Kumar and AK Ghosh, (ed.), *Management in Government & Public Services*, (New Delhi: Anmol Publications, 1992), p. 38.

The present status of the Civil Service in England can easily be visualized from the following citation taken from a work of Metcalfe and Richards:

There is a great deal of uncertainty and disorientation, accompanied by heart-searching, about civil service ethics, about roles and responsibilities and about accountability. There is a strong sense that the traditional assumptions about what it means to be a civil servant are crumbling rapidly, despite some rear-guard-efforts to reinforce it. In this crisis of confidence and legitimacy there are no leaders willing or able to guide the management of meaning to articulate a new image which fits the circumstances and has external as well as internal credibility.⁴

The words of Metcalfe and Richards seem to fit at least partially in the context of the Bangladesh Civil Service. Poor civil service performance contributes to poor governance and this erodes the credibility of the government at large. The dominant symptoms of substandard or inadequate or failed civil service performance are---

- i) unreasonable delay in the disposal of business or failure to make timely decisions;
- ii) general apathy towards work;
- iii) faulty or rash administrative decisions causing sufferings of citizens;
- iv) colonial organisational practices and lack of development orientation;
- v) job-specific competency gap;
- vi) lack of collegial attitude among the senior and the junior officials and lack of capacity for teamwork;
- vii) ineffective mechanism for appraising officials' performance; and
- viii) absence of a simple codified value system in the civil service.

Failure to make timely intervention in the above areas leads to poor civil service performance and that in turn leads to public resentment and credibility gap of the government itself.

A Catalogue of Comments from Cross-sections of People

Civil servants in Bangladesh are criticised by the citizens for their colonial attitude, corruption, inefficiency, delay, waste, extravagance and arrogance.⁵ In the words of Huq, a retired senior civil servant: "Arrogance, delay in disposal of work, inefficiency and poor

4 Les Metcalfe and Sue Richards, *Improving Public Management* (London: Sage, 1967), p. 57.

5 Syed Naquib Muslim, "The Practice of Administrative Accountability and Good Governance: The Bangladesh Experience", country paper presented at the workshop entitled *Commonwealth Programme on Managing Performance-oriented Public Service*, held at INTAN, Kuala Lumpur, June 16-28, 1997. p. 1.

performance are the most flagrant snags”.⁶ Latif maintains: “People’s perception is that public offices are the places where red-tape, harassment, bribery and other corrupt practices are common features.”⁷ Common people’s experience is that they are destined to suffer at all tiers of the civil service agencies whether it is a ministry, department or statutory body. They suffer most at the field offices where they approach to obtain day-to-day social services. The interface between the citizens and the civil servants is ‘nightmarish’ for the citizens—whether it is obtaining passport, registering land title, getting a utility connection---the citizens have to suffer delays, deal with ‘unresponsive’ civil servants and above all ‘often make side payments’.⁸ Thus the everyday reference to the civil service and civil servants reflects a negative attitude towards the public service and these references include obsolete, irrelevant or incompetent action.⁹

The civil service functioning in a democratic system must earn the confidence of the citizenry and this can be assured through better performance. Moreover, civil servants need to remember that they themselves are part of the citizenry having identical needs and aspirations as their fellow-citizens. It is the people who judge the performance of civil servants; they are the targets and they are the judges.¹⁰ The satisfaction of the people is the bottomline of the effectiveness of the civil service performance. They believe, there has been a serious deterioration in the morale and morality of civil service since independence; if the quality of goods can be improved, the quality of services can likewise be improved.

The common people hold that the majority of the civil servants are still caught in the web of traditional and colonial bureaucracy where the administrative culture is conservative. As the World Bank in its study, *The Government That Works*, comments: “The colonial legacy and the conservatism of the Civil Service have combined to produce an administrative culture that is inappropriate to the needs of a modern economy.”¹¹ About the

6 AKM Hedayetul Huq writes in the preface of the book, *Coordination in Public Administration in Bangladesh*, by ATM Shamsul Huda (ed.), (Dhaka: BPATC, 1987), p. v.

7 M. Abdul Latif Mondal, “People’s perception about public offices”, *The Daily Star*, January 25, 2005. p. 5.

8 World Bank, *Government That Works*, 1996. p. xxvii.

9 Mahbub Husain Khan, “The bureaucratic syndrome”, *The Independent*, January 27, 1997, p. 4.

10 T. N. Chaturvedi, op. cit., p. 33.

11 World Bank, *Government That Works*, p. 3.

responsiveness of civil servants to the day-to-day problems of citizens, the World Bank further comments: "People in Bangladesh are acutely aware of their vulnerability to the whims and caprices of civil servants—the penalty for complaint is a disconnected phone line, excessive billing, or harassment by local police officials."¹²

There has been a marked increase in illegal and unethical practices in the Civil Service. The degree of administrative waste continues to increase; cases of corruption continue to multiply; the tendency of many officials to delay in making/giving decisions for unholy intent has not subsided; the responsiveness of civil servants to the core value of the public interest has improved very little. Corruption, waste of public property and resources, faulty planning stem from absence of accountability. The condition of the poor has not improved as has been expected. New technology is still viewed as a threat rather than an opportunity. Newspaper reports testify that inter-agency conflict, hostility and malice still permeate the organisational climate of the civil service agencies. Parochial departmentalism is affecting smooth implementation of the public policies. Coordination among field-level government agencies is virtually absent. New recruits of the civil service are torn between conformity and creativity; soon after joining the Civil service, they begin to complain about the absence of positive attitude of their supervising officers. Many of the senior officers feel threatened when their junior colleagues take initiative or suggest innovative ideas for solving problems. Attitude more of buck-passing and scape-goating and less of risk-taking among the senior persists.

In drawing-room discussions, comments often surface like, 'Are the civil servants in Bangladesh really civil?' 'Do they provide service or disservice to the people?' The common perceptions of citizens about the performance of civil servants are ---i) the civil servants of Bangladesh are excessively conscious about rank, status and authority; ii) they are obsessed with precedents and rules; iii) they tend to indulge in wasteful luxuries at the cost of the public money; iv) they are indolent as letters reaching them from citizens are not promptly responded to; v) they procrastinate and delay decisions vi) they are arrogant in their conduct with the junior and the members of the public; vii) they wrap themselves in a cloak of opacity and observe secrecy when transparency is a need, and they practise

12 Ibid., p. 7.

transparency when secrecy is a need; and viii) they are quick at liaising with one another more on private interest than on the public interest. The World Bank has almost identical opinion about the civil service. According to its study published in 1996, civil servants i) tend to direct public resources for private gains; ii) are arbitrary in the application of rules and laws; iii) are non-transparent in decision-making; and iv) one of the indicators of the substandard performance is that the development projects, whether these are donor-driven or locally-financed, are ill-managed.

Hundreds of petitions written by common citizens pour in the office of the Prime Minister seeking intervention of the office for redress of their grievances which may well be handled by field level civil service agencies. News from the press portray the incapacity or the inadequacies of the administrative bodies in handling crimes like bribing, extortion, rape, acid-throwing, drug addiction, hijacking, terrorism which occur almost regularly in the major cities and towns of Bangladesh. So to improve performance and to build the confidence of the citizenry in civil servants more emphasis should be given to accountability.

The notion of accountability has received wider significance today because civil servants are found indulging in malpractices which mostly include abuse of authority, waste of public resources, delay in the disposal of business. The common people have the forum to vote the unaccountable politicians out of power through elections but they cannot throw the inefficient and unaccountable civil servants out of service. What the enlightened section of the people can do is to ventilate their grievances or dissatisfaction by writing letters or articles in the national dailies as we find nowadays. The editorial pages and the letters' columns of the newspapers are often filled with complaints and allegations about the misbehaviour and malpractices of civil servants. Here are a few samples of civic responses culled from a few noted newspapers.

A Bangladeshi national working as a visiting professor in Taiwan writes in the letters' column of a national English daily: "the first and foremost duty of a government is to make it i) free from terrorism and violence, ii) free from corruption, iii) maintenance of strict

discipline in all the offices of the government, iv) strict enforcement of law and order...".¹³ A reader of *The Daily Star* writes in an article entitled "Administrative Culture and Related Issues": "Bureaucracy today is in shambles... . There is no discipline, nobody listens to nobody. Without constant greasing at every step, the administrative machine does not move. A sense of frustration on the part of the general public, the business community, the industrial entrepreneurs and all concerned prevails. Sense of values has disappeared The administrative conscience has made an honorable exit."¹⁴ A newly introduced English daily *News Today* writes in its editorial "Country's bureaucracy has not yet been tuned up with the market. Our bureaucracy received training and orientation to work in a centralised system. But now there have been moves to shift from the state to the market. ...The bureaucrats have not been tuned up with the new system that is largely responsible for poor governance. So, the role of bureaucracy should be critically reviewed if the country wants to achieve higher growth and improve governance."¹⁵

Nani Gopal Das, a citizen, writes in the *New Nation*: "There is no accountability nor supervision and control in the government offices. ... Our government officers who are continuously committing irregularities and corruption year after year are left untouched and free from any sort of accountability."¹⁶ According to an editorial of *The Daily Star*: "The Civil Service has perhaps been the most privileged section of the community since the time of British rule. Over the decades, the service has been able to exercise enormous power without much in the way of accountability."¹⁷ Ahsan, a former Chairman of the SAARC secretariat, writes in an article published in *The Morning Sun*: "At present in any given department, nobody knows who is doing what and who is responsible for a particular job."¹⁸

Commenting on the status of the government, Siddiqui, a senior civil servant remarks: "the Bangladesh state machinery is highly inefficient, corrupt, incapable and self-seeking. It is

13 *The Daily Star*, 14 November 2002 (Letters' columns).

14 *The Daily Star*, October 17, 1991.

15 "Editorial", *News Today*, November 20, 2002.

16 Nani Gopal Das, "Bureaucracy that has cornered democracy in Bangladesh", *New Nation*, 18 December, 1993.

17 "Editorial", *The Daily Star*, February 12, 1992. p. 4.

18 Abul Ahsan, "Ministers and Secretaries in our parliamentary democracy", *The Morning Sun*, September 2, 1992, p. 4.

particularly unable to deliver goods and services to the vast majority of the people who are disadvantaged (i.e. the poor, the women and the children)".¹⁹

The common perception of the public about Civil Service is that it is wasteful, dilatory, arrogant and corrupt. Civil servants indulge in waste, corruption, delay in disposal of cases, sycophancy, and arrogance. These dysfunctional behaviours have made the civil servants 'uncivil' and the service 'disservice'. The dysfunctional behaviour as diagnosed by Dwivedi through his coined acronym AEIOU is almost parallel to the behaviour of our civil servants --- A represents apathy, E evasiveness, I incompetence, O obstructionism, U urge for undeserved or unwarranted power and property.²⁰ According to Shams, a retired civil servant and former principal of COTA: "Very few people seem to like the civil servants and their ways of doing things.. By turn they are called arrogant, slow-moving, bureaucratic, colonial and anti-people".²¹

There are some types, patterns and numbers of dysfunctional behaviours/dispositions that are hindering achievement of a high degree of accountability and interfere with success in performance. Below follows the descriptions of the common symptoms of mal-administration in the Bangladesh Civil Service.

Waste: Misuse and waste of public resources is widespread in the civil service agencies. Telephone, transport, energy, space, stationery items are the main areas of waste. Anybody will find the air-conditioner, light and fan on in the chamber although the officer concerned is absent. This is not only waste of energy but also waste of money. An interesting paradox in the civil servants' behavior is that they tend to waste public resources which remain at their disposal but tend to control others doing it. One major cause of administrative waste is lack of intimate coordination among officers and civil service agencies. Wasting public resources is equal to showing disrespect for the taxpayers' money. An editorial '*The Daily Star*' comments: "Telephones are used with least compunction in the offices and at home.

19 Kamal Siddiqui, *Better Days, Better Lives*, Dhaka: The University Press Ltd., 2001, p. 48.

20 O. P. Dwivedi, "Ethics and Values of Public Responsibility and Accountability", *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 1: 1985.

21 Khalid Shams, "Changing Civil Service Attitudes", an unpublished mimeograph no. COTA/ PPA-273 dated December 20, 1982. p. 3.

Inter-district and overseas calls are made for long personal conversations at government expense and they are hard to be made accountable..... The misuse of government transport constitutes another wasteful expenditure that must be curbed.”²²

Misuse of government vehicles by the civil servants and the politicians is a popular topic for the press. According to a report, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Establishment Ministry asked the ministry on January 16, 2005, to submit report on the misuse and status of about 4000 public vehicles which were supposed to be deposited with the Transport Pool on completion of the projects.²³ These vehicles, mostly expensive and luxurious, are being used by ‘planners and officials’ unauthorisedly. This fact indicates non-practice of austerity as a value by the public servants as well as incidence of ‘malaise’ in the systems of accountability. It is observed that the government functionaries use vehicles beyond their allotted number and time. Even members of their families liberally use the government vehicles.²⁴ About the use of transport, Siddiqui, a senior civil servant, remarks: “First, many high-ups would use transports in addition to the one they are entitled to for full time use. Second, many midlevel and junior officers entitled to use government transports for official purpose only are using them full time, which obviously includes private use.”²⁵ If senior officers misuse the public transport, they hardly have any moral right to check misuse by the junior. As Alam comments: “Most officers misuse the transport. Only difference is that senior officers do it more and junior officers do it less or not at all.”²⁶ Almost the same views have been expressed by a report published in a national daily, *Bangladesh Today*: “Many of them allegedly use the vehicles surpassing the limit they are entitled to and thus violate the rules. Some officers “feel obliged and delighted if they can please a minister by providing transports for the use of himself or the members of his family.”²⁷ Even the cost of the fuel is provided from the government exchequer regardless of whether the transports are used for official works or political purposes or for shopping or joy ride of the members of the minister. Biswas, a resident of

22 Editorial "Frugality of Government Expenditure", *The Daily Star*, January 4, 1994. p. 4.

23 First Editorial, *The Daily Star*, January 18, 2005. p. 4.

24 ANM Nurul Haque, "Stringency is absent in national austerity", *The Daily Star*, October 2, 2005.

25 Kamal Siddiqui, *Towards Good Governance in Bangladesh*, Dhaka : The University Press Ltd. 1996 p. 66.

26 AZM Shamsul Alam, *Bureaucracy in Bangladesh Perspective*, Dhaka: BPATC, 1999. p. 204.

27 A report published in *The Bangladesh Today*, July 19, 2003, p. 1.

north Kafrul, Dhaka, represents the sentiments of the public when he writes in a letter to the editor of *The Independent*, complaining that a huge amount of money is spent from the treasury for buying towels, soaps, revolving chairs etc.²⁸ In 1995, the Ministry of Finance issued a circular, dated 25 May 1995, asking the government officials to control expenditure on the use and maintenance of telephone, electricity, water and transport. But the mere issuance of circulars does not seem to improve the situation.

There is no uniformity in the use of furniture in government offices. Furniture items are replaced and the lay-out is changed to display a visible change in the office by the new incumbent. Everything depends on the whims of the head of the offices who can change the furniture items and the lay-out on priority basis leaving other responsibilities aside. Some officers will use costly towels hung on the chairs not identical in design, whereas only a handful of officers will not use any towel because they think these are to be used only in the washrooms.

Corruption: The purpose of this subsection is not to delve into the causes of corruption in the civil service of Bangladesh but to indicate how civil servants are perceived by people in relation to corruption. The fact remains that corruption is globally perceived as misuse of public office and public resources for obtaining private gains. Corruption weakens a government's ability to carry out its role efficiently and thereby erodes the credibility of the government. It dilutes equity from the provision of services and thus creates disparity or discrimination among people. Corruption 'deprofessionalizes administration and brings statism into disrepute'.²⁹ It lowers efficiency and productivity of civil servants and encourages them to indulge in wasteful consumption. Corruption deters flow of foreign exchange leading to curtailment of opportunities for investment and employment. Again, corruption is ethically and socially unacceptable; it is anti-democratic because innocent rate-paying citizens are the ultimate victims of corruption; each penny reaching the corrupt, rent-seeking hands ultimately comes from innocent service-seeking people. Ordinary citizens end up paying more than necessary for essential goods and services and they are deprived of the rightful share of development. Because of corrupt practices in the

28 Masud Ali Biswas's letter to the editor of *The Independent*", June 26, 2002.

civil service, 'development aid is diverted away from those mired in poverty and living under distressed circumstances.'³⁰ Because of corruption budget suffers, public debt increases, official incomes are squeezed more through taxation thus encouraging officials to earn more unofficial income, tax avoidance increases on other incomes and wealth and ultimately poor become the casualty.³¹ In the words of Khandwalla: "Corruption is a cancer that spreads like a weed and destroys order, equity and development"³²; it 'envelops the society like the tentacles of an octopus'.³³ One of the ways to identify incidence of corruption is to assess the living standard of public officials. If the living standard of a public official is not compatible with his/her declared income or assets, the existence of corruption is identified prima facie. The report of Task Force (1991) observes: "Misuse of development resources for kickbacks and patronage has been a common feature of civil service in recent years. The malaise was exacerbated by total lack of accountability Institutional checks on misuse and corruption were weakened and cynicism replaced idealism and public morality."³⁴ Yunus, founder-managing director of Grameen Bank looks at the government officials: "An officer does not sign an order if not bribed..... The government officials are not officials any more, they are businessmen. They are involved in the trade of power market.... They are selling the power in exchange for money. Rules, regulations, laws are the ingredients of that trade. Though they have been created for the welfare of the people, they are now being used in favour of the officers and against the people."³⁵

Researchers, experts, consultants and sociologists have been trying to identify the factors that contribute to the rising incidence of corruption in this country. The factors include (a) inadequate compensation package for civil servants compounded by 'economic insecurity' (b) growth of consumerism and hedonism (c) tendency of the unscrupulous private sector

29 Pradip N. Khandwalla, *Revitalising the State: A Menu of Options*, (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1999). p. 268.

30 S. Sothi Rachagan, *Corruption : consumers pay the price*, The Daily Star, February 5, 2005. p. 9.

31 Geoffrey D. Wood, *Bangladesh, Whose Ideas, Whose Interests?* (Dhaka: UPL., 1994) p. 531.

32 Pradip N. Khandwalla, op cit.

33 N. Venkateshwara Rao, *Administration and Development Dynamics* (New Delhi: Kanishka Publishers, 1996). p. 45.

34 The Center for Policy Dialogue (CPD), *Report of the Task Forces on Bangladesh Development Strategies for the 1990s*, Vol. II, UPL, 1991. p. 220.

35 Muhammad Yunus, "If I could be the chairman of Anti-corruption Commission," *The Daily Star*, June 01, 2005.

agencies to win illegal favours from civil servants (d) weak enforcement of the extant rules and laws, and (e) society's reticent tendency to condone corruption.³⁶ On the whole, lack of effective accountability of both the civil servants and the politicians is the most dominant cause of corruption. According to a workshop report published by News Network, abuse of power by administrators, and politicians, degeneration of values, politicisation of administration, absence of effective monitoring and supervision mechanism, unhealthy social competition, and passivity of the civil society are the factors responsible for the widespread corruption in this country. The intensity of corruption is indicated by the fact that on an average, 4535 complaints of corruption are filed every year with the Bureau of Anti-corruption.³⁷ The government of Bangladesh constituted a three-member Anti-corruption Commission (ACC) on November 21, 2005. The formation of the ACC has assumed special significance because the Berlin-based Transparency International has placed Bangladesh at the top of the corruption list comprising 133 countries. Combating corruption of the public officials is a daunting challenge for the government as the image of the government as well as the country is linked with reduction of corruption because it affects the poor and helpless sections of the citizenry and ultimately 'leads to gross violation of human rights.'³⁸

Corruption is anti-democratic and anti-development. It discourages private investment, distorts the allocation of public spending and vitiates the government's initiative for sustained socio-economic growth. According to an estimate, bribes paid to government officials amount to 160 million and corruption retards GDP growth by 2% per year.³⁹ According to Wolfowitz, present president of the World Bank, Bangladesh, has 'wonderful, talented people' but corruption is a 'big drag' on the country's economy; Bangladesh can achieve 8% GDP growth a year instead of the present 5% if corruption and confrontational politics are contained.⁴⁰ Civil service shares much of the blame of the Bangladesh being branded by *Transparency International* as the number one corrupt

36 M.Abdul Latif Mondal, "People's perception about public offices", *The Daily Star*, January 25, 2005. p. 5.

37 *Corruption and Transparency in Bangladesh*, News Network Workshop Report, February 2003, p. 21.

38 Harun ur-Rashid, "Corruption and its dimensions", *The Daily Star*, January 12, 2005. p. 4.

39 First editorial, *The Daily Star*, May 21, 2005.

40 Comments of Paul Wolfowitz, present president of the World Bank, while on a visit to Bangladesh on August 21, 2005. *The Daily Star*, August 22, 2005. p. 1.

country in the world. How this corruption can be reduced is a subject of popular discussion among different classes of people. Experience shows that rules, laws and regulatory measures could not help in making the civil service less corrupt. The existence of anti-corruption laws like the *Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1958*, the *Anti-corruption Act, 1957*, the *Prevention of Anti-corruption Act, 1947*, the *Anti-corruption Ordinance (Tribunal), 1960* and the *Government Servants' Conduct Rules* could not contribute to reduction of corruption in this country. Bangladesh has rather earned the 'championship' in corruption for topping the list of the corrupt countries for four consecutive years.

Solution to all these causes have however been epitomised in *Government That Works* when it says: "Reducing corruption requires measures to improve openness and transparency in government, deregulation and improvement in civil service compensation and stiff penalties/enforcement."⁴¹ Almost the same views have been echoed in World Development Report: "Reforming the civil service, restraining political patronage and improving civil service pay have been shown to reduce corruption by giving public officials more incentive to play by the rules."⁴² Because the briber and the bribed have equal responsibility for corruption, effective penalty on both of them must be part of the solution.⁴³ As Alam proposes: "Provision may be made to punish the persons offering bribe. Bribe-givers need to be treated equally with bribe-takers."⁴⁴ Civil servants operate, as other do, in a holistic system and they do not exist in an isolated island. Thus, Ali observes: "there is a need for holistic approach to deal with corruption and accountability rather than dealing with them in a fragmented manner."⁴⁵ However, one of the assumptions of the present study however, is that corrupt practices can be at last partly handled by rationalizing the existing incentive structure for the civil servants, ensuring strict observance of the Code of Conduct, evolving a pragmatic performance appraisal system, regular monitoring of officials' behaviour by trained supervisors and intensive training of the civil servants on ethics and values.

41 World Bank. *Government That Works*, 1996. p. xxv.

42 *The State in a Changing World*, World Development Report Summary, June 25, 1997, p. 9.

43 Ibid.

44 AZM Shamsul Alam, *Bureaucracy in Bangladesh Perspective*, Dhaka: BPATC, 1999. p. 249.

45 AMM Shawkat Ali, *Bangladesh Civil Service : Political Administrative Perspective*, Dhaka, UPL, 2004, p. 295.

Delay and unresponsiveness: Delay is more dangerous than error; delay may rather be replaced by error.⁴⁶ Parkinson considers delay “the deadliest form of denial.” Delay is never accepted by the public because it actually means non-action or non-performance. Anisuzzaman represents the sentiments of the public when he says: “Government service must be rendered when it is required so that temporal dimension is honoured. A delayed service is no service practically.”⁴⁷ The civil service in Bangladesh has been affected by the culture of delay. The process of decision-making is so lengthy and arduous that finally a decision tends to achieve very little. Each level in the decision-making process is a blockade and to secure a decision crossing all the levels is practically a huge task.⁴⁸ Report on the Public Administration Sector Study comments: “Prolonged and delayed decisions appear to be the norm as opposed to the exception.”⁴⁹ According to a survey, 36% of the letters coming from various sections of the citizenry are replied within 1 to 4 weeks, 20% are replied within 1 to 6 weeks and 20% of the letters are not responded to at all.⁵⁰ About the quality of services and the dilatory tendency of the civil service agency officials, a senior retired civil servant and ex-chairman of the Administrative Reforms Commission remarks: “Nobody appears in these organisations to take account of the time taken to deliver their services. Whether it is a day, or a week or a month or a year does not seem to bother the bosses of the service-delivering officials.”⁵¹ Yasuda, a Japanese rural development specialist working for JICA in Bangladesh remarks: “when one goes to a government office in Dhaka to ask for something, your request is shelved, delayed and sometimes not handled according to the normal procedure”.⁵² A survey with 200 businessmen and 70 exporters conducted by the World Bank in this country shows: “Government officials are unresponsive and oblivious to cost of delay and there is little

46 Jerry L. Mashew, *Bureaucratic Justice: Managing Social Security Disability Claims*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), p. 66.

47 M. Anisuzzaman, “Enhanced Authority, Accountability, Efficiency and Effectiveness of the Key Institutions”, a workshop paper written and presented at BPATC, in 2000.

48 Editorial, *The Bangladesh Today*, July 19, 2003.

49 UNDP, *Public Administration Sector Study Report*, 1993, p. 50.

50 Helaluddin Ahmed, “Bangladesher Amlatantra”, *Bhorer Kagaj*, 18 April, 1993. p. 12.

51 Mohammad Nurunnabi Chowdhury, “Of Accountable and Responsive Public Service”, *The Independent*, May 30, 2000. p. 5.

52 “Development Bangladesh Style”, *The Daily Star*, 17 October 2004.

improvement in the day-to-day hassles of interaction with public agencies, two-thirds of exporters have lost export orders due to delays in dealing with public agencies.”⁵³

Based on personal experience, a varsity teacher has commented sarcastically saying that the best way to solve a problem is to avoid it altogether---pass the file on to Ministry of Law, Finance or Establishment; the problem is at least solved for the time being because it has been passed over, not decided upon.⁵⁴ A group of joint secretary level officers writes almost in similar tone in a syndicate report at BPATC: “Bureaucrats are such a make that problems do not exist until they have appeared. As a result, their advice tends to come late, rather too late.”⁵⁵ Another practice to make delay in decision-making is to form a committee which in turn constitutes a sub-committee and if the sub-committee finds it convenient it will form a panel of experts to identify the technical intricacies of the issue in question. The result is either a delayed decision or no decision at all causing sufferings to the citizenry.

It is natural for the public to be curious about the potential causes of delay in the civil service agencies. Delay in the disposal of cases is one of the most important and potential sources of corruption.⁵⁶ A research conducted with forty senior government officials suggests that the main reasons for delay in decision-making are (a) the absence of accountability; (b) the need to seek approvals from several layers because of non-delegation and (c) slothfulness because of an inadequate compensation package.⁵⁷ Lack of accountability is identified as the major cause of delay in decision-making. As Government That Works which echoes the views of the citizenry, civil servants and politicians says: “Public servants are not held individually accountable for poor performance or delayed decisions.”⁵⁸ The irony is that while civil servants are “penalised for taking initiatives and making quick decisions, they are rarely punished for delays.”⁵⁹ Tendency towards inertia and delay to avoid risk has become a way of life. The main reason for the risk-avoiding

53 World Bank, *Government That Works*, p. xv.

54 Shahed Latif, *Our Culture of Delay*, The Daily Star, March 5, 1997, p. 4.

55 Syndicate report of Group-A of the 14th Senior Staff Course on *Transparency in Bureaucracy* presented at BPATC, March, 1992. p. 24.

56 N. Venkateshwara Rao, *Public Administration and Development Dynamic* (New Delhi: Kanishka Publishers, 1996) p. 53.

57 World Bank, *Government That Works*, 1996. p. 106.

58 Ibid. p. 3.

behaviour has been explained by Huda and Rahman: "In our administrative culture, rewards given for quality work are unknown whereas the retribution and penalty for even a minor or unintended fault are very severe."⁶⁰

Other sources of delay are---indecisiveness springing from knowledge gap on how to deal with a particular issue, and absence of risk-taking tendency for fear of being reprimanded or penalised by the seniors. This work environment has created in the civil service a culture of delay and 'risk avoidance'. Another study conducted by two ex-faculty members of BPATC reveals existence of two broad factors causing delay in the disposal of business; these are 'structural' and 'behavioural.' In this study, delay has been shown as 'both a cause and a consequence' of civil service dysfunctions.⁶¹ Delay occurs when officers seek to attain 'operational efficiency' by being methodical but 'not efficient and effective in the correct sense of the term.' Other reasons include jurisdictional infringement, passing the buck, misperception/ determination of priorities, employees' disorientations, misallocation of resources, inadequate staff/ logistic support, work overload emanating from ill-designed work distribution, improper delegation of authority and differential treatment to influential clients.⁶² According to Alam, the officers who ignore priorities and time sequences bring sufferings to the public and cause embarrassment to their seniors and 'invite disgrace for themselves.'⁶³ Improper delegation of authority exists in almost all the civil service agencies. Because of inappropriate delegation, "decisions which should be taken at a lower level now routinely goes up to the level of secretary or minister or even higher."⁶⁴ This results in a 'massive backlog of decisions' and 'loss of accountability'.

At times junior officers do not exercise the authority delegated to them in making decisions and they want to remain free of accountability; instead they shift the responsibility to the senior officers. This causes delay. As Alam says: "The intermediate

59 Ibid. p. 104.

60 ATM Shamsul Huda and Mustafa A. Rahman, "Functions and Functionaries of the Bangladesh Secretariat", Dhaka: Bangladesh Journal of Public Administration, Vol. IV, No. 1, 1990. p. 22.

61 ATM Shamsul Huda and Mustafa A. Rahman, "Functions and Functionaries of the Bangladesh Secretariat", Dhaka: Bangladesh Journal of Public Administration, Vol. IV, No. 1, 1990. p. 17.

62 Ibid, p. 21.

63 AZM Shamsul Alam, *Bureaucracy in Bangladesh Perspective*, Dhaka: BPATC, 1999. p. 288.

64 Syndicate report prepared and presented by SC Khan and his team members in the 19th ACAD on "Strategies for the Promotion of Administrative Accountability in Bangladesh" at BPATC, March 1992. p. 7.

and down level officers should be encouraged to take decisions and be penalised if they push up the files in which they are competent and authorised to take decisions.”⁶⁵

One more reason for delay in disposing a file is that senior officers tend to send back the file to the subordinate official by making some queries. This can be avoided if the senior officer invites the concerned officer for a discussion, elicit the answers to the queries and then dispose the case.⁶⁶ Hinting at this genre of civil servants, Alam comments in a sarcastic tone: “Walking slowly or holding the files for days is viewed as symbol of authority and dignity.”⁶⁷

The interviewed officials have admitted that although lengthy procedures and complex formalities are to blame to a large extent, in most of the cases delay occurs because of attitudinal factors. The behavioural factor behind delay is when the delay is deliberate. Many officers make intentional delay in giving decisions to serve a hidden purpose. This has also been explained by four secretaries in their survey report; to them, delay and bribery seem to have a symbiotic relationship because many civil servants make intentional delay by “holding back all papers until some payment is made to them.”⁶⁸

Delay has something to do with the values a civil servant internalises and practises. In fact, delay in work is the immediate result of an officer’s unresponsive behaviour on the job. The Japanese civil servants do not go home without completing their work; the American civil servants just forget their homes and ‘sleep on the floor though they can easily afford room in the Five Star Hotel.’⁶⁹ This implies that it all depends on the value system an officer develops. Two questions however creep in the mind after this discussion ---how this value system is developed in an officer and how training can help? When officers are not trained, it results in ineffective supervision and consequently in inordinate delay in the disposal of cases.⁷⁰ But nowadays trained officers are not in short supply. The present study reveals, majority of the officers responsible for delay in decision-making have been trained either

65 AZM Shamsul Alam, *Bureaucracy in Bangladesh Perspective*, Dhaka: BPATC, 1999. pp. 80-81.

66 Ibid. p. 89.

67 Ibid. p. 42.

68 *Four Secretaries Report*, p. 73.

69 AZM Shamsul Alam, *Bureaucracy in Bangladesh Perspective*, Dhaka: BPATC, 1999. p. 89.

70 Chaudhury Muzaffar Ahmed, *The Civil Service in Pakistan*, Dhaka: National Institute of Public Administration, 1969. p. 290.

at BPATC or at their respective cadre-specific training institutes. This fact again leads one to question the efficacy of the training delivered by the civil service training institutes in developing attitude of civil servants. A separate chapter has however been devoted in this document to discuss the shortcomings of the civil service training institutes on attitude and ethical development issues.

Sycophancy: Sycophancy is an indomitable culprit which is vitiating the work environment of the civil service agencies in Bangladesh. A number of theorists have listed sycophancy as one of the symptoms of maladministration. Commenting on the rise of sycophancy and decline of efficiency, Swingle states: "Every organisational bureaucracy reverts to a *sycophantocracy*, where power goes to those who support and flatter."⁷¹ Maladministration creeps in and efficiency subsides when practice of sycophancy is widespread. Sycophancy, like corruption, is rampant both in the administration and the politics of Bangladesh. A correspondent of a national daily of Bangladesh designates sycophancy as an 'oral graft' and as a form of 'major corruption'.⁷² ()The report of Task Force states: "A new administrative culture of subservience and sycophancy has replaced old values of civil service---taking pride in performance and upholding the public interest."⁷³ Through sycophancy, the public interest is sacrificed at the altar of personal or party interest and the performance assessment is personalised. Sycophancy is subverting efficiency and accountability of civil servants as well as elected public representatives of this country. It submerges realities and hides the actual visage of performance. Hinting at the pernicious effects of sycophancy on administration Dimock remarks: "The only men I would severely penalise are the 'yes-men'.⁷⁴ According to Richardson: "The true public servant will not tell the boss only what she or he wants to hear."⁷⁵

Like a contagious disease sycophancy is taking the shape of epidemic afflicting both administration and politics. It is observed that a dishonest politician or an inefficient,

71 Paul G. Swingle, *The Management of Power* (New Jersey: Laurence Erlbaum, 1976), p. 23.

72 A special correspondent, "Corruption across the world", *The New Nation*, November 1, 1994. p. 5.

73 CPD, *Report of the Task Forces on Bangladesh Development Strategies for the 1990s*, Vol. II, Dhaka: The University Press Ltd., 1991, p. 222.

74 Marshall E. Dimock, *A Philosophy of Administration: Towards Creative Growth* (New York: Harper & Row, 1950), p. 170.

75 Elliot Richardson, "Ethical Principles for Public Servants", *The Public Manager*, Winter, 1992-93, p. 38.

corrupt civil servant having political linkages is often surrounded by a host of sycophants; many of the sycophants include civil servants who are eager to satisfy or serve the inefficient but politically powerful person 'rather than working for the people'.⁷⁶ How sycophancy is harming the bureaucracy and politics in this country has been mirrored in the main editorial of a national English daily: "They (sycophants) deliver only those news that would please their leader, invent idolizing prefixes and create an unreal world of delusion for the leader The leader is mesmerised into emotional blackmail. They convince the leader that no one preceded the boss and definitely none shall follow. These people have destroyed the past leaders and they will destroy the present leaders. Their investment is flattery, their return is unaccountable wealth and a few days of power. They exist in every regime. They bury every regime".⁷⁷

In an opinion survey on the formulation of ethical principles, more than 400 senior government officials of the US have recommended that a true public servant 'is not seduced by flattery'.⁷⁸ Similar views have been expressed by the interviewed civil servants here. The paradox is that they do not like flattery in general but like to be flattered by others. One of the allegations against civil servants is that they often tend to serve a specific coterie or a particular party i.e. the party in power. In doing so they often sacrifice the value of the public interest. One of the junior civil servants who just joined the Service remarked, in our administration sycophants are driving the efficient out of circulation by using their vile art. Asafuddowla, a retired senior civil servant having diversity of experience in the civil service of Bangladesh, remarks in a tone of pity: "Officers of the republic have to be servile and sycophant to survive."⁷⁹ A joint secretary working for the Ministry of Textiles remarked, flattery is harming the civil service in two ways --- first, by resorting to flattery, the flatterer serves his or her private interest by praising his or her superiors falsely and by hiding the real situation, he or she precludes the superior officers from making pragmatic decisions; secondly, the person who is flattered obtains a distorted picture of what he or she really is and what he or she should really do. However, it is

76 Khurshid Alam, "Government and Politics : An Analytical Framework", *Journal of Asiatic Society of Bangladesh*, 49(2) : December, 2004. p. 356.

77 Editorial: "Power, Captivity, and Inefficacy", *News Today*, March 7, 2003. p. 4.

78 Elliot Richardson, *op cit*, p. 36

observed that generally professionally incompetent, intellectually immature and authoritarian persons both in politics and civil service 'relish flattery' which genuine and competent persons shun. Sycophants ruin these persons because 'they themselves are reluctant to be saved by honest criticism.'⁸⁰

As the above discussion concludes, a question is likely to creep in a curious mind---how does sycophancy makes its way into administration and politics. Jahan opines, sycophancy flourishes in a system where 'scant attention' is given to the rule of law by the governor and the governed.⁸¹

Arrogance: Theorists of public administration are almost unanimous in enlisting arrogance as one of the symptoms of maladministration. Arrogance generally springs from excessive power and excessive self-confidence. In fact, arrogance is the manifestation of the misperceived or distorted concept of power and possession of resources. In the context of civil service, the power of administrators emanates from their permanence, expertise and academic excellence. Moreover, the inherent norms, values, assumptions of bureaucratic culture make civil servants arrogant, self-serving and unresponsive. As Ward states, the regimented bureaucratic culture 'instills and perpetuates an arrogance that removes the government from the people it should serve.'⁸² Arrogant civil servants assume, they know best and they are more knowledgeable about the issue or the problem at hand. They tend to perpetuate the status quo and put up resistance to any kind of innovation in terms of values. To them personal loyalty, status, seniority are more important than quality.

Arrogance is one of the main maladies of the Civil Service. The classic symptoms of this malady-- a) unjustified anger/agitation, b) unwilling to listen to the junior, c) clinging to one's own views even if others' views are useful, d) belief that they can do everything well, e) blind to own deficiencies. Robson lists a few symptoms of arrogance--'an excessive sense of self-importance on the part of officials,' 'an undue idea of importance of their

79 M. Asafuddowla, "Passing thoughts invited by the On-going impasse", *The Independent*, January 9, 1996. p. 4.

80 AZM Shamsul Alam, "*Democracy and Election*", (Dhaka: Bangladesh Cooperative Book Society Ltd, 1996) p. 52.

81 Rounaq Jahan, "Why are we still continuing with a 'viceregal' political system?", *The Daily Star*, January 31, 2004. p. 2.

82 Paul Van Ward, *Dismantling The Pyramid* (Washington: Delphi Press, 1991). p. 49.

office', 'an indifference towards the feelings or towards the convenience of individual citizens' and 'a failure to recognise the relations between the governors and the governed'⁸³ A civil servant ceases to be civil when he or displays vanity or arrogance. Civil servants of Bangladesh are accused of misbehaviour, snobbery and arrogance. As Khaleque, an ex-Inspector-General of Police of Bangladesh, remarks: "The over-bearing personal demeanour, elitist attitude of a lot of them in public duty and poor moral values contributed to the fairly deprecated portrait of many of these officials."⁸⁴ Ordinary members of the citizenry fear to approach their offices for the redress of any genuine problem in the face of the arrogant disposition of these officers; even when they get access, they are often treated as if they are masters and the people are their servants.⁸⁵ Alam, a retired senior member of the ex-Civil Service of Pakistan, remarks: "The Government servants in our country though are by courtesy called Civil Servants are virtually Civil Lords."⁸⁶

Views, sentiments and perceptions of citizens are often mirrored through specific columns of the national dailies. Nizam Ahmed, a reader of the Daily Star in a letter written to the editor has listed 'arrogant bureaucrats' as one of the twenty-one menaces to the civil life in Bangladesh.⁸⁷ Arrogant behaviors are noticeable in the interaction with subordinates and with common members of the public. About the sufferings, harassment and humiliation of the public at the hands of the service-providing agencies, Nurunnabi Chowdhury comments: "Even the petty officials exhibit insolence like of which you do not see anywhere else. They immediately assume an air benefactor as you approach for the service."⁸⁸ Some officials use arrogance deliberately as a defence mechanism to hide their incompetence. They do not allow criticism of others and they impose decisions upon others. The opposite of arrogance is mutual respect. About the nature of interpersonal

83 William A. Robson's "Bureaucracy and Democracy" quoted in N. Venkateshwara Rao's (ed.) *Public Administration and Development Dynamics* (New Delhi: Kanishka Publishers, 1996). p. 45.

84 Abdul Khaleque, *Reforming the administration*, The Daily Star, January 17, 2005. p. 4.

85 Ali Ahmed, "Module for Modernising the Civil Service", *The Bangladesh Observer*, December 12, 1992. p. 5.

86 AZM Shamsul Alam, *Democracy and Election*, Dhaka: Bangladesh Cooperative Book Society, 1996. p.80.

87 Nizam Ahmed, letter's column, *The Daily Star*, September 5, 1993.

88 Mohammad Nurunnabi Chowdhury, "Public Servants' Accountability: Delivery of Services", *The Daily Independent*, September 1996. p. 4.

conduct of civil servants, Siddiqui remarks: "Suspicion, disbelief, misbehavior and throwing about rules are the common weapons he would employ in treating the lungi-clad person daring to come up to him"⁸⁹ It is interesting to note that arrogance is not found in the officials working in the private sector because there is competitiveness in the quality of services, innovations are encouraged to produce quality services or products and the personnel management system is mostly based on 'hire and fire'.

Arrogance is the manifestation of a misperceived or perverted concept of power stemming from an authoritarian mindset; it is a defense mechanism for the inefficient who inevitably suffer from a deep sense of insecurity or inferiority. In the views of Ara: "Arrogance is mask to defend against toxic and feelings of shame. Source of this shame could be social (e.g. unhealthy competitiveness), familial (e.g. poor parenting), financial (e.g. poverty) etc."⁹⁰ Persons who are internally fragile use arrogance as a shield to make themselves less vulnerable and less approachable. By growing an inflated self ego, they behave like 'superhumans' or 'sub-humans'⁹¹ and do not tolerate mistakes, do not appreciate good performance by others. They display power and pelf in a crude fashion and put down others to feel great. The arrogant behavior is so pervasive and deep-rooted in the civil servants that the fresh graduates who have been seen to be modest so long get quickly infected with this deviant behaviour after joining the Civil Service whereas the twin essential values of efficiency and civility hardly attract them for internalisation and practice on the job. Arrogance is infectious as the 'shouting, anger, officious behaviour of arrogant civil servants elicit reciprocation; the result is a vicious cycle of recrimination among civil servants themselves, peers and juniors, 'which also spills over into the public.'⁹² Arrogant officials believe that people cannot take the responsibility for their own destinies and that they cannot be trusted to adequately respond to the institutional needs.⁹³ Arrogant civil servants stripe the people of their dignity and make them insecure or anxious. Arrogance of power rather leads to blatant personalised services without regard to

89 Kamal Siddiqui, *Towards Good Governance in Bangladesh*, Dhaka: The University Press Ltd., 1996, p. 66.

90 Nighat Ara, Interpreter of Maladies, Life Style, *The Daily Star*, August 23, 2005.p. 6

91 Ibid.

92 Paul Van Ward, *Dismantling The Pyramid* (Washington: Delphi Press, 1991). p. 87.

93 Ibid. p. 81.

public needs.⁹⁴ Thus arrogance curtails the prospects of a democratic administration, democratic politics and participatory development which are the demand of this century. Hinting at the pernicious effects of arrogance, Alam remarks: “Not only in the field of honesty and integrity, but even as regards materialistic and secular achievement, public servants in Bangladesh cannot move ahead much because of their egoism and individualistic selfishness.”⁹⁵ What is pertinent in this discussion is that arrogance has a debilitating effect on performance and conduct officials because it prevents them from building trust in others and acts as an impediment to the growth of professionalism.

Arrogance is basically a learned behaviour acquired from social learning; it has ‘little to do with genetic traits.’⁹⁶ Absence of role modelling by seniors, ill-designed IT and OJT during service, inadequate feedback about performance at the behavioural level, absence of opportunities to ventilate grievances in a systematic manner contribute to the growth of this unhealthy behaviour. One way to cope with the arrogant people is to decide strongly not to be influenced by them at all. Psychiatrists suggest ways of fighting against the behaviour; these include developing or exploring alternative avenues of life to feel rewarded, visiting places of natural beauty, engaging in intellectual, academic or cultural pursuits and practising meditation regularly.⁹⁷

Profile of the Bangladesh Civil Service

Based on the views of the public, academics, researchers, and reports of the world bodies as discussed above, a profile can be epitomised portraying the behavioral characteristics of the civil servants of Bangladesh:

- i) The civil servants are arrogant and authoritarian in attitude;
- ii) They tend to delay in delivering service to the public;
- iii) They look for ready precedents and cases and do not apply their mind for innovative decisions; and
- iv) They flatter their bosses and like to be flattered by others as well.

94 Ibid. p. 10.

95 AZM Shamsul Alam, *Bureaucracy in Bangladesh Perspective*, Dhaka: BPATC, 1999. p. 78.

96 Nighat Ara, Interpreter of Maladies, Life Style, *The Daily Star*, August 23, 2005.p. 6

97 Ibid.

Concluding remarks

The quality and image of BCS rest ultimately with the satisfaction of the citizens who have to approach the civil servants for their day-to-day social services. The effective assessment of the conduct of the civil servants therefore “lies in the public opinion of the service itself and it is upon the maintenance of a sound and healthy public opinion within the Service that its value and efficiency chiefly depend.”⁹⁸ Thus sooner the civil servants of Bangladesh get rid of the above-mentioned traits for which they are criticised by the citizenry, the better for the government, the nation and also for themselves.

98 Report of a board of inquiry quoted in *The British Civil Service*, British Information Service, London, August, 1964. p. 26.

Chapter V

CODIFIED OPERATING VALUES: MISSING INGREDIENT OF THE BANGLADESH CIVIL SERVICE

It is desirable that a civil service with a performance orientation builds itself into an administrative culture where a set of agreed values is practised as a way of service life. In other words, administrative culture needs to be institutionalised by the internalisation and practice of a cluster of values to be identified by the Civil Service. These are to be practised in the same way rules, laws, systems, and procedures are followed. The discussion in the present chapter is based on the assumption or premise that accountability cannot be truly achieved or established unless a transformation in the existing administrative culture is brought in. This transformation can be achieved through the intervention of the civil service heroes and leaders with the genuine support and cooperation of the political masters irrespective of affiliation and regime. Values form an important ingredient of administrative culture both in individual organization, societal and national context.

The present chapter consists of five main sections. The first section that follows provides a definitional clarification of the term 'civil service values' along with indicating the desirability of practising these values by the civil servants, especially in a country like Bangladesh, which seems to have considerable potentiality that is trapped in a low growth cycle. The next section probes perceived causes of the unethical behavior that seems to have been persisting in the Bangladesh Civil Service. The third section elaborates with justification on the twelve core interlocking values that have been identified by this researcher in his quest for a 'Cluster of Civil Service Values'. The fourth section seeks to suggest a code of ethics for the members of BCS based on the values identified in the third section. The last part of the chapter suggests a common Code of Conduct that provides an ethical framework for accountability and for the expected behaviour of the civil servants of Bangladesh.

Why Values are Important?

As values are substantively abstract, it is difficult to define or explain them. Values are fundamental assumptions that are held about what is good or evil, positive or negative, important or trivial, true or false, and what is boon or bane. Navran defines values and ethics as “a system of beliefs---how one defines what is right, good and fair. Ethics refers to how those values are acted out.”¹ Values are the engine of efficiency and rational administrative conduct which ultimately influences an official's quality of performance.² Explaining the effects of the absence of values, Cox says: “Without values and codes that direct expectations, individuals and groups alike will roam aimlessly.”³ Thus value is a deeply held belief that a specific mode of conduct is collectively or socially preferable. Nothing can be termed as a value that does not provide any direction to a desirable condition. Values play a seminal role in shaping conduct and attitude; these provide normative check and foster a sense of self-control. Self-control is anyway better than control by anybody. According to Friedrich, responsible conduct of administrative functions is not so much enforced as elicited.⁴ Rules are formal; they foster accountability as they put a restraining hand on arbitrariness, favouritism and discrimination. The question is --- who enforces these rules? If the value system of the rule-enforcer i.e. the civil servant is not properly built, practice or enforcement of values becomes uncertain. Personal commitment and proactivity can hardly be enforced by laws; these can rather be instilled through the internalisation and practice of values. In fact, values make officials proactive⁵ and truly professionalised; one dominant trait of proactive persons is that they are less likely to be governed by the physical environment. Their decisions, activities and performance are influenced more by their carefully internalized values and standards than the environment around them. Professionalised officials permit nothing to stand

1 Frank Navran's essay "Your role in shaping ethics", incorporated in the book entitled "*Integrity at Work*" by (ed.) Ken Shelton, (Utah: Executive Excellence, 1998). p. 204.

2 Syed Naquib Muslim, "The Practice of Administrative Accountability and Good Governance : The Bangladesh Experience", a country paper presented at the workshop entitled *Commonwealth Programme on Managing Performance-oriented Public Service* held at INTAN, Malaysia, June 16-28, 1997. p. 1.

3 Allan Cox, "The Quest for Corporate Values", in Ken Shelton, ed., *Integrity at Work*, (Chicago: Executive Excellence, 1998), p. 64.

4 Carl Friedrich, quoted in George E. Berkley, *The Craft of Public Administration*, (London: Allyn & Becon, 1978), p. 453.

5 Stephen R. Covey, "*The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*", (New York: Fireside Books, 1970) p. 72.

in the way of the service which they are obligated to deliver; they rather sacrifice 'personal wishes and political expediency'⁶ to the welfare of those whom they serve. Hinting at the importance of professional values, Hassan states: "Increased accountability is to be determined by an increased sense of personal involvement and initiative and this should be accompanied by a correspondingly reduced level of dependence upon 'Management by Regulations'".⁷ Douglas corroborates Hassan's views when he says: "More important than the institutional improvements ... is our need for a deeper set of moral values."⁸

Values are not simply choices of extreme alternatives of right or wrong; they do not emerge from the vacuum; these evolve and emerge out of a variety of forces, the dynamic socio-economic context, from citizens' common beliefs, needs, purposes, motives, interests, and aspirations. Stressing the significance of values and ethics, Mosher states: "Truly meritorious performance in public administration will depend at least equally upon the values, the objectives and the moral standards which the administrator brings to his decisions and upon his ability to weigh the relevant premises judiciously in his approach to the problems at hand."⁹

Experience suggests, the constitutional provisions, rules, systems and various other control mechanisms have not been able to coax expected results or performance from civil servants. Values are important because these provide officers the standards and norms by which they guide their day-to-day activities and determine their attitudes towards socio-economic and political issues. These act as an antidote to the frivolous, amoral and illegal behaviour of officials. A common codified value set is therefore needed to guide civil servants to apply the rules and procedures judiciously and to select fair methods to implement justified goals while performing their responsibilities.

Administrative capability of civil servants must be tempered with a set of values to be commonly practised. As Sarji observes: "Public services that are guided by proper values and a code of ethics will be a better guarantee of public accountability."¹⁰

⁶ Harry D. Kitson, "Training for Personnel Work", *Personnel Journal*, June, 1977. p. 271

⁷ Yusof Hassan, "Country Report: Brunei", in Sirajuddin H. Salleh & Arabinda Kar, eds., *Administrative and Financial Accountability: The ASEAN-SAARC Experience*, (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1995 Asian & Pacific Development Centre, 1995), p. 116.

⁸ Paul H. Douglas, *Ethics in Government*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953), p. 102.

⁹ Frederick C. Mosher, *Democracy and The Public Service* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 97.

¹⁰ Ahmed Sarji, *Civil Service Reforms*, Kuala Lumpur, Pelanduk Publications, 1996, pp. 16, 111.

These views are echoed in the words of Baksi, a veteran officer of the former Indian Civil Service: "No enactment of statutes, however lofty, be their aims, no planned improvement in the machinery of administration, however educated and intelligent may be administrative personnel, and no expansion in industrialisation according to blueprints drawn up by the best of experts generously ... can possibly create a good and secured society of fully developed human beings *if moral qualities*, in requisite measure, in terms of character, honesty and genuine love for the country be lacking".¹¹

With the emergence of democracy as a mode of governance, administrative values and culture have become a recurrent theme for discussion and deliberation in Bangladesh. This is because there has been serious erosion in the morale and morality of the civil servants of Bangladesh since independence. Existence of the Government Servants' Conduct Rules and the anti-corruption laws and rules could not make any significant contribution in improving the performance as well as ethical behaviour of officers.

Perceived Causes of the Unethical Behavior in the BCS

Civil servants in all ages have been found vulnerable to power and pelf, and they often tend to sacrifice the public interest at the altar of the excessive self-interest. Volumes of law books, rules and procedures, policies and mechanisms are available with the government of Bangladesh to regulate or restrain the frivolous and unethical conduct of officials and to bring them to heel when deemed necessary. The Anti-corruption laws and rules, the Government Servants' Conduct Rules are very much in force. But still the quality of performance of the civil servants has not improved according to the expected level. A nagging question to many is --- what are the probable reasons for the unethical behavior in the members of the Civil Service?

An attempt may therefore be made to identify the causes for the continuing ethical erosion of civil servants. If the causes are identified, an agenda for action can be initiated to ameliorate the prevailing situation.

i) ***Absence of a declared cluster of core civil service values and code of ethics:*** Since independence, there has been no initiative in identifying and codifying a set of common administrative values that should guide and inspire civil servants or other similar officials working for the government. This is one of the reasons for the non-uniformity in the performance behaviour of our civil servants. When the new

11 N. Baksi quoted in K.L. Panjabi, ed., *The Civil Servant in India*, (Bombay Bharatiya Vidya Bhaban, 1965), p. 211.

members of the BCS are asked to specify the values of BCS for them to practise, they find it difficult or even get puzzled to provide a consistent response. Belonging to a unified Civil Service, the answers or responses from civil service members to the question of civil service values or ethics vary widely. This is one of the reasons why civil servants behave differently and the quality of their service or performance lack uniformity. This situation demands the policy-maker's intervention which seems to have been overdue. There is of course the existence of the *Government Servants Conduct Rules*. But this is not appreciated or accepted by civil servants themselves because these rules specify what *should not* be done, not what *should* be done. The provisions in these Rules are mostly negative in tone and punitive in spirit.

Civil servants in Bangladesh operate on personal or individual values or the values they inherit from their respective families or the values they obtain sporadically from the educational institutions or from the respective training institutes or subsequently from the workplaces. Suggesting a set of values in the absence of an officially declared civil service values for civil servants and politicians is a difficult job. It is difficult also because the Bangladesh Civil Service has already earned disrepute of being corrupt, inefficient, dilatory, arbitrary, arrogant and wasteful. In fact, the Civil Service in Bangladesh is growing physically in a gargantuan magnitude whereas its ethical self is assuming a pigmy stature. Thus, it has now become essential and urgent to identify a set of appropriate values that are commonly required of the civil servants to internalise and practise after they get inducted into the Bangladesh Civil Service.

ii) *De-emphasising ethics and behavioral science in the training curricula*: The identified values, ideals, and standards of civil servants act as what Gaus terms as '*inner check*'. This normative check can be created through well-conceived and systematic training. In Bangladesh training curricula designed for the civil servants are biased more towards laws, and rules and less towards ethics and behavioral science. Scholars, academics, civil servants love to talk on ethics at workshops and seminars but no serious commitment has been perceptible about the implementation of what is deliberated, articulated or recommended. Topics on ethics get incorporated in a disjointed way in the modules of training courses depending on the personal choice and perception of the heads of the leading cadre-specific training institutes. Discussions on values and ethics in the instructional sessions are not held in a planned or consistent way. Long and extensive lectures are organised at BPATC at an odd

hour allowing the trainees to sleep following the stressful afternoon physical exercise session. No case materials on ethics and morality have yet been developed for use in training sessions by any civil service training institutes.

iii) **Gaps in the constitution:** Constitution is the predominant symbol of a country's administrative as well as political values. It is supposed to be the original document embodying coherently the values for the citizenry, elected public representatives and civil servants. All rules, laws and procedures to run the affairs of administration are to be framed in consonance with the provisions of the constitution. What are the values enshrined in our Constitution? Are the terms *civil service*, *administration*, *bureaucracy* used or explained in the Constitution? Do our citizens know about the main constitutional provisions? When a member of the parliament i.e. Jatiya Sangshat takes oath on being elected, he or she promises to uphold the values as enshrined in the constitution. Civil servants can function in a coherent way when they find the administrative values and the 'regime value' to be consistent. Values concerned with the state or the constitution are termed by Rohr as 'regime value'.¹² When the situation is reverse, civil servants remain confused and their confusion affects smooth performance of their mandated responsibilities.

iv) **Inadequate incentive structure:** It is an acknowledged fact that the civil servants of Bangladesh in comparison to those of other countries are under-paid. Theorists and practitioners are unanimous in their views that civil servants should be better paid so that they preserve the public trust bestowed upon them. Integrity in the Civil Service is difficult to achieve when officers do not receive 'a living wage'. A public administration handbook published from the United Nations remarked: "Governments encourage corruption among their officials when salaries are inadequate".¹³ Good emoluments act as an important stimulus in eliciting good performance. The job satisfaction for having the opportunity or privilege of serving the public and a sense of self-esteem should be one of the sources of motivation for working in the Civil Service.

v) **Rarity of role models in the civil service agencies:** As soon as they join the service, the new entrants of the Civil Service find very few incorruptible leaders both in bureaucracy and politics who preach as well as practise values. It is a matter of disappointment that role models are in short supply in administration and the supply is

12 John A. Rohr, *Ethics for Bureaucrats*, (New York: Marcel Dekker, 1978), p. 59.

13 The United Nations, *A Handbook of Public Administration*, New York: UN, 1961. p. 41.

shrinking day by day. Appleby remarked long ago: "A good high level administrator is always a rare bird and such rare birds are developed from many different sources."¹⁴

Quest for a Cluster of Civil Service Values : Twelve Core Interlocking Values

"While recognising that money motivates behaviour much better than the ethic of public service, a pro-active programme needs to be put in place to reestablish a strong civil service ethic"¹⁵ One of the dominant reasons of Malaysia's economic advancement is its highly efficient, responsive and ethically motivated civil service. Malaysia believes that value system has a positive impact on the morale and efficiency of the Civil Service. The Malaysian government published in 1991 a book entitled *Values and Ethics of Public Service* which declares and advocates the core values civil servants are to cultivate.¹⁶ The reform efforts in this country are promoted to gear towards the inculcation and sustained practice of the identified values in the Civil Service.

The strength of an institution rests upon the value system it creates and practises. It is widely believed that the credibility of the Bangladesh Civil Service as an institution is on the ebb because of the continual erosion of the professional values. Politicians, administrators, teachers, learners, citizens all are unanimous in their views that the dysfunctional behaviours like corruption, fraud, waste, misappropriations, are the outcome of value disorientation. But then the question arises --- is there any set of civil service values officially declared by the government of Bangladesh and are the members of the civil service cognizant of it? For civil servants, values are important because these ultimately influence their behaviours and shape their work ethics/ style. These also influence them in identifying appropriate goals and selecting fair methods or means. In fact, administrative values are a potent force that helps in promoting their efficiency and professional growth. Moreover, civil servants of Bangladesh who come from diverse disciplines like social science, agriculture, literature, commerce, engineering, medical science need to develop a uniform and consistent ethical base. Their performance and accountability automatically improve when they function under an identical value system that guides their actions. Because of the absence of common civil service values, the civil servants in Bangladesh tend to work in isolation and a '*esprit de corps*' could not be built in them as yet.

14 Paul H. Appleby, quoted in Roscoe C. Martin's *Public Administration and Democracy* (New York: Syracuse, 1965), p. 30.

15 Kenneth Kernaghan, quoted in World Bank's Study Report, *Government That Works*, (Dhaka: The University Press Limited, 1996), p. 133.

The civil service as an institution therefore needs to identify a specific set of operating values that should be commonly internalised, practised and espoused by the members of all cadres of the Bangladesh Civil Service. Values for the Civil Service need to be common because these will minimise conflicts of interests and bring uniformity in the civil servants' behaviour. The government of Malaysia has identified twelve values for the public servants known as '*Twelve Pillars*'; these are believed to be pre-requisites to high productivity and quality performance. The twelve values are –

<i>The value of time</i>	<i>The influence of examples</i>
<i>The success of perseverance</i>	<i>The obligation of duty</i>
<i>The pleasure of working</i>	<i>The wisdom of economy</i>
<i>The worth of character</i>	<i>The power of kindness</i>
<i>The virtue of patience</i>	<i>The improvement of talent</i>
<i>The dignity of simplicity</i>	<i>The joy of originating</i>

The last value *the joy of originating* indicates the importance the government of Malaysia attaches to the practice of innovation as a means of upgrading the quality of service or output to be produced by a civil service agency.

In Korea the code of ethics has infused in the civil servants a high sense of patriotism, loyalty to the nation and a sense of pride in working for the common people. They take work as a religion as most of the training programmes aim at reforming the moral fibre of the civil servants. The code of ethics of the Korean civil service is epitomised as:

*“Have a lofty ideal with modest living;
Keep out of debt and be proud of thrift and saving;
Prefer a life of substance to that of appearance.”¹⁷*

Administrative values everywhere are dynamic and these evolve with the change in social and regime values; these are also based on the expectations of citizens. These values provide a spiritual framework of great resilience and foster an enormous moral force and consistent optimism in the members of the BCS when operational guidance

16 APO News, Tokyo, September 1997, p. 1.

17 *Public Administration Training System in Korea, Japan and Australia*, Report of Bangladesh Study Mission, Dhaka : National Institution of Public Administration, December, 1976. p. 14.

breaks down. The following set of values is recommended for introduction in the Civil Service of Bangladesh with elaborate justification.

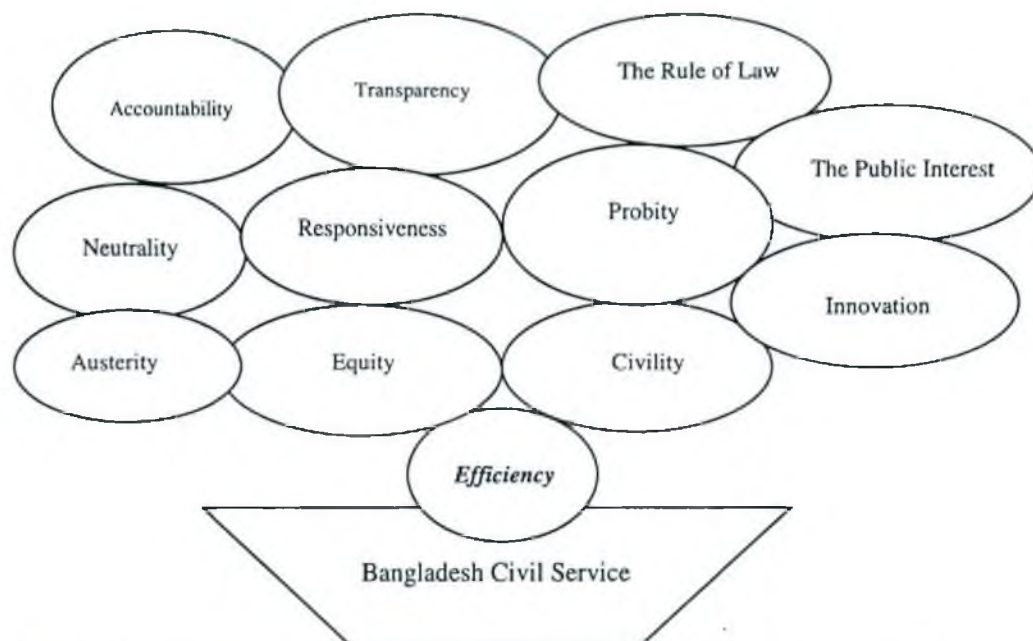


Fig. 5.1: Cluster of Twelve Core Civil Service Values: Interconnectivity

Accountability as a value is "absolute, fundamental and supreme"¹⁸; it is "the main gate and master determinant of moral management."¹⁹ *Accountability* should be the prime value of the Civil Service because it directly relates to performance of responsibilities and satisfaction of the customers or the citizenry. *Accountability* implies that civil servants should answer for their actions and conduct involving policy implementation. *Accountability* is a sense of obligation to perform and to report to a definite person or entity having authority to judge the quality of decisions and actions. Day and Klein two American theorists are willing to consider *accountability* of civil servants as "a private dialogue between themselves and their conscience."²⁰ As a value *accountability* is important because it inherently takes care of *efficiency*. *Accountability* and *transparency* are mutually inclusive because these help each other in achieving improved services to citizens.

18 Andrew Sikula, "Ethical Excellence", an essay incorporated in the book entitled "*Integrity at Work*" by Ken Shelton, (ed.) (Utah : Executive Excellence, 1998). p. 78.

19 Ibid.

20 Patricia Day and Rudolf Klein, *Accountabilities: Five Public Services*, (London: Tavistock, 1987), p.101.

Transparency is the hallmark of a responsive and accountable administration. Accountability and transparency have symbiotic relationship.²¹ Moreover, the values of responsiveness and accountability are automatically achieved when practice of transparency is ensured or it is institutionalised.²² Transparency is the people's democratic right to know what policies are being taken up and how these are being implemented by the civil servants for the public welfare. Transparency implies that "those responsible for carrying on the activities of government are liable to be asked what they do and why. Some account must be given in public to persons not within the administration of why this or that was done or was not done."²³ As Bangladesh is a republic, its citizens are the owners of the state or the ultimate masters. Hence they have the right to know how the civil servants and the politicians in power are managing the statecraft for the public welfare.²⁴ Transparency ensures accountability of civil servants in the use of public resources of which they are the custodians.²⁵

Transparency unmasks the real picture that is often kept hidden unnecessarily from the sight of the public on the plea of confidentiality; moreover, it contributes to revision of the popular misperception about the activities of the committed civil servants²⁶ and generates in the common people a sense of belonging and trust as they are informed of what the civil servants and the politicians in power are doing for their welfare.²⁷ In earlier days, this value could not be practised in administration and politics because of the intervention of extra-constitutional or extra-political forces in the democratic process of Bangladesh. The value of *transparency* ensures openness in the civil service that operates under a democratic system. '*Right to know*' contrasts

21 Syndicate report of Jackfruit group of the 11th Foundation Training Course on *Strategies for the Promotion of Administrative Transparency* prepared and presented at Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, April, 1993. pp. 3-4.

22 Syndicate report of Orange group of the 11th Foundation Training Course on *Strategies for the Promotion of Administrative Transparency* prepared and presented at Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, April, 1993. p. 5.

23 Nevil Johnson, "Parliamentary Questions and the Conduct of Administration", in Robert T. Golembiewsky's *Public Administration*, USA: Rand McNally & Company, 1966. p. 247

24 Syndicate report of Apple-group of the 19th ACAD on *Strategies for the Promotion of Administrative Transparency in Bangladesh* prepared and presented at Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, p. 1.

25 Four Secretaries Report, September, 1998. p. 44.

26 Syed Naquib Muslim, "Transparency in Bureaucracy", *The Bangladesh Observer*, December 9, 1991. p. 4.

27 Syndicate report of Jackfruit team of the 9th Foundation Training Course on *Strategies for the Promotion of Accountability in the Civil Service* prepared and presented at Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, June 10, 1992. p. 20.

with unnecessary secrecy in the transaction of business; it is crucial to the governing powers of the people and knowledge is essential to informed decisions.²⁸ Transparency neutralises bureaucratic obsession with opacity or secrecy. Opacity interferes with objectivity, blocks the process of communication and participation, limits making quality decisions and creates scope for manipulation. It sows the seeds of suspicion, distrust, inequality and fear whereas transparency ensures security and promotes equity protecting rights and privileges of people and civil servants themselves. Moreover, opacity undermines accountability itself by withholding information from or restricting access to those who need it for honest purpose. If members of the public have access to the genuinely needed information from the relevant civil service agencies, the tendency of unauthorised disclosure by disgruntled civil servants will be significantly reduced and thus legitimacy attained. Except on classified information on national security and foreign policy matters, citizens will have access to information that affect their lives. For example, a citizen should know from the relevant office the legal formalities of obtaining a fertiliser licence or a gun licence. According to the World Bank report: "All files of any administrative office are open to the press and the public if not declared secret on grounds of military security, good international relations or for the protection of individuals named in them."²⁹ Transparency also means open discussion, analysis and consultation among the relevant people on the pros and cons of major public policies to be adopted by the government. It demands that communication between civil servants and their clients either written or verbal, should be made in comprehensible terms. This value will bring visibility of actions and transactions, clarity in policies and programmes and thus brings an aura of trust in the minds of the citizenry. Moreover, transparency quells the arrogance and sense of superiority often visible in the behaviour of the civil servants; it makes the civil service objective-oriented, enduring and capable of serving the public interest³⁰ and in turn reduces the possibility of inefficiency, corruption,

28 Justice Douglas, quoted in John Rohr, *Ethics for Bureaucrats* (New York: Marcel Dekker, 1978), p. 147.

29 World Bank, *The Government That Works*, 1996, p. 91.

30 Syndicate report of Apple-group of the 19th ACAD on *Strategies for the Promotion of Administrative Transparency in Bangladesh* prepared and presented at Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, p. 1.

abuse of power and social inequity.³¹ It contains an element of the public interest; there is a synergic relations between the public interest and transparency. According to Fulton Report: "The public interest could be better served if there were greater amount of openness."³²

If a civil servant practises transparency, he or she can say 'yes' when he or she means 'yes'. This reduces confusion as well as the cleavage between the administrators and the administered. As the Fulton Report, a classic document on the Civil Service reforms, states back in 1968 about the significance of openness: "The fuller the information, the closer the links between government (both ministers and civil servants) and the community and the smaller gap of frustration and misunderstanding between 'them' and 'us'".³³ Transparency or openness is a protection against arbitrary exercise of discretion; non-transparency breeds insensitivity, aloofness and arrogance in civil servants.

When it is appreciated or recognised by everyone that transparency as a value is important for the civil service, the question naturally arises what is about politics? Politics forms the superstructure from which all the policies emanate and therefore political transparency is a precondition to establishing administrative transparency. Political transparency will expose the malpractices and corruption of the politicians in power to the people who can then decide who to vote for in the upcoming elections.³⁴ One of the reasons transparency cannot be practised in the civil service is that civil servants' activities are often unjustly interfered with by the politicians in power³⁵ Again, when civil servants turn blindly 'loyal' to the unjust desires of the dishonest politicians in power, transparency becomes elusive.³⁶

31 Syndicate report of Jackfruit team of the 9th Foundation Training Course on *Strategies for the Promotion Accountability in the Civil Service* prepared and presented at Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, June 10, 1992. p. 5.

32 *The Civil Service: Fulton Report*, op. cit., p. 91.

33 *The Civil Service: Fulton Report*, op. cit., p. 92.

34 Syndicate report of Jackfruit group of the 11th Foundation Training Course on *Strategies for the Promotion Administrative Transparency* prepared and presented at Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, April, 1993. p. 6.

35 Syndicate report of Jackfruit group of the 11th Foundation Training Course on *Strategies for the Promotion Administrative transparency* prepared and presented at Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, April 1993. p. 5.

36 Syndicate report of Jackfruit team of the 9th Foundation Training Course on *Strategies for the Promotion Accountability in the Civil Service* prepared and presented at Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, June 10, 1992. p. 11.

The rule of law which connotes that all citizens irrespective of rank, caste, colour, creed, birth-place and political affiliation are equal before the eye of law and that they will not be deprived of the rights to life, liberty and property without the due process of law is constitutionally guaranteed in Bangladesh. Establishing *the rule of law* is the most effective strategy to ensure accountability in both politics and the Civil Service. The rule of law implies the absolute supremacy of the prevailing law i.e. the equal treatment of all classes of citizens as opposed to the caprices or arbitrariness or frivolities of civil servants. Ademola, a retired Chief Justice of Nigeria, remarked in 1961: "As soon as you accept that man is governed by law and not by whims of man, it is the rule of law." *The rule of law* also demands that both civil servants and politicians should be allowed to play their assigned role without interference from anybody. The value of neutrality is enmeshed in the rule of law. Thus, *the rule of law* as an administrative value is important for institutionalising democratic administration as well as for winning confidence of the citizenry in the Civil Service.

It is observed that Bangladesh is rich in producing volumes of rules, laws and process manuals but seems to be poor in practising or enforcing them. The legal framework available with the government is sufficient to ensure the rule of law and good governance in the country. "But our rulers" as Hafiz says, "have a proclivity to over-legislate, ostensibly to concentrate more and more power in their hands."³⁷ The law-makers are often found to be the law-breakers and deviating from the established procedures. It is quite natural that when persons at the top break the law, they lose 'the moral authority to make others obey the law.'³⁸ In the process, the Civil Service gets 'mutilated' and the rule of law subverted ultimately causing insecurity and injustice to the law-abiding citizenry.

Of late, it has become difficult to establish the rule of law in this country because of the continued twisted relationship between the politicians-in-power and the administrators. The compliance of the rule of law relies largely on the law-abiding disposition of both the groups. As Shelley observes: "If the rule of law, justice and fairplay have to be secured in the society, there must be understanding and

³⁷ M. Abdul Hafiz, "The Rule of Law: How distant is the dream?", *The Daily Star*, January 31, 2004.p.

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³⁸ Ibid.

cooperation between the politicians and the administrative officials."³⁹ The issue of politician-administrator relations has been discussed at some length in Chapter-XI.

The public interest is the prime value of democratic administration. In the words of Rosen: "Public administrators are responsible and government bureaucrats are accountable when their power and influence are exercised in the public interest."⁴⁰ The public interest which acts as a safety valve for civil servants in their decisions and actions cuts both ways; it serves "the greatest number" of beneficiary by giving them "the greatest good" and acts as an inner check for those who tend to operate on caprices and frivolities. The public interest is equivalent to those interests that are shared by majority members of a community. In the absence of the public interest, the self-interest will be preponderant or uncontrollable. According to Lippman: "the public interest may be what men would choose if they saw clearly, thoughtfully, rationally and acted disinterestedly and benevolently".⁴¹ Disinterestedness does not mean lack of interest; it means without any bias towards any specific group or party. A policy or an action has not served the public interest if it can be shown that it was adopted without proper regard for existing preference in the community or its prevailing majority. The value of *the public interest* also acts as a deterrent against arbitrary use of discretion by administrators and politicians. In the words of Mosher: "Conscientious, educated and well-disposed public servants will behave in the general public interest."⁴²

Civil servants are human beings who are essentially self-interested and are actuated primarily by selfish desires. It is through a socialisation or reorientation process that they learn how to reconcile diverse interests. Although the roles of civil servants and public representatives are distinct, their relationship gets cemented by the invisible force of common values. If both the groups work shoulder-to-shoulder to serve the public interest, there remains little scope for any tension between them. The value of *the public interest* is important on the ground that

39 Mizanur Rahman Shelley, "Politics and Bureaucracy: The experience of Bangladesh", *The Independent*, January 3, 1998. p. 4.

40 Bernard Rosen, *Holding Government Bureaucrats Accountable*, (Washington: The American University, 1984), p. 152.

41 Walter Lippman, *The Public Philosophy*, (New York: Mentor, 1956), p. 40.

42 Mosher, quoted in Bruce LR Smith and James D. Carroll, *Improving the Accountability and Performance of Government*, (Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1981), p. 97.

“performance does not become the prisoner of non-decision and of the rigidities of procedure and regulations.”⁴³

The public interest and bureaucratic responsiveness are intimately related; the latter determines how closely civil service activities and decisions coincide with the former. The civil service agencies must strive to avoid abuse of power by balancing the conflicting interests such as excessive self-interest, the group interest or the party interest within the confines of law. The public interest demands maintenance of political neutrality in the Civil Service and of confidence because neutrality is an essential part of the structure of government.⁴⁴ The civil service officials cannot stay divorced from this value because they are also citizens themselves. The public interest and transparency are interlocking values because transparency is not based on the private interest but on the public interest. The members of the public who remain informed through a climate of transparency must see that special interest or excessive self-interest does not supersede the public interest. “The safest course for a civil servants is to stay meticulously outside the shadow of doubt. Where there is a conflict between their public duties and private interests, the conflict is to be resolved by the subordination of their private interests to the public duties.”⁴⁵ Thus when civil servants base their values on expediency instead of morality, the public interest will automatically suffer.⁴⁶

Good government in a democratic society relies on the competence and motivation of a neutral or de-politicised civil service.⁴⁷ *Neutrality* or non-partisanship is the hallmark of constitutional bureaucracy. In civil service neutrality does not mean indifference or inertia or non-performance or non-involvement. It means a civil servant is debarred from indulging in activities of political nature but offering loyalty to the government of the day. In the permanent civil service system, professional detachment or objectivity is an essential attribute; civil servants are not free to express

43 T. N. Chaturvedi, "Dimensions of Administrative Performance and Accountability", in Prem Kumar and AK Ghosh, eds., *Management in Government & Public Services*, (New Delhi: Anmol Publications, 1992). p. 44.

44 The Masterman Committee's report quoted in Chaudhury Muzzaffar Ahmed's *The Civil Service in Pakistan*, Dhaka: NIPA, 1969. p. 311.

45 Chaudhury Muzzaffar Ahmed, *The Civil Service in Pakistan*, Dhaka: National Institute of Public Administration, 1969. p. 284.

46 AZM Shamsul Alam, *Bureaucracy in Bangladesh Perspective*, Dhaka: Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, 1999. p. 201.

political views and they are to forego participation in political debates and in partisan political activities. The civil service neutrality is based on the assumption that civil servants are the servants of the citizenry, and not of any particular political party. Regarding the practice of neutrality, the Philippines code of ethics for public servants specifies: "Public officials and employees shall provide service to everyone without unfair discrimination and regardless of party affiliation or preference."⁴⁸ As has been said earlier, neutrality and the rule of law are inter-related; because if a civil servant works with neutrality, he or she treats all citizens equally in the light of law. As a matter of fact, this type of functional attitude of the civil servants "supports the growth and sustainability of better governance".⁴⁹ If neutrality is not maintained, the Civil Service becomes prone to politicisation, and when the Civil Service is politicised, the rule of law is automatically subverted. Again, when there is no rule law, the security of public life and property is jeopardised and the fabric of democracy is shaken. More specifically, when neutrality is vitiated through politicization, it becomes difficult for the civil servants to protect the public interest. If neutrality is not practised, civil servants will lose their cohesiveness and a particular group will reap the harvest for serving the political interest and the other group will be victimised for preserving the public interest. As Pilania and Singh observe: "In the absence of neutrality, civil servants will develop cleavages, factionalism and percolate the belief that some will be promoted and some others would be penalised due to their political bias."⁵⁰

Unfortunately, in Bangladesh, neutrality of the civil service seems to have been seriously affected in recent times. The responsible quarters believe, the political parties in power are greatly responsible for this deviation. As Ali remarks: "It appears to have been discarded in varying degrees by successive regimes, more since 1991".⁵¹

47 Report on *Public Administration Sector Study in Bangladesh*, United Nations Development Programme, July, 1993. p. 101.

48 Patricia A Sto Tomas in the country paper of the Philippines presented in the ASEAN-SAARC regional conference on *Administrative and Financial Accountability* and printed in the book, *"Administrative and Financial Accountability : The ASEAN-SAARC Experience"*, (ed.) Sirajuddin H. Salleh & Arabinda Kar, Asia & Pacific Development Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1995. p. 181.

49 AMM Shawkat Ali, *Bangladesh Civil Service: Political-Administrative Perspective*, Dhaka: University Press Ltd., 2004, p. 293.

50 G P Pilania and Hoshier Singh, *Administration and Social Change*, (New Delhi: Printwall Publishers, 1985). p. 68.

51 AMM Shawkat Ali, op. cit., p. 293.

The subject of politicization as a major constraint on civil service performance has been discussed at some length in Chapter 11.

Responsiveness implies the nature and intensity of interface between civil servants and citizens seeking redress of their grievances. Responsiveness refers to the speed and the attitude with which civil servants satisfy the legitimate demands and genuine needs or preferences of citizens linked to commitment. Stressing the importance of responsiveness, Rourke observes: "Clearly both responsiveness and professionalism will always remain highly ranked values in the design and operation of a democratic bureaucracy and each requires constant nurturing."⁵²

About the level of responsiveness of our civil servants to citizens, the World Bank in its research document *Government That Works* comments: "Only a small number of public servants view *responsiveness* to citizens as a fundamental obligation."⁵³ Responsiveness of Bangladeshi civil servants has been exemplified by Alam in plain words: "If a member of the public", as he says, "comes to a government office for any service, he is avoided and asked to come tomorrow as the person who was supposed to deal with it has gone to a bank or for lunch or to pick up his daughter from the school. Many government servants would have been happier if the fellow did not come at all."⁵⁴ The scenario is however different in the private sector offices. Responsiveness to the genuine needs, interests, rights or will of citizens is an important test of accountability. Concerning the importance of responsiveness in the delivery of services, the Philippines Code of Ethics specifies: "Public officials and employees shall extend prompt, courteous and adequate service to the public."⁵⁵ Responsiveness calls for efficiency and effectiveness in the dispensation of promised services to the citizenry. The virtue of empathy is enmeshed in this value. In other words, responsiveness flows from sensitivity to the value of the public interest. It presupposes timely action and action involves either success or failure. The antithesis of responsiveness is inaction or indifference or non-committal behaviour. Inaction

52 Francis E. Rourke, "Responsiveness and Neutral Competence in Bureaucracy", *Public Administration Review*, vol. 52, no. 6, p. 98.

53 World Bank, *The Government That Works*, p. 3.

54 AZM Shamsul Alam, *Bureaucracy in Bangladesh Perspective*, Dhaka : Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, 1999. p. 8.

presupposes nothing; it has nothing to win or lose. Many civil servants are seen to resort to inaction to avoid commission of mistakes.

The degree of responsiveness is linked to the degree of the needs of citizens satisfied within the existing legal framework. The presence or profusion of rules, laws and procedures along with the threat of penalty for non-compliance with them has fostered a risk aversion culture among the civil servants in many countries including Bangladesh. The over-riding consideration of non-compliance with the prescribed rules and procedures often precludes them from being quickly responsive to the emergent needs of citizens. This contributes to delay in the delivery of services that are urgently required or sought by the citizenry.⁵⁶

Governments of the developing countries have introduced various measures to promote responsiveness of civil servants to the public. These include *procedural measures* such as language simplification, redesign of forms, simplification of procedures, opening complaint boxes, introduction of citizens' charter; *information measures* such as availability of information through publication of documents on rules, procedures and laws and manuals; *institutional measures* like setting up of the office of the Ombudsman.⁵⁷

Probity is a super-ordinate value that takes care of other values. Probity demands from civil servants consistent pursuit of the virtue of integrity. Integrity is a combination of candour, honesty and commitment. Integrity not only means honesty in financial transactions but it also implies compatibility or congruity between perception and practice and, promise and performance. Probity includes integrity which requires one to insist on what one perceives to be right and demonstrate courage to refuse what is ethically untenable. This value will prompt one to listen to the views of others and then decide what is right and what is wrong. When civil servants practise integrity, they earn credibility of the public. As Pennington maintains: "The number one characteristic people want from their leaders is integrity

55 Patricia S. Tomas, "Country Report", in Sirajuddin H. Salleh & Arabinda Kar (ed.), *Administrative and Financial Accountability: The ASEAN-SAARC Experience*, (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Asia & Pacific Development Centre, 1995), p. 181.

56 Patricia S. Tomas, "Country Report of the Philippines" in Sirajuddin H. Saleh & Arabinda Kar (ed.), *Administrative and Financial Accountability: The ASEAN-SAARC Experience*, (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Asia & Pacific Development Centre, 1995), p. 194.

57 The World Bank, *Government That Works*, 1996. p. 64.

... . It is a crucial ingredient but it is only the first step in a long process.”⁵⁸ Integrity implies commitment and ‘trust in products, services and relationships.’⁵⁹ Today integrity is perceived as a part of efficiency. According to Wheave: “Incorruptibility and efficiency are two obvious requirements for public confidence in the administration of government departments.”⁶⁰ Civil servants practising probity put the public interest above self-interest without being swayed by any personal consideration or corrupt motive; they are not likely to be influenced by flattery and driven by egoism and unreasonable desires. Moreover, it leads the practitioner to a better decision and prevents him or her from the abuse of discretion. Probity and the rule of law are intertwined values. Henry Fayol who mostly worked as a mine engineer perceived the ill effects of the abuse of power and authority in the first part of the nineteenth century and suggested practice of integrity as a means to safeguard the abuse of power by the top-ranking officials. He thus states: “the best safeguard against abuse of authority and against weakness on the part of a higher manager is personal *integrity*”⁶¹ Jefferson reminded us long ago the importance of honesty: “The whole art of the government consists in the art of being honest.”⁶² This will enable them to invite ideas, encourage debate and embrace criticism.

As a value accountability is associated other values. In these days of scarcity when new ideas are sought to minimise cost, to provide timely services, accountability has to accommodate the value of *innovation* which is now considered one of the parameters of efficiency. Innovation is any thought, behaviour, or thing that is new because it is qualitatively different from existing forms. According to Barnett, “every innovation is an idea or a constellation of ideas.”⁶³ The reverse of innovation is ‘dogmatism’ which is considered by Drucker as one of the six ‘deadly sins of public administration’. Dogmatism cannot guarantee performance but it ‘can ensure non-performance’. Development cannot occur when dogmatism is in practice in the civil service because dogmatic civil servants cannot produce new products and services

58 Randy Pennington cited in “*Integrity at Work*” by (ed.) Ken Shelton, (Utah: Executive Excellence, 1998). p. 148.

59 Ibid.

60 K.C Wheave, *Maladministration and Its Remedies*, (London: Stevens & Sons, 1973). p. 8.

61 Henry Fayol, *General Industrial Management*, p. 22.

62 Jefferson, quoted in Bernard Rosen, *Holding Government Bureaucrats Accountable*, (Washington: The American University), p. 152.

63 H. G. Barnett, *Innovation: The Basis of Cultural Change*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1953), p. 7.

with the same resources and satisfy the customers.⁶⁴ In the context of the Civil service innovation may mean introduction of new ideas or concepts that may be converted into an action plan or technology to improve the quality of the existing service by civil servants or civil service agencies. Innovation signifies addition of new service, new role, and new skills or attributes for better performance. Thus innovation provides civil servants impetus to provide creative solutions to the complex problems or to create new opportunities.

Practice of an innovative culture enables a civil service agency/ office to respond to the changing market/environment and to improve the quality of service in response to the demand of citizens. The competitive and changing environment of today necessitates civil servants to embark upon innovations a) to develop capacity for delivering efficient and quality services to the citizenry and b) to keep pace with the changing technology to gain efficiency and dynamism.⁶⁵ Innovation creates the prospects of increased responsiveness of the service-providers to societal needs. Innovation brings quality and productivity.

Civil servants have to face many unpredictable circumstances that call for innovative solutions not conceivable until problems emerge. Solutions are often contingent on unforeseen factors. They have therefore to apply their imaginative or innovative power and here they appear as artists. As Pope says: "His material, the human personality, has all the qualities of the finest steel --- all and far more! Can any limit therefore be set to the possibilities of his work?"⁶⁶ Proactivity, innovation and creativity are not encouraged in the traditional civil service. Innovative behaviour is still not a part of the Bangladesh Civil Service. The seniors are often seen to downplay initiatives and innovative behaviours of juniors. There is again no provision for reward for a civil servant demonstrating a high level of performance and for displaying innovativeness as there is in the Malaysian Civil Service and in the Singapore Civil Service. According to Development Administration Circular no. 3 of 1991 "Public Service Innovation Awards are given to those agencies who have successfully introduced innovations to produce quality service. The *joy of originating*

64 Peter F. Drucker, "The Seven Deadly Sins in Public Administration" in *Perspectives in Public Bureaucracy* by Fred A. Kramer (ed.), (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1981). p. 237.

65 Saadat Husain, *Innovations in Educational Administration in Bangladesh*, Proshikhyan, Bangladesh Society for Training & Development, Vol. 2, July-December, 2003. p. 1.

66 H. G. Pope, "Principles in Practice", *Public Administration*, vol. xi, no. 2, April 1933, p. 205.

is one of the twelve pillars of the Malaysian public service; it means that the best moment of satisfaction for a civil servant is when he or she originates idea coupled with action that benefits the people or the community. Innovations are encouraged in 7 areas --- work environment, organisational structure, capital equipment, management style, system & procedure and technology.⁶⁷ Thailand has created an institution known as National Innovation Agency (NIA) which operates under the Ministry of Science and Technology to encourage members of the civil service to create innovative ideas for capacity-building, and for enhancing efficiency in implementing the nation's strategic goals. NIA infuses new ideas in improving quality of products and services in such areas as health care, industrial design, software, food.⁶⁸

However, while trying to achieve the value of accountability, a civil servant of today should use his or her capacity for creativity with care. Accountability and innovation should not spoil each other. All innovations may not bring fruits and so civil servants attempting experimentations in the public interest should not be held accountable. As Mosher warns: "If everyone were held accountable for everything he did or tried or thought or imagined, this would be a pretty sterile, dull and static world."⁶⁹ In a society of scarcity, a civil servant bereft of a capacity for innovation can hardly contribute to solving the social problems or public issues. As Laski puts it: "A civil service needs not only the routiner; it needs also the ardent inventor who can disturb the routine But there is from the nature of its construction an absence of imaginative scepticism [and] passion for constructive *innovation*."⁷⁰ It is however observed that many civil servants in Bangladesh are unwilling to make any innovations because from experience they find that they are more castigated than appreciated for suggesting or doing any innovative work whereas those who are dishonest, least concerned about the public interest and are stereotyped in role performance are found to stay safe.

67 Ahmed Sarji Bin Abdul Hamid, *The Civil Service of Malaysia*, The Government of Malaysia, 1996. p. 49.

68 Nophakhun Limsamarnphun, "Building a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship", *The Nation*, Thailand, September 2, 2005, p. 7a.

69 Mosher, quoted in Bruce LR Smith and James D Carroll, *Improving the Accountability and Performance of Government*, (Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1981), p. 72.

70 Harold Laski, "Reviews on Parliamentary Government", *Public Administration*, vol. xvii, No. I, January, 1939, p. 64.

Equity is a democratic value, which disapproves discrimination or disparity among people. A democratically oriented civil service demands that civil servants maintain the value of equity as the basic underpinning of all programmes, activities and their benefits. The value of equity posits that civil servants use scarce resources efficiently and distribute them fairly or justly. Citizens are expected to enjoy equal access to services, opportunities and information. Civil servants should not discriminate any citizen on the ground of gender, age, race and religion. Equity ensures distributive justice and protects the interests of the disadvantaged minorities. In other words, a consistent practice of this value will generate in the civil service a feeling of compassion for the poor, the disadvantaged and the deprived section of the citizenry. Thus equity can be both a social as well as administrative value. If any civil servant practises objectivity, equity and probity, the public enjoys safety because there is less likelihood of the incidence of unfair treatment. Conversely, when resources intended for the poor are directed or used for the benefit of the vested interest groups, the value of equity is diluted or even negated. This is a typical situation in the government of Bangladesh as is reported by the Task Force Report: "A significant portion of the resource 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."⁷¹

The manner with which a citizen is treated by a civil servant is indicative of the quality of administration. In the opinion of Finer: "Courtesy in a public is a high form of efficiency."⁷² Brand admonishes: "In their intercourse with the public, officials must always be courteous. They must avoid roughness and apathy; they must be friendly and obliging ..."⁷³ In other words, the quality of public service does not mean the quality of output only; it includes polite and civil behaviour of service providers and the friendly gesture with which service is processed for delivery.⁷⁴ Civility is an indicator of responsiveness; in fact, the values of civility and responsiveness reinforce each other. The German public service code of ethics demands that public officials

71 Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), *Report of the Task Forces on Bangladesh Development Strategies for the 1990s*, vol. II, (Dhaka: University Press Ltd., 1991), p. 212.

72 Herman Finer quoted in the article "*The Personal Relations of Officials with the Public*" by G.H. Stuart-Bunning, *Public Administration*, Vol. IX, No.1, 1931. p. 33.

73 A Brand, *Das Beamtenrecht* translated by Herman Finer, in "The Civil Service and the Modern State: Discipline & Rights", *Journal of the Public Administration*, vol. vii, no. 1, 1929, p. 326.

"must always be courteous. They must avoid roughness and apathy; they must be friendly and obliging"⁷⁵ Robson suggests: "There is suggests nothing more infuriating than arrogance or conceit on the part of an official, while a friendly and helpful attitude can leave a favourable impression of a lasting nature."⁷⁶ It is often remarked by the members of the public that in the Civil Service there is decline of courtesy and rise in the snobbery; civility is almost absent in civil servants. Absence of civility makes a civil servant 'unattractively' self-important. In fact, civil servant ceases to be civil when he shows vanity or arrogance to the citizenry of which he himself is a part. As Crichley sarcastically puts it: "... in forgetting to be servants they forget also to be civil."⁷⁷ Civility is freedom from arrogance, vanity or snobbery in which civil servants of Bangladesh have earned enough notoriety. The World Bank, in its study *Government That Works*, comments: "Ordinary citizens have no expectation of assistance or cooperation or even polite behaviour from government officials."⁷⁸ It is widely believed that many civil servants in this country deliberately avoid candour or politeness to avoid giving information or offering due service; they rather compel negotiation for improper gain. However, sustained practice of civility as a professional value will probably check the tendency of civil servants from being arrogant. To establish civility in day-to-day activities in the office, the government does not require any fiscal measures and strategic planning. What is necessary for the officers is to set a goal to practise this value every day as a mental exercise.

No strategy in promoting accountability will be effectual unless civil servants develop a sense of economy and install a culture of *austerity* at the workplaces. In India, austerity is one of the core values both in politics and administration. Regarding the practice of austerity, the Philippines Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards specifies through a clause: "Public officials and employees and their families shall lead modest lives appropriate to their positions and income. They shall not indulge in extravagant

74 Mohammad Nurunnabi Chowdhury, "Of Accountable and Responsive Public Service", *The Daily Independent*, May 30, 2000, p. 5.

75 G.H. Stuart-Bunning, "*The Personal Relations of Officials with the Public*", *Public Administration*, Vol. IX, No. 1, 1931. p. 33.

76 William Robson, *The Governors and the Governed*, (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1964), p. 20.

77 T A Crichley, *The Civil Service Today*, (London: Victor, 1951), p. 88.

78 World Bank, *The Government That Works*, p. 7.

or ostentatious display of wealth in any form.”⁷⁹ In Germany, the public service is the representative of stringent parsimony and *austere* honesty.⁸⁰

Austerity should be the core value to be practised by the civil servants of a country like Bangladesh that groans under abject poverty. But unfortunately, addiction to luxury or extravagant spending at the cost of public money has become a common phenomenon in our country. Austerity as value is important because craving for higher standard of living induces one to be corrupt.⁸¹ Once a civil servant becomes accustomed to luxurious life, he or she finds it difficult to get out of it and naturally resorts to foul or corrupt means to fulfill his or her ingenuine needs. Civil servants are expected to shun waste and extravagance and practise frugality in using the public money and resources. In many developed countries, extravagance is treated as an executive sin. The practice of austerity is likely to check excessive consumerism and hedonistic behaviour that drive officials to indulge in corrupt practices. In answering the question as to how to practise this value, Muhith prescribes: “Austerity demands a careful deployment of both physical and human resources. The basic principle should be to conserve resources for the most essential needs and services. Ostentatious lifestyle must be curbed.”⁸² One benefit of practising austerity is that it will encourage avoidance of waste and prudent use of resources and in the process this will engender ‘additionality in resource mobilisation.’⁸³ Gulick the late Dean of American Public Administration reminded us back in 1933: “The good life for government as well as for individuals consists in balance and proportion --‘*nothing too much*’ and ‘*nothing too little*.’”⁸⁴

In the cluster of values for civil service suggested in this chapter, the set begins with accountability and ends in efficiency. The hypothesis is, efficiency will be automatically available when the other eleven values are achieved. In the words of

79 Sirajuddin H. Salleh & Arabinda Kar (ed.), *Administrative and Financial Accountability: The ASEAN-SAARC Experience*, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Asia & Pacific Development Centre, 1995, p. 182.

80 Fritz Morstein Marx, *Civil Service in Germany*, an article printed in the book “*Civil Service Abroad*” by Leonard D. White *et al.* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1935). p. 162.

81 AZM Shamsul Alam, *Bureaucracy in Bangladesh Perspective*, Dhaka: Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, 1999. p. 251.

82 AMA Muhith, *Thoughts on Development Administration*, Dhaka: Saleha Muhith, 1981. p. 148.

83 *Ibid.* p. 151.

84 Gulick, quoted in Dwight Waldo, *The Administrative State*, (New York, The Ronald Press, 1948), p. 149.

Day and Klein: "efficiency and accountability are two sides of the same conceptual coin."⁸⁵ The essential test of any civil service is its efficiency in delivering social service to the citizenry. An efficient civil servant is normally an accountable civil servant.

Although *efficiency* is a classical value, it is still everybody's favourite term because of its enduring nature. Efficiency holds the super-ordinate position in the hierarchy of values as it is the most pragmatic value for civil servants. It is crucial because resources of a government are scarce and today civil servants are to manage with less. With the passage of time, the spectrum of efficiency has been broadening but the concept appears nebulous, complex and elusive particularly when it relates to the civil service. According to Dimock: "Efficiency, like happiness, is subtle."⁸⁶ To Waldo, efficiency is a matter of quality.⁸⁷ Gulick treats it as 'the axiom number one in the value scale of administration'⁸⁸ and inefficiency is considered by Waldo as 'the cardinal sin.'⁸⁹ The problem with this value is that it is not often possible to measure when social benefits are in question; in other words, it is not always possible to put a price tag on social or softer issues like social security, flood protection measures, building bridge etc. Perhaps that is the reason Mintzberg remarked, efficiency gets a bad name if in practice, it is equated with measurable efficiency.⁹⁰ Ordinarily speaking, efficiency is giving citizens maximal benefits at the least cost or more benefits at the same cost. The quality of service and the satisfaction a citizen receives out of it constitute the acid test of efficiency. Moreover, a civil servant has to accomplish a specific work within a timeframe. All activities to be accomplished by an administrator are time specific. Time, Einstein's fourth dimension is an important resource that has to be used optimally. Another element of efficiency is *cost-consciousness* or *value for money*. As Metcalfe and Richards put it: "At the efficiency end of the scale, changes are guided principally by consideration of cost-

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85 Patricia Day & Rudolf Klein, *Accountabilities: Five Public Services*, (London: Tavistock, 1987), p. 42.

86 Dimock cited in Dwight Waldo's "*The Administrative State*", (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1948). p. 197.

87 Dwight Waldo, "*The Administrative State*", (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1948). p. 139.

88 Luther Gulick, *Papers on the Science of Administration*, (New York: 1937), p. 192.

89 Dwight Waldo, Op. cit.

90 Henry Mintzberg, cited in Les Metcalfe and Sue Richards, *Improving Public Management* (London: Sage, 1987), p. 28.

consciousness.”⁹¹ Cost-consciousness implies avoidance of waste and extravagance. Members of the Civil Service are to manage with less resources; they cannot afford to use resources extravagantly because resources everywhere are limited or scarce and these resources belonging to the public have to be used judiciously. This is part of his accountability. As a motorist needs to develop a road-sense, similarly a civil servant has to develop a cost-sense. It is because of scarcity that we are compelled to raise the question of accountability. As Peters puts it: “There is the simple need to get the most of each dollar, pound or rupee of public money.”⁹² When they are cost-sensitive, they automatically develop a sense of accountability and desist from extravagance or imprudent use of the public money and resources. The greater efficiency results from a greater sense of cost of any service in which civil servants spend money. In Germany, administrative efficiency is recognised as the mainspring of good government and Germans believe, ‘efficiency depends upon the ethical standards’.⁹³ Through the practice of the value of efficiency, both civil servants and politicians are expected to develop a ‘*financial conscience*’ that will protect the government against impropriety, waste and extravagance in using public money. All these ingredients have been epitomised in the words of the Canadian scholar of Public Administration Johnson; efficiency implies “reducing administrative expenses, eliminating waste and extravagance and speeding up service to the public. This is what I am inclined to call ‘*administrative efficiency*’.”⁹⁴

Suggested Code of Conduct or Ethics for Government Functionaries

After the identification of a set of professional values as discussed in the earlier sections, it now seems possible to frame a code of conduct meant for the civil servants in Bangladesh. This code of conduct will indeed be a prescriptive one for the government functionaries to follow while at work. The following sections seek to clarify the term ‘management ethics’ in organizational context. Ethics can be defined as a set of standards of acceptable conduct and moral judgement. Ethics provides

91 Les Metcalfe and Sue Richards, *Improving Public Management* (London: Sage, 1967), p. 55.

92 Guy Peters, *The Politics of Bureaucracy*, (New York: Longman, 1984), p. 280.

93 Fritz Morstein Marx, *Civil Service in Germany*, an essay printed in the book “*Civil Service Abroad*” by Leonard D. White *et al.* (New York : McGraw-Hill, 1935). p. 162.

94 AW Johnson, “Efficiency in Government & Business”, *Canadian Public Administration*, vol. 6(3), 1963, p. 246.

cultural guidelines - organizational and societal - that help to decide between proper or improper conduct. Therefore, ethics permeates all aspects of the management's interface with all of those who are managed and who are its clientele.⁹⁵ In public organisations in particular ethics is considered a set of moral principles that are expected more often than not to govern the professional behavior of the civil servants. But the 'real world' situation in most of the developing countries is that ethical problems among civil servants ranging from the junior to the senior affect the quality of performance of the civil service as well as the credibility of the government itself. Ethical problems thus merit special consideration because ethical principles and standards ultimately regulate conduct and influence decisions, although these do not tell people what they should do; rather they guide people how to choose the best course of action for themselves. As Brown remarks: "The best ethical guides do not tell people what they should do; rather, they show people how to discover the best course of action for themselves."⁹⁶ To maintain accountability, moral force in the individuals seems imperative. If civil servants are law-abiding, their accountability is automatically achieved; moral force is the prime source of this law-abiding behaviour.

Ethics in public administration implies practice of a set of values, ideals, moral principles and standards that guide civil servants in redeeming their professional obligations. As Kernaghan, an Australian public administration theorist, says: "A code of ethics provides government employees with criteria by which they may evaluate their own behaviour as well as the behaviour of their administration colleagues."⁹⁷ In every country the code of ethics is redefined and updated in the light of the local conditions. In the Bangladesh Civil Service, ethical standards have to be redefined and updated in view of the changed conditions of the internal and external environment; these have to be consistent with the new values and the new environment.

95 George Bohlander and Scott Snell, *Managing Human Resources*, (Mason, Ohio: Thomson, 2004), p. 580.

96 Marvin T. Brown, *Working Ethics: Strategies for Decision-making & Organisational Responsibility* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990). p. xi.

97 Kenneth Kernaghan, *Ethical Conduct: Guidelines for Government Employees*, (Toronto: Institute of Public Administration, 1975), p. 7.

Until a newly recruited member of the Bangladesh Civil Service joins the apex training centre, namely the Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC) and the other relevant training institutes for civil service training, he or she does not get hold of any other document than the offer-letter of appointment in a particular cadre. In Singapore, the government hands over to a new recruit of the Singapore Civil Service a handy, informative and educative document called 'Civil Service Handbook', published by the Public Service Division in the Prime Minister's Office - the central personnel agency in that country. This handbook contains background material and information on the Singapore Civil Service, which includes i) vision and goals of Civil Service; ii) the clientele/customers of Civil Service, and iii) Code of conduct meant for the civil servants.⁹⁸

Presently the behaviour and acts of the civil servants in Bangladesh are regulated by rules contained in two important government documents, i.e., Government Servants' Conduct Rules of 1979 (GSC) and Discipline and Appeal Rules of 1985. In fact, these rules have been inherited from the Pakistani administration which in turn inherited it from the British colonial regime. In the context of democratic administration in practice in Bangladesh, the Government Servants' Conduct Rules needs to be such that the provisions are explicit, maintainable and enforceable. Inherited originally from the colonial time, the Conduct Rules do not clearly spell out what are the values, norms and practices that should be commonly followed by the members of the Bangladesh Civil Service. Chaudhury states: "There has unfortunately been considerable deterioration in the standards of integrity in almost all ranks of the Civil Services despite the existence of comprehensive conduct rules, elaborate disciplinary procedure and general and special punitive measures. Punitive measures cannot go very far in improving the standards of integrity among the civil servants."⁹⁹ Provisions laid down in the 'Rules' are mostly restrictive, prohibitive and punitive in tone and spirit. One of the reasons the civil servants are not seen to observe the Conduct Rules is that out of 34 sections or rules, 27 are prohibitive in nature. When rules are restrictive, they usually evoke resistance by and non-compliance of those for whom these are framed. Moreover, there is no effective mechanism to monitor who is

98 Jon S.T. Quah, "Improving the Efficiency and Productivity of the Singapore Civil Service", in John P. Burns, ed., *Asian Civil Service System*, (Singapore: Times Academic Press, 1994). p. 17.

complying with those rules and who is not. In other words there exists no concrete mechanism to immediately catch the civil servant who deviates from the code of ethics. There is no provision either to reward those who demonstrate high standard of ethics and penalise those who indulge in unethical practices. In the words of Dwivedi and Jain: "In any case, non performance has never been grounds for disciplinary action. The result is a psychology of evasion wherever possible; even years long delay in implementation of major decisions"¹⁰⁰ A panel of researchers of the UNDP in Bangladesh stressed the need for 'a strong code of conduct for government officials'. To them the existing conduct rules need revision; 'this revision of the existing provisions should take into account current socio-economic context.'¹⁰¹ The content of the existing Conduct Rules is so cumbersome and lengthy that it is difficult for the government servants to remember and to practise. As Siddiqui remarks: "We should have as few provisions as possible in the Conduct and Discipline Rules but ensure their fullest implementation across the board."¹⁰² Abedin remarks in a similar tone, the provisions of GSC Rules are 'complicated and cumbersome'; as a result their application 'becomes problematic.'¹⁰³ Thus, in tune with the values identified, a Code of Ethics for Government/Civil Service may be framed for practice by civil servants. It will be possible to foster cohesion among the members of the Civil Service irrespective of cadre, if they maintain the principles of the Code of Ethics.

In the midst of the prevailing ambiguity, it is therefore necessary for the government to develop an easy, acceptable and doable framework within which "do"s and "don't" can be labelled. Here is the proposed Code of Ethics for government/civil servants based on the twelve values identified in the preceding sections.

99 Muzzaffar Ahmed Chaudhury, *The Civil Service in Pakistan*, Dhaka: National Institute of Public Administration, 1969. p. 368.

100 O.P Dwivedi and R.B Jain, *Indian Administration*, (New Delhi: Gitanjali, 1985), p. 44.

101 UNDP, *Report on the Public Administration Sector Study*, (Dhaka: United Nations Development Programme, 1993), p. 15.

102 Kamal Siddiqui, *Towards Good Governance in Bangladesh*, (Dhaka: University Press Limited 1996), p. 84.

103 Mohammed Jainul Abedin, *Papers on Administration and Related Issues*, Academy for Planning & Development, 1991. p. 80.

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT OR ETHICS

As regards the individual member of the Bangladesh Civil Service

As an officer, he or she will --

- give total loyalty to the Republic at all times and on all the occasions when it requires services;
- uphold the constitution of Bangladesh and obey, enforce and maintain the prevailing laws of the land;
- implement the charter of duties in the light of the twelve ethical values declared by the government;
- give primacy to the matters that concern the public interest as well as the national interest; not ignore official duty and use official rank/position to secure private interest ignoring the public interest;
- never accept for himself or herself or for any member of the family any unwarranted economic or non-economic benefit from any member of the public; not lend money to or borrow from any person who has official dealings with him or her;
- not involve in business with the government directly or indirectly, which is inconsistent with the conscientious performance of official duties;
- never divulge any confidential or classified information to the public in performing official duties for personal benefit;
- not take part in political activities and canvass for support for any political party; and
- wear appropriate dress and maintain punctuality in performing official duties.

As regards colleagues within the organization

He or she will--

- not indulge in willful abuse of authority to harass subordinates and other members of the office;
- respect other's views or opinions even if these vary from his or hers;
- treat colleagues at all levels with dignity and respect;
- respond to or respect the genuine needs, grievances and problems of others and not discriminate on grounds of gender, position/rank;
- encourage and assist peers and junior colleagues to develop their potential; and
- neither offer nor accept gifts, hospitality or services which might cause an improper obligation.

As regards the focal agency

He or she will--

- implement, enforce, promote and uphold the declared policies and practices and values of the agency;
- explore and employ economical ways of solving a problem or of getting a task done;
- update himself or herself with the best management practices and continue to develop professional excellence;
- encourage development and maintenance of quality and continuous improvement in all management activities; and
- strive to develop/attain professionalism and put in best effort, ideas, techniques and thought in performing the assigned official responsibilities.

As regards officials relevant to and having direct link with other agencies

He or she will--

- communicate relevant policies, practices and information to the relevant individuals or institutions as and when required for genuine purpose;
- ensure that the interests of others are properly identified and responded to in a lawful manner;
- respect the customs, practices and needs of others which may vary from his or her own; and
- forge and develop cordial relations based on mutual respect.

As regards the wider community/locality

He or she will--

- maintain courtesy, decency and decorum in dealing the members of the public particularly women who approach the office on genuine reasons;
- respond quickly to the legitimate needs of the citizenry and assist the distressed and disadvantaged segment of the citizenry on priority;
- in discharging duties, maintain honesty and neutrality beyond the suspicion of the innocent public;
- dispense services or privileges to anyone irrespective of gender, sect, religion and age; and
- maintain truthfulness in all public communications.

As regards the Civil Service

He or she will-

- act in such a way that the image, credibility and status of the Service is upheld and refrain from conduct that impairs its reputation.
- show respect for every recognised profession, private or public; and
- implement and uphold vision, and mission and values of the Civil Service.

Concluding Comments

Values practised in any Civil Service mirror the preferences or choices of its members. The core common civil service values as discussed and suggested in the preceding sections will expectedly constitute a major framework in shaping the professional conduct and these should be the foundation of all activities by the present and future civil servants as long as they hold their offices. However, the paradox in the behaviour of the civil servants is that all acknowledge the significance of the above values, and that all love to engage in lengthy academic discourses, but few are inclined to practising them. If these values are internalised as well as practised by them, these will guide their day-to-day work and help them reconcile the ethical dilemmas they are confronted with and their accountability will be automatically taken care of. Within each civil service office, members belonging to all BCS cadres need to practise the above values. This will foster a healthy and conscientious work climate in the civil service offices of Bangladesh and will help in achieving overall efficiency of the government. The code of ethics will also forge a 'collective self-discipline' among civil servants which is instrumental in promoting the total performance of the government. Malaysia, Singapore, Canada, and Sweden have shown through examples that once civil servants are truly attuned to their professional values, they become capable of moral self-discipline, self-realisation and self-evaluation and ultimately turn into 'asset' for a nation.¹⁰⁴ It is expected that through institutionalisation and sustained practice of the above suggested values, the entire Bangladesh Civil Service can transform itself into a 'self-moralising' credible institution capable of 'self-correcting' and 'self-evaluating'.

104 Simcha B. Werner, *The Self-moralising Organisation*, Occasional Paper Series, Second Series No. 2, Texas : American Society of Public Administration, 1985. p. 6.

Chapter VI

STRATEGIES FOR ACHIEVEMENT OF THE CODIFIED CIVIL SERVICE VALUES

Most citizens and civil servants in Bangladesh are unanimous in their views about the need for the practice of values in politics and administration. They cherish to acquire or possess the values; also they engage themselves in discussing ethics in workshops and seminars as part of their academic and intellectual pastime but it is a paradox that they find it difficult to practise them. As laws bear no significance if and unless these are enforced, similarly values are meaningless if these are not practised. Thus when there is a gap between what is professed and what is practised, the prospects of establishing the code of values become uncertain. However, once the identified values are officially accepted and declared at the governmental level these should be a part of the work ethic of all the Civil Service agencies.

This chapter seeks to suggest some mechanisms by which the civil service values specified in Chapter V can be implemented or achieved. Table 6.1 projects taxonomy of the mechanisms of the values to be achieved. Unless appropriate strategies are devised to operationalise these core values, the gap between the civil service values and the behaviour of officers will continue to widen and the identified set of core operating values will exist as no more than a mere list of pious wishes. In other words, if there is any incongruity between the announced values and the practised values, the civil service performance is sure to be affected. In order therefore to ensure internalisation or systematic pursuit of these values by civil servants in their day-to-day performance of responsibilities, the concerned authorities in the government may take certain steps specified in the section that follows.

Steps for Establishment of Civil Service Values and Code of Ethics

Wide publicity

The government may arrange publication of news-letters, news bulletins, calendar, booklets and posters for five consecutive years portraying or displaying in a pictorial

way the official values to be fixed on the walls of each civil servant's chamber in the government offices, in the training institutes, and libraries. Frequent seminars and symposia should be organised to create awareness of the civil servants about the significance of the twelve values that have been proposed in Chapter V. Regular bulletins may be published from the Cabinet Division, the Ministry of Establishment and office of the Prime Minister to propagate the declared values. For example, to popularise the practice of courtesy, the government of Brunei has embarked upon a programme called '*courtesy campaign*' to encourage civil servants to deliver courteous services to citizens. A project may also be launched to disseminate the values through 325 civil service training institutes; BPATC can play a coordinative role in this regard. UNICEF has introduced popular slogan--- "*Say 'yes' to the children*". In the similar spirit we can also introduce slogans to be used in the civil service offices '*Say 'yes to the genuine citizens*'. Catchy slogans like '*Customer first*', '*Avoid waste*' will reinforce the work values of the civil service agencies.

Table 6.1: Taxonomy of the Mechanisms of Value Achievement

Value to be achieved	Structural means of achievement	Managerial means of achievement
<i>Accountability</i>	Decentralisation of services and authority Strengthening Parliamentary Committees	Pragmatic performance appraisal/ Submit annual performance report
<i>Transparency</i>	Introduction of citizen's charter Constitutional provision Amending Official Secrets Act, 1923 Amending GSC Rules Amending Evidence Act Amending Rules of Business	Simplification and publication of rules and procedures Access to members of the public
<i>The rule of law</i>	Constitutional provision	Publishing informative leaflets on rules
<i>The public interest</i>	Constitutional provision	Legal orientation/training
<i>Neutrality</i>	Introduction of Citizens' charter Providing constitutional guarantee to civil servants	Practice of professional codes

<i>Responsiveness</i>	System of receiving complaints Opening an Efficiency Unit at PMO Installing the Ombudsman's office Building a strong civil society	On-the-job training Giving access to the stakeholders
<i>Probity</i>	Introduction of Better Pay	Leadership by example Practice of professional codes
<i>Innovation</i>	Introducing rewards for innovative officials	Practice of teamwork Giving recognition/ appreciation Brief/ focussed workshop
<i>Equity</i>	Introduction of local distribution system	Training
<i>Civility</i>	Incorporation as an element in PRIP	Managerial commitment to practise codes
<i>Austerity</i>	Incorporation as an element in PRIP Introducing Value-for-money concept at CS offices	Managerial commitment to practise codes By modelling and by example
<i>Efficiency</i>	Incorporation of work plan in appraisal	Recognition and reward

Integrating school, college and university curricula

Many scholars believe that values cannot be imposed or taught through legislation; rather these have to be infused. Values and attitudes are framed out of the complex interplay of forces of family, educational institutions and society.¹ Mosher expresses almost the same views: "Through the family are transmitted the basic values of the society: the approved pattern of behavior, the approved manners and the approved views of the world."² It is difficult to build a fresh value system in civil servants in an isolated fashion. In the words of Russell-Smith: "The standards of civil servants are formed partly during youth by the influence of the home and school and partly by the almost unconscious process of absorbing the traditions of the Service after joining it and applying them to the work in hand."³ It is at the school level when the original ethical base can be forged. This notion is reflected in the remark of a former US congressman testifying before the House Task Force on Ethics: "No one learns his ethics in Congress. No one needs to be told by his colleagues what is right, fair, and

1 N. Venkateshwara Rao, *Public Administration and Development Dynamics*, (Kanishka Publishers, 1995), p. 81.

2 Frederick C. Mosher, *Democracy and the Public Service*, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1982) p. 42.

honorable. All I really know I learned in kindergarten.”⁴ The curricula of school, college and university should have an integrated conceptual linkage with the curricula to be delivered at the training institutions. Institutional training should not be treated as an isolated or disjointed activity. One of the recommendations of the Working Group II at a Saarc-Asean the conference on “*Administrative and Financial Accountability: The ASEAN-SAARC Experience*” was: “In the long run, the education and family system must promote necessary values such as honour, integrity and accountability. In the short run, our programmes in the government must focus on normative training, that is, training that emphasizes values favouring accountability on the part of the government officials.”⁵

Present education curricula of schools and colleges Bangladesh do not seem to address the subjects of ethics and values sufficiently; if there are any ethical references in the books of stories and essays, these are sporadic and ill-planned. The education curricula should be reformed and reorganised to incorporate ethical and human values. As Chaudhury says: “The most urgent reform in this direction is the radical overhaul of the entire educational system A sound and thorough general education of a high quality is the primary foundation of an efficient Civil Service.”⁶ The careers and anecdotes of honest, innovative, high-performing civil servants may be published to show as examples how they practised honesty and overcame temptations in discharging their responsibilities through integrity and commitment to the public service.⁷

Both the government and the non-government agencies need to organise training on ethics or morality. In Bangladesh there are persons in politics, administration or elsewhere who laugh at the advocacy of ethics on the ground that ‘morality leads only to morality, the cause leads to further cause without producing any desirable effect.’⁸ Ethical teaching may not have as tangible results as physics or accounting or

3 Enid Russell-Smith, *Modern Bureaucracy: the Home Civil Service*, (London, Longman, 1974), p. 106.

4 Quoted in the article “Three Paradoxes of Government Ethics”, published in *The Public Manager*, Summer 1992, p. 59.

5 Patricia S. Tomas, “Report of the Working Group II”, in Sirajuddin H. Saleh & Arabinda Kar, eds., *Administrative and Financial Accountability: The ASEAN-SAARC Experience*, (Asia & Pacific Development Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1995), p. 16.

6 Muzzaffar Ahmed Chaudhury, *The Civil Service in Pakistan*, Dhaka: National Institute of Public Administration, 1969. pp. 364-365.

7 AZM Shamsul Alam, *Bureaucracy in Bangladesh Perspective*, Dhaka: Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, 1999. p. 251.

engineering but the actual return will be huge in the form of low crime rate, less incidence of corruption and less passivity. A citizen writes in the letters columns of an English national daily: "Unfortunately there seems to be little attention to this aspect from our social and political leadership."⁹ That education and practice of ethics have positive impact on the performance of civil servants and politicians has been proved by Malaysia. Bangladesh can draw inspiration from these examples.

Training and education should not be treated as mutually exclusive categories particularly in the public service. An integration has to be achieved by linking the educational syllabi to training curricula to gain continuity and congruity of orientation. As Blanchard admonishes: "We must take and recognise that values need to be taught and that they can and should be taught in school."¹⁰ The integration of the curricula of educational institutions and the training institutions will reinforce in building a solid ethical base in the upcoming civil servants of the country. The Ministry of Education and Ministry of Establishment can oversee this integration through a high-level curriculum committee constituted of competent members.

Designing a pragmatic compensation package

"Efficient management of the civil service depends largely on the interplay of various legal, administrative and incentive measures."¹¹ During consultation, the respondent officials vented almost consensual views that better pay or incentive is an effective remedy to prevent civil servants from indulging in corrupt practices. If civil servants are poorly paid, they will tend to supplement their income by resorting to illegal means. According to the 2003 report of *Transparency International*, low salary structure for public officials is one of the major causes of corruption and erosion of values.¹² This implies that the pay grades of the civil servants should be revised keeping in view, of course, the affordability of the government which is already aid-dependent and debt-ridden. Earlier the salary structure, living conditions and

8 Mohammad Badrul Ahsan, "Two moralities", *The Daily Star*, January 7, 2005. p. 4.

9 Wahid Chowdhury, "Crime, corruption and security," Letters columns, *The Daily Star*, January 14, 2005. p. 7.

10 Ken Blanchard's essay entitled "Managing by Values", incorporated in the book "*Integrity at Work*" by (ed.) Ken Shelton, (Utah : Executive Excellence, 1998). p. 34.

11 Syed Giasuddin Ahmed, *Public Personnel Administration in Bangladesh*, (Dhaka: University of Dhaka, 1986), p. 3.

promotion prospects coupled with retirement plans made the Central Superior Service attractive and the civil servants found it convenient to practise the values they were expected to practise. But today a vast majority of the civil servants of Bangladesh are left in a difficult situation because they are not getting the salary their predecessors received nearly four decades ago. As Zamir, a senior retired officer belonging to the foreign service, remarks: "We have a situation where civil servants earning a monthly salary of US D250 are making decisions on implementation of projects running into millions of USD. This is not just tenable particularly where you have persons from the private sector offering carrots at every opportunity."¹³ Aslam Iqbal, a delegate from Pakistan, spoke at a ASEAN-SAARC conference on Administrative and Financial Accountability held in Dhaka in 1993: "A financially satisfied bureaucracy is a happy group and tends to work in an honest and fair environment. Emoluments should be rationally determined and of a magnitude which should make an official immune from temptations."¹⁴ According to Riggs: "... the public servants must be paid at the rates commensurate with those of the market. This means that government must have a large treasury".¹⁵ In Malaysia, and in Singapore where practice of ethics and values are emphasised, all civil service salaries are pegged to market rates to make the civil service competitive aimed at attracting and retaining a fair share of the national talent. The pay and allowances given to the civil servants are close to those given to the private sector officials. Civil service salaries are reviewed annually so that these are competitive with the market and commensurate with the competencies and responsibilities of the civil servants. As Zamir puts it again: "Our efforts at reducing poverty, enhancing transparency and accountability will be of no avail if we cannot get out act together and pay decent wages to our civil servants. ... We need to look at Singapore, Thailand and Malaysia and observe what they are doing."¹⁶ Examples of Malaysia and Singapore show that the morality of the civil servants and the salary paid to them have direct linkage. If the civil servants are adequately paid, their ethical

12 Excerpt of the report of the Transparency International, Bangladesh, published in *The Daily Star*, 15 August 2004, p. 12.

13 Muhammad Zamir, "Need for real wages for civil servants", *The Daily Star*, 11 September 2004, p. 4.

14 Aslam in Sirajuddin H. Salleh & Arabinda Kar, eds., *Administrative and Financial Accountability: The ASEAN-SAARC Experience*, (Asia & Pacific Development Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1995), p. 56.

15 Fred .R. Riggs, *The Ecology of Public Administration* (Bombay: Asian Publishing, 1961), p. 12.

16 Muhammad Zamir, "Need for real wages for civil servants", *The Daily Star*, 11 September 2004, p. 4.

status will be enhanced and it will have positive impact on the productivity of the agencies they work for.¹⁷ According to Chaudhury: "It will be impossible to achieve and maintain integrity in the civil service if the officers do not receive adequate pay."¹⁸ Thus the pay-scale will be such as will attract and retain 'a fair proportion of the best available talents to the civil service.'¹⁹ Wallich suggests almost in the same vein: "More efficient and transparent forms of compensations including monetizing in-kind benefits and aligning pay more closely with comparators in the rest of the job market" are required 'to enhance incentives and motivation' and to attract or retain 'the brightest and the best' in the Civil Service.²⁰

Because the cost of living has soared tremendously and the real income of the government servants has fallen drastically in recent years, the existing pay-scales need revision. Both India and Pakistan have revised the pay-scales of the government officials. Since independence, as many as six Pay Commissions have been constituted by 2004. It is observed that there has always been the practice of adhocism in fixing the pay scales of the government officials. The Pay Commission of 2004 has submitted its report implementation of which will involve additional amount of Tk. 5,249 crore. The compensation package 'must be fair, timely and affordable' and cannot be isolated from the economic condition of the common people because they are practically the pay-masters.²¹ To make the salary scales 'affordable', 'logical and sustainable', the government can adopt two measures keeping in mind the financial stringency or budgetary limitations--

i) Right-sizing the civil service structure: The government can trim the Civil Service into a rational size by ridding it of the redundant and non-performing officials particularly at the lower level and thus save the unnecessary expenditure to pay the 'deserving' officials; this is because "less government makes greater sense by making it more efficient and less intrusive."²² In Bangladesh the number of ministries

17 Muzaffar Ahmed Chaudhury, *The Civil Service in Pakistan*, Dhaka: National Institute of Public Administration, 1969. p. 238.

18 Ibid. p. 246.

19 Muhammad Mujibur Rahman, "Need for increase in the salaries of government employees", *The Independent*, September 3, 1997. p. 4.

20 World Bank country director in Bangladesh Christine I. Wallich's letter on "Public Administration and Governance Policy" addressed to the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, *The Daily Star*, July 21, 2005. p. 1.

21 Mustafizur Rahman, "Public servants' pay fixation," *The Daily Star*, February 6, 2005. p. 5.

22 Syed Saad Andaleeb, "A 90 per cent pay hike? Hmmm...", *The Daily Star*, February 7, 2005. p. 5

is large compared with Malaysia, Korea, Vietnam and Thailand. As the frustrated public keeps on urging the government to expand its activities for 'doing more and the government responds to the pressure by increasing the size' of the civil service.²³ Drucker reminded the policy makers back in eighties that the belief -- 'Fat is beautiful' is one of 'the deadliest sins of public administration'.²⁴ At least half of the class-iv officials who constitute the majority of the civil service personnel and who embody neither 'brains' nor 'muscles' may be retrenched and be employed subsequently in productive sectors like technology-based agriculture, fishery, livestock, information technology after providing them skill development training. In other words, the size of the civil service can be rationalised on the assumption that 'the government can do more by doing less', that is, by giving up the functions that can more efficiently be carried out by the private sector.²⁵ According to Alam: "If the size of the bureaucracy is reduced to a half as a general policy, the efficiency of the government service might even increase with right steps and attitude."²⁶ Muhith gave almost the same opinion back in 1981: "Proliferation of institutions and public services should be resisted. Institutions which have outlived their utility should be closed down."²⁷

ii) Introducing austerity campaign: The government may introduce 'austerity campaign' in all the civil service offices and curtail expenditure of unnecessary protocol, hospitality, luxurious ceremonials and rituals that are mostly non-productive. It is a good sign that the ministry of finance has recently imposed 10% cut on the use of fuel and the hospitality cost has been reduced from Tk.12 to Tk.6 per person.

It should however be kept in view that better salary should not be the sole motivational factor as majority of the people of this country are poor; service to these people should be considered a rare privilege or honour and this should be the source of intrinsic motivation for them to work in the civil service. For example, Grameen

23 Syndicate report of Group-A of the 14th Senior Staff Course on *Transparency in Bureaucracy* presented at Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, March 1992. p. 24.

24 Peter F. Drucker, "The Seven Deadly Sins in Public Administration" in *Perspectives in Public Bureaucracy* by Fred A. Kramer (ed), (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1981), p. 235.

25 Shahed Latif, "Role of a bureaucrat : Misconceptions and Misgivings", *The Daily Star*, March 11, 1997. p. 4.

26 AZM Shamsul Alam, *Bureaucracy in Bangladesh Perspective*, Dhaka: Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, 1999. p. 219.

27 AMA Muhith, *Thoughts on Development Administration*, Dhaka: Saleha Muhith, 1981. p. 148.

Bank's(GB) pay-scale is that of the government but there is no greater motivation than immeasurable satisfaction the GB officials derive from helping the distressed and disadvantaged people. The spirit and motivation to work for the common people springs from the leader, the head of the institution who has been able to set a high example of 'service above self and above the worldly temptations, ambitions and trappings of high positions'.²⁸

Stringency in recruitment for institution-building in the Civil Service

Most of the interviewed senior civil servants believe, one of the reasons for the low quality administrative performance that is being experienced now in Bangladesh is the faulty recruitment process. As Chaudhury states: "... the recruitment and retraining of recruits often of inferior quality are enormously costly and result in inefficiency."²⁹ Thus the basic issues relate to the recruitment of proper persons and their motivation to work. If wrong persons are recruited for the civil service, rules, laws, ethics can hardly help in shaping them up. As Ward says: "The problem of public servants who do not serve the public cannot be remedied by seminars and procedural gimmicks."³⁰ White warned us long back saying: "If the original selection is carelessly or inadequately performed, weakness is carried into the staff which time and training may never cure."³¹ In fact, recruitment of well-qualified, intellectually and morally strong, persons is essential to building an ethical and accountable civil service because, as Alam says, "no government can attain desired development objectives through a weak bureaucracy."³²

History testifies that contemporary political leadership in 1972 weakened the Civil Service system by bypassing the conventional method of civil service recruitment based on competitive examination. In this period rewards for political service greatly influenced decisions on appointment, placement and promotion. "Tension generated

28 Azizul Jalil, "Great Ideas, Simple Solutions", *Star Weekend Magazine*, February 18, 2005. p. 22.

29 Muzzaffar Ahmed Chaudhury, *The Civil Service in Pakistan*, Dhaka: National Institute of Public Administration, 1969. p. 238.

30 Paul Van Ward, *Dismantling The Pyramid* (Washington: Delphi Press, 1991), p. 202.

31 Leonard D. White, "The British Civil Service," an essay printed in the book "*Civil Service Abroad*" by Leonard D. White et al (New York : McGraw-Hill, 1935). p. 25.

32 AZM Shamsul Alam, *Bureaucracy in Bangladesh Perspective*, Dhaka: Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, 1999. p. 23.

through these appointment practices continue to plague the civil service today.”³³ Policed recruitment of civil servants coupled with lack of professionalism results in substandard performance having multiplier effect on the total governmental efficiency. This was however not the case with the earlier civil services before the birth of Bangladesh. Hinting at the style of recruitment in the Indian Civil Service, Alam and Ahmed comment: “The Crown opted for qualitative individuals for enforcing functional accountability whereas the GOB has created quantitative octopus without discipline of productivity.”³⁴ In India civil service recruitment is carried out on the basis of tough competition and a sound academic record.³⁵ Thus to tackle the existing crisis of values and ethics in the Civil Service, ‘the Government needs services of men of high calibre and competence’³⁶ and recruit officers who are “more varied in talent, deeper in knowledge, higher in quality and integrity and wider in outlook.”³⁷ Only a stringent process of recruitment makes this possible. We need to remember that when mediocrities intrude and outnumber the most efficient, brilliant persons of the civil service, the latter get eliminated, the promising, bright juniors get misdirected or confused, the ethical and intellectual status of the entire administration becomes mediocre and ‘the process of institution-building turns to be sordidly painful’.³⁸

Creation of constitutional/legal provisions

Values cannot be established in a state of vacuum; these are also difficult to inject. This is particularly true of the professional values that are required to be inculcated by the government officials who join the Civil Service generally after twenty years of age completing the university degrees. However, some values are easy to transmit whereas some are difficult. Legal and constitutional provisions need to be created so

33 Robert LaPorte, “Governance and Public Administration” in Hasnat Abdul Hye’s *Governance: South Asian Perspective*, Dhaka: University Press Limited, 2000. p. 188.

34 Mohammed Shahidul Alam and Nasser Ahmed, “*Good Governance in Bangladesh*” a seminar paper presented at BCS (Administration Academy) on August 26, 1994. p. 5.

35 Pradip N. Khandwalla, *Revitalising the State: A Menu of Options*, (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1999).p. 251.

36 Muzzaffar Ahmed Chaudhury, *The Civil Service in Pakistan*, Dhaka: National Institute of Public Administration, 1969. p. 238.

37 *Ibid.*, p. ii.

38 Syndicate report of Group-A of the 14th Senior Staff Course on “Transparency in Bureaucracy” presented at Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, March 1992. p. 12.

that those who will practise these difficult values feel obligatory as well as safe in practising them. *Transparency* and *neutrality* are two of those difficult values.

As has been discussed earlier in Chapter-V, transparency implies freedom of access to information to be enjoyed by the citizenry on matters that relate to their welfare. According to UNESCO Media Declaration: "freedom of information is a fundamental human right and access by the public to information should be guaranteed."³⁹ A host of countries such as Nepal, Singapore, Malaysia, Sweden, South Africa, New Zealand have recognised this right in their constitutions. "There is the absence of a direct reference in the Constitution of Bangladesh to freedom of information or right of access to government held documents."⁴⁰ Section. no. 5 of the *Official Secrets Act, 1923*, section nos. 123 and 124 of the *Evidence Act, 1872*, and Rule 28(i) of the Rules of Business, and section no. 19 of the *Government Servants Conduct Rules, 1979*, which are now in practice in this country, prohibit the government officials to communicate or disclose information to the press or to others. As Mondal comments: "Bangladesh has no dearth of laws to deny the public and the press their right of access to information."⁴¹

From the above discussion, it transpires that to ensure citizens' right of access to information and to enable the civil servants to practise the democratic value of transparency, either constitutional amendments or enactment of the freedom of information law are required to provide them a legal footing. The Report of the Task Forces on Bangladesh Development Strategies for the 1990s (vol. 2) and the Public Administration Reforms Commission have suggested to create legal provisions for allowing the citizenry access to information on matters that concern 'the larger public interest.'

Similarly there is no provision in the Constitution of Bangladesh guaranteeing protection to the civil servants for practising political neutrality in their day-to-day functions or administrative transactions. The article no.181 of 1956 and article no.177 of 1962 constitutions of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan provided adequate protection to the civil servants 'from the undue interference with their rights', against

39 Quoted in Abdul Latif Mondal's article "Ensuring people's right to information", *The Daily Star*, April 4, 2005. p. 4.

40 Abdul Latif Mondal "Ensuring people's right to information", *The Daily Star*, April 4, 2005. p. 4.

41 Ibid.

arbitrary exercise of power and 'victimisation' by the ministers.⁴² The article no. 181 provided that no government servant could be "dismissed or removed from service or reduced in rank until he has been given the reasonable opportunity of showing cause against the action proposed to be taken in regard to him."⁴³ The absence of provisions in the Bangladesh constitution to safeguard the rights of the civil servants makes them vulnerable to the politicisation process which seems to be widening by degrees in this country. 'The departure from this salutary tradition' of giving safeguards to the civil servants 'does not appear to be appropriate'.⁴⁴ In India constitutional safeguards are available to the civil servants who do their duty 'without fear or favour.' "In fact, the safeguards", as Rao says, "are a lot more effective than those available to the politicians themselves."⁴⁵ This right to protection or self-defence 'proved to be no obstacles to the good relationships between the civil servants and ministers.'⁴⁶ This has actually contributed to the promotion of the twin values of political neutrality and integrity of civil servants.

It is therefore urgent that provisions are created in our constitution through amendments to safeguard the members of the Civil Service cadres so that they can practise the value of neutrality and perform their duty 'without fear or favour' and this will ensure establishment of the rule of law and good governance in Bangladesh.

Introduction of oath-taking by senior and junior civil servants

As soon as a new entrant of the Civil Service signs the letter of acceptance of the appointment from the government, he or she signs a contract with the government represented by the citizenry to provide legitimated services to them. With the signing of the contract, he or she enters the zone of accountability to deliver the relevant social services to citizens.

The new entrants of the Civil Service are to formally promise that they will maintain as well as nurture the civil service values as long as they stay in the service. The most critical points of introducing and operationalising the value set are the moments when

42 From Mohammed Jainul Abedin's *Papers on Administration and Related Issues*, Academy for Planning & Development, 1991. p. 85.

43 Ibid. p. 46.

44 Muzaffar Ahmed Chaudhury, *The Civil Service in Pakistan*, Dhaka: National Institute of Public Administration, 1969. p. 51.

45 N. Venkateshwara Rao, *Public Administration and Development Dynamics*, (Kanishjka Publishers, 1995). p. 202.

46 Ibid. p. 202.

new entrants receive 'the offer of employment' from the government and when they take oath on completion of the mandatory common foundation training course at BPATC. This author suggests below a draft of oath to be administered to the new members of Bangladesh Civil Service:

In the name of Allah, I vow to perform the responsibilities to be assigned to me by my employer. I will strive to use the knowledge and skills acquired from training for the welfare of the community, citizenry and the nation. I will uphold the constitution, obey and enforce the prevailing laws, rules and procedures and practise, preach, and establish the twelve values of the Bangladesh Civil Service in the exercise of authority to be delegated to me.

It seems worth-mentioning here that every public officer in the Philippines has to take an oath to uphold and defend the constitution before joining his/her office and defend the constitution and the copies of the oath are transmitted to and preserved in the Civil Service Commission.⁴⁷

Developing and delivering well-designed training package on ethics: Training programmes should include exclusive well-designed modules on ethics and values. Since 1984, BPATC has not yet been able to introduce any course on ethics. One of the resolutions of the ASEAN-SAARC conference on Administrative and Financial Accountability held in 1993 in Dhaka, was: "Erosion of moral values has no other remedy except return to the normative education. Moral education should be built into the education system at all levels."⁴⁸ It is high time that in the career development courses viz. Foundation Course, ACAD and SSC of BPATC and '*Law and Administration Course*' of BCS Administration Academy, training courses on ethics reflecting the officially declared values are incorporated in the regular training calendar. All the training courses meant for civil servants need to transmit the common message that they are the servants of the Republic rather than officials of an omnipotent state. An exclusive orientation programme designated as 'Value Development Programme' may be organised at regular intervals in the national training institution i.e. BPATC. As Foundation training is the entry point for civil service training where members of all cadres assemble for common orientation, civil service values should be incorporated in the relevant module. Case method, role play

47 Sirajuddin H. Salleh & Arabinda Kar, eds., *Administrative and Financial Accountability: The ASEAN-SAARC Experience*, (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Asia & Pacific Development Centre, 1995), p. 179.

48 Ibid., p. 20.

and simulation may be used as training methods to advocate or promote or uphold the core values of the civil service in an unobtrusive way.

In Malaysia, accountability, moral values and attitude development are the focal areas of regular training courses meant for civil servants. Applied ethics courses are the capstone of the American civil service training curriculum. These courses help the public servants develop a moral bent of mind essential to ethical civil service. When the constitution, laws, judicial references and policies do not guide administrators adequately in their regular work, training on ethics elevates a sharp sense of individual responsibility in the minds of civil servants. This kind of training also enables them to identify and to examine value issues in the decision-making process meeting the public interest best.

Revision of the existing performance appraisal format

Performance appraisal format should be designed reflecting the declared civil service values as suggested in the preceding chapter. In other words, adherence to the values should constitute one of the major components of the performance appraisal system. Performance appraisal format will operate as a coercive mechanism to ensure practice of the professed declared values of the Civil Service. Once the value set is put into operation, this will warrant formulation of a new performance appraisal system that will encourage healthy competitiveness among the civil servants to practise a pro-people or citizens-friendly civil service. Good civil service is based on standardisation; here officials are held accountable for deviating from the standards or measures fixed for the purpose. One effective way to ensure good performance is to devise a periodic workplan for every officer. The new performance appraisal system will encompass *Work Plan Skills, Knowledge, and Values* to be the pillars of the appraisal system. One of the responsibilities of the supervising officer who prepares performance appraisal report should be to monitor the performance of officers how well the professional values are practised and to what extent they influence an agency's institutional climate or ethos. Suggesting the ways of enhancing accountability Kaura says: "Performance appraisal of the public servants should be objective and the criteria used must be transparent and objective."⁴⁹ However, the

49 M. N. Kaura, "Report of the Working Group III", in Sirajuddin H. Salleh & Arabinda Kar (eds.), *Administrative and Financial Accountability: The ASEAN-SAARC Experience*, (Asia & Pacific Development Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia), 1995. p. 14.

subject of civil service performance appraisal has been discussed elaborately in chapter VII.

Introduction of award for ideal civil servants

An accountable civil service implies that success is rewarded and failure is condemned. "Accountability needs to be buttressed by careful changes in the material and non-material rewards which public organisations extend to their employees."⁵⁰ Mosher suggests in his famous book "*Democracy and The Public Service*": "..... answerability implies the possibilities of rewards for jobs well done and sanctions for failures."⁵¹ In other words, lack of recognition and rewards for good deeds⁵² and, penalty for misdeeds by civil servants acts as a disincentive to the efficient performance in the Civil Service.⁵³ Non-performing corrupt officials need to be punished so that 'a clear message is sent to the bureaucracy as to what sort of conduct is in and what sort is out'.⁵⁴

In our country, however, there is no provision or fund allocation for rewarding officials for showing honest and efficient performance in the Civil Service. The government may therefore develop a coherent motivational package to inspiring the committed civil servants. The plan may, besides monetary benefits, combine social and educational support, subsidies on health services, subsidized accomodation,'creation of identity to be respectfully reckoned with and providing adequate recognition, introduction of reward system for performance etc.'⁵⁵ Civil awards raise motivational level if these are performance-based. 'Officers with highest standards of integrity are generally self-effacing and it is the duty of the administration to discover them and reward them accordingly.'⁵⁶ Thus, the government can introduce national awards for

50 The World Bank, World Development Report, 1983, p. 124.

51 Frederick C. Mosher, *Democracy and The Public Service* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 14.

52 Syndicate report of Group--Orange of the 10th Foundation Training Course on *Strategies for the Promotion of Civil Service Accountability in Bangladesh* presented at Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, October 13 , 1992. p. 6.

53 Syndicate report of Group--Banana of the 9th Foundation Training Course on *Strategies for the Promotion of Accountability in Civil Service* presented at Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, June 1992. p. 5.

54 Pradip N. Khandwalla, *Revitalising the State : A Menu of Options*, (New Delhi : Sage Publications 1999),p. 251.

55 M. Mosharraf Hossain, *Corporate Mismanagement*, (Dhaka : Friends Publisher,2004)

56 Muzaffar Ahmed Chaudhury, *The Civil Service in Pakistan*, Dhaka: National Institute of Public Administration, 1969. p. 316

honest and efficient civil servants in recognition of their meritorious performance and outstanding contribution to the public service and this can be widely publicised to keep their morale high and to show them as role models for others. Similarly, the stories of corruption and malpractices (if proved) together with penalty may be exposed to the public through the mass media.⁵⁷ The government may earmark a portion of the national budget for this purpose.

However, the civil servants have to appreciate the fact that reward for being honest and efficient “is not extrinsic but intrinsic; it is a self reward, self-satisfaction and self-fulfillment. This reward is invisible and has to be felt only”.⁵⁸ The real essence of satisfaction lies in the psyche of the official who has to train him/herself to appreciate the value of integrity and enjoy the pure bliss out of it.

As a part of its overall strategy to foster and institutionalise accountability in the public service, the Malaysian government has introduced other measures than legal. It has introduced a culture of reward and recognition in the Civil Service at the individual and institutional levels. The awards aimed at rewarding high performers act as effective mechanisms of motivation. The government has introduced the *Public Service Innovation Award* under the Development Administration Circular no. 3 of 1991 issued by MAMPU to encourage excellence and innovation by civil servants. Awards in the form of certificates, trophies and cash money are given to the winners. The areas where innovations are encouraged include *Management power, Systems and procedures, Organisational structure, Management style, Work environment, Technology and Capital equipment*. Another award called ‘*The Public Service Special Award*’ was introduced in 1992 to provide recognition to the civil servants for showing outstanding performance in six areas such as i) information technology, ii) financial management, iii) Personnel management, iv) project management, v) file management, and vi) counter services. To encourage the civil servants to deliver prompt and courteous service to the citizenry, the government of the Philippines has introduced Courtesy Campaign and two awards under the titles ‘Most Courteous Employee of the Month’ and ‘Most Courteous Employee of the Year’. The assessment is made on the basis of the feedback from the citizens who give their

57 AZM Shamsul Alam, *Bureaucracy in Bangladesh Perspective*, Dhaka: Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, 1999. p. 253.

58 Ibid. p. 238-239.

opinions in the Public Assistance Counter installed at the lobby or any place accessible to the them.⁵⁹ In Singapore, 'reward for work and work for reward' is one of the core principles of the Civil Service.

The easy way to determine where accountability lies is to ask the question – 'who receives the penalty when a task is not performed properly'. A civil servant of this country having the reputation of being honest and efficient remarked a few years ago: "It seems that in our country both reward and penalty are rare; good and honest performers are often penalised and deviant or delinquent civil servants do not get the penalty they deserve."⁶⁰ Motivation and initiatives of committed and high-performing civil servants are immediately sapped when they are rewarded or promoted on other criteria than performance. When high performers are not rewarded their level of performance begins to decline; again, when low performers are rewarded, they tend to find numerous ways to justify it rather than enhance their performance. The civil service will lose its strength when committed, competent and non-partisan officers are marginalised, victimised or penalised and if deviant, inefficient, sycophantic, partisan officials are rewarded with 'accelerated promotions, plum postings,' extension of contract and re-employment. That is why Abedin remarks: "It is unfortunate that incentive system has done more harm than good to make our public servants achievement-oriented."⁶¹ In our culture, punishment trickles down to the junior and the senior who has closer or intimate linkage with the top ruling political elite in power can easily escape penalty that is due. As Broadwell, an American training expert, comments: "In most cases it is the bottom person who gets it in the neck if things go wrong."⁶² In our civil service, incentives, in many cases, go to officers not for efficient performance of responsibilities but for personal loyalty at the cost of the corporate or public interest; the biggest bottleneck on the way of enhancing efficiency is that inefficiency is not penalised. Hardly anybody loses job in the government offices for inefficiency.⁶³ An important strategy to elicit civil service commitment is

59 Report on the *Sixth ASEAN Conference on Civil Service Matters*, Brunei Darussalam, September 1991. p. 106.

60 Kamal Siddiqui, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

61 Mohammed Jainul Abedin, *Papers on Administration and Related Issues*, Academy for Planning & Development, 1991. p. 85.

62 Martin M. Broadwell, *The Supervisor and On-the-Job Training*. (Mass: Addison-Wesley, 1987.), p. 138.

63 AZM Shamsul Alam, *Bureaucracy in Bangladesh Perspective*, Dhaka: Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, 1999. p. 95.

to introduce a rational, objective and depoliticised reward system. If a civil servant is rewarded for practising his or her professional values and for displaying good performance, he or she will not only earn satisfaction but also influence his or her peers in emulating his qualities.⁶⁴

Introduction of Citizen's Charter in the Civil Service agencies

The civil service has to develop a market orientation because citizens are actually the buyers of their services. In order to ensure quality services to the citizenry, the concept of "*citizens' charter*" has been introduced by many governments of the developed and developing countries including Malaysia and India as a mechanism for ensuring transparency and accountability in the public service agencies. The concept of citizen's charter originated in the UK in the late 1980s when the British government undertook a reform package designated as "Next Steps" which became operational in 1992. Following the example of Britain, Malaysia took up the venture of introducing it under the label "client's charter". In Malaysia, accountability is enhanced through practice of clients's charter and a quality culture in all the civil service agencies. The offices have been reoriented from mere producing outputs or services to satisfying service-seekers who are considered as customers and as paramount. Accordingly, values like *cost-consciousness*, *timeliness*, *meeting targets*, *innovativeness*, and *responsiveness* to customer needs become integral to the quality culture. More than 381 agencies including 272 government agencies have so far institutionalised the concept of citizens' charter to deliver quality services to the people.⁶⁵ The Government of India has directed all ministries, departments and agencies under them to publish citizen's charter on pilot scheme basis.

Citizens' charter (cc) is a public document that reflects the overt or written commitment of an agency about the categories and quality of services it provides to the citizens or the community. A citizens' charter generally contains assurance to the citizens of i) timely service, ii) zero-defect/error product or service, iii) hassle-free access to the relevant agency for service, and iv) access to information towards

⁶⁴ Kamal Siddiqui, *Towards Good Governance in Bangladesh*, Dhaka: University Press Limited, 1996, p. 103.

obtaining smooth service. The essence of citizens' charter is the provision of total customer/ citizen satisfaction in the light of the declared agreement or commitment. It impels civil servants to internalise the civil service values to be practised in delivering the agreed upon services to citizens. As the charter incorporates the performance standards that are known to the public, it is possible to evaluate the performance of the agencies. However, a charter need not set or show standards precisely for everything a civil service agency does but should focus on those key aspects of service as are considered important or urgent by the citizens. As part of civil service reforms, Bangladesh can introduce the institution of citizens' charter like the UK, Malaysia, Singapore, India.

Four Secretaries' Report recommends institution of the citizen's charter in Bangladesh: "predetermined standards of performance for Ministries/Divisions and their attached offices are made transparent for the citizens who have a right to know the obligations of the government service delivery system."⁶⁶ Similarly, the number one of the twenty-eight recommendations documented in the Public Administration Reforms Commission's report is that to ensure better delivery of service to the people, all service-oriented civil service agencies should publicly display signs or boards indicating what kind of services are available, where those are available, where application forms are available, where money should be deposited and where to make a complaint.⁶⁷ The World Bank document *"The Government That Works: Reforming the Public Sector"* also suggested institution of the concept of citizens' charter as a means of improving accountability and responsiveness to citizens. All ministries, directorates, departments will formulate their respective 'citizens' charter' and display them in the suitable spots of the offices. Initially CC may be implemented in selected agencies and the number can be increased depending on the learning experience gained from the pilot scheme. But before a pilot scheme is taken up, it is necessary to orient or train the senior and the mid-level officials about the conceptual dimensions of CC. BPATC can be assigned the responsibility of organizing training on this subject for the officials of the relevant agencies.

65 Ahmed Sarji, *Civil Service Reforms*, (Kuala Lumpur: Pelanduk Publications, 1996), p. 111.

66 Four Secretaries' Report, *Towards Good Government in Bangladesh*, 1993, p. 30.

67 Report of Public Administration Reforms Commission 2000, Report no. 23, vol. II, p. 97.

Pre-requisites to the successful operationalisation of Citizens' Charter

The ultimate purpose of introducing Citizens' Charter is to provide quality services to citizens and thereby improve accountability of civil servants to the citizenry. The top management of a civil service agency must therefore place quality at the very top of its institutional agenda; quality must permeate the fibre of every office. However, the definition of *service* varies from situation to situation although it relates invariably to expectations of one's clients/customers. What is a 'service' in the Civil Service cannot be precisely explained because of its diversity and complexity. Many perceive 'service' as waiting on someone across the desk. In the context of the Civil Service, service should mean solution of a problem, meeting needs or disposal of a case with timeliness, accuracy, reliability and with zero illegal cost. In fact, one of the indicators that a civil service office is functioning well is that there are few genuine complaints against it. Improving services of an office is a continuous process, not a one-shot event. However, successful implementation of Citizens' Charter depends on a few factors that are discussed below:

i) Practice of standards at the service delivery points: Work standard is a powerful tool for measuring and improving quality of services. When standards are set, it becomes easy to identify the gap between what is expected of an officer by a citizen and what is actually performed by him or her. The gap depends on how citizens perceive the quality of service they receive from an officer; this gap is the service problem. In other words, the service problem stems from the difference between *what citizens' expectations are* and *what citizens' perceptions of the service they receive are*.

As described earlier, a standard describes what is expected of a service provider. Every office has to develop its own standards by which it can measure performance. Standards need to be developed with care to gain effectiveness; these should be specific and written. *Timeliness, accuracy, and reliability* are the usual standards of service. What is most important for an officer is having a positive mindset and a commitment to accomplish a task. In the Civil Service, services are not always well-managed because, many say, it is more difficult to set quantifiable service standards and to measure performance. According to Denton: "If enough thought is given, all

services can be measured.”⁶⁸ In the Civil Service, standards are mostly intangible ; two major aspects of measuring services are *procedural* and *processual*. Processual aspect relates to the behavioral dimensions of officers dealing with citizens who approach an office with a case or a problem. Moreover, officials need standards so that their supervisors can assess their quality of performance. Reaching office by 9 am, checking all the mails of the mail-file by 4 pm on the same day; responding a telephone-call before three rings, greeting a citizen in a friendly manner are examples of standards.

ii) Practice of teamwork: The journey to the operationalisation of the Citizens’ Charter is not smooth in a country where the Civil Service is run by officers mostly with traditional mindset. On way to enhance quality and total efficiency is inter-departmental cooperation, coordination, mutual respect and teamwork. This is based on the assumption that productivity and quality of services cannot be ensured single-handedly by any officer; it is in fact the outcome of collaboration or teamwork among the relevant officials which is less practised in the Civil Service in Bangladesh. Sharing of responsibilities and regular communication should be a common practice in the offices which is, of course, not the case today. Regular communication is essential because delivering quality service requires regular feedback from citizens.

Moreover, supervisory style or work style has significant impact in achieving the success of the citizen’s charter. Supervisors can practise MBWA (Management by Wandering Around)⁶⁹ to see how officers are doing and what problems they face in meeting citizen’s needs. In practising MSWA, a supervisor must be equipped with communication skills including listening, coaching and following through to stimulate officers’ involvement in their job. They can also personally inquire when any complaint is received from any citizen.

iii) Intensive orientation: Once measurable standards are developed, it will be proper to train the officers on how to administer them. Every officer must appreciate or internalise what it is required to deliver quality service. As any service ultimately comes down to a one-to-one interactive situation, attitude of a service-provider is an

68 D. Keith Denton, *The Service Trainer Handbook*, New York : McGraw-Hill Inc. 1992. p.35

69 Ibid., p. 111.

important variable to deliver quality service. Officers must not only conceptualise what quality implies and how to achieve quality services but they must really *want* to deliver it. Thus they need intensive training and education to develop quality orientation and a citizens' perspective. Officers should clearly know what is expected of them and how their performance is going to be measured. If services are not measured, these can hardly be improved. Officers must also know the cost of poor performance or poor quality of service. The cost of low quality service is not appreciated by many civil servants. Thus every officer must be oriented and must get involved in reducing delay and building speed. They need to be trained to generate motivation to work, self-confidence and intellectual self-reassurance. Lack of managerial vision stemming from lack of orientation on the Citizens' Charter is a real roadblock. Experience suggests that most of the officers in the Civil Service lack operational philosophy and managerial vision i.e. what they want to be and what they emphasise. The question is---do they want to be speedy decision-makers? If they do, they will themselves innovate efficient work method and pursue appropriate work style.

iv) Practice of adequate delegation: Efficient delivery of service cannot just occur unless a service is properly managed. By assigning decision-making power to the officials of lower echelons proportionately and holding them accountable is one way to gain speed. Withholding adequate delegation is an enemy of speed. As Denton says: "One of the best ways to reduce bureaucracy to improve speed is to reduce the needs for approvals from above."⁷⁰ Delegation is important because even if an officer wants to provide quality service, it is often impossible because he or she has neither responsibility nor authority to do a task. Giving responsibility and authority to officers at different levels proportionately is one way to eliminate delay. This of course depends largely on the leadership style and mindset of the departmental heads or senior officers.

v) Use of technology: A major roadblock to speed involves when work is ill-planned or ill-organised. It is the innovative system or procedures an office designs to deliver improved service that is most important to doing it with accuracy and timeliness. At times improved technology helps to gain speed or efficiency. One way to gain speed

70 D. Keith Denton, op. cit., 1992. p. 7.

is to introduce simplified and standardised forms or formats for use by citizens for obtaining services and for use by officials for record-keeping and retrieval. The main technology is the technology of management. If officers plan and organise the daily activities, they will be able to satisfy their citizens. Supervisors can hold quick, short meetings with staff members to review performance and take corrective actions when performances are found below the standards. One way by which an officer can improve services is by listing the potential sources of citizens' dissatisfaction. Such a list can be used to identify the problem areas that deserve critical attention and intervention. Figure 6.1 is a hypothetical list of the causes of dissatisfaction that citizens might experience at the office of Assistant Commissioner (Land). This list can provide an officer a solid ground for investigation at his or her own level.

<i>Citizens' Dissatisfaction List at the AC (Land) office</i>	
i)	No signpost installed to indicate the location of the relevant section/ unit
ii)	Forms are not readily available
iii)	Extra money charged while paying land-development revenue (LD)
iv)	Officials are discourteous
v)	Delay in giving the receipt of LD tax
vi)	The previous year's revenue payment not duly recorded
vii)	Complicated matters are highlighted, easy ones are not mentioned
viii)	Anybody approaching the office is considered a client for extracting money

Figure 6.1: Citizens' Dissatisfaction List

vi) Formulation and enforcement of Codes of Conduct for citizens: Responsiveness as a value has been repeatedly emphasised in this document because it is an essential value missing in the Bangladesh Civil Service and it is a factor unavoidable for any officer who intends to deliver quality service to a citizen. Experiences in the developing countries like Malaysia, Singapore suggest that Citizen's Charter acts as an effective mechanism to generate responsiveness to citizens' needs. However, it is difficult to operationalise Citizens' Charter at the civil service offices in a country like

Bangladesh where civil servants, in general, are known to be rule-bound, non-responsive and impolite and citizens in majority are seen to be non-compliant, non-empathic and indolent.

The success in the introduction of Citizens' Charter as an accountability mechanism relies not only on the responsive behaviour of civil servants but also on the conduct of citizens themselves. Citizens or rate-payers have the right to secure legitimate services from civil service agencies; they may lodge complaints with the concerned head of the agency or the office if and when the services they can legally claim are not made available to them. Similarly, citizens have obligations to fulfill so that civil servants are able to provide smoothly the services sought by the former. In other words, effective installation of Citizens' Charter necessitates formulation and practice of *Code of Conduct* for officers and *Code of Conduct* for Citizens. Here are two discrete sets of Codes of Conduct suggested for officers and for citizens:

A. Officers' Code of Conduct

Every official should--

- i) ensure that any service provided to a citizen is *accurate, complete, consistent and timely*;
- ii) ensure that no error or omission on the part of an officer occurs while providing a service to a citizen for which the latter is likely to suffer;
- iii) ensure that the prevailing rules and laws of the government are complied with by a citizen seeking a service;
- iv) try to improve quality of services as much as possible at the individual initiative;
- v) promise what he or she can deliver and deliver what he or she promises;
- vi) always maintain an intimate and cooperative relations with colleagues to mobilise resources aimed at ensuring better services to citizens; and
- vii) be courteous, cooperative and responsive while dealing with a citizen.

B. Citizens' Code of Conduct

Citizens should---

- i) try their utmost to obtain information about the relevant rules and laws and about the location of the appropriate office or official in securing genuine, due or legitimate services;

- ii) comply with the rules and procedures as required by law while approaching any official or agency for any services;
- iii) not influence any official by any illegal means in obtaining any services;
- iv) expect or claim services that have been promised and not that have not been promised ;
- v) in approaching any office, be cooperative, courteous and decent in conduct in the same way they expect the officials to be, and should not put any impediment to the normal discharge of an official's duties; and
- vi) pay timely, wherever applicable or due, taxes, duties, customs or fees as required by law.

Implementation of citizen's charter depends on the availability of a favourable climate and culture in the civil service agencies. In a culture where unnecessary secrecy prevails and obsolete rules and laws operate, introduction of citizen's charter remains precarious. As report of PARC states: "Even if a public servant wants to inform clients about the services his/her organization provides, the present environment of secrecy does not allow him/her to do so. In a culture of secrecy imposed by law, transparency loses its essence."⁷¹ If fully implemented, citizen's charter will add a new dimension to the practice of accountability in the civil service offices; this is because its implementation requires an office to be answerable to the citizens for the quality of its services or outputs according to the standards to be declared. What is therefore necessary very urgently is to revise, amend and update the old redundant and non-democratic laws and rules through the Law Commission. Laws may be framed whereby every civil service agency will submit annual performance report on the progress of the implementation of the respective Citizens' Charter. The report will act as a tool of keeping the officials alert about the quality of service to be delivered to the citizens. Each report may contain three components--- a) standards of service or products the concerned agency is expected to achieve b) the amount of progress achieved c) the barriers to the implementation of the charter and d) cause of failure in performance and corrective actions to be taken for failing to meet citizens' satisfaction.

71 Excerpt from the Report of the Public Administration Reform Commission, Vol. II. p. 97.

Role of Administrative Leadership and Political Leadership

Mere declaration of beliefs or values or administering lengthy sermons or issuing official circulars cannot assure us of achieving accountability of the civil servants. In other words, real accountability can be achieved by demonstration of the practice of the declared beliefs and values. Prevention of waste and of extravagance cannot be truly regulated through legal measures. This implies that words must be matched with deeds. Civil servants who promise to practise the values must show through their own examples; they must 'walk the talk'. Examples set by officials holding leadership positions influence others to follow them. The indirect effects of their actions are far more important than their direct instructions. If higher officials are corrupt, they encourage others to be so; if they are honest, ethical, neutral and they seek to promote the public interest, others below them try to emulate their examples. The new recruits and the junior members of the Civil Service tend to behave ethically when they observe that the senior members holding leadership/supervisory positions behave ethically. The senior members have a special responsibility within their respective agencies--- i) to preach, like priests, the core values and demonstrate practice of those values through examples or precedents, and ii) to assess performance of the junior staff in the light of the values and standards. Seniors who themselves practise the values should be vigorous in insisting on adherence to the declared values and standards and in the case of deviation by the junior, sympathetic advice, counselling or even reprimanding may be pursued.

Although it is difficult to create honest officials in a corrupt society, high ethical standards of higher officials raise the level of others. This is equally applicable to politicians. It is possible to strike the traditional, obsolete mindset of civil servants when political leaders act as role models exemplifying the values that are preached by agencies. Modelling is more effective than didactic instruction in a training classroom. Senior officers holding supervisory positions are to embody the values and they have a responsibility to exemplify them through their day-to-day behaviours. On the whole, the leadership of replacing the outmoded values with the new ones must emerge from the senior people who are to influence the present and the upcoming members of the Civil Service.

Values should not only be pronounced but these should also be practised. Values can be best transmitted when junior civil servants find seniors as role models carrying and practising those values. When values are both pronounced and practised, the process of a healthy institutional culture sets in. There must be a match between belief and practice; the mismatch between word and deed hinders culture from taking into a concrete or visible shape. Leaders are the agents who interpret and transmit culture. Leaders of civil service agencies who do not demonstrate what they believe, ultimately lose confidence of the people. Ethical performance of senior civil servants exerts a pervasive influence on the junior's conduct. As Dean remarks: "In the last analysis, accountability is a personal matter. If new techniques are to succeed, there has to be an appropriate attitude change and nowhere is this more important than at the top."⁷² Hinting at the practice of honesty by the higher level of the Indian Civil Service officers, Rao, an ex-ICS officer of 1934, says: "The entire machinery can work honestly if and only if integrity exists at the top. And the top has not merely got to be honest, but has to appear to be honest. And this was one of the great things that our people used to think about our Civil Service...."⁷³ The identified set of operating values as discussed in Chapter V will be 'nothing more than a wish list'⁷⁴ if civil servants particularly the senior ones who embody the government's top management do not exemplify them through their conduct in the day-to-day operations. Moreover, if seniors demonstrate that they truly practise the values they preach, juniors will feel obliged to follow them. It is undeniable that the consolidation or institutionalisation of the professed values will occur when both the senior and the junior share them. In addition, seniors must monitor the behaviors of the juniors on a continuing basis and reflect it in the performance appraisal report where a column for value practice needs to be incorporated. A new performance appraisal format has been proposed in Chapter VII stressing practice of the suggested civil service values.

72 Sir Maurice Dean, *The Fulton Report Accountable Management in the Civil Service, Public Administration*, RIPA, Vol. 47, 1969.

73 B.G. Rao quoted in K. L. Panjabi's book, *The Civil Servant in India*, (Bombay Bharatiya Vidya Bhaban, 1965), p. 291.

74 Ken Blanchard's essay "Managing by Values", incorporated in the book *Integrity at Work* by Ken Shelton, (Utah: Executive Excellence, 1998). p. 34.

Chapter VII

REFORMING THE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM: STRATEGY OF ENHANCING ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability should not be considered an abstract value as it is unavoidably performance-based and results-oriented. Performance refers to an accomplished task or the behaviour which leads to the accomplishment of a specific task; it is the end product. In the context of professional job performance, performance refers to:

- the results that officials produce on the job--- the outcomes, consequences and outputs; and
- whatever they do that affects those results---their behaviour and actions.¹

Thus performance is what occurs as a result of an official's effort and abilities.² It is the focus of employee behaviour assessment. As Bennis comments: "It's performance, not buddy-buddy non-sense, that counts."³ If the performance of an *agent* is substandard, it is not acceptable to the *principal* in the same way a vehicle giving troubles is not acceptable to its driver/owner. Various recommendations such as provisions of higher incentive, introduction of stringent penal measures, strengthening of audit system, installation of the office of Ombudsman, introduction of MIS/DSS are suggested from time to time as measures to promote performance of the civil servants of Bangladesh. Permanency in the Civil Service does not guarantee competency and performance. If proper systems are not evolved to run the affairs of administration, the Civil Service will remain vulnerable to 'non-performance' and 'non-results'⁴; non-performance is considered by Drucker as one of the sins of public administration. While the government of Bangladesh has been introducing various methods of modern

1 John E. Newman & John R. Hinrichs, "Performance Evaluation for Professional Personnel, a monograph pushed by , Work-in-America Institute Inc. New York, 1980. p. 2.

2 Lloyd Baird, "*Managing Performance*", (New York : John Willey & Sons, 1986), p. 134.

3 Warren Bennis, "Chairman Max in Perspective", *Harvard Business Review*, September-October, 1972. p. 142.

4 Peter F. Drucker, "The Seven Deadly Sins in Public Administration" in *Perspectives in Public Bureaucracy* by Fred A. Kramer (ed.), (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1981). p. 237.

management in the civil service offices to improve the quality of performance, the performance appraisal system still remains conventional in these days of transparency, information and communication. As Mahtab remarks: "For a long time, we have alarmingly neglected this seminal aspect of our personnel management system which in no way can be construed other than continued negligence of the most important aspect of our duties."⁵

The present chapter seeks to examine the performance appraisal system now in practice in the Bangladesh Civil Service. The chapter is divided into two parts. The first part aims at examining the efficacy of the existing performance appraisal system and identifying the pitfalls of the present appraisal format based on the critical analysis made by the researchers, local and foreign consultants and the junior and senior members of the Civil Service. On the whole, it purports to bring out the main reasons for the failure of the existing performance review system. The objective of the second part is to suggest an alternative performance appraisal system. To that end an attempt has been made to replace the existing format of Annual Confidential Report or ACR (see Annex-II) by formulating an alternative format aimed at improving performance and accountability of officers through precision and objectivity. The whole idea behind this exercise has been to falsify the myth that 'in government, performance appraisal is largely a joke'⁶ by making the appraisal activity objective, productive and meaningful. The suggested alternative appraisal format has been shown on Annex- III.

Analysis of the existing appraisal format: Identifying the gaps

Performance appraisal system now in vogue in the Bangladesh Civil Service is subjected to criticism or condemnation by the civil servants and the non-civil servants alike because of its deficiency in form and spirit. Almost everyone inside and outside the civil service believes, the present system for appraising the performance of the civil servants is faulty and it does not work as an effective means of appraising performance and of ensuring accountability. According to a survey on the functioning of public administration in Bangladesh conducted by the UNDP in 1993, 72% of the officers

5 Shahabuddin Mahtab, *Talking of Management*, Dhaka, 1998. p. 45.

6 Herbert S. Meyer quoted in the essay "Appraisal of What Performance?" by Harry Levinson, *Herbert Business Review*, July-August, 1976, p. 2.

surveyed have indicated that ACR process has lost its validity.⁷ It is believed, as long as the deficiencies of the present appraisal system persist, the accountability of civil servants cannot be truly achieved and effectiveness and credibility of the civil service offices cannot be ensured. Since the independence of Bangladesh, no consistent attempts have been made to introduce modern scientific measures to appraise objectively the performance and potentials of an officer.⁸

The process of accountability begins with performance of a set of responsibilities and efficient performance depends largely on the efficacy of mechanisms that are devised and used by organizations to appraise the performance. In fact, one of the practical strategies to enhance the level of performance and to strengthen accountability in the Civil Service or the public sector agencies is to practise an effective performance appraisal system. A good performance appraisal system is a prime means of improving productivity, of ensuring quality of performance and achieving effectiveness of an organisation. Ideally, performance appraisal has three core functions ---

- to provide adequate feedback to the concerned officials on their current level of performance;
- to act as an aid for improvement of the future performance of officials; and
- to supply officials' performance data to the top management for critical decisions such as *promotion, transfer, time-scale, service confirmation, important assignment, local and foreign training*, and so on.

Present System of Annual Confidential Report

In Bangladesh, the performance appraisal format known as Annual Confidential Report (ACR) is used annually to assess the officials' performance. It is commonly used to appraise performance of all the civil servants irrespective of cadre. The components of the present ACR format are:

Part-I: Annual medical check-up report/overview

Part-II: Basic background information and job description of officers reported upon (ORU)

Part-III: Thirteen personal traits to be evaluated by 1-4 marks rating scale

7 UNDP, *Public Administration Sector Study*, (Dhaka: UNDP, 1993), p. 14.

8 Syed Giasuddin Ahmed, *Public Personnel Administration in Bangladesh*, (Dhaka: University of Dhaka, 1986), p. 262.

- Part-IV: Twelve work-performance variables to be assessed in the same scale
- Part-V: A structured written report called pen picture
- Part-VI: Recommendations about aptitude, reputation, training needs and eligibility for promotion
- Part-VII: Countersigning Officers' (CSO) remarks on the assessment of the Report Initiating Officer (RIO); total marks on overall evaluation and general remarks, if any;
- Part-VIII: The controlling Ministry's date of receipt recording the causes of abnormal delay, and other actions, if any. A set of guidelines about submitting, writing, counter-signing and sending to the ministry.

Part-I

Medical report does not reflect the actual health status of ORU; almost all ORUs manage to obtain 'A' grade whether they were sick or sound. According to the respondent-officers, the medical check-up may be conducted and recorded separately and only the cases which affect normal office work should be endorsed in the dossier of the incumbent. It should not be a part of the performance appraisal format as it causes unnecessary delay in the assessment.⁹

Part -II

Part-II, which contains the short bio-data and job description of the ORU, is of little significance because these do not indicate performance. Bio-data of the ORU is preserved by the Public Administration Computer Centre (PACC) which supplies it as and when it is required by the Superior Selection Board (SSB).

Job description that is expected to be recorded by the ORUs themselves in Part-II does not help the RIO in appraisal process as it is static and not measurable. In other words, job description is not a subject of assessment nor does it help in assessing performance; it only helps in preparing a work plan which is practically a pre-appraisal element. This part does not contain any information about the tasks to be actually performed or the targets actually achieved by the ORUs during the assessment period. As the ADB

⁹ Md. Toffazzal Hossain et al, *The Performance Appraisal System of the Civil Servants of Bangladesh*. The First Batch MATT-LDP Report, BPATC, December 15, 1999. p. 14.

survey report states, two pages of the form contain personal and medical details which seem redundant, if performance is considered the focus for assessment.¹⁰ There is no system of formulating a work plan in the present system. Thus job description part may rather be replaced by *work plan* which focuses on performance and on output/results. Achievement of the work plan creates scope for the supervisor to assess what is actually performed and also how much is performed.

Part-III & IV

In Part-III & IV, emphasis is given more to personality traits than to performance parameters; although personality traits contain no performance standard, these carry 52 marks whereas performance part weighs 48. There are 13 personality trait items and 12 performance factors with a rating range of 1-4 having total 100 marks in equal weightage to all the traits and attributes. The overall grades are 'outstanding': # 95-100; 'very good': # 85-94 'good': #61-84, 'average' # 41-60, and 'below average': # 40 and 'below'. In Part-IV, item no. 3.2 (*quality of work*) and 3.3 (*quantity of work*) can hardly be assessed unless a Work Plan is drawn and progress report on implementation of the Work Plan is maintained. While preparing the assessment report under the existing system, it is difficult for the supervisor to recall the quantity and the quality of work achieved throughout the year unless he or she maintains a track record of his or her activities. In the absence of a work plan to be pursued throughout the month or year and work plan progress record, the assessment by RIO tends to be fuzzy, hypothetical and subjective. In items *quality of work* and *quantity of work*, assessment is made mostly on supposition or on blurred memory.

There is little uniformity of understanding among the supervisors about the definition of the 25 variables; perspectives or perceptions vary from supervisor to supervisor. Therefore, any confusion on the implication of each variable/criterion will inevitably cause commission of injustice to the ORU. Moreover, traits are an inadequate basis for assessing performance and there is nothing to give feedback on traits because these do not show action or performance. The existing form forces the RIOs to assess performance of the ORUs mainly on the basis of personal traits rather than job performance. The RIOs have little to do with the personal traits of

10 Asian Development Bank's Survey Report on *Strengthening of Public Administration Training in Bangladesh*, Vol. I, December, 1998. p. 74.

ORUs because these are inherent or almost permanent in them. The personal traits of officers are supposed to be examined or determined during the recruitment by the PSC. In other words, the psychological test conducted by PSC identifies or spots the type of personality of the incumbent on the basis of which he or she is assigned a particular cadre.

A true appraisal focuses on the outcome of performance rather than on the traits of personality. In other words, the prime purpose of performance appraisal is to measure what *an official does* and *how he does*, not to assess *what he is* as a person. 'How' is important because it ultimately influences efficiency or productivity. As Josephowitz states: "The performance evaluation is only about the *performance*. It does not evaluate the person."¹¹ Performance-oriented offices and truly professionalised supervisors emphasise *performance* or *results* rather than *personality*.

In the personal trait part (Part-III), criterion no. 2.5 '*personality*' is shown as an exclusive variable or as one of the 13 attributes. Conceptually, all the 12 attributes cited in Part-III cumulatively constitute the *personality* of an officer. *Personality* should not be a discrete and exclusive variable for assessment because personality is a combination of several attributes. It can therefore be safely remarked that the Part-III of the existing format is ill-conceived. As the Administrative and Services Reorganisation Committee report (1973) remarks: "The confidential report merely records the superficial impression of the reporting officer. Again, the confidential reports on the manner and spirit in which they are being written tend more to emphasise the man and his inherent instincts than on his performance."¹²

Some of the attributes or traits are interlocking and repetitive and therefore the justification for separate grading for those characteristics is questionable. For example, '*sense of discipline*' and '*sense of responsibility*' are almost interrelated. Again, if an officer is highly disciplined, he or she is expected to be punctual and a punctual officer is naturally prompt in writing and in countersigning ACR. There is therefore little justification for separate grading on '*sense of discipline*' and '*punctuality*'. Item no.

11 Natasha Josephowitz, "*Paths to Power*", (New York : Addison-Wesley, 1985), p. 120.

12 Excerpt from the *Administrative and Services Reorganisation Committee* report quoted in Md. Toffazzal Hossain et al, *The Performance Appraisal System of the Civil Servants of Bangladesh*, The First Batch MATT-LDP Report, BPATC, December 15, 1999. p. 15.

2.11 of Part-III, i.e. '*prompt in taking action*' and item no. 3.11 of Part-IV '*writing or countersigning ACR*' are almost similar in implication. Thus such duplication or overlap of attributes or traits affects assessment of actual performance.¹³ Appraisal based on such traits as '*dependability*', '*timeliness*', '*initiative*' '*punctuality*', does not provide the performance data which the supervisor needs. Because, for example, one can be '*punctual*' in the office and score a good grade in this particular criterion without doing any work throughout the day, month or year.

Some of the variables/criteria such as item no. 3.11 '*writing or countersigning ACR*', item no. 3.4 '*ability to supervise and guide*' and item. no. 3.8 of Part-IV '*interest and ability to train subordinates*' have little relevance for the junior officers particularly the new entrants because they have no chance to supervise other officials. Officers who have no chance to train others are likely to obtain zero and this earn for them adverse remarks from the supervisor who rather claims helplessness about this. Again, in the performance part, the officer's role as a trainer, i.e. 3.8 of Part-IV '*interest and ability to train subordinates*' and 3.4, i.e. his '*ability to supervise and guide*' are not logically sequenced. In the appraisal process, junior officers are likely to be affected as many of them do not have the scope to train officials working under him. These officers cannot train the section assistants in the first instance because paradoxically enough in many cases junior officers receive training from the experienced section assistants holding class-iii rank. Thus item no. 3.4, 3.8 and 3.11 hardly apply to the new entrants of the civil service.

Part-V

Instruction no. 13 on the last page of ACR form states that an overall evaluation of the ORU and other points which have not been reflected in Part-III and IV may be mentioned in the Part-V i.e. pen picture column. In other words, the pen picture column in Part-V is expected to reflect additional remarks not covered in Part-III and Part-IV. Experience however shows that in most cases the criteria cited in Part-III and Part-IV are mostly repeated while writing the pen-picture and the special/unique features of the supervisees are hardly mentioned.

13 Md. Toffazzal Hossain *et al.*, Ibid. p. 15.

On scrutiny of more than three hundred ACRs of officers at various levels, it has been discovered that the pen pictures written by RIOs contain hazy, abstract, exaggerated and broad comments which often do not match with the grade awarded to the ORUs. Mostly general remarks are made from which an actual picture of the quality of performance cannot often be obtained. At times, it is found that a RIO providing adverse comments to an ORU in Part-V gives favourable grade in Part- III and IV. Some RIOs keep the pen-picture columns blank while many of them do not know how to write the pen-pictures. The language in which the pen-pictures are written are mostly repetitive or stereotypical and do not reflect the true or distinct picture of the incumbent's level of performance. On the whole, a true picture about the performance of an officer is not always available. Thus critical administrative decisions such as *promotion, transfer, service confirmation, important assignment, training* cannot be truly made on the basis of Part-V.

Part-VI

ACR is an important instrument for a civil servant to secure promotion. But ACR in its present form is regarded by many officers as an inadequate instrument for assessing fitness or eligibility for promotion.¹⁴

Bangladesh Public Service Commission's annual report 1990 stated: "Very often the officers reported upon have been assessed not fit for promotion; though the overall rating of the officer was satisfactory and he/she had fulfilled all the criteria for promotion prescribed in the relevant rule, initiating officer had made adverse comments in different columns of the ACR forms but the ORU have been recommended for promotion. It is extremely undesirable to have contradictory remarks in the ACRs".¹⁵ The grade awarded to the ORUs does not often match with the comments recorded in the pen-picture as well as in the recommendation column i.e. Part-VI. For example, an official who is graded as '*unsatisfactory*' is commented upon as being '*eligible for promotion*' which is contradictory or misleading.

14 Asian Development Bank's Survey Report on *Strengthening of Public Administration Training in Bangladesh*, Vol. I, December, 1998. p. 74.

15 Excerpt from Bangladesh Public Service Commission's annual report 1990 quoted in Md. Toffazzal Hossain et al *The Performance Appraisal System of the Civil Servants of Bangladesh*, The First Batch MATT-LDP Report, BPATC, December 15, 1999. p. 16.

Part-VII (a) & VIII (b)

In most cases, CSOs do not care to record the grounds of their assent or dissent in Part-VII(a); they do not usually take the pain of explaining why they differ with the grade awarded by RIOs. The Part-VII(b) fixed for the CSOs seems redundant because in most cases they are not familiar with the RIOs' level of performance. Many of them do not even remember the names of RIOs while some CSOs retain the grade given by RIOs to avoid the risk of over-rating or under-rating. Some CSOs display authority by arbitrarily reducing the grade awarded by RIOs, although the concerned ORU does not deserve the reduction. Very often appraisal is prepared on the basis of assumption or blurred memory about the performance of the ORU. Thus if appraisal is not factual, any decision on career, placement, training etc. of an officer tends to be unrealistic, or even injudicious.

Many officers during the interview expressed their views disavouring continuance of Part-VII earmarked for CSO. This is because CSO has the discretion to enhance or reduce the RIO's grade without assigning any reason; he can award any grade, high or low, in lump if he considers appropriate and that turns out to be the final grade for ORU. These discretionary powers of CSO are often abused ultimately affecting the career of the ORU. The grade awarded by RIO in Part-III and Part-IV on personality traits and on work performance can be offset or be made redundant by CSO's rash assessment in Part-VII(b). Again, when CSOs change the grade given by the RIOs, they do not often put on record the ground of change. This makes the whole exercise of RIO in filling Part-III and Part-IV futile. As Mahtab remarks: "Counter-signing officers are not involved in the process. He is only a counter-signing machine. Besides he does not generally want to go beyond the path shown by RIO, as he has little personal knowledge about the ORU and his activities."¹⁶

RIO is the immediate supervisor who actually supervises the performance of ORU for the entire report period and therefore he has better knowledge of the level of ORU's performance. But it is observed in many cases that CSO who happens to be the distant overseer "even without bothering to record his note of dissent in Part-VII(a) has proceeded to award in Part-VII(b) lump sum marks which are vastly higher or lower

16 Shahabuddin Mahtab, *op cit.*, p. 43.

than the marks given by the reporting officer."¹⁷ In the absence of accountability such lump marking can be irresponsible and can make a mockery of the performance appraisal system.

More pitfalls of the present appraisal system

i) Because there is no provision for Work Plan in the existing format, ORUs have difficulties in understanding what is to be appraised. This leads to frustration, demotivation and non-performance on the part of the ORUs. Performance of tasks does not remain the central concern of the officers. Alam remarks: "As we have not developed a tradition of accountability, there is no column of accountability in the Annual Confidential Report forms of officers and employees."¹⁸ To obtain a good grade, the ORUs prefer building personal rapport with RIOs to performing really the tasks expected of them.

ii) The appraisal is based on closed system and therefore the ORU/ supervisee has no access to the report prepared by the RIO/supervisor. Only adverse remarks are communicated to the assessee whereas favourable comments that can give him/her an impetus to work are kept confidential. There is no legal provision that ensures or requires communication between the supervisor and the supervisee on the issue of performance appraisal. In fact, the lack of concern for developing subordinates is evident in the very format and spirit of the present system of performance appraisal. Legally the RIO and the ORU do not have to enter into a contract about the tasks or duties to be performed by the ORU. Under the existing system, the ORU does not receive any feedback on the level of performance from the RIO. As the report is kept confidential, RIOs do not show any interest in providing any feedback, positive or negative. Again, the supervisees' 'right to know' their strengths and weaknesses is denied and they have little scope to receive from the supervisor the help they need in performing their tasks properly. As the ACR does not form part of any systematic and continuous performance management system supervising officers do not feel it

17 M G Bhuiyan, "ACR : Pitfalls of the System" , *The Daily Star*, July 8, 1999. p. 5.

18 AZM Shamsul Alam, *Bureaucracy in Bangladesh Perspective*, Dhaka : BPATC, 1999. p. 91.

obligatory to discuss routinely with the supervisees their performance-related problems. The very purpose of performance appraisal is therefore vitiated.¹⁹

Because of the element of confidentiality in the existing system, the relations between the ORU and the RIO never grow and the former always remains in a state of fear and tension. Little communication occurs between the supervisee and the supervisor; because of the faulty design, there is no scope for formalized objective discussion, coaching and counseling on performance problems. In the British system, preparing an appraisal is continuous process where the supervisor sits several times a year and spends a good deal of time with supervisees. In our system the RIOs often spend not more than a quarter of an hour (or less) to write a CR and this is only a one time operation a year.²⁰ As the system is closed and there is no provision for face-to-face communication between the supervisee and the supervisor, the latter does not feel it obligatory to prepare the reports timely.

iii) The appraisal system is mostly personalised, impressionistic and intuitive. It is criticised on the ground of subjectivity element, although in real life situation it is difficult to totally eliminate it. An officer can manage a good grade from the supervisor by using the art of sycophancy or by forging happy personal relations. In other words, appraisal relies largely on the personal relations between the supervisor and the supervisee. As Mahtab remarks in a tone of sarcasm: "The fact that an officer has failed to pay respects to his superior officer in the early hours of the Eed Day may be a more important factor for the performance appraisal than the incumbent's professionalism or ability for sound judgement and quick disposal of cases. personal likes and dislikes are prevalent everywhere but in the case of Bangladesh it is prevalent to a gross degree."²¹ Several senior officers who were interviewed remarked that the ACR is too subjective and does not reflect the true performance of an offices;²² "the element of subjectivity in the ACRs persists to a degree much higher than otherwise desirable."²³ Many supervisors determine the grade of the ORUs beforehand i.e. without looking at the appraisal format and put numbers in Part-III and Part-IV on the basis of their pre-

19 Asian Development's Survey Report on "Strengthening of Public Administration Training in Bangladesh", Vol. I, December 1998, p. 74.

20 Shahabuddin Mahtab, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

21 Ibid.

22 Four Secretaries' Report entitled *Towards Better Government in Bangladesh*, 1993, p. 4.

determined or pre-decided grade. Thus their appraisal is based on impression, not on the work actually performed throughout the year.

Prejudices, biases, likes and dislikes usually creep into the assessment process. There are officers who do not take the risk of preparing unpleasant reports and “hence prefer to sleep over ACRs.”²⁴ Because of the inherent weaknesses in the appraisal format, it is not difficult for an officer to secure a satisfactory ACR; in most cases the officers in the promotion range can “coax and cajole the reporting officer for minimum qualifying marks.”²⁵ Again many supervisors do not like to take the risk of antagonizing their supervisees even though their performance is substandard. These supervisors seek to remain on the safe side and earn cheap popularity by awarding inflated or undeserved grade to the ORUs. This happens because there is no mechanism like work plan or achievement record to regulate the assessment process and to make the assessment objective or performance-based.

iv) ACRs are often hastily filled up leaving no impact on administrative outcome or decision-making. This particularly happens when outstanding ACRs of several years of an ORU are written at a time. The result is that the RIO tends to grade the supervisee uniformly or at times rashly because of the loss of memory. The objectivity or accuracy of assessment is thus naturally affected. The present format does not encourage creativity or innovation that will improve the quality of service of the Civil Service agency to the people, society or the nation. The government of Malaysia has devised a performance appraisal system by which officers are encouraged to be efficient and innovative in producing quality services or output. Performance appraisal is used in determining annual salary progression besides determining promotions.

v) ACR is like an annual administrative ritual, not a mandated responsibility for the supervisor. Its importance is raised during promotion and also infrequently during important placement. As training and subsequent placement are not integrated with the appraisal process, RIOs do not take any initiative about training or professional development of the incumbent as well. In its present form, performance review exists

23 Ibid. p. 17.

24 Kamal Siddiqui, “Towards Good Governance in Bangladesh”, Dhaka: University Press Limited, 1996, p. 99.

as an isolated event, as it is carried out on a once-a-year basis. It is mostly linked with placement and promotion of ORUs but de-linked from professional enrichment or career development of the incumbents. The performance is not geared towards professional development/enrichment of the supervisees. Many organisations, private and public, in the Western countries consider the performance appraisal as the most reliable tool for determining training needs of staff. The existing system of performance appraisal in the civil service does not address these issues.

vi) The present format is being used to appraise performance of all cadres although the nature of job varies from cadre to cadre. A uniform format of ACR for all categories of officers does not provide scope for objective assessment. In other words, the same format is being used for appraising the performance of an engineer, foreign service official, income-tax officer, magistrate, trainer and teacher. As Mahtab, a retired senior civil servant comments: "Different category of officers perform different sets of jobs and the criteria of their evaluation cannot be the same. Uniformity of form for assessment cannot do justice to them all."²⁶ In Malaysia, appraisal formats for a field administrator and a trainer are different. The functions of officers from the joint secretary level officers up to secretary are different, as they more involved in policy-making and providing consultancy services to the concerned ministers and so the appraisal format for these levels of officers should be varied.

vii) The tenure of the supervisor or of the supervisee is often not continuous or stable. As proper records are not maintained and no mechanism has been evolved to do it, the present system suffers from the error of 'recency effect'; this implies that subordinates' performance is assessed on what they have done lately, not on their consistent performance. If record is not maintained properly, a subordinate's latest substandard performance may overshadow the consistent good performance achieved throughout the year. Most of the supervisors do not maintain any record of the details of the performance throughout the year and there is no format or formal provision for doing it either. The result is that officials do not receive the reward they deserve and officials who deserve penalty get relief.

25 AMM Shawkat Ali, "*Bangladesh Civil Service: Political-Administrative Perspective*" (Dhaka: University Press Limited, 2004), p. 113.

26 Shahabuddin Mahtab, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

viii) Many of the supervisors do not show professional skills in appraising performance because they are not trained on the dynamics of the appraisal process. Most of the supervisors have no training about how to appraise a supervisee's performance and so there is no professional touch in doing it. Performance appraisal procedures have not been incorporated as an item in the training modules of BPATC's mid and senior level courses. Training on this subject is important because when untrained supervisors sit down writing appraisal reports, they are unlikely to do proper justice to the appraisal on which the career or the quality of future performance of officers largely depends.

ix) Majority of the ORUs suffer from frustration, demotivation, tension about the existing performance appraisal system. According to them, ACR is used more as a tool of harassment or victimisation than as a tool of professional development. While junior officers find the appraisal as dreadful, many supervisors take the appraising task as distasteful and unpleasant; they are often overtaken by inertia.

Towards an Alternative Appraisal System

If we accept the above criticism and seek to remove the weaknesses of the existing conventional performance appraisal system, evolving an alternative system is an urgent necessity. Moreover, if we want to make the Civil Service accountable, productive and dynamic, we need to devise or pursue an alternative approach to performance appraisal. Thus, all the pitfalls of the present performance appraisal format as discussed in the preceding sections justify the need for formulation of an alternative format that is more functional and useful in holding civil servants accountable.

Performance appraisal should not be treated merely as a subject of academic discourse on personnel administration; it should rather be designated as a tool of ensuring accountability keeping in view the total improvement of organisational performance. Performance appraisal should be considered a developmental tool, not a tool of creating fear in the mind of the appraisees. It has to be linked with training needs assessment and training scheme for human resource development in the Civil Service. Here are the features of the new performance appraisal system:

i) Performance appraisal is not an isolated, once-a-year event. Appraisal is a continuous, on-going process of review; it should be part of the supervisor's regular on-

going work in the office. In other words, performance appraisal should be a major element in the job description of all officers. Assessment should be based on data and the source of data is objective, honest monitoring and recording of the incumbent's job performance throughout the year.

ii) In the new proposed system, appraisal is based on performance, not on personality traits. If the supervisor focuses on personal traits, he or she has little to give feedback on. Appraisal is meant not for evaluating the subordinates as persons but their performance/achievement only. Personality is not an issue for appraisal. The thrust of the new format is *work performance* and *training* to improve the present quality of work.

iii) Incorporation of the element of Work Plan is totally a new initiative. One benefit of Work Plan is that, it is possible to allocate rationally the total workload of a unit or department among all the officers through job description and it is possible to handle the evasive officer who tends to obtain a 'good' appraisal report without practically doing any work. In other words, the inequality in workload-sharing by officers that persists in the Civil Service offices can be prevented to a considerable extent.

iv) In the new system, performance appraisal is proposed to be transparent and participatory to make the exercise meaningful. The supervisor and the supervisee will sit together at the beginning for preparing the Work Plan and then at the middle part of each appraisal period i.e. six months for progress review. It will be on a collaborative and interactive process, not on adversarial basis. The supervisor will have the right of access to the recorded information indicating performance problems and of ventilating grievances of the supervisee.

At the initial stage, openness or transparency (as against opacity or confidentiality) between the supervisor and the supervisee may cause certain emotional and behavioral problems like interpersonal conflict, mental stress, fear etc. But it is expected that continuous practice and intensive orientation about the process and philosophy of the new system i.e. PRIP will reduce tension/apprehension and produce confidence in the officers. Moreover, if all officers are attuned to the cult of the values of probity and efficiency through orientation and are committed to work accomplishment, there will be little problem in institutionalizing the new system.

v) In the proposed system, the role of the supervisor is perceived not as a critical fault-finder or a psychologist but as a guide, coach, or counselor helping the ORU meet his/her set targets and thereby achieving the goals of the department/office. Thus the emphasis is laid on applied learning, rather than on fruitless fault-finding. It is linked with training and career planning of the officers. The old format stresses the past performance only whereas the proposed new format stresses the past as well as the future performance.

The present appraisal system allows supervisors to know how well their subordinates are performing and wherein lies the discrepancies/gaps and how the former can help the latter in meeting the deficiencies. To make the appraisal meaningful, not a ritual as it is with the present system, feedback is conceived as an important ingredient of the charter of the supervisor's duties. Feedback will help the supervisees improve performance and achieve greater accountability.

vi) Performance appraisal is both a judgemental and a developmental process. It appraises officials of where they stand and what they can do more to improve their performance.²⁷ A separate column has therefore been inserted on the new format to indicate the training needs of ORUs. Training is conceived to be the joint responsibility of the RIO/supervisor and ORU/the supervisee. This column will act as the recorded source of the training needs of the ORUs. The RIO will fill in the column on the basis of his observation and experience about the performance of the supervisee over the year.

vii) The part earmarked for CSOs in the existing format is proposed to be retained simply for the knowledge of what the ORUs have achieved by implementing the work plan. CSO will not put any comment on the grade awarded by the RIOs. CSOs will not grade the performance either because in most of the cases they are not familiar with level of ORUs' performance.

viii) Medical test part should be dropped altogether from the existing format as it should be conceived not as a part of the performance appraisal but as a facility for routine annual health check-up of the officers.

²⁷ John E. Newman & John R. Hinrichs, op cit. .p. 2.

Suggesting an Alternative Performance Appraisal Format

It is suggested that ACR be re-designated as Performance Review and Improvement Plan (PRIP). The PRIP will be instrumental in developing a modern citizen-centric civil service respected by the citizenry for its quality of performance. This will be done by creating a participative environment through an open and free interface between a supervisor and his/her supervisees to enable the latter to focus their efforts on achieving results. The system will enable the officers to improve their competency and to develop their full potential so that they can assume higher responsibilities in future.

The present format has been developed --

- to ensure that the work plan of each officer reflects the goals of the division/ section and the vision and mission of the Ministry/Department
- to ensure that supervisors and supervisees have a common understanding of job requirements;
- to review individual performance against mutually agreed work plan and Performance Standards; and
- to provide feedback on performance to supervisees/ officers and identify training needs.

PRIP will act as a diagnostic tool to improve the performance of an official. It will have four major components with four distinct purposes— i) to prepare a *work plan* based on consensus between the supervisee and the supervisor ii) to recognise good performance, to encourage further improvement and to identify the *performance gaps* iii) to grade the performance in the light of the format and iv) to prepare a *plan for performance improvement through training* aimed at overcoming the performance gaps detected during the assessment period.

Modalities of operationalising PRIP

The PRIP will be an annual cycle of planning, feedback and assessment with four stages as shown in Figure 8.1. It is proposed that there will be three sessions--- i) *pre-performance session* to be scheduled in the first week of January; in this session work plan comprising the Key Tasks, and performance standards will be settled through negotiation with the supervisee ii) *progress review session* to be scheduled by the end of June and iii) *post-performance session* to be scheduled by the end of December.

Success of the exercise will depend on the commitment as well as devotion of time and effort by both the supervisor and the supervisee.

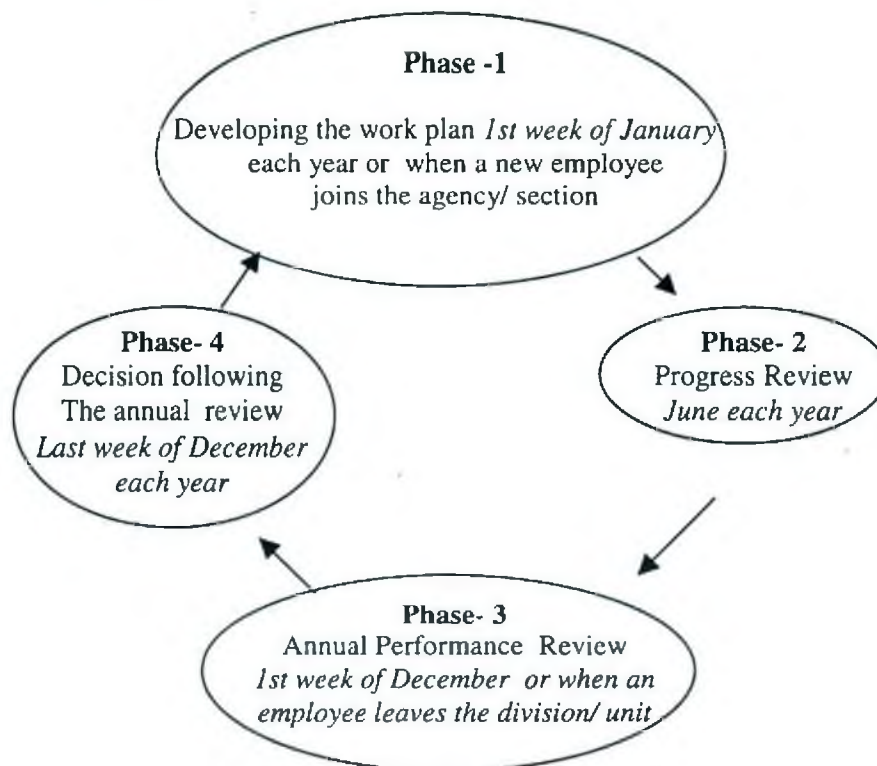


Figure 7.1: Annual Cycle of PRIP

Work Plan : What and Why?

Performance appraisal is meant for assessing the quality of performance of tasks or works, not the traits of an official. If the tasks performed by him or her are not taken into account for assessment, there is practically nothing to assess. As work plan is a vital component of the proposed alternative performance format, it demands an elaborate treatment for justifying its incorporation in the new assessment system PRIP.

Work plan and its implementation record will act as visible indicators of performance or non-performance of the assigned tasks of an official. These will also serve as the basis of rewarding for performance and of punishing for non-performance. In Bangladesh Civil Service, absence of work plan or record has made it possible for an official to shun responsibilities and has made it difficult for authorities to punish the shirking civil servants.

In the Philippines, every officer is required to enter into a detailed agreement with his/her supervisor setting forth in quantitative and qualitative terms what the officer will accomplish within a six month period. At the end of the rating period, the officer's performance is assessed on the basis of his/her accomplishment compared to what was agreed upon.²⁸

Workplan is a pre-appraisal document devised to record the Key Tasks to be performed by a supervisee-official during an assessment period; it is a built-in mechanism to monitor and to assess an officer's own performance and to identify the problems affecting his/her performance. A workplan documents the Key Tasks which are the critical or major elements of an official's job. Key Tasks and Individual Performance Standards or targets will be developed basing on both the annual plans/programmes of the Ministry/Department, division/unit and on the schedule of an official's other set of duties. Plans and programmes of an agency need to be disaggregated into a set of Key Tasks which are to be delegated to and accomplished by the relevant officials. Only then work implementation can be predicted and targets achieved. The Performance Standards make the performance visible and predictable and therefore measurable. In the whole process, workplan acts as a mechanism through which the Key Tasks specified therein are implemented and then assessed. A Workplan must---

- set individual priorities in consonance with the departmental or institutional priorities;
- make each activity results-oriented and visible as far as possible;
- set standards to measure results as far as possible; and
- keep Key Tasks time-bound to make performance predictable.

The proposed incorporation of workplan into the existing performance appraisal process is a major intervention suggested by this researcher; this is suggested on the ground that the Key Tasks to be undertaken by the supervisee will remain recorded therein and later it will be possible for the supervisor to assess or measure how much of the work has been accomplished and how much has not. Absence of a workplan and performance standards is likely to make the appraisal subjective as well as injudicious. Precision of a work plan will however depend on the nature of tasks/activities; some are

28 Patricia S. Tomas in *Administrative and Financial Accountability: The ASEAN-SAARC Experience*", Sirajuddin H. Salleh & Arabinda Kar (eds.), Asia & Pacific Development Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1995. p. 191.

quantifiable while others are not. For the civil service agencies, it is often difficult to prepare a precise Work Plan of an individual official because many of the tasks are not foreseeable or predictable.

It is observed that most of the civil servants in our country grow a tendency to work in a state of fuzziness and abstraction on the plea that their activities or tasks are mostly of general, qualitative, service-oriented and unpredictable nature and it is not often possible to quantify or concretise or measure them properly. Inclusion of workplan into the scope of appraisal is avoided particularly by the government agencies because workplan formulation is a painstaking job as it requires intensive involvement of the supervisor and the supervisee, investment of time and careful analysis of the total programme of an agency. The international Civil Service agencies engaged in similar activities of service nature have however shown that this device can make an activity visible and hold an officer accountable as far as possible. What is actually important is to set a trend of concretising each task as a part of creating a new work culture in a Civil Service agency in Bangladesh. This will help in improving accountability of an official as well as that of a unit easily.

A Workplan will be developed by each officer as soon as he/she joins a desk of an office; normally it will be developed and finalised in January of each year while he/she is already on the job. The workplan should be approved or validated by the supervisor of the supervisor (known as the Counter-signing Officer) so that the latter remains informed of what tasks are to be undertaken by the supervisee throughout the month or year (review period) towards accomplishment of the overall programme of the department/ section/ unit. A copy of the negotiated and approved workplan will be retained and preserved by the CSO until the submission of the review report to prevent any potential maneuvering by the supervisee and the supervisor

Developing a supervisee's Performance Standards

Individual Performance Standards are selected outputs and levels of output from Key Tasks which will be agreed between the supervisor and the supervisee-officer as measures of performance. The outputs may be quantifiable or observable. In developing Individual Performance Standards, practical measures of *quality*, *quantity*, *speed* and *cost* should be considered. It is however difficult to quantify some elements

of performance in a civil service job. For example, the quality of interpersonal relations of an officer, the degree of cooperation and coordination with other individuals/organizations is difficult to measure; this can be judged when no complaint is received from the relevant superiors, clients or the agencies concerned or the activity is fully accomplished. But still efforts should be made to make the performance visible as far as possible.

The official will then write up a draft of the work plan, meet again with the supervisor, and when both agree, the work plan is finalized and signed.

Phase 1: Developing the Work Plan

At Phase 1 the Work plan is developed. For preparing a work plan the participation of the supervisee is essential and so it is attractive to him. In fact, work plan will be the first major assignment for which the appraisee-officer will be initially held accountable during the period; it is the basic instrument to make the assessment objective, job-specific and results-oriented.

Preparing the work plan is process of negotiation between the supervisor and the supervised officer. The supervisor should conduct an interview with his/her the draft supervisees to discuss the overall goals and objectives of the Ministry/ Department or work units. During the meeting the supervisor and the supervisee will discuss plans jointly, modify it if necessary until both of them are satisfied. They reach agreement on Key Tasks and suitable Individual Performance Standards initially for 6 months.

Progress in achieving Key Tasks recorded in work plan will then be the subject of regular discussion and supervisory guidance. This is formalised in a Progress Review at Phase 2. Phase 3 is the final annual performance review and at Phase 4 decisions are made following the annual review. These decisions will be the basis for dealing with substandard performance and performance recognition. These will also help in the development of the new Work plan for the next annual performance cycle.

The review period will normally begin on/from the date the workplan is signed by the supervisee and the supervisor and conclude by December 20 every year. After the review is completed by the supervisor, he/she will transmit the review report to the CSO for countersigning. The CSO will neither comment on the review nor award any

grade; his/her involvement is meant for sharing the knowledge of what and how much work has been accomplished by the supervisee-officer towards implementation of the overall goals of the office/agency.

An alternative performance appraisal format designed on the basis of the principles and concepts is shown on Annex-III. A sample of filled-in work plan achievement record for assessment purpose is also shown on Annex-IV.

Phase 2: Progress Review Interview

At the conclusion of 6 months the supervisee will self-assess how much of the work plan he/she has achieved. In the case of the implementation problems, the supervisee will substantiate with factual data whenever possible. This interview will enable the supervisor and the supervisee to revise or reschedule the targets for the next 6 months or remainder of the report period. In fact, the purpose of this interview is to consider any changes in priority, to assess progress, to identify implementation barriers and to discuss how the barriers can be overcome. If necessary, because of changed situation in the offices, modifications may be made to Key Tasks and to Individual Performance Standards.

A record of the Progress Review Interview detailing any changes will be made in the *Progress Review* section of the Work Plan Form. A sample of the progress review is shown on Annex V.

Importance of supervisor's feedback on supervisee's performance

To make the appraisal meaningful, not a ritual, feedback should be built into the regular job of the supervisor at the respective level. Feedback helps supervisees improve performance and achieve greater accountability. In fact, feedback is what makes the performance meaningful, lively and dynamic. The more specific and frequent the feedback, the more it will be useful in enhancing the level of the supervisee's performance. Unless the supervisee is aware of his or her specific deficiencies and strengths, shortcomings and achievements, he or she may not know where and how to improve his or her performance. Feedback should be always factual and focussed. To be substantive and credible, feedback should be based on facts, not on assumption or hearsay. It should highlight results, critical events and significant behaviours which

affect performance. For feedback it is useful to raise the key or critical issues that involve learning for better performance; it is better to avoid general or vague remarks, subjective views which are found in most cases.

In the process of performance review, what supervisees expect from their supervisors is objective feedback in the form of direction and guidance that will help them enhance their quality of performance. Thus performance feedback from the supervisors must be frank, open and straightforward so that the supervisees know when their performance is satisfactory and when it is unacceptable.

Phase 3 : The Annual Performance Review Meeting

The purpose of this meeting is for the supervisor to evaluate the officer's performance/achievement for the whole year/period and discuss with him or her in an open, constructive way how performance can be further improved. The steps in the meeting are detailed below:

The supervisor assesses and discusses with the supervisee performance in relation to the relevant tasks. The supervisor will assess how well Key Tasks (already mutually agreed) in the work plan have been accomplished and Performance Standards met. Results are recorded both in the columns *Achievements Towards Standards* on the Work plan page and in the *Supervisor's Comments* on the Annual Performance Review page.

Putting it all together in the Annual Performance Review Recommendation

Considering all the factors the supervisor then will indicate to the officer the Performance Review Recommendations deemed appropriate for the year.

The supervisor and the supervisee-officer will then discuss areas of disagreement, and seek resolution of any perceived difficulties, if there be any.

Linking performance appraisal with training plan/ needs assessment

The career potential and training needs of the supervisee will be discussed and the Training Plan for the next twelve months drawn.

Plan for performance improvement meeting should be half-way through the annual review period in June of each year. As noted earlier, preparing schedule for

Performance Improvement Plan should be incorporated as one of the vital tasks of the supervisor's job description. The objectives of this one-to-one meeting session or exercise are ---

- to identify barriers to the progress of work and sort out how these barriers can be overcome; and
- to identify the training needs of the supervisee. A training plan for the rest of the six months will also be drawn in the light of the training needs to be identified.

Training should be the joint responsibility of the supervisor and the supervisee. A training road-map should be prepared indicating the specific areas where the supervisee needs to be trained and this will be mutually decided. The supervisor and the supervisee will—

- jointly identify the new knowledge needed for more effective performance and contribution; and
- jointly identify the new or upgraded skills required more effective performance.

A separate column will be inserted on the format to indicate performance gaps of the officer to be assessed. This column will be the recorded source of identifying the training needs of the ORU. The supervising officer will fill in the column on the basis of his observation and experience about the performance of the supervisee. It will be realistic if officers are nominated to the relevant training programme in the light of the training needs identified by the supervisor. The personnel administration unit of each civil service office will formally nominate the concerned official for the appropriate training in consultation with the supervisor.

The supervisor completes the Comments and Career Potential sections and the Performance Review Recommendation and signs the Work Plan Review Form.

The Counter-signing Officer (CSO) who is the supervisor of the supervisor will countersign the final assessment made by the supervisor. He will neither comment nor award any grade; his involvement is meant only for sharing the knowledge of how much work has been accomplished by the supervisee-officer.

Suggested Competency Profile for Performance Appraisal

A competency profile needs to be prepared for effective performance appraisal. Ideally performance should be based on the analysis of two categories of competencies--- *generic* and *specific*. Competency implies the behavioural dimensions of a role- the behaviour required of the civil servants of all cadres to carry out/perform their work effectively. It also implies the knowledge, skills and values an official needs to acquire for performing a job effectively. Values manifest themselves through behaviours. Generic competency implies competency that applies to officials irrespective of any organization or cadre; these are general and common. Specific competency implies the behavioral characteristics that are specifically required for performing the job-specific responsibilities of each officer.

A. Core Generic Competencies: Knowledge area

- i) Knowledge of the job and
- ii) Knowledge of the relevant policies, rules and procedures

Eight ($4 \times 2 = 8$) marks will be earmarked for this part.

B. Core Generic Competencies: Skill Area

- i) Analytical and decision-making ability
- ii) Ability to plan activities
- iii) Ability to maintain good relations with clients/customers
- iv) Communication skills : Writing skill
- v) Communication skills : Verbal skill
- vi) Ability to work in a team
- vii) Ability to adapt change and cope with pressure
- viii) Ability to contribute innovative ideas for Agency's development

Thirty-two ($4 \times 8 = 32$) marks will be earmarked for this part.

C. Core Generic Competencies: Values

Competency profile for appraisal may also be based on the codified values. In other words, values have to be meshed in the appraisal scheme by identifying the competencies in the light of the declared core values (explained in chapter V). The quality of performance depends on how values are internalised and practised by civil

servants. Each civil servant will be monitored and assessed on the criterion of the practice of the values such as *The Public Interest, Probity, Austerity, Neutrality (non-partisanship), Responsiveness*. The civil servants practising these values should be graded by their supervisors accordingly. This will help in fostering a healthy work culture in the civil service agencies. Out of the twelve declared civil service values, five are proposed to be reflected in the new alternative appraisal format. These are --

- i) Practice of *the Public Interest*
- ii) Practice of *Austerity*
- iii) Practice of *Neutrality* (non-partisanship),
- iv) Practice of *Responsiveness*
- v) Practice of *Probity*

Twenty ($4 \times 5 = 20$) marks will be earmarked for this part.

D. Job-specific performance based on work plan

Competency for this part is cadre-specific and job-centred. This will be prepared on the basis of the Work Plan of an officer. The work plan will vary from officer to officer belonging to various cadres, for example, Assistant Commissioner (Taxes) belonging to Bangladesh Civil Service (Taxation) cadre or a member of the BPATC's teaching faculty. Forty marks ($4 \times 10 = 40$) will remain earmarked for implementation of Work Plan.

Anatomy of the alternative format

The newly designed appraisal form as shown on Annex-III is divided into five parts. Part-I contains information indicating the identity of the supervisee, ORU and of the supervisor and the assessment report period. The Generic Competency which includes 15 criteria encompassing 2 knowledge factors, 8 skill factors and 5 value factors is covered by Part-II. Part-III will include 10 factors of Specific Competency showing completion of the Key Tasks based on the mutually agreed Work Plan. Part-IV shows the record of the Key Tasks implemented according to the Work Plan on the basis of which Specific Competency of the supervisee will be assessed. Part-V contains overall review, comments, recommendation on training by the supervising officer and that to be counter-signed by the Countersigning Officer. The rationale of involving CSO in the appraisal process is that he or she will be able to get informed of the progress of work

achieved and training, if any, required by the supervisee. This will enable CSO to make future administrative decisions judiciously.

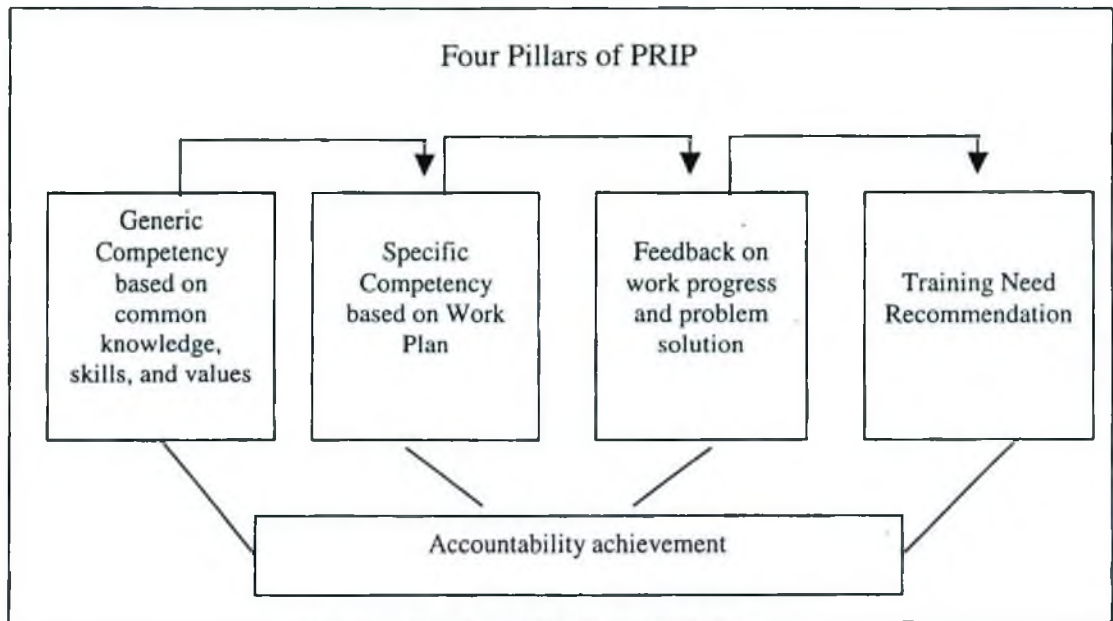


Figure 7.2: Four Pillars of PRIP

Factors for the success of the new/alternative system

Introduction of any new system has inherent challenges. The success of the proposed alternative system depends on the following factors:

- i) A two-way discussion between ORUs and RIOs is essential to developing a pragmatic work plan. During the negotiation, the supervisor must ensure that the supervisee can freely articulate his or her opinions. In fact, the viability of the new system depends on healthy and friendly interpersonal relations between the ORUs and RIOs. Personal antagonism between the two will make the exercise dysfunctional.
- ii) Skills of supervision and communication comprise the cornerstone of an effective performance appraisal process. Thus quality of communication and interpersonal relations between the supervisor and the supervisee is the key to the success of the new system. The supervisors need to be trained on Interpersonal skills and the Techniques of On-the-job Training.
- iii) The supervisor has to invest a reasonable amount of time in conducting Work Plan meeting. There is no scope for keeping the assessment task pending. For the top-level supervisors, spending time is of course costly but this cost can be afforded or justified to achieve the prime goals of HRD and productivity in the civil service.

iv) Clear definition of responsibility ensures proper performance. Every desk has to be equipped with job description based on proper definition of tasks. Job description also known as position description will specify to the officer the charter of responsibilities and the person to whom he or she has to report to. It has been observed, in many civil service offices, position description does not exist. In its absence, a work plan cannot be prepared and performance of an official cannot be appraised objectively. Position description needs not be incorporated as an element in the performance appraisal format.

v) The work plan to be formulated mutually by the supervisor and the supervisee must be realistic and implementable.

Concluding Remarks

The proposed format as discussed above needs not be taken as radical or revolutionary but as a natural synthesis of the researcher's experience on-the-job, consultation with senior and junior civil servants and knowledge gleaned from a few appraisal procedures of other countries like Mauritius, Malaysia, Singapore and also donor agencies such as UNICEF. In fact, evolving and implementing a rational performance appraisal system for the Civil Service is a challenging job for any government. There will always remain a scope for various questions answers to which are not easy. In fact no one package of ideas can give a final answer to the 'never-ending quest' for evolving a scientific system of performance appraisal for which the civil servants have been waiting. Extensive research and study will therefore be required to rationalize the appraisal system. The crucial question before all of us is-- do we want to make the civil service performance-oriented and truly accountable? If the answer is 'yes', we need to revise the existing performance system. But what is most required is the top-level executive commitment to do it.

Once a new system is put into practice, intensive institutional training on how to appraise performance of officers will be required for officers at all levels to make the system functional. One of the reasons that performance appraisal system, whether it is old or new, fails is that supervisors in our civil service lack skills needed to implement it. Because a sloppy or unprofessional appraisal leads to misinformation about the performance affecting administrative decisions, every supervisor has to be trained on how to prepare the performance appraisal. If supervisors are trained on the performance

appraisal procedures, they will grow a uniform perception about the criteria or parameters on the basis of which supervisee-officers are to be appraised. A short, intensive training course exclusively on the techniques of performance appraisal may be introduced by BPATC.

Performance appraisal/ review has to be formally and functionally linked with on-the-job training. On the basis of the deficiencies identified during the performance review, structured OJT programme can be designed by the supervisor to improve the performance of the incumbent.

Chapter VIII

ORGANISATION DEVELOPMENT ORIENTATION: A STRATEGY FOR CHANGING CIVIL SERVANTS' MINDSET

In the secretariat and in the field offices of the government of Bangladesh, organizational practices are guided in accordance with the Rules of Business¹ and the Secretariat Instructions² inherited from both the British colonial and Pakistani regimes. These have not been much revised during the thirty-five years of independence. As a result, organizational practices in the civil service agencies are characterized by (i) an excessive reliance on rules, procedures and precedents; (ii) disinclination to innovate or find solutions beyond the statutes or manuals; (iii) undue emphasis on form, propriety and on hierarchy; (iv) tendency of officials to shift or evade the responsibility as far as possible; and (v) a built-in aversion for and unwillingness to accept targets and time limit of any kind.³ However, because of individual initiative by the trained civil servants, traditional organizational practices are being replaced, although at a slow pace. But as the efforts are not consistent for the lack of common orientation and for lack of leadership support (both administrative and political), the old rule-bound hierarchical organisational practices continue to operate in the present work environment of the Civil Service agencies of Bangladesh.

Although the structure of the Civil Service as operated during the Pakistan regime has been reorganised in the post-liberation period, the organisational practices have remained almost as before. Management of the civil service agencies in the post-liberation period, as Abedin says, "has been traditional in approach and outmoded in techniques based on negative assumptions about human nature. Things have not changed much after liberation. Though high officials preach about cooperation and

1 Government of Bangladesh (GOB), *Rules of Business 1996*, (Dhaka: Cabinet Division, revised up to August 2000).

2 GOB, *Secretariat Instructions*, (Dhaka: Organization and Management Division, Cabinet Secretariat, 1976).

3 Dipak Rudra, "Fostering Teamwork in Government", *Indian Management*, January 1968. p. 12.

commitment, their techniques are not progressive enough to cause group cohesiveness and to improve interpersonal relationship.”⁴ The commonly held views of the citizenry, civil servants and politicians have been recorded in the *Government That Works*: “The colonial legacy and natural conservatism of the Civil Service have combined to produce an administrative culture that is inappropriate to the needs of a modern economy”.⁵ In fact, ‘it is the style of management and not the role of government which is the problem’.⁶

However, in order to streamline the management processes in the Civil Service agencies, almost all countries, the developed and the developing, have been enforcing various administrative reforms from time to time but these have been generally dealt with in terms of the machine model. Researchers, experts and scholars believe that there is an urgent need to shift our focus to the sociology and network of institutions for identifying the root causes of the low performance of the Civil Service and the resentment of the public and then to come up with possible solutions.⁷

This chapter seeks to justify the need for applying Organisation Development (OD) concepts in the civil service agencies as a strategy for improving the overall institutional performance and for bringing about a psychic change in the civil servants. Much of the content of this chapter is theoretical, normative and suggestive. Theories on team-building and leadership have been developed basing on literature survey and on the researcher’s long experience as a civil service trainer and as a practitioner while working as a Thana Nirbahi Officer (executive chief of the sub-district), Deputy Commissioner (chief executive of the district), and Joint Secretary (Administration) in the Ministry of Establishment (the most important central personnel agency of the government of Bangladesh). The observations of the researcher on the work style, communication pattern and organization culture of the civil service agencies are based on the personal experience and perception and also on the views of a host of active and retired civil servants interviewed by him.

4 Mohammed Jainul Abedin, *Papers on Administration and Related Issues*, Dhaka : Academy for Planning & Development, 1991. p. 81.

5 The World Bank, *Government That Works*, 1996 p. 3.

6 *Commonwealth Strategies for Reform*, Commonwealth Association of Public Administration & Management, 1995. p. 97.

7 Aslam Iqbal, key-note address presented in the regional conference on *Administrative and Financial Accountability* and printed in the book, “*Administrative and Financial Accountability : The ASEAN-SAARC Experience*”,(ed.) Sirajuddin H. Salleh & Arabinda Kar, Asia & Pacific Development Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1995. p. 84.

Why Organization Development (OD) in the Civil Service?

According to social psychologists and behavioral scientists, accountability can be well exacted by creating a work style that promotes synergy and cohesion among the members of the Civil Service. In many countries, organisation development (OD) concepts are being applied in a planned way to the civil service agencies to humanise and democratise the traditional Weberian pattern of the Civil Service. OD helps in revising the traditional power and authority concepts in civil servants and will create in them an attitude of collegiality, receptivity and adaptibility; it seeks to establish a new administrative order that demands capitalising the available human resources to enhance the efficiency of the civil service agencies. OD paradigm encompasses many of the democratic values such as collegiality, free access, and togetherness. In fact, the values of democratic administration and those of OD are compatible. Continuous or repeated practice of OD concepts will help in debureaucratising the traditional mindset of the civil servants.

OD framework comprises two major components—

- Team-building
- Leadership development

These twin components have been identified as critically important areas in which most of the developing countries including Malaysia, Singapore, Korea, India have achieved significant progress. But, in Bangladesh, these are confined within theoretical discourses in the training institutes.

OD is fundamentally a process-oriented and performance-based approach to problem-solving. Problems are solved through teamwork and leadership. Saxena suggests six steps to apply OD approach to improve performance, long-range planning and reorganization in the government agencies. The steps include-- (i) problem identification, (ii) setting priorities of the problems, (iii) development and sharing of information regarding the problem (iv) the joint planning with emphasis on alternative solutions, (v) implementation and testing of the selected alternatives, and (vi) periodic revision and forward action.⁸

⁸ A. P. Saxena, *Training and Development in Government*, (New Delhi: Indian Institute of Public Administration, 1974), p. 40.

As has been mentioned earlier in Chapter-III, elitism, centralisation of authority, and resistance to change are the dominant characteristics of the civil service agencies in Bangladesh. These characteristics affect the pattern of how civil servants interact and communicate with different segments of the citizenry in this country. Accordingly, citizens have formed differential perception towards civil servants in the process of their interaction and encounter with the former.⁹ According to Khaleque, the civil service in Bangladesh is largely authoritative, highly status-conscious and position-proud. The authoritarian stereo-types and organizational rigidities have rendered the Bangladesh Civil Service apparently irresponsive to the needs of the fast-changing society and have placed it in an 'unfriendly cleavage' in the society. What is paradoxical is that the present-day civil servants of Bangladesh tend to adapt quickly the elitist and arrogant disposition but shun to pursue the professional excellence the members of the ICS and the CSP were proud of. However, the modern concept of administrative dynamism and participative management demand 'genteel leadership' and disapprove authoritarian practices in the Civil Service.¹⁰

Modern civil service has become complex and it requires regular practice of teamwork which is now viewed as one of the core strategies of effective problem-solving, achieving quality performance and institutional efficiency. The members of the Civil Service are the potent force for getting a work done; they are the engine of performance. They are the people who interface the members of the citizenry regularly. The total performance of a civil service agency depends on the quality of performance of these officials. They can show maximal efficiency when they work in a team. A modern government is a macro-team; its ministries, divisions, departments, corporate bodies may be called micro-teams. In fact, teams constitute the building blocks of a dynamic civil service system.

Governments of both developed and developing countries emphasise practice of innovation and creativity in the Civil Service in solving problems that escalate almost every year. Unless civil servants are given a conducive environment to use their creative powers, the agencies they work for will not be able to compete nationally and

9 Mohammad Mohabbat Khan and Nure-Alam Siddique, *Public Administration Education and Training in Bangladesh*, Bangladesh Journal of Administration & Development, Vol. 4, No. 2, July-December 1996, 1997. pp. 1-2.

10 Abdul Khaleque, "Reforming the administration", *The Daily Star*, January 17, 2005. p. 4.

internationally. In the civil service agencies of Bangladesh, innovation is a scarce resource because, except in rare cases, leaders have not been able to create an open problem-solving climate for the officers.¹¹

There is a pre-conceived notion in civil servants and non-civil servants alike that the concepts of team building and leadership which are the core components of OD can hardly be applied in hierarchically structured civil service offices of Bangladesh. It is however observed that the governments of many developing countries including India, Malaysia and Singapore that remained colonies of the alien forces have reaped substantial benefits by introducing OD concepts in their public sector agencies. Throughout the world, the civil services are moving away from the traditional hierarchical mindsets and leaning consciously towards the team orientation. This is occurring because of the increasing public pressure for quality services and the demand for results, innovation and more productivity. In fact, a shift from 'administrative civil service' to 'managerial civil service' is being conceived in many Asian countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, and Korea.¹²

Civil Service in this country still operates on the Weberian paradigm that discourages flexibility in decision-making and presupposes authoritarian attitude, and overly hierarchical superior-subordinate relations. In this model accountability is achieved through relatively coercive means---hierarchy, unity of command, rules, etc. In general terms, the model is still valid today but "the traditional institutions for ensuring accountability have either become overloaded or their methods of operating have become outdated."¹³ As the new officers join the Civil Service, they soon begin to suffer from despair and job dissatisfaction. Although economic factors are predominant, non-economic factors are no less important. Two potential sources of frustration and disincentive are unfriendly work environment and non-supportive interpersonal behaviour of senior officers. As the World Bank in its study *Government That Works* (1996) comments: "There are a large number of dedicated, honest and motivated people who work for government. They are not the problem; the system in which they work is the problem. The government is filled with many good

11 Based on the researcher's experience and on the views of the interviewed officials.

12 For more details on these developments in the Newly Industrialized Countries (NICs) in Southeast Asia, see Ahmed Shafiqul Huque, Jarmain T.M. Tan and Jane C.Y Lee, eds., *Public Administration in the NICs*, (London: Macmillan Press, 1996).

people trapped in bad systems and environment.”¹⁴ Similar views have been corroborated in the ADB’s survey report: “They are frustrated by some of the ineffective systems that dictate the way they work. They are saddened by the irresponsible and dishonest behaviour they sometimes see around them. They worry that the civil service is not delivering a good public service.”¹⁵

Bangladesh has inherited a kind of civil service which is run more by directives rather than by discussion. Disagreement with the views of the superior is often considered insubordination or as an act of recalcitrance. Initiatives and innovation of juniors are often treated as a symptom of aggressive behaviour. Dialogues and free discussions, debates are not widely practised in the civil service agencies. In the meetings, dialogues lapse into diatribes or monologues by the senior.¹⁶ In this situation, the scope for innovation or generation of new ideas is restricted because the offices are unable to create an open problem-solving environment among officers. The result is that new ideas are not given outlet to express, innovations are never stimulated, and new alternatives for better decisions can hardly be generated. In the words of Kibria:

This is a typical situation in almost all the civil service agencies in Bangladesh and this necessitates introduction of new management concepts and tools to improve performance of the public servants. The traditional concepts of public management are therefore called into question and interest in the application of new management concepts to the government offices is growing.¹⁷

Except in the emergency or crisis situation like flood, elections, civil disturbances, the civil service offices rarely practise teamwork because they are to function within statutory, procedural and formal structure. The existing organizational practices based mostly on formalism, rules and hierarchy do not help in fostering or promoting teamwork. However, trained or motivated heads of departments playing leadership role have been able to promote team efforts at their individual initiative. In many cases, teamwork in the directorates, the collectorates and the ministries has proved successful because of the common orientation of the officers and collegial mindset of the heads of those offices.

13 J.D Derbyshire, *An Introduction to Public Administration*, (London: McGraw-Hill, 1984). p. 204.

14 World Bank, *Government That Works*, (Dhaka: UPL, 1996), p. 103.

15 Ministry of Establishment, Government of Bangladesh, *Strengthening Public Administration Training in Bangladesh*, vol. 1 (a survey report submitted by the Commonwealth Secretariat under TA no. 2882-BAN sponsored by Asian Development Bank, 1998), p. 91.

16 Based on the researcher’s work experience and on the views of the respondents.

17 Golam Kibria, "Management of Public Resources", *The Daily Star*, 3 February, 1999, p. 5.

Teamwork to Improve Performance of Civil Service Agencies

Individualism is the common trait of our people as well as our civil servants.¹⁸ Democracy does not encourage individualism either in politics or administration. A democratic civil service manifests itself in the practices and activities of the administrator and the administered. It requires practice of participation of all in the decision-making process through teamwork. Democracy lasts when individuals are allowed to express freely their views that are based on reason. It becomes fragile when this is not maintained or practised. Dialogue, rather than monologue, either in politics or in administration, is the demand of democracy. Dialogue brings forth innovative ideas that contribute to public welfare. Teamwork is based on the democratic value that every individual is important and has resources that can be used for common benefit. As Dimock remarks: "If you believe in democracy and science, you believe in the group, not in the individual."¹⁹ Accountability must hold not only vertically but also horizontally among officers at the peer level.²⁰ When accountability is installed horizontally, an organization becomes much more effective because officials enjoy their responsibility by sharing success or failure.

Teamwork is the best way to involve officials in creative work and to introduce *innovation* for better service. Every member of a team brings with him or her energies, skills, ideas, information, knowledge, experience, and views. Moreover, every official has a reservoir of such positive emotions as cooperation, self-confidence, patience, creativity, tolerance, trust, empathy and humour. These emotions are resources that can be used best in teamwork. But the success of a team relies heavily on team leadership. It is the team leader who manages members' negative emotions like anger, jealousy, hesitancy, prejudice, hostility, distrust, fear and anxiety; he or she tries to convert them into positive energies through motivation and counseling. Communication skills are the basic requirements for performing these motivational and counseling functions. Traditional administration which does not encourage teamwork has little opportunity to use these valuable human resources.

18 A. M. A Muhith, "Accountability of Government can foster Good Impression", *The Daily Star*, 6 April 1999, p. 4.

19 Marshall E. Dimock, *A Philosophy of Administration: Towards Creative Growth*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1950), p. 72.

Moreover, teams create a cross-training environment in which team members learn from one another by sharing ideas, knowledge and experiences and then achieve common goal which would not otherwise be possible or available. One member supplements the deficiencies of the other and improves poor performance. Thus, complementation of energy and ideas and cross training are the direct dividends of teamwork. Members can participate in the problem-solving process and learn how to accept conflicting views. Moreover, teamwork opens the prospects of achieving the value of innovation by our civil servants. Here is the equation to secure effective teamwork²¹:

$$\underline{\mathbf{T}}\mathbf{rust} + \underline{\mathbf{E}}\mathbf{mpowerment} + \underline{\mathbf{A}}\mathbf{ccountability} + \underline{\mathbf{M}}\mathbf{otivation} = \mathbf{TEAM}$$

Trust: The overriding thrust of team-building activity is trust-building. *Trust* acts as glue that binds together officials of diverse background. This glue is known as cohesiveness which is the heart of teamwork. Team cohesiveness can be promoted by exploring and responding to members' needs and interests. Mutual trust and support are the core ingredients of cohesiveness. One way to build trust is to create a climate of free and open communication at the workplace. Trust not only breeds reliability but also creates in officials morale and a sense of responsibility. When trust is missing, the scope for sharing ideas becomes bleak. Trust cannot be commanded; it stems from competence. Trust is an institutional or social capital; it foreshadows cooperation. It reduces uncertainty in communication and performance and minimises prospects of friction or unhealthy conflict among individuals or in organisations. Where there is mutual trust, there is little need for formalism. As Kuriloff says: "Mutual trust is mutually reinforcing."²²

Empowerment: Efficacy of teamwork depends on how much empowerment has taken place in each member of the team. The leader of the team must make the members of team feel that they are equally important for the success of the mission for which they work. The members feel important when they are given the right task

20 Arthur C. Beck and Ellis D. Hillman, *Positive Management Practices* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1966), p. 90.

21 Theories developed based on this researcher's ten-year experience as a trainer at BPATC on team building.

22 Arthur H. Kuriloff, "An Experiment in Management : Putting Theory Y to the Test", in Robert T. Golembiewsky's *Public Administration*, (Rand McNally & Company, 1966). p. 286.

based on their aptitude and competency. Motivated members do not avoid work but seek responsibility and take it as a pleasing experience.

Empowering in the context of teamwork implies work-sharing and power-sharing. When power is shared among team members, a sense of belonging or ownership is fostered. Simply telling the team members to do something is not enough; the team leader should provide necessary guidance on *HOW* to do the task. The team leader must assign or delegate appropriate tasks to the appropriate team members; otherwise they will remain alienated and feel a sense of powerlessness. On being empowered with specific responsibility, each member will remain accountable for his or her performance.

Another way to empower is to drive fear out of the mind of junior members in a team. Fear undermines free and spontaneous participation of team members and this produces a significant impact on productivity. Fear of not being able to contribute to the problem-solving process of the team is almost natural. Some team members cannot participate or contribute because of their perceived low hierarchical status. It is the responsibility of the team leader to liquidate this fear. To empower is to provide the team members a moral and psychic support so that they can use their human resources in solving the problems of the organizations.

Accountability: In a team, every member is not only accountable for performing his or her assigned task but also sharing collective accountability for the success or failure in producing the total expected results. In a team if a member fails to perform his or her assigned task, the performance of the whole team suffers. Thus both individual and collective accountability are the seminal binding force that holds the members of an agency or department together. These also contribute to building cohesion or sense of belonging.

Motivation: Through teamwork, all the officers get the chance to satisfy their ego-needs; they attain status by demonstrating their abilities and in the process low self-esteem or sense of inferiority of the junior members is alleviated and the arrogance of the powerful or senior members of the administration gets neutralised.²³ Thus one of the responsibilities of the team leader is to create in the members an inner motivation

so that they participate in the decision-making or problem-solving process with a spirit of ownership. Leader needs help and cooperation from them to achieve the set goal. But cooperation cannot be commanded; members have to be motivated so that they extend cooperation spontaneously. Leaders can best motivate the team members when they create a climate of free communication and trust so that they can express their ideas and views without fear and tension. Members can also be motivated by giving them due recognition for their contribution and paying respect for their qualities. The reverse situation is entertaining prejudice and malice.

Shared Leadership in Teamwork

While working in a team, members experience a shared leadership. In fact, in a team several leaders operate within a team because a single member cannot play all roles concurrently. Leadership role shifts from one member to another depending on individual knowledge and skill in a specific field that contributes to achieving team goal.. A team leader is in fact a leader among several informal leaders.²⁴ A formal leader has to be designated because someone from among the team members has to be accountable for overall success or failure.

Team leader is basically an orchestrator who marshals energies and ideas of the members and uses them optimally to achieve team goals. This he achieves when he can create the right climate. Without a healthy climate, it is not possible to secure involvement of the members, and use their human resources optimally. The team leader sets right climate by communicating the values, beliefs and norms that are expected to be maintained commonly by the team members. In a supportive team climate, members feel motivated to work and derive satisfaction by working together. Elements of a supportive team climate are *trust, openness, tolerance, responsiveness, freedom from fear and tension*. In this climate, members are free not only to express their views but also to differ or disagree with others. Mistakes are not only admitted but these are also treated as sources of learning and professional growth.

The leader has to ensure that norms he or she is going to set in consultation with the members are not dysfunctional. *'Always shed light on goals', 'Treat everybody with*

23 Arthur H. Kuriloff's essay, "An Experiment in Management : Putting Theory Y to the Test", in Robert T. Golembiewsky's *Public Administration*, (Rand McNally & Company, 1966). p. 284.

24 Based on the researcher's experience as a teamwork facilitator.

respect', 'Do not monopolise talking', 'Talk freely and openly in the public interest', 'Listen to each other with interest', 'Juniors can point out seniors' mistakes with politeness and without fear', 'Congratulate or reward those who suggest new ideas', 'Do not offend those who are unable to contribute'--- these are some of the norms that can be practised in order to manage a team. The leader needs to demonstrate that his or her own actions are in sync with the declared norms.

Team Concepts in Malaysian and Singaporean Civil Service

Officers working in the civil service agencies in Bangladesh commonly believe that organising workshops is the exclusive functional jurisdiction of the training institutions. International civil service agencies like UNICEF, UNDP, organise small workshops at the respective workplaces where they practise teamwork to explore quality solutions to complex problems. Arranging focussed workshops for problem-solving is a part of their work culture. These focussed workshops help in generating a lot of decision options that are not otherwise available through normal work process. Spontaneous participation is encouraged among the relevant officials including the officials of the government partner-agencies of the government who contribute their best in order to solve specific problems that are incorporated in the workshop agenda. Ideas are shared and pragmatic solutions are sought through analytical discussions in teamwork. This rarely happens at the local civil service agencies. Most of the chiefs or departmental heads of the civil service agencies perceive themselves to be know-all persons and do not seek any support from anybody particularly the junior officers.

Change in the procedural and processual aspects of work to improve performance of the civil service system is being perceived by the developing countries. The Singapore Civil Service and Malaysian Civil Service have introduced team approach in the day-to-day administrative work. One of the four ingredients of Brunei's civil service work ethic is, according to the Prime Minister's Office Circular no. 14/1984 "to work with team spirit and in harmonious environment." The government of Singapore has coined a word *Qualitivity* which stands for quality and productivity. Qualitivity improvement is the application of new skills and trying out new ideas. According to Ma, Director of Institute of Public Administration and Management : "Two powerful

mechanisms are being used by the Singapore Civil Service to harness staff creativity i.e. *Work Improvement Team* and *Staff Suggestion Scheme*.”²⁵

In Malaysia, teams are used in the form of Quality Task Force, Quality Control Circle and Work Teams for generating creative and innovative ideas for problem solution.²⁶ Work Improvement Team (WIT) has been modelled on the Japanese Quality Control Circle. Based on OD framework, it is a team of 6 to 8 officials collected from the same the unit who meet under a leader every week to discuss problems they face and seek solutions or suggestions for work improvement. The functions of WIT include improving work procedures, administrative and financial systems, workflow, the office environment and services to the public. In order to improve quality of services and productivity, they believe, it is necessary to make a paradigm shift in the management style and work culture of the civil service. WIT creates an effective forum for institutionalised teamwork and equal participation of officers in decision-making. These two are effective mechanisms to reduce the hierarchical barriers among officials. In the words of David Ma : “When we sit together to discuss an issue, we forget who is what.”²⁷ The practice of the WIT provides several benefits--- (i) it helps in involving the relevant officials in problem-solving, (ii) it generates a spirit of ownership and pride in meeting job-related problems, and (iii) it helps in sharpening their problem-solving skills.

Quality of performance depends on the quality ideas coming from the actors as well as stakeholders. Ideas are the best human resources and a potent force that can be used for quality decision-making and for improvement of institutional performance. Ideas have to be procured from the appropriate officials. As Cole observes: “No branch of government nor any level of organisations has a corner on the market of good ideas; they can come from anywhere, both inside and outside an organisation. Government organisations must have the capacity to generate and respond to potentially useful ideas.”²⁸ Civil service agencies in the developed countries including Malaysia and Singapore have created a kind of free and open work environment where officials

25 Ministry of Establishment, Government of Bangladesh, *Strengthening Public Administration Training in Bangladesh*, Vol. 1 (a survey report submitted by the Commonwealth Secretariat under TA no. 2882-BAN sponsored by Asian Development Bank, 1998), p. 91.

26 Ahmed Sarji Bin Abdul Hamid, *The Civil Service of Malaysia*, The Government of Malaysia, 1996. p. 216.

27 *APO News*, Asian Productivity Organisation , Tokyo, September 1997.

have the chance to generate, stimulate and elicit constructive ideas for organisational problem-solving and this result in improved performance and quality decision-making. The governments of many developing countries in Asia have initiated schemes for harnessing ideas from officials, junior and senior, to ensure effective service delivery and customer satisfaction. The Singapore government has introduced *Staff Suggestion Scheme* (SSS) to encourage officials to contribute to quality problem-solving through ideas or suggestions. The ideas must be attuned to the quality of service, reduction of cost, and welfare of the clients/citizens and should of course be implementable within the available resources. The basic philosophy is---‘Your ideas count, no matter how small’. Every government official at all levels has to offer formally at least 4 suggestions per year as matter of right as well as obligation. An official is paid cash reward if his or her suggestion is accepted by the government and he or she is doubly rewarded if his or her suggestion is implemented. Officers derive a great deal of job satisfaction for being recognised as a contributor and for being able to participate in decision-making. To encourage innovation and to promote efficiency, Malaysia has also introduced this system whereby officers of the civil service agencies will provide suggestions to improve the quality of service to the people. The heads of departments are to submit suggestions for improvement directly to the chief secretary to the government.

All these systems bring the civil servants job satisfaction which is almost absent in the civil service of Bangladesh. The government of Bangladesh can introduce SSS to encourage officers to contribute their innovative ideas for improvement of performance of civil service agencies. This will also strengthen their accountability through involvement or participation.

The present generation of civil servants in this country many of whom have been trained at home and abroad are quite aware of the advantages and values of participatory decision-making but ‘in their actual behaviour one hardly finds any trace of such orientations.’²⁹ According to the interviewed junior officers, most of their seniors do not seem to allow their juniors to participate in decision-making; they do not tend to elicit ideas from them for problem-solving. The problem is one of mindset and supervisory support. The results are job dissatisfaction, frustration, lack of team

28 John DR Cole, *A Real Strategy for Improvement*, The Bureaucrat (The US), Spring, 1982. p. 5.

29 Mohammed Jainul Abedin, *Papers on Administration and Related Issues*, Dhaka: Academy for Planning & Development, 1991. p. 81.

spirit which ultimately affect officials' efficiency in performance. The irony however is that the same group of officers holding senior positions and who used to maintain status quo and put up resistance against administrative reforms during their tenure suddenly turn out to be radicals or reformists as soon as they retire from service and then forget their old style of managing offices or people.

How to install team culture in the civil service agencies?

The offices or departments are attuned and structured to superior and subordinate boundaries.³⁰ This factor of subordination creates a sense of inferiority and fear in the officers of the low hierarchy. Whether teamwork can be practised in a bureaucratically structured civil service agency in our country is an intriguing question to many. Experiences in Malaysia and Singapore suggest that OD can be integrated happily for more improved results if interpersonal and leadership skills are acquired and democratic values are developed by civil servants.

Bureaucratic administration is based on merit or competency of the organisational members. The same is true of team approach. If members of a team are not equally competent or resourceful, it ultimately turns dysfunctional and lapses into a mere group. In a bureaucratic structure, communication tends to be unilateral whereas in a team communication is two-way, open and free. Rules control the behaviour of members in a bureaucratic organisation whereas norms and values combined with rules regulate the members on a team. Informalism, flexibility are the basic elements that make teams truly functional. Bureaucratic organisations stress *compliance* whereas team-oriented organizations emphasise *cohesion*.

However, Team Approach can fit in a civil service agency if a few adjustments are made. Side by side with formal mechanism, use of informal process contributes substantially to achieving accountability of subordinates. If subordinates are happy with their jobs, if they receive support and motivation from their supervisors, their accountability is automatically achieved. According to Rosen: "Achieving accountability as a normal part of supervision is neither easy nor certain because accountability is, among other things, a state of mind that encourages pride in performance and contributes to both individual and institutional accountability."³¹ The

30 A P Saxena, *Training and Development in Government*, (New Delhi: Indian Institute of Public Administration, 1974), p. 38.

31 Bernard Rosen, *Holding Government Bureaucrats Accountable*, (New York: Preger, 1984), p. 32.

validity of Rosen's words is substantiated as most of the interviewed junior officers have opined that frequent, informal personal contact is very effective for holding subordinates accountable. The greater the distance between the junior and the senior, the greater the probability of job dissatisfaction, frustration and inefficiency. But when contact between them is close and frequent, the greater is the probability of support, sympathy and success in collective performance.

In teamwork the question of status and the matter of superiority or inferiority of one member to the other are not given absolute importance. Tasks and responsibilities in a team are diverse but these are complementary to one another. Team building is more matter of attitude and culture than of exercising power. Size of the organisation matters little if cohesion among the members can be fostered and appropriate climate and culture are built and this depends on the leadership competency.

Hierarchy which is an essential element of the Civil Service or bureaucracy does not impede the process of teamwork because in teamwork no one is superior or inferior to the other and competency is stressed more than rank.³² Reconciliation of the role of the formal leader with that of the informal leader, creation of an open communication climate, fostering an egalitarian mindset are the essential requisites of successful teamwork. What is therefore needed is the control of the officials' egoism and this is possible through mental effort and nurturance of the public interest as a value.³³ Hierarchy in the civil service poses a barrier if it is tempered with egoism that inhibits the process of free communication and development of productive interpersonal relations. The institutionalised sense of inferiority of subordinates and possible growth of hostility in subordinates against the formal leader can be alleviated considerably by creating a climate of open communication and by nurturing a collegial attitude. Friendly interaction among junior and senior civil servants, recognising and using the human resources of informal leaders (that might emerge from juniors) by formally designated leaders, practice of open communication and transparency can help in facilitating teamwork in the civil service agencies.

32 Syed Naquib Muslim, *Teamwork in Administration*, Journal of Administration & Diplomacy, Vol. 2, No.1, January-June, 1994. pp. 88-97.

33 Syed Naquib Muslim, *Enhancing Efficiency of the Government Officers through Team orientation* Proshikhyan, Dhaka: Bangladesh Society for Training & Development, Vol. 2, No. 2, July-December, 1996. pp. 47-52.

The implementation of team-building concepts as a part of the work style cannot be left to chance; similarly team spirit cannot be built overnight. The change in the mindset occurs in an incremental process but what is first necessary is to train the civil servants at all levels on the techniques of team-building, give them the environment for practice in their agency and beyond.

The experiences of the success in the practice of teamwork in certain offices indicate that bureaucratic elements like hierarchy, division of work do not act as barriers to teamwork in the civil service agencies. Teamwork depends less on organizational practices and more on psycho-social factors like leadership, shared perception and understanding, common concern for goal/ target achievement and departmental/ institutional commitment. In the words of Rudra : "It is only when the Government servants feel truly involved in their concerns and tasks--- and understand that they are addressing themselves to challenges and problems which affect their own lives as much as those of their target groups---that they are likely to function as a cohesive, purposive team and as an instrument of social and economic transformation."³⁴

OD Intervention for Improving Coordination in the Civil Service agencies

Weak coordination, like corruption, is almost pervasive in the civil service agencies of Bangladesh. A plethora of legal measures are suggested and applied to improve the quality of coordination but with little visible improvement. OD concepts have an intervening role in improving both intra- and inter-agency coordination because effective coordination ultimately relies on regular *communication* and a positive mindset on the part of the associated officials or agencies. As Siegenthaler says, OD "aims at bridging the gap in communication and influence between those who have less power and those who have more power"³⁵ so that coordination can be achieved to meet common goals of those people. That is why it is justifiably said, "coordination with people is but a matter of communication aligned to action."³⁶

Inter-agency coordination is basically an extended form of sustained teamwork among agencies while they set about achieving the common predetermined goals through

34 Dipak Rudra, "Fostering Teamwork in Government", *Indian Management*, January, 1968. p. 12.

35 Gary Siegenthaler, "Improving Communication through OD," *Public Management*, (The US), September 1978, p. 17.

36 "The Management Process", an article reprinted by National Institute of Public Administration, Dhaka, as a training hand-out adapted from the US Air Force Manual, January, 1965. p. 19.

communication and coordination.³⁷ In the absence of coordination among officials, departments and agencies, the activities of the focal organisation get mystified and the officials remain in the dark about the state/progress of goal accomplishment.³⁸

Coordination remains a chronic problem in the civil service agencies of Bangladesh for which the quality of total civil service performance, nay the government, is affected. More specifically, officers in most cases are found to be spontaneous and even desperate in doing coordination with relevant individuals and institutions particularly in three situations--i) in securing a good performance appraisal reports ii) in obtaining foreign training facilities aimed at financial savings, not at professional enrichment and iii) in seeking relief from penalty imposed for proven wrongdoing. According to Al-Husainy, ineffective coordination between the Ministries and agencies and among officials resulting in inadequate accomplishment of national goals is a symptom of deep-rooted malaise in the Civil Service.³⁹ Achieving effective coordination among officials and agencies is thus a complex task for the civil servants.⁴⁰ The principal factors that weaken the knot of coordination are ---

a) *Goal ambiguity* : Goal ambiguity among the relevant officials or the units is a common problem with the civil service agencies. This goal ambiguity stems from lack of a proactive attitude to communicate with the relevant units or agencies. As Khan says: "If we are sure about what we are doing, if we have the ideological orientation, and if the goals are clearly identified, then many problems of coordination could have been solved."⁴¹ Coordination requires full conversance of the relevant officials with the goals of the job or of the programme.⁴² It is observed that officials show more

37 Syed Naquib Muslim, "Enhancing Efficiency of the Government Officers through Team orientation" Proshikhyan, Dhaka: Bangladesh Society for Training & Development, Vol. 2, No. 2, July-December, 1996. pp. 47-52.

38 Syndicate report of Jackfruit team, Section -B on "*Strategies for the Promotion of Administrative Transparency*", 11th Foundation Training Course held at Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, July 1993. p. 6.

39 SM Al-Husainy, a workshop paper entitled *Coordination between Ministries and Implementing Agencies* presented at Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre and printed in the book *Coordination in Public Administration in Bangladesh*, by ATM Shamsul Huda (ed.), Dhaka: Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, 1987). p. 135.

40 Syed Naquib Muslim, *The Art of Modern Administration*, (Dhaka: Bangladesh Institute of Administration & Management, 2003) p. 19.

41 Remarks of Akbar Ali Khan in the floor discussions at the workshop on coordination organized by Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, and printed in the book *Coordination in Public Administration in Bangladesh*, by ATM Shamsul Huda (ed.), Dhaka: Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, 1987). p. 25.

42 Syed Naquib Muslim, "How coordination can ensure organisational efficiency", *The Independent*, February 13, 1996. p. 4.

interest in activities that center round their private interest, not the public interest. When the private interest is involved, no direction from the top is necessary for the incumbent officials to communicate with the relevant individuals or agencies but when the public interest is involved, they tend to maintain introversion.⁴³

b) *Lack of team spirit*: In Bangladesh, there exists a lingering cleavage or lack of team spirit between the senior and the junior, the elected public representative and the civil servant, and the generalist and the specialist, ministries and directorates/boards, headquarters and field offices. A sense of mutuality is missing. Coordination cannot last long when coercive methods are used. It occurs best where team spirit prevails. According to Sweeney: "Pushing and crushing gets results only as long as you stay on top. To be effective, coordination requires involvement, commitment and collaboration".⁴⁴ Effective coordination greatly relies on 'the quality of leadership and personal charisma'; in the words of Hossain: "Development of team spirit and a sense of cooperation across organisation boundaries greatly help coordination."⁴⁵ Many problems of coordination can be solved by such means as personal relations, mutual appreciation and respect and good inter-agency informal contact.

c) *Restrictive communication culture*: The main malady of coordination in Bangladesh is lack of communication among civil servants themselves and among the agencies. The communication climate prevailing in the civil service agencies is charged with fear, distrust, and tension. Job dissatisfaction stemming from low incentive and non-supportive supervision is common; informal interaction between/among the senior and the junior which greases the machine of coordination is a rare phenomenon. All these do not encourage civil servants to maintain liaison with the relevant agencies.

However, much of the problem of coordination can be solved at the personal level through informal communication. As Rabbani states: "Although the chain of command should be clearly defined and observed, it is desirable to have an informal work-relationship among the officials. This will help to permeate coordination within

43 Based on the researcher's professional experience or observation.

44 Neil R. Sweeney, *The Art of Managing Managers*, (California: Addison: Wesley, 1985). p. 108.

45 Mohammed Hossain's comments on Syed Giasuddin Ahmed's workshop paper *Coordination between Ministries and Implementing Agencies* printed in the book *Coordination in Public Administration in Bangladesh*, by ATM Shamsul Huda (ed.), Dhaka: Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, 1987). p. 118.

the agency.”⁴⁶ Almost the identical views are expressed by Giasuddin Ahmed: “It is not a problem of rules, regulations or instructions nor a problem of structural weakness but is a problem of attitude.”⁴⁷

In some countries like Malaysia, Singapore Korea, work ethic developed by civil servants themselves acts as ‘motivating ideology for the public officials.’ As esprit de corps develops ‘a sense of mutual trust and confidence’ among the members of their civil services, coordination becomes easy and smooth. Experiences in these countries suggest that hierarchy, rules and procedures cannot often guarantee compliance with orders communicated from the top for coordination.⁴⁸ In other words coordination through coercive means can be achieved quickly but it does not last long; but when coordination is spontaneous and voluntary, no formalism is necessary to enforce it.⁴⁹ Instead of opening a new file, officials discuss issues over the telephone; instead of creating a time-consuming inter-departmental committee, the heads of relevant departments ‘thrash out problems of coordination in informal lunches in the cafeteria around the administrative buildings.’⁵⁰ Singleness of purpose among the officials rather than authority is the best binding force of coordination; the officials carry on the task of coordination and accomplish a far better result because of the inner compulsion. As Gulick says: “The power of an idea to serve as the foundation of coordination is so great that one may observe many examples of coordination even in the absence of any single leader.”⁵¹

46 KM Rabbani’s comments as the chairperson of the plenary session on Coordination between Ministries and Implementing Agencies printed in the book *Coordination in Public Administration in Bangladesh*, by ATM Shamsul Huda (ed.), Dhaka : Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, 1987). p. 147.

47 Syed Giasuddin Ahmed’s reply to the queries in the floor discussion on his paper *Coordination between Ministries and Implementing Agencies* printed in the book *Coordination in Public Administration in Bangladesh*, by ATM Shamsul Huda (ed.), Dhaka: Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, 1987). p. 25.

48 Michele T. Myers and Gail E. Myers, “*Managing by Communication : An Organisational Approach*”, (Auckland : McGraw-Hill, 1982). p. 33.

49 Abdul Mueyed Chowdhury, *Measures for Improving Coordination*, a paper presented in the workshop on coordination at BPATC and printed in the book *Coordination in Public Administration in Bangladesh*, by ATM Shamsul Huda (ed.), Dhaka: Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, 1987). p. 156.

50 Comments of Talukder Maniruzzaman in the workshop on coordination printed in the book *Coordination in Public Administration in Bangladesh*, by ATM Shamsul Huda (ed.), Dhaka : Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, 1987). p. 19.

51 Luther H. Gulick, “Notes on the Theory of Organisation”, *Perspectives on Public Bureaucracy*, by Fred A. Kramer (ed.), (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1981), p. 87.

As has been said earlier, civil servants in our country maintain better liaison with the relevant individuals and institutions when the private interest is involved but when the public interest is in question they tend to be inert. This is because the value of *the public interest* is not strongly ingrained in the mindset of our civil servants. When they truly internalise the values of *responsiveness, neutrality, civility* and *the public interest*, they perform coordinative functions spontaneously or voluntarily.

Coordination as an activity is unavoidable because better coordination among civil service agencies will improve overall efficiency of the government. It transpires from the above discussion that a change in the attitude of the civil servants is essential to improve coordination in the Civil Service. It is assumed that a regular and well-tailored training course on *coordination, communication and motivation* for all levels of the Civil Service will help in building a sense of cohesion/ in the officers; once this harmony is achieved, the total performance of the government is likely to improve.

Leadership Development for Administrative Culture-building

Leadership development is one of the major components of OD activity carried out in an organisation. Performance of employees and productivity of organisations depend greatly on the competency of leadership. Better performance of the civil service agencies is linked to the leadership development of the civil servants. Officials working at civil service organisations must have the competency to provide leadership to implement the vision of each agency. Leaders not only create visions but also share them with employees and mobilise them to implement those visions. A leader alone cannot realise his or her vision, he or she has to garner and galvanise support and commitment of the other officials of the organisation.

All the officials may not have the chance to work as leaders but they can certainly acquire at their respective levels leadership skills and qualities which will impact the total performance of the agencies they work for. Leaders of the civil service agencies must set a new culture and instill new values in the officials so that they work with a mindset different from the colonial administration.

Values are the bedrock of the institutional culture and leaders embody those values. A culture shapes the responses and influences motivation, performance and job satisfaction of civil servants. It is the leadership which takes initiative in instilling new

values in and revising old attitude and perceptions of the new entrants to an organisation. Leaders are the norm-creators, value-setters and culture-builders in an organisation. Leadership is important because junior civil servants emulate the behaviors exemplified by leaders. They are the carriers as well as transmitter of values; they are the role models. Role models are persons who carry the image of what a junior likes to be. Modeling at times works as the substitute for direct instruction. Leaders empower, energise and inspire employees to go for innovations aimed at improved performance to the satisfaction of the clientele.

Genuine leaders in the civil service or elsewhere develops leadership in others. In fact, a critical function of a leader is “the encouragement of the development of leaders and leadership skills within the organisation.”⁵² What a leader needs most is a high degree of communication and motivation skills. According to Schoonver: “In most cases the primary barrier to change is not the lack of vision but the lack of interpersonal skills.”⁵³ Poor interpersonal skills are common problems of the leaders of the civil service agencies in Bangladesh. One of the reasons is, systematic and regular training on leadership development is virtually absent in the civil service training institutes including BPATC.

The thrust of OD is attitude development through leadership. Developing attitude is a difficult area and so it is being avoided time and again. As Shams puts it:

Attitudes are difficult to change... It is more a question of changing perceptions, increasing knowledge acquiring as well as developing skills and finally deciding to employ them to tackle given situations. It will also mean breaking administrative traditions based on the concepts of ‘status’ and ‘position power’. It means gradually relying more and more on participative management. It means motivation through organisation development rather than using ‘carrot and stick’ formula. It means developing new leadership styles in government offices quite different from the ones which have been taken for granted by the civil servants of this country.⁵⁴

Behavioural scientists have given us the ways as to how to make intervention in the area of attitudinal development through the application of OD concepts.

52 Ahmed Sarji, *Civil Service Reforms*, (Kuala Lumpur: Pelanduk Publications, 1996), p. 6.

53 Stephen C. Schoonver, *Managing to Relate*, (Reading: Mass, 1988), p. 5.

54 Khalid Shams, “Changing Civil Service Attitudes”, an unpublished mimeograph no. COTA/PPA-273, 20 December 1982, (presently preserved in the library of BCS Administration Academy, which was previously named Civil Officers’ Training Academy).

Concluding Comments

In the final analysis, everyone in this country interested in seeing a changed mindset of the civil servants must appreciate that OD is based on the framework of democratic administration. Democratic administration cannot exist and sustain in an isolated way. A new administrative or management culture needs to be created in the civil service with greater emphasis on information and idea-sharing, and the optimal use of human resources, aimed at improvement on the quality of services to the people. It is the civil service leaders who will set about building this new culture with the support of a new generation of enlightened political leaders. Teamwork leading to quality output can be available if excessive compartmentalization, empire-building attitude, and anti-change mentality in officers and exogenous factors like political interference and politicization can be avoided.

As a measure to improve the existing situation initially, a climate can be created through regular meetings to discuss critical institutional issues/problems, to share ideas with all the relevant officials in a civil service office. In these meetings, among other subjects 'organisational policies can be explained, barriers to implementation can be identified and solutions can be invited'.⁵⁵ These practices will promote teamwork and make vertical and horizontal coordination smooth or easy. The premier civil service training agency BPATC can develop a pragmatic training package on OD to accomplish common orientation of the civil servants of all BCS cadres on the subject. Keeping the bureaucratic structure unaffected a comprehensive OD orientation can help the civil servants in revising their conventional mindset and value system. Success of training will however depend on the availability of trainers trained on behavioral science and social psychology in the civil service training institutes. Together with this will be required the policy support of the top hierarchy in the Ministry of Establishment and management support of the heads of the cadre-based training institutes.

⁵⁵ Mohammed Jainul Abedin, *Papers on Administration and Related Issues*, Dhaka: Academy for Planning & Development, 1991. p. 83.

Chapter IX

PROFESSIONALISING THE CIVIL SERVICE: ACCOUNTABILITY OF BANGLADESH PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION TRAINING CENTRE

This chapter seeks to reiterate the importance of training in professionalising the members of the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) and to examine how far Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC) has succeeded in achieving its mandated responsibility and the problems it confronts in achieving its accountability. The discussion with due analyses in the chapter has been organised in five main sections. The first section focuses on the role that BPATC has been playing in imparting training to officers belonging to the twenty-eight BCS cadres. The second section probes the major problems that seem to have been affecting the performance of BPATC and in turn affecting the civil service performance. The third section pinpoints certain measures towards upgrading the quality of training services at BPATC. The fourth section is on encapsulation that refers to cases of training failures in which trainees cannot transfer their learned behaviour to workplaces. Finally, the fifth and last section concludes discussions by suggesting certain measures towards facilitating optimal use of training in the civil service agencies. However, the remainder of this introductory note indicates in general terms the importance of training in enhancing professional capabilities of the civil servants which in turn ensures their functional accountability.

Today the popular slogan for all governments vis-à-vis administration is: '*professionalise or perish*'. According to Fulton Report: "civil service is no place for amateurs. It must be staffed by men and women who are truly professional".¹ Professionalisation is a psycho-social process of constructing and internalising a set of skills and values for effective performance of responsibility. Professionalisation of the Civil Service strengthens the capacity of civil servants by developing competency

1 *The Civil Service: The Report of the Committee*, 1966-68 (Chairman, Lord Fulton), vol. I, Cmd. 3638, (London, HMSO 1968), p. 9.

through skills and values. Professionalisation is a process while professionalism is the result. Again, in another context, professionalism is a process when efficiency is the result. Although today 'professionalism' is a fashionable term in public administration, which is widely misused or misperceived. Professionalism implies existence of qualities, skills and values necessary to perform a specific job. The Fulton Committee Report suggested two requirements for professionalism: "One is being skilled in one's job-skill which comes from training and sustained experience. The other is having the fundamental knowledge of and deep familiarity with a subject that enable a man to move with ease among its concepts. Both spring from and reinforce a constant striving for higher standards."²

Quality of civil service performance depends largely on development of professionalism through a systematic process of training. Well-designed training packages and their effective implementation contribute substantively to the promotion of civil service performance. A truly professionalised official usually subscribes to the code of ethics that guides the practice of his or her profession. Since accountability is a value and values are important ingredients of professionalism, training has a critical role to play in building a strong ethical base in civil servants. On the whole, a well-conceived training programme can build in the Civil Service a '*collective self-discipline*'.

Experience on the job may be a good substitute for training but it involves time, the costliest of the resources; experience is gathered after the lapse of a certain period of time and so it is costly. As experience is not readily available, training is used as a means by which a civil servant is given requisite knowledge and skills so that he or she is able to perform effectively his or her assigned tasks or responsibilities. Emphasising the importance of training the World Bank in its study *Government That Works* states: "Measures are needed to enhance professional standards and skills in the civil service and to ensure that competent and well-trained people staff the Ministries, Agencies and Departments."³

2 Op cit., p. 16.

3 The World Bank, *Government That Works*, (Dhaka, 1996),. p. xxxii.

Training is a critical instrument of developing professional competency and promoting continued excellence aimed at delivering quality services. Because training has a direct and indirect bearing on performance, to improve the training system is to improve the accountability and performance of the Civil Service. In fact, a civil servant reaches the expected level of performance through training --- institutional or on-the-job training or ideally both.

BPATC's Accountability in Promoting Civil Service Performance

Any training activity is expected to produce perceptible positive results on the behaviour of the targeted clientele. In the context of civil service, the impact of training is best reflected in the performance and conduct of the civil servants trained. The impact of training is however related to the degree of the use of imparted training. The question of the institutional accountability of the civil service training agencies is therefore no less important because the quality of civil service performance is linked to the quality of the performance of the training institutes themselves.

BPATC, one of the 325 public service training institutions and one of the key 25 training institutes of Bangladesh has been functioning since April, 1984. Table 9.1 includes a list of these 25 key training institutions meant for the BCS officers. In Bangladesh, the major portion of civil service/administrative training is covered by BPATC. The question of BPATC's accountability arises because it has the institutional mandate to train civil servants of all BCS cadres by organising three core career development courses, viz. *Foundation Training Course*, *Advanced Course on Administration and Development (ACAD)* and *Senior Staff Course (SSC)*. BPATC is premised in the original project proforma (PP) on the hope that by its training and development activities, it becomes "a centre of excellence in training in the Asia-Pacific regions".⁴ Soon after joining the Civil Service each member of each cadre is expected to receive four-month Foundation Training at BPATC which is generic in nature and is aimed at building a common civil service outlook and identical level of competency. The mission of civil service training should be to enable the university graduates intending to be civil servants to develop themselves as "brains, personality, effectiveness, judgement and integrity, the whole blended into a sane and balanced

4 Status report prepared by Project Implementation Office, PATC, Ministry of Establishment, 30 September 1985, p. 74.

individual by a process of education.”⁵ The Foundation Training is followed by functional/ specialised training which is provided by the respective cadre-based training institutes. Functional training provides the technical job-related skills required for functioning in respective cadres.⁶

Table 9.1: List of 25 Key Training Institutes for BCS Officers

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1. Bangladesh Civil Service (Administration) Academy (Dhaka)
 2. Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC)
 3. Academy for Planning & Development (Dhaka)
 4. Foreign Service Academy (Dhaka)
 5. Police Academy (Sardah, Rajshahi)
 6. Postal Academy (Rajshahi)
 7. Financial Management Academy (Dhaka)
 8. Land Administration Training Centre (Dhaka)
 9. Judicial Administration Training Institute (Dhaka)
 10. National Academy for Education Management - NAEM (Dhaka)
 11. Bangladesh Cooperative Academy (Kotbari, Comilla)
 12. Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development - BARD (Comilla)
 13. Rural Development Academy -RDA (Bogra)
 14. National Institute of Mass Communication (Dhaka)
 15. Livestock Officers Training Institute (Dhaka)
 16. Bangladesh Civil Service (Taxation) Academy (Dhaka)
 17. Bangladesh Customs, Exercise & VAT Academy (Chittagong)
 18. National Institute of Population Research & Training (Dhaka)
 19. Bangladesh Railway Training Academy (Chittagong)
 20. Central Extension Resources Development Institution (Gazipur)
 21. Food Department Training Institution (Dhaka)
 22. National Academy for Primary Education (Mymensingh)
 23. National Institute of Preventive Social Medicines (Dhaka)
 24. National Social Services Academy (Dhaka)
 25. Tele-communication Staff College (Gazipur)

Source: Ministry of Establishment, *Report on Strengthening Public Administration Training* (3 volumes, volume 1 Annex N', 1998. p. 168.

5 *The British Civil Service*, British Information Service, London, August, 1964. p. 2.

6 Syed Naquib Muslim, *Banglapedia*, Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Dhaka, 2003.

Until September 2004, BPATC has organized 52 Foundation Courses and trained as many as 9121 new entrants of the BCS; it has trained 1133 deputy secretaries through 47 ACADs and 741 joint secretary level officers through 40 SSCs. Since its inception, it has trained 18591 officers including engineers and doctors. It is therefore natural that BPATC will be institutionally accountable if there is any gap between its promise and performance, declared mission and achievement vis-a-vis the performance of the civil servants.⁷

Today however doubts are being cast in different quarters about the impact of training on the performance of the Bangladesh Civil Service. In the words of Shams: "Training imparted has little or no impact on the clientele who are unable to relate the training received to the socio-economic administrative milieu."⁸ One indicator of the ineffective civil service training is that on completion of training, majority of the trained members of the Bangladesh Civil Service are not seen to behave uniformly at the workplaces; their performance, interpersonal conduct, work style, problem-solving approaches decision-making abilities and professional values vary conspicuously. This is however not the case with the civil service training in the developed countries like Sweden, Canada, and New Zealand or even in the developing countries like Singapore and Malaysia. Mere creating some impressive arithmetical figures suggesting huge size of trained civil service personnel does not necessarily indicate improvement in the quality of service. In fact, the impact of training is reflected best in the on-the-job performance of civil servants as well as ultimate satisfaction of the law-abiding citizenry whom the former are obligated to serve. It is therefore viewed by many that despite adequate investment in training, the efficiency of civil servants has not improved as has been expected. About the success of training courses, a Bangladeshi researcher on public administration comments in a national daily: "Creation of BPATC by amalgamating the now-defunct COTA, NIPA, STI and BASC has improved neither the training process nor the training outcome. In fact, the objectives, approaches, methods, and procedures for evaluation of training programmes have not substantially changed from the pre-BPATC period."⁹

7 Data collected from Programme and Studies Division of BPATC.

8 Khalid Shams, *Emerging Role of Research & Development in Public Administration Training*, Mimeograph, COTA/PPA-1, August 1979.

9 M Wahiduzzaman, "Public Management Training in Bangladesh", *The Independent*, October 7, 1995, p. 6.

The beneficiary of the administration holds that the majority of the civil servants are still caught in the web of traditional mechanistic bureaucracy where informal elements are missing. The degree of administrative waste continues to increase; cases of corruption continue to multiply; the tendency of officials to hold files for unscrupulous intent has not subsided; the responsiveness of the civil servants to the core value of *the public interest* has improved very little. The letters and correspondences written by the officers do not conform to the prescribed formats.

The incidence and intensity of poverty has not diminished; and new technology is still viewed as a problem rather than an opportunity. Experiences and newspaper reports indicate, inter-cadre conflict, hostility and malice still permeate the climate of the civil service agencies. Parochial departmentalism is affecting smooth implementation of the public policies. Coordination among the field-level government offices remains a perennial problem; conflict between the government and non-government agencies seems endemic. New recruits of the Civil Service are torn between conformity and creativity; they complain about absence of positive attitude of their supervisors in nurturing their potentials. Many of the senior officers feel threatened when their junior colleagues take initiatives to improve the quality of performance. Attitude more of buck-passing and less of risk-taking persists. Many civil servants working at the centre and in the periphery/ field do not know how to cope with stress on the job and manage more work with less time.

The above scenario may prompt one to ask the question--- what impact has the training of BPATC been able to create on the Civil Service performance during the last two decades? Training is not decidedly the panacea to cure all the administrative maladies. But if training is expected to optimise performance, to enhance efficiency, to develop positive attitude, then BPATC has to account for how much it has contributed to the professionalisation of the Civil Service since its inception in 1984.¹⁰

Major Problems Impeding the Performance of BPATC

Time is perhaps ripe to identify the factors creating the gap between its declared objectives and achievements, its promise and performance. A critical review of the major problems affecting the performance of the BPATC and in turn affecting the civil service performance follows:

Faulty training packages: Training courses conducted at BPATC tend to be more trainer-centred than trainee-centred. Training modules are designed mostly on the basis of subjects that are 'deliverable', not that take care of the mundane, professional needs of civil servants. Most decisions in course design 'lack comprehensiveness and vision' and these are 'occasional, not systematic'.¹¹ Training modules are designed basing on what instructors can teach, not on what the incumbents need for better performance on the job. In other words, many of the training contents are based on the subjects of mastery of instructors themselves, not on the areas of deficiency of the officers to be trained. In an article Siddiqui remarks: "In spite of elaborate institutional arrangement and creation of BPATC, the training delivery system has still remained ineffective in terms of designing job-relevant training programme."¹²

Ideally and conceptually, training needs are assessed on performance gap analysis and training needs are the sources of training curriculum. An ADB survey report reveals that "training needs assessment is not carried out as effectively as it should be ... the lack of systematic, regular and effective training needs assessment is a serious weakness and one of the many reasons why training does not appear to be having the desired effect of improving the competence and attitudes of Class I officers."¹³

One of the weaknesses of BPATC is that training needs and development of professionalism are inadequately addressed;¹⁴ training needs are identified on the basis of trainer's individual perception, not on what the trainees perceive them to be. Experience of the training management suggests that no training curriculum holds good for all times. Continual adaptation, alteration and revision are required as frontiers of professional knowledge and skill keep on expanding, new issues or challenges of the Civil Service emerge and thus new training needs of civil servants sprout forth.¹⁵ It is observed that the training curricula as designed by BPATC are based mostly on

10 Syed Naquib Muslim, *Banglapedia*, Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Dhaka, 2003.

11 Mosharraf Hossain and Theodore Thomas, "A Design on OD Workshop", BPATC, Savar, July 23, 1985. p. 3.

12 NA Siddiqui, "Public Service Training in Bangladesh: A Critical Overview" *The Daily Independent*, July 8, 1996, p. 6.

13 Government of Bangladesh, Ministry of Establishment, *Report on Strengthening of Public Administration Training in Bangladesh*, a survey report, vol. 1, 1998, submitted by the Commonwealth Secretariat under TA no. 2882-BAN sponsored by Asian Development Bank, p. 50.

14 Mizanur Rahman Shelley, "Politics and Bureaucracy: The Eexperience of Bangladesh", *The Independent*, January 3, 1998. p. 4.

hypotheses, imitation, intuition, post-training feedback from the trainees, experiences of the relevant course management and prescription from the top.¹⁶ At times, new topics that have little relevance with the training needs of the clientele are often incorporated in the training modules to accommodate willing or enthusiastic faculty members who join the training institutes afresh. Again, these topics are scrapped as soon as they leave the Centre on transfer or retirement. There are instances to testify that topics have been dropped because of the transfer or retirement of officers from the Centre. Thus it seems that continuance of the training agenda is linked to the continuity of the faculty member's tenure at the training institutes. This implies that non-needs often emerge as needs whereas actual training needs remain unaddressed or overlooked.

A professional curriculum should not be ultimately based on opinion or assumption. It should be derived from extended research into the set of tasks that officials are to perform.¹⁷ In the case of BPATC, research is not the basis of constructing training curricula; it is more or less a ritualistic activity the results of which are hardly attended to or followed up.¹⁸ In most cases, training curricula are designed on the basis of personal opinion, bias or caprices; contents are subjected to frequent changes depending on the personal choice and on the perception of the heads of the training institutes. Moreover, BPATC has been experiencing a culture of mutual cancellation both at the policy level and at the implementation level. This is true in case of setting training priorities, selecting trainers and training managers. Cliques, coalitions, lobbies have been found to work in the selection of courses and design of course contents.

No systematic and comprehensive effort has yet been made to assess the common training needs of civil servants of all cadres. As civil servants are educated adults, the best training is one which is based on 'felt needs' of the officers. Institutional training in the Civil Service has therefore become a ritualistic or formalistic exercise; it is not fully performance-based, job-oriented and market-responsive. The core problems faced by the civil service training institutes are truly reflected in the Task Force Report: "the impact has been minimal due to shortage of qualified trainers, lack of interest of civil

15 Syed Naquib Muslim, "Changing Role of Administrators", *The Bangladesh Observer*, March 5 1069, 1989. p. 5.

16 Syed Naquib Muslim, "Problems of Institutional Training for Civil Servants", *The Bangladesh Observer*, November 12, 1989. p. 5.

17 Harry D. Kitson, "Training for Personnel Work", *Personnel Journal*, June, 1977. p. 271

18 Based on the personal observation of the researcher while working at BPATC as a faculty member.

servants in in-country training and failure to link training with organizational needs. Training programmes have tended to be routinized and ritualistic."¹⁹ The course materials of the Foundation Course are highly theoretical and are biased towards the Western ideas, concepts and models. The focus of the training course is on the mastery of the administrative rules, procedures and techniques rather than on people orientation and broadening of the civil servants' outlook. As Khan and Siddique observe: "The present approach to public administration training in Bangladesh is of little benefit to its clients as it remains mostly divorced from the social realities."²⁰ Again, the course contents of ACAD and SSC are mostly academic and knowledge-based. The issues of values, attitude development are not adequately addressed. As Khan and Siddiqui say again: "The ACAD and SSC course also have a lot of similarities with the university courses in public administration, even though there is hardly any lineage between the universities and training institutes especially in designing the contents of various academic and training courses. At the same time one can see overlappings in the modules and sub-modules, since almost similar issues are covered in all three types of training programmes despite the fact that there is a gulf of difference in terms of the participants' background and requirement of training."²¹

Shortage of professionalised trainers: Effectiveness of training relies heavily on the competency of the faculty. In fact, a highly professionalised, stable, discipline-specific faculty is a pre-requisite for better performance of a training institute whereas an untrained and disoriented instructional corps is a liability. The process of faculty development in the Civil Service training institutes including BPATC is interrupted time and again because of the absence of the institutional vision, policy discontinuity and priority shift. The BPATC Third Phase project document remarks: "there is acute shortage of capable faculty members who can undertake such professional challenge."²²

19 The Centre for Policy Dialogue, *Report of the Task Forces on Bangladesh Development Strategies for the 1990s*, (Dhaka: UPL, 1993).

20 Mohammad Mohabbat Khan and Nure-Alam Siddique, *Public Administration Education and Training in Bangladesh*, Bangladesh Journal of Administration & Development, Vol.4, no.2, July-December 1996,1997. p. 20.

21 Mohammad Mohabbat Khan and Nure-Alam Siddique, *Public Administration Education and Training in Bangladesh*, Bangladesh Journal of Administration & Development, Vol. 4, No. 2, July-December 1996-1997. p. 17.

22 BPATC, *Efficiency Development in Public Administration*, BPATC Phase III Project, October 29, 1995, p. 50

Trained faculty members have always been in short supply. Training is yet to be considered a respectable job in the Civil Service as it is in the Army Staff College; meritorious officers do not feel attracted to work in the training arena. Most of the civil servants working as trainers on deputation do not truly feel motivated to work. Some of them are posted on penalty, some are willing to work for personal or family advantage and very few are inclined to work as trainers having commitment to share knowledge and experience with the fellow civil servants. As ADB survey report finds: "Training is not held in high esteem and is considered by some people to be 'a dumping ground'. Even those trainers who enjoy the work accept that appointment to a training institution is unlikely to enhance their career prospects." The policy of compulsive placement proves 'self-defeating' because unwilling officers are less likely to make effective trainers.²³ All these have an adverse impact on the quality of civil service training.²⁴ This is because an unwilling, demotivated civil servant working as a trainer can contribute little to training or efficiency promotional activity even if he or she is equipped with technology.²⁵ Hinting on the adverse impact of placement of penalised or frustrated officer on the quality of training, Husain remarks: "Blithely they enjoy the hidden facilities without rendering the required services to the institutes."²⁶ At times these misplaced officers 'impose impractical and unnecessary constraints' without taking into account the realities of the civil service training.

No training institute can rely solely on the internal faculty to manage a training course particularly that which is meant for the senior civil servants. BPATC is no exception. Resource persons are therefore hired from outside for administering sessions on diverse topics. But it is a unique situation in case of BPATC that external resource persons are not often properly selected. Personal bias, prejudice, and hidden private interest often influence selection of external instructors ignoring the institutional or corporate

23 GOB, Ministry of Establishment, *Report on Strengthening of Public Administration Training in Bangladesh*, a survey report, vol. 1, 1998, submitted by the Commonwealth Secretariat under TA no. 2882-BAN sponsored by Asian Development Bank, p. 48.

24 Mohammad Mohabbat Khan and Nure-Alam Siddique, *Public Administration Education and Training in Bangladesh*, Bangladesh Journal of Administration & Development, Vol. 4, No.2, July-December 1996-1997. p. 19.

25 Syed Naquib Muslim, "Training Methodology: The Asian Experience", *The Bangladesh Observer*, December 7, 1987. p. 5.

26 Saadat Husain's essay "Effectiveness of Management/ Administrative Training in Bangladesh" in the book by the author "*Issues in Training & Development*", (Dhaka: New Age Publications, 2003). p. 149.

interest.²⁷ It has been observed that officers with excellent academic record, trainees' evaluation record and varied field experience are not often invited to conduct training sessions. It is not possible for the Rector to check the background of the external faculty all the time; the onus of proper selection of the resource persons lies on the training management.

Desk-discipline mismatch has been a chronic problem at BPATC. Officers' assignment does not always match with their subject background and aptitude. For example, the directorate of Behavioral Science in the Management & Public Administration Division wing of the Centre always received low priority and no officer was ever conceived to be groomed to man this important department. At one stage, an officer of library science background was assigned to officiate as Director (Behavioral Science). Presently, an officer belonging to BCS (Agriculture) is holding the post of Deputy Director (Behavioural Science). This unit is important because it is responsible for providing inputs for attitude development training activities. In addition, the process of faculty development is interrupted because of vision in clarity, policy discontinuity and priority shift.

Unstable leadership: BPATC's leadership has remained unstable and in most cases, senior officers who are unwilling and who earned the displeasure of the government are deputed to provide leadership to the institution. This hampered the process of institution-building, continuity of policy and consistency in curriculum design. This fact is corroborated by Ali; according to him, low quality of training results from placement of unwilling senior civil servants who work as heads or as senior trainers.²⁸ The World Bank in its document '*Government That Works*' states: "An important measure would be to make postings to senior staff training institutes a career advancement step --- just as followed by the Bangladesh Defence Forces Academies/ Staff College --- rather than a punishment posting."²⁹

Placement of civil servants in the training institute either as a trainer or as the head is considered as reward in the civil service training institutes in Singapore and in Malaysia

27 Based on the experience of the researcher who worked for Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre as Assistant. Director, Deputy Director and Director for fourteen years.

28 AMM Shawkat Ali, *Bangladesh Civil Service: A Political-Administrative Perspective*, (Dhaka: University Press Limited, 2004), p. 138.

29 The World Bank, *Government That Works*, (Dhaka: UPL, 1996), p. xxxii.

where placement of civil servants is not treated as deputation or secondment but simply as a routine transfer. Civil servants are to work as trainers and administrators on rotation and all of them have to complete courses on training technology and Public Administration. Unwilling civil servants are never placed in any training institute.

Use of traditional training methodology: Effectiveness or success of training depends largely on the application of appropriate methods. The trainees often remark that the methods of training practised by BPATC are traditional and obtrusive. Training methods here are not varied or diversified. As the contents of the course are mostly knowledge-based or informational in nature, use of lecture method is widespread or overwhelming. Course evaluation report by the participants of the Fourth Senior Staff Refresher Course states: "In most of the Courses methods employed for training are traditional. Sessions are mostly lecture-based."³⁰ According to a survey carried out by ADB team, "Of the 140 or so sessions of the Foundation course, 116 were lectures. Thirty two days of the 58 day ACAD course is taken up by lectures."³¹ Use of syndicate method is sporadic or irregular and that of simulation, case method, role play is rare or infrequent. Although case method is useful, popular and pragmatic, its use has been significantly minimal at BPATC. Until today BPATC has not been able to produce a case-book based on local situations for use at the senior level courses. The problem is not one of ignorance of the faculty but the lack of initiative and preparation. For lack of diversity in the use of training methods, training is considered as a painful experience by the civil servants.³² Khan and Siddique observe: "The archaic and outdated methods and techniques used in BPATC and other training institutes add to the ineffectiveness of various programmes. Though the importance of lecture and discussions is well-recognised, using these as the main methods of training in programmes for entry-, mid- and senior level civil servants can no longer be justified in the present context."³³

30 Proceedings of Business sessions of Fourth SSC Refresher Course, Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, November 1990.

31 *Strengthening of Public Administration Training in Bangladesh*, a survey report, vol.1, 1998, submitted by the Commonwealth Secretariat under TA no. 2882-BAN sponsored by Asian Development Bank. p. 32.

32 Syed Naquib Muslim, "Training Methodology: The Asian Experience," *The Bangladesh Observer*, December 7, 1987. p. 5.

33 Mohammad Mohabbat Khan and Nure-Alam Siddique, *Public Administration Education and Training in Bangladesh*, Bangladesh Journal of Administration & Development, Vol.4, No.2, July--December, 1996-1997. pp. 19-20.

Participatory methods like syndicate, case method, simulation are widely used and less reliance is on lecture methods in the civil service training institutes in Korea and Japan. The Administrative Staff College of Australia in Melbourne stresses practice of syndicate methods (75% reliance) involving officials of both the private sector and the public sector on the same platform, through which they acquire an intimate picture of the administrative problems and of what lies ahead for the national economy as well as their own enterprises.³⁴ Thus what is necessary is 'an honest and judicious application of lecture, syndicate and case method and strike a balance among them to make training effective.'³⁵

Aversion of civil servants for training : In recent times, training has turned out to be an unwelcome phenomenon to the members of the Civil Service. Few government officials spontaneously seek nomination to receive training at BPATC. The trainees of the Foundation Course are eager to participate in the course as it is linked to their service confirmation; the participants of mid-level and senior level courses try their utmost to avoid nomination. There is an array of instances to testify that officers resort to *tadbir* or seek favour so that they are exempted from the prescribed training courses. The apathy of the mid- and senior level civil servants towards training is attributed to different reasons. The dominant one is that training does not provide them immediate pay-off and the organization/agencies they work for do not treat the trained officers with a difference and the efficiency resulting from training is hardly counted or rewarded. In many cases efficiency is not rewarded. They believe, simply attending theoretical lectures fraught with fancy rhetorics having little touch of the reality hardly helps them in advancing their career. Another reason of the unpopularity of civil service training is that training and career development are still de-linked. Present training contributes very little to the professional enrichment of officers. Even if an official is trained under compulsion, he or she can hardly use it back on the job.

Measures to Upgrade BPATC's Performance

Improving the quality of human resources in the civil service is crucial to improving the accountability of the civil servants. Following measures are suggested to upgrade the quality of training services at BPATC.

34 *Public Administration Training System in Korea, Japan and Australia*, Report of Bangladesh Study Mission, National Institution of Public Administration, Dhaka, December, 1976. p. 36.

35 Muzzaffar Ahmed Chaudhury, *The Civil Service in Pakistan*, Dhaka: National Institute of Public Administration, 1969. p. 234.

Formulating 'Vision' and 'Mission' of BPATC

A vision is a statement that describes the best possible future of an organisation; it defines in what state the leader of the organisation desires to see his or her organisation. Vision always deals with the future; it suggests an image of the future and gives a sense of direction for an institution. Broadly speaking, vision includes *mission* which is a guide to action. Mission constitutes broad purposes drawn direct from vision to make it clear and convenient enough for the actors to implement. In other words, mission is what results the vision-maker seeks to achieve; it implies a choice of goals and priorities.

In the light of the principles and theories as discussed above, the vision of BPATC may be proposed as---

By the year, say 2015, Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre will achieve a pre-eminent institutional position of being 'the Centre of Excellence' by installing a well-equipped and results-oriented training delivery system aimed at building an efficient, innovative, adaptive, accountable, proactive, transparent and citizen-centric Civil Service and at instilling in the civil servants a 'collective self-discipline' so that they can function with confidence and dignity in the competitive, fast growing knowledge-based society and can meet the challenges of the 21st century.

At the backdrop of democratic governance, the role of the Civil Service needs to be revised. The electorate or the citizenry today demands a kind of Civil Service which is pro-poor, pro-democracy and pro-development. Thus the mission of BPATC may be re-formulated as---

- i) to transfer current concepts, tools and techniques of public administration required by the civil service for acquiring new professionalism; and
- ii) to devise, organise and offer need-based, client-centred, market-driven training courses or orientation programmes to achieve the mission no. i.

Thus the mission of BPATC should be to create in the Bangladesh Civil Service an enabling capacity to meet effectively the existing and emerging challenges it is/ may be confronted with. The enabling capacity is expected to create a strong and stable faculty and to deliver need-based, pragmatic training courses.

The Civil Service of the present-day Bangladesh is facing three important challenges that have been discussed in Chapter III. The most daunting challenge for the Civil Service is to prove its accountability and capability to run in a parliamentary democracy. With the emergence of democracy, the challenges of development assume

a new dimension requiring the Civil Service to be more responsive to the needs and grievances of the innocent or genuine service-seeking public. The civil service has to redefine its role, internalise a set of new values as democratic culture makes new demands on the competencies of civil servants. BPATC's responsibility will be to design and deliver its training courses in tune with the democratic needs and new trends of the Civil Service. Modification of outlook and attitude of civil servants should be the thrust of curriculum design initiatives.

Strategies for operationalizing the mission: priorities

The word '*strategy*' refers to the broad choices of how an organization will achieve its mission and what programmes and activities need to be undertaken to implement the mission. In other words strategies are devised to operationalise a set of specific objectives; it is a set of broad but best decisions or choices formulated for achieving the declared objectives.

For a government administrative capability is a valuable resource. It implies policy implementation capability, managing crises, alleviating poverty, mobilizing the human segments of society for socio-economic development, preserving social discipline through enforcement of laws etc. Thus the strategic aim of BPATC should be to develop civil service efficiency or administrative capacity so that it can redeem these obligations. Following measures are suggested to achieve this aim.

Alternative approach to training: Perception of public administration training varies from situation to situation depending particularly on a country's socio-economic and politico-administrative situation. How does the government of Bangladesh perceive training is a natural question to any conscious citizen. As is reflected in the Public Administration Training Policy (PATP) gazetted in May, 2003, in the context of the Civil Service, training is perceived by the government as a major intervention "to create an efficient and innovative, responsive and accountable and honest and committed public service system to meet the challenges of the 21st century."³⁶

BPATC has to adopt or pursue an alternative approach to training in response to the demand of the local as well as competitive international market. As in other developing countries like Malaysia, Korea and Singapore, training has to be perceived as a

productive investment in human capital. Training activity should not be treated merely as an administrative routine or ritual to be maintained by the civil service agencies. Training should be considered an integral part of the entire civil service system; it has to be integrated with performance appraisal system and human resource management. Training should be used as an instrument of promoting efficiency in the Civil Service, of optimising use of human resources and of building capability to cope with the potential resistance to administrative reforms that are required to be introduced by the government from time to time.

Another important purpose of training should be to imbibe civil servants with the declared values of the Civil Service. Lastly, training must be used as a tool of implementing the national vision and strategic plan. Demand for good governance, need for coping with the rapidly changing technology, irresistible wave of globalisation, persistent pressure of market economy and emerging challenges of the 21st century necessitate the government to initiate an overhaul of the existing training system.

Assumption of a new role by BPATC: After a lapse of 31 years, the Government of Bangladesh has introduced *Public Administration Training Policy* in 2003. Formulation of PATP cannot by itself ensure delivery of quality training services. Unless the policy is implemented the situation remains as before. BPATC as the prime civil service training institution can shoulder the responsibility of monitoring implementation of PATP. Once the implementation process is set in motion, the civil service training will improve and this will in turn have positive impact on civil service performance. The PATP has designated BPATC “as the apex training institution and as a think-tank”³⁷ to provide advisory services to the government on policy, administration and management matters. PATP envisages BPATC as the prime training centre for the civil servants of all cadres. Accordingly, BPATC has to assume a new role.

The vision of BPATC will remain a mere rhetorical statement if it is not implemented. What is most required for implementation is competence and commitment to be built in the civil servants. BPATC’s role and responsibility will be to design appropriate training programmes through which this mandate can be fulfilled.

36 Ministry of Establishment, *Public Administration Training Policy*, published in *The Bangladesh Gazette*, May 6, 2003.7368

37 *Public Administration Training Policy*, p. 7369.

To increase the overall efficiency of the Civil Service, reforms are an unavoidable necessity. The government is trying to introduce reforms on an incremental basis. The success of the reform efforts however relies heavily on the competence and commitment of the civil servants. BPATC has to adopt a comprehensive training programme to enable the civil servants to identify the existing structural and processual problems hindering the effective performance and then initiate reforms based on their perceived practical needs rather than on prescriptions imposed from outside.

The Ministry of Establishment (MoE) has to engage BPATC as the focal point for coordinating and monitoring implementation of PATP. BPATC should report to the MoE at regular intervals how the guidelines and standards specified in PATP are being practised or pursued by the 25 key institutions of the Civil Service.

Rationalising the training curricula: BPATC should launch an elaborate comprehensive programme of identifying the training priorities and rationalising the training curricula to transform the civil service into a “a more efficient, customer-focussed, results-oriented and accountable body of people who can implement Bangladesh’s social and economic goals.”³⁸ The missing ingredient of the interconnectedness between the training inputs and training needs has to be caught. Reconstruction of curricula in tune with the demand of the environment and needs of the civil service is essential to make training need-based, results-oriented, client-centred and market-responsive. Training needs have to be identified in the context of the changed and emerging role of civil servants. Since training is the prime responsibility of the Centre, the most important strategy to improve the quality of training will be to rationalise the existing curricula of all the core and non-core courses.

In the earlier years faculty meetings were convened to decide contents of the courses and the module-in-charges were put to a kind of virtual viva voce test in front of irrelevant others to justify inclusion or exclusion of specific sessions/topics into or from the module. In the process, irrelevant module like land management was incorporated in the Foundation Course to accommodate two new faculty members who just joined from the field and who could not teach other subjects. After their departure the same module was discontinued. All these occur because systematic needs analysis could not be embarked upon and proper officers could be appointed to work as faculty members.

38 *Strengthening of Public Administration Training in Bangladesh*, a survey report, vol. 1 submitted by the Commonwealth Secretariat under TA no. 2882-BAN sponsored by Asian Development Bank, p. 40.

The ideal situation demands that the core learning inputs/topics should remain unaltered. For example, for the Foundation Course, public administration-related topics such as *Self-analysis Exercise, Supervision, Leadership, Team-building, Communication & Coordination Skills, Human Relations, the Techniques of Problem-solving* are the perennial training needs of the officers of all BCS cadres. If these are not included in the course contents of the FC, the new entrants of the Civil Service will leave the Centre without the knowledge of how to operate in a team, how to coordinate activities with those of the fellow-departmental colleagues, how to meet the grievances of the beneficiary who sit across their desks. On the whole, through FC BPATC must strive to develop "a breadth of view, an understanding of the approaches, modes of analysis and paradigms of other professions and socialisation to more comprehensive 'public interest' norms ...".³⁹

As already discussed in chapter VIII the work environment of the Bangladesh Civil Service is characterised by lack of team spirit and of open/intimate communication between the superordinate and the subordinate, the civil servant and the politician and the specialist and the generalist. Conflict, egoism, exhibition of power remain as chronic behavioral problems. Moreover, many members of the Civil Service still perceive themselves to be superior to others and they keep themselves emotionally isolated from the public who are virtually their pay-masters. 'Nothing could be more disastrous than that the Civil Service and the public should think of themselves as in two separate camps. The inculcation of right attitude towards work and towards the public should therefore be one of the principal purposes of Civil Service training.'⁴⁰ If the quality of the Civil Service is to be improved, it is not enough to add to their theoretical knowledge only; 'it is necessary to develop the man as a whole.'⁴¹

According to a group of trained young civil servant-interviewees, for achieving efficiency, behavioural change is much more desirable than structural change.⁴²

39 Schott in *Professionalism and Bureaucratic Responsiveness: Conflict or compatibility* by Richard C. Kearney and Chandan Sinha published in *Public Administration Review*, January-February, 1988, p. 577.

40 Report of the Committee on the Training of Civil Servants, cmd. 6525,144, pp. 10-11 quoted in Muzzaffar Ahmed Chaudhury, *The Civil Service in Pakistan*, Dhaka: National Institution of Public Administration, 1969. p. 174.

41 Muzzaffar Ahmed Chaudhury, *The Civil Service in Pakistan*, Dhaka: National Institution of Public Administration, 1969. p. 234.

42 Syndicate report of Orange group of the 11th Foundation Training Course on *Strategies for the Promotion of Administrative Transparency* prepared and presented at Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, April 1993. p. 9.

Attitude development should therefore be the thrust of the training courses meant for the seniors; if the attitude of senior civil servants is not properly attuned to the needs of the day, mere existence of rules and laws cannot help in promoting accountability of the new civil servants who tend to imitate the senior or emulate their ways.⁴³ Developing a positive attitude of the civil servants is a long-felt need. But the question is -- to what extent BPATC has been able to meet this need? An analysis of the course contents will indicate that these do not adequately address the attitude development or behavioral or normative change issue. One of the recommendations of the Working Group II in the conference on "*Administrative and Financial Accountability: The ASEAN-SAARC Experience*", was: "Our programmes in the government must focus on normative training, that is, training that emphasizes values favouring accountability on the part of the government officials."⁴⁴

A training programme reflects the professional as well as social demands of the contemporary time. With the emergence of democratic administration, BPATC's responsibility will therefore be to design its training programmes in tune with the democratic needs and the new trends of the Civil Service. BPATC should organise regularly generic training programmes such as *Supervision, Training of Trainers, Performance appraisal, Leadership development..* As the Four-secretaries' report says: "The need-based training programme should inter alia, address issues like attitudinal change in the public service so as to make it consistent with the working of a democratic government."⁴⁵ Training programmes or modules should be designed to remould the attitude of the civil servants and infuse in them the skills and values of new professionalism, thereby transforming the entire civil service into a self-propelling macro-team.

Professionalisation of the instructional staff: According to the clause no. 8.5 of PATP: "Professionalisation of trainers should be one of the top priorities for institution-building."⁴⁶ A professionalised faculty is the most important resource for a training

43 Syndicate report of Group-Mango, Section-C of the 10th Foundation Course on *Strategies for the Promotion of Accountability in the Civil Service* prepared and presented at Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, October 1992. p. 11.

44 Report of the Working Group II represented by Patricia S. Tomas in the conference on "*Administrative and Financial Accountability: The ASEAN-SAARC Experience*", (ed.) Sirajuddin H. Salleh & Arabinda Kar, Asia & Pacific Development Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1995. p. 16.

45 Four Secretaries' Report entitled *Towards Better Government in Bangladesh*, 1993. p. 67.

46 *Public Administration Training Policy*, The Bangladesh Gazette, May 6, 2003. p. 7381.

institute. Training is undeniably a specialised, skill-based activity; training is effective when trainers are competent. Thus professionalisation of trainers should be one of the critical strategies to be adopted by BPATC for institution-building. Developing a discipline-specific faculty will not only enrich the quality of training but also impact the overall institutional performance.

BPATC has to be staffed with worth-imitating and worth-emulating model officers who are noted for their professional excellence and credibility. A pool of officers having brilliant academic qualifications, and aptitude for and commitment to training needs to be identified by each ministry and they may be placed in the civil service training institutes on rotation.

As the Four-secretaries' report says: "Training institutes should not be the dumping grounds for unsuitable civil servants."⁴⁷ Training institutes should not be considered the place for penal posting; only committed and competent persons should be made trainers and heads of training institutes, not unwilling or undesirable or worthless civil servants.⁴⁸

The Centre should not be considered a haven for amateurism; amateurism must be supplanted by professionalism. Only academically sound and professionally credible members of the Civil Service with communication skills and aptitude for training need to be attracted to the Centre for instruction and research. Secondment has to be discipline-specific and only competent or credible civil servant should be posted to BPATC. According to clause no. 8.3 of PATP: "A pool of officers having academic background, aptitude, commitment, competence and adaptability to training culture needs to be identified" to work as trainers for the cadre-based training institutes.⁴⁹ Suggesting on how to strengthen the civil service training institutes, *Government That Works* writes: "An important measure would be to make postings to senior staff raining institutes a career advancement step--- just as followed by the Bangladesh Defence Forces Academies-rather than a punishment posting."⁵⁰

Members of the permanent faculty need to be exposed to field realities so that they can develop courses based on real needs. Attachment programmes can be chalked out for field-orientation; this will enable them to develop a pragmatic perspective of the

47 Four Secretaries' Report entitled *Towards Better Government in Bangladesh*, 1993, p. 67.

48 Kamal Siddiqui, *Towards Good Governance in Bangladesh*, (Dhaka: UPL, 1996), p. 75.

49 *Public Administration Training Policy*, *The Bangladesh Gazette*, May 6, 2003.p. 7381.

50 The World Bank, *Government That Works*, p. xxxiii

administrative realities and it will be possible for them to 'walk their talk'. Field attachments will also enable them to assess the genuine training needs of the officers at work.

Diversification of training methodology: Effectiveness of training depends largely on the use of appropriate training methods; no single method is enough to make training effective. Appropriate training methods and the techniques of using them effectively enhances receptivity and retention of training to the trainees. The PATP prescribes through its clause no. 6.0: "More and more emphasis should be placed on participatory and interactive methods of training with reduced reliance on lecture method to make training attractive and useful."⁵¹ Use of training methods entails a lot of technicalities which need to be mastered by the civil service trainers to achieve targetted objectives. The steepest part of the civil service training is development of positive attitude and internalisation of the core values of the Civil Service. One way to handle attitude development is the use of appropriate participatory training methods such as simulation, role play, case study, interactive problem-solving exercises etc. BPATC should be equipped with modern training aids/apparatus for effective use of the training methods to make training 'attractive, enjoyable and rewarding'.

Lecture methods should be minimally practised in the mid- and senior-level courses. The ADB survey report suggests that the volume of management training delivered by lecture should be greatly reduced and replaced by more interactive learning techniques and target should be set for gradually reducing the volume of lectures on management topics. A reduction to 30% within five years should be feasible.⁵² Every faculty member meant for instruction should be trained to how use various training methods and specially how to write and administer cases for the senior level participants.⁵³

Strengthening oversight by the Ministry: According to the Schedule I of the *Rules of Business* on the allocation of responsibilities of the Ministries, the Ministry of Establishment is responsible for training government servants both at home and abroad. But the real situation is that the Ministry remains confined more to operational issues

51 Ibid .p. 7380.

52 *Strengthening of Public Administration Training in Bangladesh*, a survey report, vol.1, submitted by the Commonwealth Secretariat under TA no. 2882-BAN sponsored by Asian Development Bank, p. 43.

53 Syed Naquib Muslim, "Use of Training Methods and Training Aids in Bangladesh", *BSTD Proshikhyan*, vol. 12, January-June, 2004. p. 59.

such as posting, transfer and deputation than to monitoring of training activities. A strong training wing designated as Recruitment and Training Wing (RTW) to be manned by training-oriented personnel should be created in the Ministry of Establishment to supervise the training activities carried out by the cadre-based training institutions operating under the relevant ministry. The specific objectives may be: i) to provide legal, policy and infrastructural support to the cadre-based training institutes; ii) to monitor the progress of the implementation of the *Public Administration Training Policy* and also the training and staff development programmes undertaken by the training institutes; and iii) to promote interagency cooperation/coordination among the training institutes so that resources/facilities and technology may be shared and functional overlap among them prevented.

Reward for Efficiency: Rewarding efficient officers is a way to attract them to training. Good performers in the training courses should be given incentive in the form of lucrative posting. In the similar fashion, trainers showing standard performance should be rewarded. According to provision no. 9(v) of PATP: "National awards will be declared every year to recognise the services of the trainers. Certificate and cash rewards will be given to best trainers for their outstanding performance or contribution to training field."⁵⁴ BPATC may take an initiative in declaring awards to the best trainers every year and criteria for awards and budgetary provisions should be created to implement that.

Institutional Network-building: Linkage today is power as information is power. Linkage enables organizations to share technology and information to improve performance through development of a comparative perspective. According to Inayatullah, a Pakistani public administration practitioner: "The greater the variety of linkages an institution can forge, the greater its capacity to adopt to new circumstances and survive."⁵⁵ Linkage among the cadre-based training institutions seems a missing link in the chain of training and development activities. Each training institute seems to practise a policy of introversion and isolation. Inter organizational relations are confined only to hiring speakers from each other. Lack of mutualisation between and among government, business, universities, voluntary organisations and training

54 *Public Administration Training Policy*, The Bangladesh Gazette, May 6, 2003.p. 7383.

55 Inayatullah, *Management Training for Development: The Asian Experience*, ACDA, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1975. p. 56.

institutes aggravate the inefficacy of civil service training.⁵⁶ During the last decade, BPATC's achievement in network building and linkage-forging is not significant. Linkage with World Bank Institute and UNFPA is confined to sporadic offering of specialised modules and infrequent workshops.

Before crossing the borders of Bangladesh, it is first necessary to forge linkage with the relevant public sector training institutions operating inside the country. Functional linkage among the cadre-based, specialised training institutions is necessary to share views, ideas, and experiences on the problems related to training or to promotion of the Civil Service efficiency. Moreover, a domain consensus among the cadre-based training institutions is indispensable to avoid role duplication and curriculum overlap that cause waste of resources. For example, BPATC needs not train the subjects like land administration or revenue management which are offered by BCS (Administration) Academy or Land Administration Training Centre.

Mechanisms need to be devised to orchestrate activities of the professional training institutes inside the country. The following measures might help---

High-level academic conferences and visits: Annual or bi-annual conference may be organised where the heads of all the cadre-based training institutes will attend to decide the training agenda and to identify problems on the use of training. Again, it will be a segmented approach if only the civil servants are invited; with them the beneficiaries of the Civil Service, for instance, the associations of business communities, rank and file of the professional associations, lawyers, elected public representatives, ADAB representatives may be invited to join this congregation. This may be an item in the Centre's activity profile or schedule. The objective of this exercise will be to share, in a free and frank climate, ideas, suggestions, experiences aimed at rationalization of the curricula of the core courses like FC, ACAD, and Senior Staff Course and also to devise strategies for preventing the chronic problem of training encapsulation. This will also help greatly in reducing inter-cadre tension which is affecting the efficiency of the government. Periodic exchange of formal and informal visits and study tours will foster intimate inter-institutional bond or linkage.

56 MBA Abbas, "Public Administration in Pakistan", an unpublished mimeograph, Dhaka, NIPA, January 7, 1971, p. 30.

Forging linkage with training institutes under Saarc: It is also necessary to forge linkage with the counterpart-training institutes of the member-countries of the SAARC which pursue common goals of administrative improvement and socio-economic development. BPATC needs to establish institutional linkage with the apex public administration training institutes to exchange faculty/consultants, share technology, organise seminars and workshops on common problems/issues affecting the lives of the people of the sub-region.

Training Encapsulation in the Civil Service

All efforts of BPATC and of other civil service training institutes will lapse into futility if training imparted to the officers remains encapsulated and training cannot be used by them on the job. Training encapsulation refers to a training failure in which a trainee cannot transfer a learned behaviour to a job situation. Except the use of end-of-course evaluation BPATC and other civil service training institutes have not yet been able to devise any other mechanisms to measure “whether the training received is substantially put into practice in the workplaces.”⁵⁷

Today people have become sceptical about the impact of civil service training on the service delivery system. Although adequate investment is being made in civil service training, training is not properly used by public servants completing training courses. There are a plethora of indicators which show that training imparted by the public sector training institutions is not being used optimally and that training does not show any remarkable impact on the performance of public officials and so it is often considered a wasteful or an extravagant exercise. No significant change in the work style is visible. It is an irony that officers attending both local and foreign training on reforms tend to turn reform-resistant than reform-responsive. A few officers who take initiative to use training ultimately give up because of lack of top management support. The problems of non-use of training can be categorised as problems in the delivery side and as problems in the receiving point. These are discussed below:

Apathy towards training: Many government officials demonstrate apathy towards institutional training. Two dominant reasons for this apathy are --- job-skill mismatch

⁵⁷ *Strengthening of Public Administration Training in Bangladesh*, a survey report, Vol. 1, submitted by the Commonwealth Secretariat under TA no. 2882-BAN sponsored by Asian Development Bank, p. 52.

and non-provision of reward to the trained officers showing excellent performance.. This apathy affects the growth of individual professionalism which in turn affects the quality of civil service delivery ultimately leading to the diminution of the credibility of the civil service. Some officials show little interest in training because they find that a trained officer and a non-trained officer are often treated on an equal footing. Government officials tend to confine their learning within the classroom boundary and do not bring it to their workplaces because they find that many are rewarded with important placements or positions even if they do not attend or complete the mandatory courses. In some cases, officers are over-trained as every time the same official is nominated for training while in many cases, officers showing substandard performance and requiring training are hardly nominated for training. Training is also used as a tool to get rid of the recalcitrant or non-performing official from the office for the time being.

Training-unfriendly climate at the workplace: Most of the trained officers commonly complain that they cannot use their training because the work environment is not training-friendly. The work environment in the civil service offices is mostly rigid and change-resistant. It is difficult to secure management support for implementing what is learnt. Top management which nominates officials for training has little time to take stock of what an officer has learnt on completion of a training course. In most cases, junior officers who return to their desks completing training courses are treated with indifference or at times with ridicule by their supervisors. The attitude of non-cooperation of senior officers creates a sense of demotivation or disillusionment in juniors who find it meaningless to apply on the job what they learn in training courses. According to the report of the Public Administration Sector Study, use of training is limited 'because they do not return to their old positions, do not get necessary support from their organisations to apply what they learn.'⁵⁸ Supervisors tend to hinder rather than facilitate the use of the modern management concepts, techniques and tools acquired by junior officers from a training course. In other words, trained officials cannot transfer their training to the workplaces as they face resistance from their supervisors as well as the untrained juniors; resistance from peers is comparatively minimal. Thus training makes little appeal to the civil servants.

58 UNDP, *Report on the Public Administration Sector Study*, UNDP, 1993, p. 94.

Training-job mismatch: Optimal use of training depends largely on the post-training provisions created for the trained officers. If officers trained in a specific field are placed in a different or alien field, they have no scope to use his knowledge and skill. They ultimately get demotivated and grow apathy towards further training. In many cases, facilities to enable trained officers to use training are either absent or minimal. An officer who received computer training from Germany a few years back reported that he was given a desk not matched with the skill he acquired through training and ultimately he forgot what he had learnt. This is a typical case in the civil service offices, of course, with few exceptions.

Lack of linkage between training and career: One of the important reasons for which government officials do not feel attracted to training is that there is little linkage between training and career. After completing a specific training course, officers find little prospects of professional enrichment and career development or promotion. In many cases, officers are promoted to higher positions without taking into account whether they have accomplished mandatory training courses or not.

How to Ensure Optimal Use of Training: Concluding Comments

In conclusion, it seems appropriate to recommend the following measures towards facilitating optimal use of training in the civil service agencies based on the observations in place in the foregoing paragraphs.

Top management's commitment: The degree of the use of training by junior officers is linked to the degree of interest or commitment shown by their supervising officers. In other words, use of training depends significantly on the intensity of interest and involvement demonstrated by the first-line supervisors of the trained officials who work under them. We have to produce a new breed of supervisors who will act as role models, mentors and who will encourage their trained juniors to use their learning. BPATC can organise or offer a regular course designed particularly for supervisors of government offices with a thrust on OJT and TOT orientation.

Integration on IT with OJT: Institutional training and on-the- job training need to be well-coordinated. IT provided by BPATC and cadre-based departmental training institutes must be followed by OJT at the respective workplaces and be carried out in a

systematic and planned fashion. The responsibility of supervising and using institutional training should be formally vested with the heads of the offices or the supervisors. Mid and senior level officers holding supervisory positions should be imparted intensive supervisory training and OJT orientation. The training courses should include modules that will help in building a positive, healthy and supportive attitude in the senior officers as well as in building their instructional competence (see annex I).

Building a culture of learning: Use of training should be practised as an element of civil service work culture. Any officer completing a training course must make a presentation at a seminar upon his or her return to the organization to share with his or her colleagues the knowledge and skills he or she has acquired. This should be practised as a rule and should be maintained in a religious spirit. In that effort the senior must show the way or the example. In the words of Zaman: "the superior officers have a role to play in creating an environment conducive to training as a way of life in the organisation. Only in such an environment can the personnel actualise themselves by exposing themselves to ever-learning situations at every step".⁵⁹ As a matter of fact, creation of a learning culture or environment results from initiatives of the trainees, supervisors and institutional leadership-- administrative and political; a segmented effort does not help. As Husain states: "Environment of training is improved or vitiated depending on the quality of governance."⁶⁰

59 M Wahiduzzaman, "Public Management Training in Bangladesh", *The Independent*, 7 October 1995, p. 6.

60 Saadat Husain, "Role of Training in Good Governance", a paper presented at a seminar on Good Governance organised and sponsored by Bangladesh Society for Training & Development, November 21, 1995. p. 3.

Chapter X

INSTITUTIONALIZING ON-THE-JOB TRAINING & FOSTERING HEALTHY SENIOR-JUNIOR RELATIONS IN CIVIL SERVICE AGENCIES

The Civil Service today is a recognized profession and is used by every government as a powerful instrument for accomplishing its multiple goals and redeeming diverse responsibilities to the citizenry. A profession embodies a specific field of work represented by a body of practitioners who are held together by a psychic bond built with 'craft consciousness'. A profession requires the presence of high standards of proficiency and members belonging to it insist on doing their job 'superlatively well' maintaining a strict code of ethics.¹ According to Thornly and Chubb: "The civil service is generally regarded as a profession and rightly so. It is one of the distinguishing features of a profession that to a large extent it controls entry to its ranks, guards its own standards and fosters its own science or art".² Fulton Report specifies two main attributes of professionalism of the Civil Service-- "one is being skilled in one's job - skill which comes from training and sustained experience. The other is having the fundamental knowledge of and deep familiarity with a subject that enable a man to move with ease among its concepts".³ Professionalism implies acquisition of a body of knowledge and skills to be used in the service of others rather than merely for one's own purpose. Therefore, for effective delivery of service to the people a high degree of professionalism is a prerequisite. Achievement of accountability rests largely on the acquisition of professionalism by officers/employees. Again, for any service to develop and maintain professionalism there is no other better alternative than training.

Professionalism is generally developed through two categories of training--- institutional training (IT) and on-the-job training (OJT); both have a complementary role to play in building competency of the civil service officials. According to Hope: "It

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- 1 Harry D. Kitson, "Training for Personnel Work", *Personnel Journal*, June, 1977. p. 271.
 - 2 Thornly and Chubb quoted in C.H. Murray, "A Working and Changeable Instrument", *Administration*, vol. 30, no. 4, 1982, p. 81.
 - 3 *The Civil Service*, vol. 1, Report of the Committee 1966-68 (Fulton Report), (London: HMSO, 1968, p. 16.

should be recognized that some form of tutelage and OJT is indispensable in the civil service.”⁴ In 1984, a team of foreign consultants from the New York-based consultancy firm Institute of Public Administration which made pre-investment study named Staff Appraisal Report on the Public Administration Project before the inception of BPATC assigned strong emphasis to three types of training for professionalisation of the civil servants of Bangladesh.⁵ These are –

- On-the-job-training
- Training of trainers
- Supervisory training

Because of its intrinsic value in building the performance ability of officers, OJT demands an exclusive discussion. The objectives of this chapter are to review the conceptual dimensions of OJT based on a literature survey, to identify the modalities of conducting the OJT activities successfully in the civil service agencies in Bangladesh and to assess the present status of OJT therein. The success of OJT operations depends heavily upon the healthy and happy senior-junior relations. An effort has therefore been made to identify the nature of the senior-junior relations persisting in the civil service agencies in this country. To begin with, however, conceptual dimensions of the on-the-job-training (OJT) need to be clarified to justify its significance.

Conceptual Dimensions of On-the-job Training

OJT occurs at the workplace under the guidance of a supervisor or experienced junior assistant of an organisation. OJT is purely work-related, performance-based and practice-oriented. It focuses on the performance deficiencies and attitudinal problems of officials while on the job. OJT is not a substitute for IT; it is not a discrete training activity conducted independently but it is complemented by IT. IT in fact creates in officials a conceptual base which helps them figure out where to begin and where to end while performing their job. Institutional training produces potential rather than expertise. The experience necessary to develop the expertise can only be obtained on the job. Ideally, IT precedes OJT because OJT is practice-oriented whereas IT is more or less theory-based.

4 Kempe P. Hope, *Dynamics of Development and Development Administration*, (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1984), p. 84.

OJT permeates in an invisible form in every organisation. OJT is mostly situational and is a never-ending process. But it can also be 'programmed' and structured to meet the training needs of officers identified. Good teaching does not occur by chance but by design. Thus if OJT programme is to be made effective, it needs to be planned and organised. The key requirement for OJT is involvement of the supervisor; OJT activity brings the supervisor and the supervisee much closer.⁶

OJT: The most reliable tool for infusion of Civil Service values

During interviews both junior and senior members of the Bangladesh Civil Service have emphasized practice of ethics at the workplace for promoting administrative accountability. They have the identical perception that unless civil servants' moral frame is improved, accountability cannot be truly achieved. They believe that ethical education or training will induce civil servants to exercise authority or discretion judiciously and to use public resources prudently. But the question is-- how can an ethical civil service be achieved? To them, one of the alternatives is provision of a systematic moral education and training to the new entrants of the Civil Service. Training will not only develop their competence but also shape their moral conduct. Training must remind the officers constantly that they are public servants of a 'professional state' rather than officials of an omnipotent state; 'professional state' was coined by Mosher hinting at the nurturance of values necessary for the welfare of all. The question thus arises what category of training will be more useful for achieving this purpose?

An analysis of the modules meant for common civil service training shows that the thrust of institutional training for the civil servants is presentation of the theories and concepts of various subjects mostly through monologous lectures where scope for practice and demonstration of values is minimal. As a matter of fact, trainees tend to accept the values when they find their seniors practising them. Ascher observes: "Professional standards will become part of the civil servants' personal standards largely through the inspiration and examples provided by colleagues whom he admires

5 World Bank, *Staff Appraisal Report of Public Administration Project*, Report no. 4151-BD March 23, 1983. p. 17.

6 Syed Naquib Muslim, "On-the-Job Training in the Public Sector in Bangladesh", *Proshikhon*, 3(5), pp. 12-30.

or for whom he feels personal regard.”⁷ In British India, examples and standards of senior officers played an influential role in shaping the ethical conduct of the junior officers. Unfortunately many of the present day senior officers are yet to realise fully that their leadership can influence greatly in building up higher professional standards of conduct among their subordinates.⁸ The issues of attitude and values can be more effectively addressed through on-the-job training than through institutional training. In the words of Stewart: “Problems of attitude or motivation can be tackled by training sometimes, but it needs the long on-the-job type of training to give changes time to take place.”⁹

Values cannot be imparted by delivery of lengthy sermons or through issuance of voluminous executive orders; these have to be practised first by those who are in the top hierarchy. Supervisors who act practically as trainers on-the-job not only declare or clarify values but also display them through their activities and conduct. In fact, values get consolidated when these are practised by the trainer on-the-job. Moreover, ‘supervisors should be duty-bound to mentor their supervisees, facilitate staff development and encourage teamwork’.¹⁰ A common professional code of ethics embodying all these requirements has already been suggested in Chapter-V of this document. Supervisors having leadership qualities are the carriers of civil service culture to which subordinates respond spontaneously and by which they are influenced quickly. Training for new leadership occurs more intensely in the superior-subordinate interaction and OJT creates a climate for this. Thus the problems of attitude, values, norms and leadership can be better handled by planned and successful delivery of on-the-job training. Junior members of the Civil Service learn more from seniors through the process of their interaction and emulate the values they practise. It is said, leadership qualities cannot be taught; these rather have to be caught. The spirit of initiative, risk-taking and drive can be better infused through interaction with supervisors and the examples they set. As Gardener observes: “training always takes place in an organisation whether there is a training programme or not each time we

7 CS Ascher quoted in Muzzaffar Ahmed Chaudhury's *The Civil Service in Pakistan*, Dhaka: National Institute of Public Administration, 1969. p. 318.

8 Muzzaffar Ahmed Chaudhury, *The Civil Service in Pakistan*, Dhaka: National Institute of Public Administration, 1969. p. 318.

9 Valirie Stewart, *Managing the Poor Performer* (London: Gower, 1983). p. 157.

10 Ted F. Anthony, “Preventing Supervision From Becoming An End-of-the Line Job”, *Personnel Journal*, June, 1977. p. 297

assign, explain, reject, encourage or reprimand, we are training. We also train by the examples we set."¹¹ Change orientation can be effectively conducted by supervising officers. They can persuade juniors to shun obsolescence and update themselves with new knowledge and new skills.

If both new and old members of the Civil Service acquire mastery of the OJT techniques, they can effectively discharge their training responsibility and contribute greatly to the growth of professionalism of the civil servants and to the overall efficiency of the offices they work for.

Supervisor's role in professionalising the Civil Service

From the above discussion, it becomes clear that the success of any OJT activity depends on the relations between the senior and the junior. The value of training received in the institute by a new entrant is often lost due to the supervisor's failure to impart on the job training. A supervisor of today is an activator, motivator, energiser and most importantly trainer. As Gardener observes: "In most areas, employees are best trained by their own supervisors."¹² In performing the responsibilities of a supervisor, a civil servant has also to play the role of an instructor on-the-job. It is the professional as well as moral responsibility of a senior civil servant to groom the junior in such a way that he or she can take up the responsibility in the absence of the senior. How seniors can help juniors in developing professionalism is best reflected in the words of Leathes: "It is well to improve yourself, it is well to advance yourself, but it is well also to remember that the best civil servant in the long run is he who makes it easier for others to do their best."¹³

An ideal supervisor has two ways to raise the level of individual performance of his subordinates; first, by increasing motivation and secondly by enhancing the quality of individual performance which involves training. These two key responsibilities cannot be delegated to others; rather these have to be redeemed by the supervisor himself. Senior officers should never ignore the task of training the junior officers

11 Neely Gardener, *The Supervisor as a Trainer*, from the reprint no.199, NIPA, Dhaka, February 1964, p. 4.

12 Ibid., p. 5.

13 Stanley Leathes, "The Training of Public Servants", *Public Administration*, vol. ix, no. 3, July 1931, p. 247.

working under them. The cost of a junior officer being insufficiently trained can be much higher. This is equally true of a machine-operator and a civil servant. Insufficiently trained officers in spite of their best intentions are vulnerable to inefficiency, excess cost, unsatisfactory service and sometimes even dangerous situations. It is the supervisors' responsibility to teach or prepare the new recruits of civil service to handle the intricacies of the job and to get them integrated into their respective assignments. Khosla, an ex-ICS officer of 1925, believes: "The first duty of a senior officer is to help the junior novice in becoming a knowledgeable, self-confident and efficient civil servant."¹⁴ Trainers of training institutes teach the '*science*' of civil service whereas supervisors on-the-job teach the '*art*' of civil service.

Monitoring, one of the core functions of the supervisor, encompasses a set of activities such as keeping track of work progress, observing behaviour, asking questions and listening to juniors about the problems they face. The purpose of monitoring is not to find faults only but to help juniors in overcoming them and in meeting the set standards of performance. In most of the civil service agencies monitoring functions is not carried out properly by the supervisor.

However, supervisor's responsibility does not consist merely in monitoring and auditing the performance of his or her subordinates; he or she helps them in the enhancement of their career as well. Supervisors help supervisees in performing their jobs better by providing guidance and training, assistance with material/non-material resources, support, motivation and guidance for developing their career. In fact, what the new entrants of the civil service now-a-days expect from their supervisors is not *instructions* but *instruction*.¹⁵ In Singapore, every Saturday is a training day; supervisor and supervisee sit in a one-to-one and face-to-face situation to discuss the job-related problems, to find out how better one can perform and to identify solutions if there be any performance problems.

Successful transferring of skill and knowledge on the job depends on the efficiency of the supervisor. A specific set of skills is needed to be acquired by the supervisor in order for him to perform effectively his training responsibility. Stressing the importance of acquiring instructional techniques by supervisors, Broadwell states: "We cannot be

14 K.L. Panjabi, (ed.), *The Civil Servant in India*, (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhaban, 1965), p. 10.

free from supervision just because we are supervisors ourselves. We will have to be trained".¹⁶ OJT is therefore restrictive as well as imitative; it is restrictive because the success of this activity depends on the calibre and competency of the immediate supervisor and it is imitative because supervisees follow what their supervisor *tells, shows* and *does*. Broadwell further says: "training is a skill. It can and must be learned when one becomes a supervisor".¹⁷ If both new and old members of the Civil Service acquires mastery of the OJT techniques, they can effectively discharge their training responsibility and contribute greatly to the growth of professionalism of the civil servants and to the overall efficiency of the offices they work for.

OJT in Practice in Civil Service Agencies in Bangladesh

The efficacy and impact of institutional training on the behaviour of the civil servants in Bangladesh is often questioned. Many of the interviewed officials have opined that institutional training is not producing desired results on the performance of the civil servants. As Shams remarks: "I do not think that there has been any dearth of administrative or management training in the recent past. Many management skills have been taught. But there is no way of knowing at present how much of civil servants behaviour has changed in the desired direction."¹⁸

Discussions with a number of officers reveal that there exists a common misconception among majority of the mid-level and senior civil servants that training of junior officers should take place in a training institute under the tutelage of professional trainers, although junior officers expect guidance, direction, instruction from the senior when they face performance-related problems. Training in a institute nowadays is costly as well as time-consuming. Many civil service agencies cannot afford to send their officers for institutional training because of the professional pre-occupations and administrative exigencies. A new entrant of the civil service may not often be sent to training institutes instantly unless he or she is nominated to attend Foundation Training Course or cadre-based departmental training course which is not often held timely.

15 Syed Naquib Muslim "Problems of Post-training Utilisation in the Public Offices", *Bangladesh Journal of Administration and Development*, 4 (2) & 5 (1), pp. 149-158.

16 Martin Broadwell, *The Supervisor and On-the-job Training* (Mass: Addison Wesley, 1987), p. 36.

17 Ibid, p. 48

18 Khalid Shams, "Changing Civil Service Attitudes", an unpublished mimeograph no. COTA/ PPA-273 dated December 20, 1982, p. 3.

Thus the responsibility of training the new civil servants devolves on the agency s/he joins or upon the supervisors he works under.

Ideally, the fresh recruits of the BCS should first join BPATC for foundation training and then receive specialized cadre-specific departmental training at the respective cadre-based training institutes. An analysis of the existing foundation course curriculum indicates that the learning inputs provided to the trainees are mostly knowledge-oriented and theory-based. On completion of the foundation course, the officers of BCS (Admn) cadre should join the BCS (Admn.) Academy for attending the departmental/specialized training. The course is of course useful in developing professionalism needed for field administration.

Interviews with both the supervisors and the probationary officers reveal that institutional arrangement for conducting OJT in the secretariat is almost absent. The initiation of OJT and its quality largely depend on the 'chance' factors and it varies from workplace to work place and with the attitude of the supervisors and degree of their competency as trainers. So OJT in each ministry/division is managed almost on an ad hoc basis. While the juniors need training and guidance from the supervisors, the seniors treat them as "finished products" and expect quality service from them. The gap between the probationer's needs and supervisor's expectation is not bridged in the absence of a well-structured OJT. The inadequacy of training has adverse effects on the quality and speed of decision. Their human resources are under-used, inefficiency creeps in the organisation and the probationers usually get less job satisfaction.

The specialized training of BCS (Admn) Academy cannot also adequately meet the training needs of the new officers despite its best efforts. BCS (Administration) Academy faces the problem of training backlog. As a result, there is reason to believe that neither BPATC's foundation training nor BCS (Administration) Academy's departmental training is adequate to bring about desired attitudinal change and infusion of civil service values among the new civil servants as the curricula of both the training courses do not extensively deal with leadership development, professional ethics, decision-making skills, initiative and drive elements.

OJT for the new recruits of BCS (Administration) cadre begins with a one-year structured training programme organized by each collectorate administration under the direction of the Cabinet Division. A survey indicates that the methods of OJT as used at the collectorates are traditional and these are more or less based on rational choices, customs and usages and experiences of the individual collectorates in the absence of a well-defined manual. Training is conducted without the help of any audio-visual equipment. The supervisors of the programme who are generally Additional Deputy Commissioners (General) usually have little or no grip over the concepts of the OJT techniques, training cycle and evaluation system. There is no mechanism to monitor the progress and evaluate the effectiveness of this portion of OJT and the performance of the trainees. The survey indicates that none of the interviewee-supervisors has knowledge of OJT methods like coaching and counseling. Majority of the supervisors do not know the techniques of questioning, listening and advising. This implies that unless field officers/ supervisors are provided with orientation about OJT, and its various methods, the behavioural and psychosocial dimensions of the Civil Service cannot be handled adequately.

The deficiencies of both the foundation course provided by BPATC and the specialized course of the BCS (Administration) Academy are supplemented by OJT at the collectorate. While orienting the subordinates and supervising their performance, the senior officers exert influence on them. The probationers usually emulate the behaviour of their superiors, watch their leadership style, follow their interpersonal communication pattern. They also learn problem-solving and decision-making skills through the process of continual interaction and experiential learning.

The leadership skills, interaction pattern, communication style of the senior and their attitude towards the people/ beneficiaries influence the new entrants and their mindset as they interact with their superiors. The study carried out by the researcher and his team reveals that the senior members remain so busy with their own work that they cannot take adequate interest in attending to the problems of the probationers. Most of the respondent new entrants have labelled their supervisors as authoritative, non-cooperative and poor listeners. According to them, the concept of OJT does not exist at their workplaces. The study shows that in many cases the juniors do not have access to their seniors. Their relationship with the supervisors is based on fear and formality.

According to them, supervisors are not serious about OJT because training the juniors on the job is not their mandatory function. None of the supervisors interviewed has any formal orientation about OJT and none has attended any Training of Trainers course. This implies that the supervisors mostly depend on common sense in handling OJT. The problem is further compounded because the existing OJT programmes are tradition- based and it gives more stress on rules and regulations and attach less importance to development management and specific problem-solving issues.

The probationary officers believe that supervisors should themselves be properly trained in OJT methodology and development techniques so that they may be able to train up their juniors satisfactorily. According to them, if this is not done, the civil service would remain static and lose its effectiveness. Fifty percent of the supervisors are not willing to perform their training functions. These supervisors neither explain the tasks nor demonstrate how to accomplish them. They love to find fault with the juniors and tend to pass harsh judgement about their performance.

An ADB survey report reveals that most of the officers prefer OJT to IT because they find the former more effective than the latter because its contents are more job-specific.¹⁹ The effectiveness of OJT in civil service agencies is being hampered because many supervisors are not willing to act as trainers on the job and some do not have the skills either to work as trainers. In-house training is more practical and useful because “there are many things that can best be done in the working environment such as communicating organizational goals and objectives, developing practical ideas for improving service quality and team-building”.²⁰ In-house training helps to develop a learning culture within Civil Service agencies and reinforce in the officers the premise that training is not a one shot event but a continuous process. The survey further reveals that the status of in-house training in the Ministries and Departments is not satisfactory. PATP clause no. 5.5 however prescribes installation of in-house training facilities in every full-fledged government offices through creation of training cell.²¹

19 Ministry of Establishment, *Strengthening of Public Administration Training in Bangladesh*, vol. I, Dhaka: ADB, 1998, p. 45.

20 Ibid., p 45.

21 Public Administration Training Policy, p. 7379.

Survey indicates that OJT organized at the collectorates and ministries are not qualitatively uniform and identical. There is also a variation in the content, process and time frame of the OJT programmes. According to the supervisors, this variation is mainly due to the absence of a set of guidelines and manuals on OJT. The Ministry of Establishment may formulate and circulate a coherent set of guidelines to all the Ministries and collectorates so that OJT may be conducted systematically. In order to monitor the OJT programmes, the Ministry of Establishment may ask the OJT organisers to submit reports on OJT programmes conducted by them.

Problems of Supervisor-Subordinate Relations Affecting OJT in the Civil Service Agencies

Apart from the legal, procedural facets, accountability has a managerial dimension. Accountability ultimately demands effective performance of individual tasks or responsibility and achievement of set goals under the supervision of a senior officer. Managing subordinates has been identified as one of the critical areas of management by the survey team of ADB. According to the survey report: "Motivating subordinates is rated as most difficult for both the junior and middle-levels while senior officers say that monitoring their performance gives them the most difficulty, an area which has also been ranked as the second order of difficulty by the junior and middle levels."²²

Senior-junior relations influence significantly the quality of performance of an agency. Every encounter between a senior and a junior is a learning experience, although other types of interaction are also noticeable. According to Dunshire, there are three modes of senior-junior nexus in an organisation.²³

Duress: the achieving of compliance by the threat or use of penal sanctions of varying severity.

Exchange: the winning of cooperation by the mutual recognition of contribution and obligation

Identification: the assuring of collaboration by the spontaneous sharing of values, purposes and outlook or by the long term inculcation in the subordinate of the values etc of the superior.

22 Strengthening of Public Administration Training in Bangladesh, op. cit., p. 37.

23 Andrew Dunshire, *Control in a Bureaucracy*, (New York: St. Martin Press, 1978), p. 38.

In the context of the civil service agencies in this country, the first category of the interaction mode is widely noticeable. One of the reasons for the practice of this mode is that it is easy, less painstaking and less time-consuming and no preparation is necessary on the part of the supervisor.

Senior civil servants do not seem to want that subordinates should participate actively in making decisions although many of the decisions concern their own lives. Many seniors do not show tendency to consult juniors on the mere plea that the latter with inadequate experience have little to contribute. Junior members of the Civil Service feel discouraged when their human resources are not used in the relevant fields. According to some interviewed junior officers, our seniors have hardly any tendency to invite ideas, encourage debate and accept criticism. Few senior officers encourage subordinates to talk freely, and encourage them to contribute valuable ideas. The truth is that good ideas are not the exclusive area of seniors; these can emerge from anybody. Seniors need to have the attitude to explore and capitalise ideas that have merit even though these may originate from the junior. It is observed that in a civil service agency, the same juniors who do not open their mouth in routinised or non-routinised interactive situations like monthly meeting at the presence of an authoritarian senior, are ironically found to excel in communication and managerial leadership when they themselves take charges of leadership. Why does it happen? It is because seniors do not create the kind of organisational climate where they and their juniors can freely interact and communicate to share ideas and opinions for better problem-solving aimed at more satisfaction of the service-seeking citizenry. Juniors complain most of the senior officers in the civil service are authoritarian; they are neither protective nor supportive. They maintain interpersonal distance from the juniors who cannot ventilate their problems and grievances. This interpersonal distance restricts growth of healthy interpersonal relations between/among officers. As Khaleque, a retired Inspector-General of Police remarks: "Cadre officers, by and large, hardly mix as equals at social level with others down below."²⁴ Almost the same views have been echoed by Kibria, a former Comptroller and Auditor-General of Bangladesh: "The personnel structure in government departments and the public sector corporations and enterprises is heavily hierarchical with a wide social and professional chasm between the officers and

24 Abdul Khaleque, "Vision of governance", *The Daily Star*, December 26, 2004, p. 4.

staff.”²⁵ This growing gap between the senior and the junior deprives the decision-making process of insight into details and many well-meaning policy or management decisions get bogged down during implementation. It has been observed in our civil service that there are a few supervisors who tend to maintain an artificial interpersonal distance with their juniors as they fear that the more they interact with them, the more exposed will be their professional deficiencies. They avoid communication deliberately with the junior to hide their intellectual or academic deficiencies. As Alam puts it candidly: “In our country it is not possible for the boss to be a friend, perhaps because senior officers know less and subordinates know more. In the atmosphere of boss knowing less, he does not become a friend, he keeps himself isolated and away from the subordinates.”²⁶

Seniors are reluctant to listen to their subordinates. They claim that they are involved in day-to-day problems so much that they do not have enough time to listen to their subordinates. This did not happen in the past; in earlier civil services, seniors used to encourage juniors to visit them to allow them opportunity for on-the-job learning. Bedekar, one of the ex-ICS officers of 1933, says: “The highest authorities were easily accessible to and welcomed junior officers who were free and were encouraged to discuss their official problems. The result was that junior officers had background knowledge and did not labour under misapprehensions.”²⁷ In fact, many complex interpersonal problems can be solved by listening to subordinates who have creative ideas and analytical interpretations on varied administrative issues or problems. As Huseman, Logue and Freshley state: “The establishment of rapport through judicious listening will help the superior to understand and interpret what employees are trying to tell them.”²⁸

The value system of seniors determines their pattern of communication and interaction with subordinates. Many complicated problems can be handled efficiently if seniors make themselves accessible, listen to juniors. In fact, the subordinate who has free access to his supervisor, it is possible to secure better solutions to varied

25 Gholum Kibria, “Management of Public Resources”, an article published in *The Daily Star*, February 3, 1999, p. 5.

26 AZM Shamsul Alam, *Bureaucracy in Bangladesh Perspective*, Dhaka: Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, 1999. p. 85.

27 K.L Panjabi, (ed.), “*The Civil Servant in India*”, (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhaban, 1965), p. 276.

management problems. This also creates motivation and morale in junior officers. Sharing information with subordinates tends to reduce fear, distrust and suspicion that we all have in our work and towards our seniors holding supervisory positions. This sharing fosters a feeling of safety and belonging required for job satisfaction and efficiency.

Transmission of professional/ civil service values is hardly occurring in the CS agencies because most of the supervisors are either not conscious of their role as trainers or they are not willing to redeem this part of their responsibility. The result is that the junior or mid-level officers have to wait for or depend upon IT the provision of which more or less remains uncertain. There are also instances that many officers do not get the chance to receive mandatory professional training even throughout the entire tenure of their service.

Dysfunctional behaviours affecting senior-junior relations

Most of the junior members of the Bangladesh Civil Service commonly complain about the unfriendly work environment prevailing in the civil service offices; the environment in the workplaces is fraught with fear, malice, distrust, prejudice, non-cooperation, excessive self-interest where it is difficult to show optimal level of efficiency or performance and to achieve accountability in turn. All these remind one of the words of Vries and Miller: "Organisational life becomes viewed as a jungle where people do not really care for one another but merely manipulate and exploit. It is a world of power games where relationships are shallow, superficial and predatory."²⁹ Compassion, cooperation, empathy, affection of the senior for the junior are rarely available at the civil service offices.³⁰ If an officer finds a favourable environment characterized by these values, it is because a unique leadership operates in that agency. It is observed, one of the reasons the Indian Civil Service could achieve administrative efficiency is that the relations between the senior and the junior were cordial although paradoxically the work environment was highly rigid. As Gorwala recalls: "The confidence of the

28 Richard C. Huseman, Cal M. Logue and Dwight L. Freshley, *Interpersonal and Organisational Communication*, (Boston: Holbrook, 1970), p.131.

29 F. R. Kets de Vries and Danny Miller, *The Neurotic Organisation* (San Francisco : Jossey-Bass, 1987) p. 111.

30 Syed Naquib Muslim, *On-The-Job Training in the Public Sector in Bangladesh, Proshikhyan Dhaka: Bangladesh Society for Training & Development, Vol.3, No.1, January-June 1996. p. 18.*

subordinate services must be kept and their trust in their superior officials and in government increased by fair dealing, observance of promises and considerate treatment."³¹ A supervisor always needs to keep in mind that he/she is also a subordinate to a senior officer and therefore he/she has to empathise with the problems of those who are subordinate him/her. According to Likert, a supervisor must be an effective subordinate as well as an effective superior; otherwise, he cannot influence his subordinates effectively.³²

Thus success in performance relies on how effectively senior officers can manage or control their negative impulses." According to Dotlich and Cairo: "most CEO failures are not the result of insufficient intelligence. Generally, they happen when smart and well-intentioned leaders act in illogical, idiosyncratic or irrational ways."³³ Some behaviours seem deliberate while some 'operate beneath their awareness'. These behaviours of the senior almost inevitably influence that of the juniors. Here are four dominant behaviours of seniors generally noticeable in the interaction process and that affect the performance of the junior.

Interpersonal malice: In most cases the senior-junior relations in the civil service does not appear to be happy. The relations are characterised by malice, prejudice and egoism. According to social psychologists, the main source of interpersonal jealousy is the sense of feeling of insecurity or unsafety. A genuinely educated person can be envious but not jealous. Most of the senior officers feel a sense of insecurity in dealing with their juniors. They fear that their juniors might supersede them in professional excellence. Creativity in the junior is stifled mostly because of malice and prejudice of the senior. The malicious senior does not present his junior to his own supervisor on the suspicion that his junior may be liked by his boss. However, properly trained senior officials do not feel insecure; they rather inspire their subordinates so that they shine further and show more creativity.

Arrogance: Arrogance is visible both in the senior and the junior although the degree varies. Arrogance emanates from excessive self-confidence. Arrogant persons/officers think, they can do everything well by themselves. They tend to find faults with others

31 AD Gorwala, *The Role of the Administrator, Past, Present and Future*, R.R. Kale Memorial Lecture, Gokhale Institute of Politics & Economics, 1952. p. 38.

32 Rensis Likert, *New Patterns of Management*, New York, 1961. p. 114.

but do not find faults in themselves. Arrogance is a dysfunctional disposition that alienates the superiors from their juniors who seek support and guidance from the former. Continuous arrogant treatment becomes a source of stress and demotivation for the committed junior officials. It has a debilitating effect on performance and conduct of the junior; it prevents one from building trust in others. It is an obstacle to learning as it does not accept ideas from others.

There is a tendency to display efficiency by those who are inefficient and demonstrate power by those who are substantively powerless. Some new civil servants think that they belong to a superior class/case beyond the reach of the common people. They develop a high sense of importance and superiority. They prefer to avoid communication and grow a tendency to keep isolated.

The problem is further accentuated when juniors ultimately get infected with this behaviour while working with this category of seniors. Juniors tend to imitate the wrong behaviors and emulate negative values quickly while they shun positive values of seniors. It is observed that egoism is transmitted fast whereas competency slow. Dignity and status can be truly fostered by showing professional competence and by practising values, not by creating fear in juniors.

Fault-finding tendency: Many seniors have a tendency to assign duties only to those who are committed and who do not evade responsibilities. They again do not give recognition or appreciation to those who deserve for better performance. They are reluctant to develop those who are inefficient or whose performance is substandard. They tend to find faults but unwilling to discover the sources of those faults. Regarding the typical behaviour of senior and juniors, Chowdhury remarks: "Temperamentally and character-wise we appear to be somewhat hesitant or perhaps a bit reluctant in discharging our individual level of responsibility and in accepting our own shortcomings."³⁴

Most of the interviewed junior civil servants report that the existing institutional climate and culture in the offices of the Bangladesh Civil Service are not conducive

33 David L. Dotlich & Peter C. Cairo, *Why CEOs Fail?* (California: Jossey-Bass, 2003), p. xviii.

34 Hybat Jan Chowdhury, "Of effective administration and efficiency of its people", *The Independent*, March 23, 1997. p. 4.

to the practice and nurturance of professionalism while performing mandated responsibilities.

Supportive supervisors are ready to coach their subordinates if the latter's performance is substandard whereas traditional supervisors spoil time and energy by criticising and scolding juniors for the gaps, faults or deficiencies in their performance. In the words of Desai, an ex-officer of the Indian Civil Service of 1923: "I have always believed in the theory that an officer's popularity and character should be judged by what his subordinates think of him rather than what his superiors say of him. One is inclined to flatter one's superior and bully one's junior; but that is not the standard of a good officer."³⁵

Seniors and juniors are seen to remain engaged in mutual blaming which not only takes away valuable working hours but also hampers timely accomplishment of work. Seniors accuse juniors of being insensitive to urgency or priority of business, of being recalcitrant and indolent whereas juniors accuse seniors of being non-supportive, non-protective to them and evasive of responsibility. Thus junior officers are unhappy with the senior and senior officers are unhappy with their seniors. One of the reasons for their resentment is that many of the supervisors have no spirit to tolerate their juniors' errors. This implies that they cannot learn in an environment free of recrimination. The fact is that if a trifling error is treated with scorn, juniors do not feel to take more creative ventures and the propensity for innovation is immediately stifled and their performance turns stereotypical. As Blum and Leonard say: "Not only their errors be tolerated, their strengths should be encouraged."³⁶ Seniors must behave with the juniors with affection and empathy to attract and retain outstanding young potential officers for the ministries, directorates and collectorates to operate effectively. As Abdullah observes: supervisors "must have a warm and workable relationship with the people down the line so that creative impulses are released on the one hand and supervisory mechanism is reinforced on the other. We feel this personal relationship within the organization is lacking."³⁷

35 K.L Panjabi (ed), *The Civil Servant in India*, (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhaban, 1965), p. 111.

36 Henrick L. Blum and Alvin R. Leonard, *Public Administration in a Public Health Viewpoint*, (New York: Macmillan, 1963), p. 421.

37 Abdullah, Report of the Working Group I, in Sirajuddin H. Salleh & Arabinda Kar, eds., *Administrative and Financial Accountability: The ASEAN-SAARC Experience*, (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Asia & Pacific Development Centre, 1995), p. 5.

Fear: Fear is a negative emotion that harms both the body and the mind.³⁸ It decreases the sense of wellbeing and seriously interferes with the quality of performance and productivity of an employee; it also blocks communication between the senior and the junior. Juniors nurture a sense of fear to face their seniors who maintain excessive hierarchy and formalism. Psychologists call this behaviour 'social phobia'. This phobia closes the doors of interaction and communication between or among the senior and the junior. What happens ultimately is non-sharing of ideas, messages, information required making judicious decisions. Fear of incurring displeasure of the senior for articulating unpleasant truths is rampant in the government offices. In the present system, the relations between the senior and the junior are based on fear which acts as a major roadblock to innovation and creativity of the juniors. Fears exist in the form of criticism, rejection, threat etc. If supervisees or juniors remain perpetually in a state of fear, it inhibits their professional growth affecting ultimately their performance as well as interpersonal relations with supervisors. The instrument of fear cannot be applied to all categories of officials; it is required for those who are evasive and recalcitrant.

Fear of incurring the senior's dissatisfaction persists almost in every subordinate. A subordinate cannot often maintain the quality of performance as he or she has to pay his/her attention more to the fulfillment of the senior's private needs rather than to the former's job-specific needs. The emotional condition and the consequences that emanate from this situation have been best described by an American theorist Berkeley: "Fear of a poor rating will cause subordinates to become too subordinates i.e. to conform too much to superior's whims and wishes. Such fear stifles innovation, constructive criticism and even communication."³⁹ In our civil service agencies while juniors seek to discover a *mentor* in their superiors, they find a *tormentor* instead.

The civil service agencies must therefore practise a system or create a work environment that will not foster fear but constructive cooperation among the supervisor and the supervisee to improve each other's performance on a continuing basis. Brief informal meetings at convenient intervals during working hours can neutralise fear of the junior to a great extent. This will also help in building a healthy and intimate

38 Nighat Ara, "Interpreter of Maladies", *The Daily Star*, dated August 9, 2004, p.6.

39 George E. Berkley, *The Craft of Public Administration*, (London: Allyn & Becon, 1978). p. 149.

interpersonal relations between the junior and the senior; they can identify the performance -related problems through exchange of ideas and experiences.

Buck-passing: Accountability cannot be conceived in an isolated fashion; it is linked with the problems of supervision and interpersonal communication. In the words of Chaturvedi: "Accountability in administration is not an isolate. It is linked with authority and problems of delegation and communication."⁴⁰

It has been observed that majority of our supervisors assign unpleasant responsibility and grant inadequate authority whereas they tend to exact full accountability from the junior. This creates resentment, job dissatisfaction and demotivation in the junior having negative impact on performance or efficiency. The buck-passing tendency of the officers in the Civil Service of Bangladesh can be best described in the words of Galbraith: "Encountering a problem, an organisation man turns naturally automatically to a subordinate. The latter is told to get on with it. This he then does by turning to an assistant. And the delegation continues. The culture of organization runs strongly to the shifting of problems to others--- an escape from personal mental effort and responsibility."⁴¹ Juniors do not always welcome delegation because unpleasant and hazardous tasks are generally delegated to them by their unfriendly and evasive supervisors. Continuous shifting of hazardous jobs saps the motivation of junior officers. Ideally, one of the best ways to motivate officials is to delegate the kind of tasks the supervisor himself enjoys or at least prefers to do.

Indiscriminate or injudicious assigning of tasks to juniors is not delegation but it is simply "dumping". This in fact originates from such managers or supervisors who tend to avoid responsibility and risk. This is an example of non-delegation. True or perfect delegation means giving up that which we like to hold on or tend to retain --- the authority - and retaining that which we like to give up - the accountability. Holding on is a defense mechanism which is used by a supervisor when he feels threatened or insecure or when he cannot trust his juniors. Commenting on our supervisors' attitude to delegation Mahtab says: "In Bangladesh, the top man would like to hold on to the

40 T.N Chaturvedi quoted in Prem Kumar and AK Ghosh, *Management in Government & Public Services*, p. 45.

41 J.K Galbraith quoted by M. Abdul Latif Mondal, in his article "People's perception about public offices", *The Daily Star*, January 25, 2005. p. 5.

smallest responsibilities. We have neither the broadness of heart nor the intellectual honesty to trust and delegate work to our juniors. The problem of trust and the delegation of powers is a serious problem which now vitiates the government sector."⁴² Most of the senior civil servants 'suffer from the fallacy of 'I can do it myself or 'I alone can do it'.⁴³

Through delegation subordinates learn the process of doing the job rather than evading it. If junior officers are authorised to take action on certain issues and they commit mistakes, there is scope for correction and rectification. But if seniors do not delegate but centralise authority, there is lesser scope for correction of the mistake. Centralisation of authority by the senior does not grow a sense of responsibility in subordinates but rather curtails the prospects of learning by doing.⁴⁴ Thus if subordinates are competent, seniors should not hesitate to delegate responsibility and authority to them. The fact is that if powers are delegated to juniors, seniors' position is not reduced. After the delegation is done, they can supervise, intervene and provide guidance when juniors seek it.⁴⁵ Delegation acts as a hyphen to build rapport between the supervisor and the supervisee. It helps in building mutual trust which contributes to healthy interpersonal relations between them.

In our civil service, accountability like water flows and percolates downward. The reverse may also happen as the water gets boiled and swells up. In the words of Alam: "It is not always that seniors control juniors, they may also exercise great influence in decision-making process."⁴⁶ Initially the junior officers may be underassessed and so they are likely to suffer but in the long run, but they 'may win and earn laurels' if they can prove their ability and are 'honest, fair, firm and capable of absorbing initial shocks.'⁴⁷ If junior officers are meticulous, well-conversant, objective, and efficient, they do not remain mere as subordinates but turn out to be 'credible colleagues' and

42 Shahabuddin Mahtab, *Talking of Management*, Dhaka, 1998. p. 87.

43 AZM Shamsul Alam, *Bureaucracy in Bangladesh Perspective*, Dhaka: Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, 1999. p. 84.

44 AZM Shamsul Alam, *Bureaucracy in Bangladesh Perspective*, Dhaka: Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, 1999. p. 85.

45 Ibid. p. 84.

46 Ibid, p. 293.

47 Ibid, p. 293.

valuable member of the team. Moreover, “mutual comprehension and mutual instruction” as Chapman says, “is extremely valuable and is perhaps the best way to ensure senior administrators grow in stature as they assume greater responsibilities.”⁴⁸ Seniors are really seniors when they infuse in juniors the spirit of ‘courage to disagree or disobey the incorrect order of their bosses’ in the public interest.⁴⁹ It is observed that almost every senior civil servant considers himself or herself to be superior in terms of rank and merit. The fact is that competent senior officers often dominate the work situation by virtue of rank or seniority whereas truly competent juniors feel ignored because of low hierarchical position. Normally senior officers having a sense of inferiority do not tolerate their subordinates disagreeing with them on any issue. In our civil service, if juniors “argue with the boss, the weak boss feels threatened and disgraced. They want the subordinates to agree with them and flatter them by appreciating any decision given by them.”⁵⁰ This is a typical inter-personal climate prevailing in most of the civil service offices.⁵¹ As a matter of fact, eagerness or ability to contribute to problem-solving by any member of the team should be welcome whereas tendency to block others on the plea of juniority thwarts the process of interpersonal communication and quality decision-making. If juniors are allowed to disagree with seniors in the public interest, the former feel a sense of involvement and this creates a positive impact on the quality of decisions related to public welfare. Team spirit among members is affected immediately when a feeling superiority or inferiority flows in the veins of the working group poised for decision-making.

Inadequacy of Communication

In the civil service agencies of Bangladesh, the interaction pattern between the senior and the junior is still traditional or colonial. The communication is mostly one-way. The supervisor feels a sense of ‘boss supremacy’ and tends to call his subordinates to his chamber “umpteenth number of times in a day and mostly on the flimsiest of grounds. Although such a practice is extremely annoying and time-wasting, the boss would invariably find it beneath his dignity to walk down to his subordinate’s office and

48 Chapman quoted in Muzzaffar Ahmed Chaudhury’s, *The Civil Service in Pakistan*, Dhaka: National Institute of Public Administration, 1969. p. 220.

49 AZM Shamsul Alam, op. cit. p. 297.

50 Ibid., p. 303.

discuss an official matter with him there. He will sometimes find it inconvenient even to talk to his subordinate over the intercom or telephone.”⁵²

Open communication at workplaces is a source of intrinsic motivation for officials. Officials are best motivated by the satisfaction derived from healthy interpersonal relations among colleagues--- senior and junior. Open and free communication creates in them a sense of trust or confidence. It is also a source of job satisfaction. Moreover, a climate of open communication makes available information and data needed by officials to perform a specific job; they get answers to the questions they face while doing a specific task. Thus an “open door” style works as a motivator and encourages them to ventilate their job-related or professional problems.

Providing continuous feedback in a supportive climate will help the incumbent in rectifying performance. If the supervisor does not provide useful feedback on genuine grounds, the supervisee will assume that his supervisor is not managing accountability. The process of regular review and dialogue will enable the subordinate to correct performance and the supervisor can decide whether he should coach or counsel him in improving performance. When the dialogue is open, candid, and friendly, the subordinate will not suffer from trauma as the majority of our junior civil servants do and they will feel like contributing more by better performance and by offering innovative ideas and suggestions for problem-solving. Ultimately, it is the supervisor’s responsibility to understand why performance is poor and what can be done to improve the condition. Feedback may occur through formal sessions scheduled beforehand and also through informal day-to-day interaction or communication.

In a meeting seniors do not give chance to juniors to speak out their views freely. Meeting are full of monologues by the senior and pitiable silence by the junior. Juniors can hardly share their ideas and opinions. Personal loyalty or obedience to the senior is a basic civil service value in this country. Senior civil servants do not like that their views are put to criticism by their juniors. Juniors are afraid of questioning the validity of their seniors’ views and of criticizing their seniors even if matters of the public

51 Based on on-the-job experience of the researcher

52 Kamal Siddiqui, *Towards Good Governance in Bangladesh*, (Dhaka: The University Press Limited: 1996, p. 10.

interest are in question. Most of the seniors are reactive, mechanistic and routinised. The concept of mentorship is virtually absent.

Reasons for the dearth of competent supervisors

Majority of our supervisors in the Civil Service agencies is responsible to a large extent for low performance, job dissatisfaction and low productivity of the junior officers. The concept of ideal supervision is virtually absent in the supervisors of the civil service agencies. Most of the supervisors remain busy performing their own assigned responsibilities. The objective of a career civil service is to find the man for the job and not the job for man.⁵³ This seems to be the echo of the Chinese philosopher Confucius when he says: "The administration of government is in getting proper men." This mismatch occurred because of the faulty or erratic recruitment that took place soon after independence in 1971. In this country what had taken place in 1972/73 is that Public Service Commission tried to find the job for the man and not the vice versa. The result was that the quality and the tradition of the civil service could not be maintained. Commenting on the quality of recruitment during that period, Kamal Siddiqui, a senior civil servant of Bangladesh, says: "Not only were ill-educated persons having strong connections within the ruling party brought in, they were neither groomed nor trained in the subsequent years."⁵⁴ These officials now occupying supervisory positions had been recruited without any normal or conventional competitive examinations introduced in the then Pakistan or East Pakistan. Barring exceptions, most of the recruited members of the BCS did not have the chance to attend well-designed, need-based, development-oriented comprehensive training programme on *leadership, supervision* and *management*. This is of course not to say that all the officers recruited in the initial part of post-liberation period are of low calibre and have less competency to qualify normally as members of the BCS. It demands no debate to validate that to tackle the existing and emerging complex problems of the Civil Service, to provide administrative leadership in the civil service offices, to guide juniors properly in performing their job, 'the Government needs services of men of high calibre and competence.'⁵⁵ The crux of the point is that when a massive recruitment occurs, there

53 UN, *A Handbook of Public Administration*, (New York: United Nations 1961), p. 36.

54 Kamal Siddiqui, *Towards Good Governance in Bangladesh*, (Dhaka: The University Press Limited, 1996), p. 39.

55 Muzzaffar Ahmed Chaudhury, *The Civil Service in Pakistan*, Dhaka: National Institute of Public Administration, 1969. p. 238.

remains potential scope for or risk of intrusion of mediocrities 'which time and training may never cure.' Moreover, when mediocrities outnumber the most efficient, brilliant persons of the Civil Service, the latter get eliminated, the promising, bright juniors get misdirected or confused and the entire Civil Service itself becomes mediocre creating negative impact on the quality of services.⁵⁶ This happened in the initial part of the seventies.

Junior officers everywhere expect a non-threatening, empathetic and positive environment to learn job-related skills and values. In Bangladesh Civil Service, many of the junior members are seen frustrated as they find their supervisors not only unfriendly but also, in many cases, incompetent; again, there are supervisors who feel threatened when they find their junior officers brighter and more competent than them.⁵⁷ This kind of environment does not help in building a healthy work climate necessary for attaining organisational efficiency.

Informal investigative discourses with the junior members of the Civil Service indicate that majority of the supervisors in the civil service agencies are authoritarian in temperament and conduct. They are often inaccessible to the supervisee-colleagues. Juniors do not feel free to express their views to and seek guidance from their seniors; seniors also (except a significant few) are also not found to encourage the juniors to express their individual opinions or ideas on the solution of a problem that concerns their job or the public interest. The problem of inaccessibility and authoritarian behaviour emanates from the supervisors of the supervisors who influence the former through their inherited traditional communication and interaction pattern. The paradox is that juniors who observe or experience their seniors' behaviour learn to behave in the same manner when they themselves become senior; seniors through their behaviours influence their juniors who tend to show the same pattern while at work. Vries and Miller observe: "It is the responsibility of senior executives to recognize the effect of their behaviour on subordinates."⁵⁸ In the words of Ward: "Subordinates tend to manifest the same constricted behaviours that they find so inhibiting when engaged in

56 Syndicate report of Group-A of the 14th Senior Staff Course on *Transparency in Bureaucracy* presented at Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, March 1992. p. 12.

57 Syed Naquib Muslim, *The Art of Modern Administration*, (Dhaka: Bangladesh Institute of Administration and Management, 1997). p. 164.

58 F. R. Kets de Vries and Danny Miller, *The Neurotic Organisation* (San Francisco : Jossey-Bass, 1987), p. 111.

by seniors.⁵⁹ The unfriendly and unhealthy interpersonal relations between the senior officer and the junior officer affect the learning process which in turn affects directly or indirectly the growth of professionalism of the junior. Reminiscing the role of senior civil servants in grooming their juniors during the British rule in India, Isvaran, a former member of Indian Civil Service states: "The training of the new-comer was accepted the senior civil servants as their special social responsibility. Mere watching the senior was instructive. There were innumerable discussions outside the office, at the senior's house or the club or on the field of sport. Valuable pieces of advice were handed over in a casual manner. Their reception was thereby made more certain than if they had been passed on in a heavy-handed formal manner."⁶⁰

Formalizing Productive Senior-junior Relations: Concluding Comments

The above discussions lead us to conclude that a healthy interpersonal relations between the senior and the junior "are generally necessary for the retention of professional standards."⁶¹ Stressing the importance of nurturing a healthy interpersonal relations between the senior and the junior, Cole admonishes: "Make the accountability process collaborative, not adversarial. You and your colleague-subordinate managers are in this together; you and they need a system that fosters constructive cooperation to succeed in achieving real management improvement on a continuing basis."⁶²

A select number of measures may be suggested to make the senior-junior relations meaningful and productive. (i) *Scientifically designed performance appraisal format*: Senior-junior relations has two dimensions---formal and informal. The formal dimension relates to performance of the tasks to be performed by both----the supervisor and the supervisee. This symbiosis between them is to be achieved by the mechanism of performance appraisal which has to be scientifically designed to make the performance of the senior and the junior visible and therefore accountable; in other words, the success or failure in achieving the set goal has to be shared by both. The formal relations between the supervisor and the subordinate have to be output/results-

59 Paul Van Ward, *Dismantling The Pyramid* (Washington : Delphi Press, 1991), p. 202.

60 V. Isvaran, "The Indian Civil Servant", in K.L. Panjabi, (ed.), *The Civil Servant in India* (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhaban, 1965). p. 249.

61 C S Ascher quoted in Muzzaffar Ahmed Chaudhury's *The Civil Service in Pakistan*, Dhaka: National Institute of Public Administration, 1969. p. 318.

62 John DR Cole, *A Real Strategy for Improvement*. The Bureaucrat, Spring, 1982. p. 10.

oriented to ensure achievement of pre-determined departmental or organizational goals. In the absence of a formal mechanism, the effectiveness of the supervisor-supervisee relations is left to mere chance or to the individual initiative of the concerned senior.⁶³ *Incorporation of provisions in the Professional Code Ethics/Conduct:* Another mechanism to strengthen the knot of supervisor-supervisee relations is to incorporate relevant provisions in the Code Ethics/Conduct requiring every officer to practise them. Whether or not officials conform to the provisions of the Code of Ethics will be monitored by the supervisors of the offices and contextually by the supervisors of the supervisors. Moreover, 'supervisors should be duty-bound to mentor their supervisees, facilitate staff development and encourage teamwork'.⁶⁴ A common professional code of ethics embodying all these requirements has already been suggested in Chapter-V of this document. (iii) *Intensive institutional training on OJT:* Success of the OJT operations will depend on the properly designed/tailored training package to produce a new breed of supervisors who will contribute to the growth of professionalism in the Civil Service. Course contents of the training course on OJT have been suggested and shown on Annex-1. Supervisor-supervisee relations can also be improved through a massive OD intervention that needs to be carried out through systematic behavioral science-based training as suggested in Chapter VIII. (iv) *Proper Delegation:* Another way to reduce or prevent alienation between the superior and the supervisee is to practise proper delegation of tasks to the trained supervisee. Delegation is an effective mechanism to bring both the supervisor and the supervisee into a productive interaction process. (v) *Rewarding for good performance:* The notion of accountability at times takes on a pejorative connotation and is viewed as a basis of penalising officials for failure to perform than of rewarding for better performance.⁶⁵ So one way to forge a happy superior-subordinate relations is by instantly rewarding juniors for their good performance. Good performance determines reward which in turn produces psychic satisfaction. Reward may take the form of praise or credit. For example, if a supervisor accepts the suggestion/idea of a junior, he or she can offer the latter credit or appreciation. In fact, reward based on current performance not only affects positively

63 Syndicate report of Group-A of the 14th Senior Staff Course on *Transparency in Bureaucracy* presented at Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, March, 1992. p. 12.

64 MS Haq, "Street to State and Beyond", *The Independent*, July 31, 2002

65 John DR Cole, *A Real Strategy for Improvement*, The Bureaucrat, Spring, 1982. p. 5.

the subsequent performance but also strengthens interpersonal relations between the senior and the junior.⁶⁶

Effective supervision is the key to the development of professionalism of officials and institutional capacity of the civil service agencies. Effective supervision springs from what Golembiewsky calls 'supervisory power'. Supervisory power rests on the ability of supervisors to influence the subordinates through training, motivation and interpersonal cooperation. Representing the state of Civil Services both in the developed and developing countries, Golembiewsky says: "Our civil service systems do little to ease the burdens of managing work via increases in supervisory power."⁶⁷

What Golembiewsky means is that civil service systems in all countries tend to ignore the significance of supervision and consequently optimal level of organisational efficiency becomes hard to achieve. This is more true in case of the Bangladesh Civil Service.

The supervisory power of the supervisor does not emerge automatically; it emanates from the acquisition of relevant training particularly on supervision and on OJT techniques. Before the supervisors train the supervisees the former themselves need to be trained first. As Husain observes: "Training at the higher level has a multiplier effect because their decisions, words and actions have a wide ramification at different layers of administration. They also act a trainers to junior officers who often consider the venerable seniors as role models."⁶⁸ Unfortunately, conceptual deficiency or ambiguity of the supervisors about the tenets and techniques of OJT is a problem by itself.⁶⁹ In other words, effectiveness of OJT is related to the supervisors awareness of their role, their knowledge of the methods and techniques, their skills of application, close rapport between the supervisor and the subordinate on the job, and commitment of the top management. Perhaps the greatest potential of enhancing efficiency and accountability of the juniors lies with the supervising officers because it is they who are largely responsible for the routine job of delivering services and using resources or

66 Natasha Josephowitz, *Paths to Power*, (New York : Addison-Wesley, 1985) .p. 118.

67 Robert T. Golembiewsky's "Civil Service and Managing Work", in Robert T. Golembiewsky's (ed.) *Public Administration*, (Rand McNally & Company, 1966). p. 177.

68 Saadat Husain, *Role of Training in Good Governance*, a paper presented at a seminar on Good Governance sponsored by Bangladesh Society for Training and Development, November 21, 1995. p. 3.

implementing a work on a day-to-day basis. These supervisors are in the best possible position to spot wasteful practices, to generate ideas for more productivity and to ensure productive use of resources. Positive attitude of supervisors is critical for carrying out these tasks. As Mahtab observes: "There is an urgent need for a total attitudinal change... The superior has to restore his place to that of a friend, philosopher and guide Positional authority is not enough ... The senior administrator has to be a model of professional competence and integrity which the junior will emulate."⁷⁰ All these necessitate that supervisors are "to create a climate of understanding, trust and human dignity. This can help a lot in lifting us from our present condition."⁷¹ What is therefore required is a new breed of supervisors to man the civil service agencies, who will act as role models for the junior officers of the Civil Service. Supervisors can become role models when they become the living examples of the values and ideas they preach. These role models will have to be equipped with new professionalism which is the demand of the new century. OJT and IT will be the source of this new professionalism. On the whole, a better balanced and successful OJT programme for the civil service personnel is the result of the continuous coordination between the Ministry of Establishment, cadre-specific training institutes and OJT providing agencies.

69 Syed Naquib Muslim, *On-The-Job Training in the Public Sector in Bangladesh*, Proshikhyan Dhaka: Bangladesh Society for Training & Development, Vol.3, No.1, January--June 1996. p. 18.

70 Shahabuddin Mahtab, *Talking of Management*, Dhaka, 1998. p. 3.

71 Ibid. p. 65.

Chapter XI

MAJOR POLITICAL CONSTRAINTS ON ADMINISTRATIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

Even if all the prescriptions, recommendations or proposals as discussed in the foregoing chapters are implemented, achieving accountability of the civil servants in Bangladesh still remains problematic or uncertain because of the presence of some exogenous political factors that pose as major constraints on their performance. These constraints, in Ali's views, "include lack of motivation, lack of supervision and of accountability. It is also largely caused by lack of a system of neutral and apolitical recruitment, lack of adequate training and of adequate compensation and finally lack of protection against victimization on political and other grounds."¹ While agreeing to the views of Ali, the author of this thesis wants to single out two major constraints that appear formidable and which merit to be deliberated carefully. These are (i) political interference in the administration of the Civil Service, and (ii) politicisation of the Civil Service.

Political Interference

Interference of politicians in the domain of the civil servants' lawful activities has emerged as one of the major roadblocks to the enforcement and promotion of accountability of the Civil Service in Bangladesh.² Along with politicians senior officials of the government have also grown tendency to interfere in the day-to-day work and this has been identified by a team of researchers as one of 'the main weaknesses in the functioning of the Secretariat'.³ In fact, unjust and unnecessary political interferences 'obstruct the natural course of actions and many people become the victims of injustice'.⁴

1 AMM Shawkat Ali, *Bangladesh Civil Service: Political-Administrative Perspective* (Dhaka: University Press Limited, 2004), p. 79.

2 Syed Naquib Muslim, "Promotion of administrative accountability", *The Independent*, September 14, 1996. p. 4.

3 UNDP, *Report on Public Administration Sector Study in Bangladesh*, United Nations Development Programme, July, 1993. p. 99.

4 M. Abdul Latif Mondal, "People's perception about public offices", *The Daily Star*, January 25, 2005. p. 5.

Undue interference indirectly encourages corruption and malpractices in the dishonest and incompetent persons who tend to capture critical political as well as administrative positions through unfair means; they abuse power and deprive the deserving persons of their due share or benefits. Moreover, the innocent and law-abiding citizens suffer hassles and harassment as they are to pay additional cost for the services they can legitimately claim from officials. As Flanders puts it : “When bureaucratic and political interference is widespread, it is more difficult to see bribes as an extra tax for public goods.”⁵ Taking bribes and using political influence to avoid penalty go unabated as very few are seen punished for this deviant behaviour. The fact is that wrong-doers find themselves safe in a society where ‘a culture of impunity’ is established and innocent, efficient, honest and people-oriented civil servants are harassed for ‘not sharing distorted norms’ with the former. ⁶ This condition is subverting the practice of the value of accountability in this country.

Interference of the politicians in administrative affairs is not a new phenomenon in this subcontinent. After the independence of India in 1947, some civil servants resigned because of the menace of the politicians. The resignations of two ICS officers, Nabagopal Das and N. Bakshi, have been considered the outcome of bureaucracy-politics tensions prevailing on the eve of partition.⁷ Unfortunately, the tension as such seems to have continued even today in most of the countries of South Asia. In Bangladesh, majority of the civil servants working at the secretariat as well as at the field level offices complain about the growing unwarranted political interference in the day-to-day affairs of administration. It seems as if the pagan dictum ‘might is right’ has come in place, and the much professed principle ‘merit must prevail’ has turned inoperative. Muscle and money seem to be reigning supreme and merit is beginning to become subordinate to them.

Politics in Bangladesh is beginning to be under the clutches of the musclemen and the corrupt segment of the society. According to a sitting Member of the Jatiya Sangshad: “Muscle power, black money associated violence and intimidation are gaining more

⁵ Stephanie Flanders, “An Economics of Corruption”, *The Financial Express* (Bangladesh), November 5, 1994.

⁶ Aziz Rahman, “Swamped by a culture of impunity”, *The Daily Star*, January 31, 2004.

⁷ K.L Panjabi, (ed.), *The Civil Servant in India*, (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhaban, 1995), p. 111.

and more importance in the political arena.⁸ Money and muscles act as the 'vicious tools of a manipulative culture disrespectful to the core value of democracy'⁹ and they subvert the process of achieving administrative accountability. Moreover, when muscles replace merits, it is 'a sign of substantial sickness for a society stepped into modern management'.¹⁰ When a society turns demeritised, corrupt and greedy persons capture politico-administrative power and disgruntled administrators tend to maintain the status quo and promote partisanship.¹¹ It is unfortunate that a large number of smugglers, officers both in the army and the Civil Service who are known to be corrupt get themselves elected both in the local and national elections through their 'enormous money and muscle power'.¹² They use black money to buy or bribe insensible voters who consequently bring these unscrupulous politicians to power.¹³

Today, both local and national level elected public representatives have grown a tendency to interfere in the normal day-to-day functions of the civil servants on the plea of exercising their political will. They give priority to personal or party interest over the national interest. Once elected, they grow tendency to use government apparatus as an extension of their respective party machinery.¹⁴ These political behaviours sap the moral strength of the honest civil servants and of those who want to work in the public interest. The result is that the quality of performance of the civil servants is affected leading to disservice rather than service to the public. Taking advantage of democracy, multiple pressure groups are emerging in this country and they tend to put illegal pressure on the honestly serving officers who find it difficult to perform their day-to-day responsibilities maintaining the due process of law.

The tension between the minister and the senior civil servants has become almost a regular phenomenon in Bangladesh. The conflict originates mainly from the ministers' (of course, not all) ignorance of the Rules of Business, personalised recruitment of

8 G.M. Quader, "The future of democracy", *The Daily Star*, February 27, 2005. p. 5.

9 Nurul Islam Anu, "Political game-play: Need for rules", *The Daily Star*, January 15, 2005. p. 18.

10 Muinul Islam, "Economy and politics plagued by criminalisation", *The Daily Star*, January 15 2005. p. 27.

11 Mahmood Ali Malik, "When merit disappears", *The New Nation*, June 5, 1992. p. 5.

12 Mohammed Shahidul Alam and Nasser Ahmed, "Good Governance in Bangladesh" a seminar paper presented at BCS (Administration Academy) on August 26, 1994. p. 5.

13 Abdul Bayes, "Kibria's death and devil's days", *The Daily Star*, February 1, 2005. p. 4.

14 Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), "The National Integrity System", TIB Country Study Report, published in *The Daily Star*, 15 September 2004, p. 11.

staff, appointment of staff on personal choice etc.¹⁵ This conflict leads to frequent of transfer of high officials including secretaries or even making them OSDs thus affecting the continuity of the policy implementation process. In answer to the question why the politician and the civil servant enter into conflicts, as Ali Ahmed says, untrained and immature politicians are intolerant; if civil servants differ with ministers on any issue, "the difference is taken as the defiance of authority"¹⁶ and they are victimised.

The tension between the politician and the civil servant is deepened further when the minister claims that a civil servant is the servant of the elected public representatives and that his or her individual will (even if it does not match with the public interest) represents the will of the people. This misperception of the politicians impairs the harmony between the Civil Service and the politicians. As Gorwala puts it: "This of course is completely wrong. ... The minister and the government servant are both the servants of the people. They both have places on the same ladder of subordination. The Minister stands on the top rung, the general administrator below him and so down to the last peon. They all have the same master, the public; none is the servant of the man above him. In other words, the relation between them is that of colleagues engaged in a common beneficial task."¹⁷ Yet these two groups remain in constant friction although they need to appreciate that the relations between them are not adversarial but complementary.¹⁸

One of the implications of the Rule of Law is that civil servants and politicians will function in their respective domains, their common clientele being the people. In the words of Rao: "The civil servants are no Red Riding Hoods, nor are politicians Big Bad Wolves. Both are functionaries on a very human scale."¹⁹ When people's welfare or interest is the common factor, accountability of both the groups remains achievable. Pitt and Smith remind us: "The principle of accountable management means that both

15 A news item in *Dainik Janata*, May 10, 1994. p. 5.

16 Ali Ahmed, *Bangladesh Public Administration & Senior Civil Servants*, Bangladesh Administrative Staff College, 1964. p. 117.

17 AD Gorwala, *The Role of the Administrator, Past, Present and Future*, R.R. Kale Memorial Lecture, Gokhale Institute of Politics & Economics, 1952. p. 38

18 Syed Naquib Muslim, "Transparency in Bureaucracy", *The Bangladesh Observer*, December 9, 1991. p. 4.

19 N. Venkateshwara Rao, *Public Administration and Development Dynamics*, (Kanishjka Publishers, 1995). p. 203.

ministers and parliamentarians would normally refrain from detailed interference with the work of civil servants acting within a sphere of delegated authority"²⁰. This also implies that if political leaders themselves do not practise their own accountability, all efforts to achieve civil service accountability will naturally prove futile.

In Bangladesh, both the politicians and bureaucrats now-a-days are seen showing a new tendency. Some politicians are inclined to perform bureaucratic responsibilities ignoring their mandated political obligations, whereas some bureaucrats tend to switch over to political functions disregarding their original role. As Khan observes: "The complex interplay of politics and administration is increasingly resulting in the politicization and debureaucratization of administration. The politicization trend takes two forms. On the one hand, there is what is properly known as political interference and exploitation of administration for political purposes. On the other hand, administrators themselves become politicians and take their positions with or against particular parties or factions."²¹ The Civil Service begins to lose its intrinsic character when civil servants tend to behave like politicians. As Chaudhury aptly remarks: "One of the worst disservices any political party could do the country would be to destroy this non-political attitude on the part of the government servants."²² Hinting at the behaviour of the immature, capricious politicians and how to handle them, Masani states: "It seems that government interferes secretly. The minister tells the secretary who is the chairman of an enterprise to do or not to do something. Thereby public accountability is in fact defeated, while it is supposed to be practised. This is very important. If a minister interferes, let him put it in writing."²³

History testifies, however, that earlier political leaders including members of the parliament even in the Pakistan regime showed inclination to protect the interests of the civil servants so that they could perform their responsibilities unhindered by reckless

20 D.C Pitt and B.C. Smith, *Government Departments: An Organisational Perspective*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), p. 106.

21 Iltiza H. Khan, "Bureaucracy in a Developing Country: India", *Public Administration* (Australia), Vol. xxxii, no. 4, December, 1973. p. 363.

22 Muzzaffar Ahmed Chaudhury, *The Civil Service in Pakistan*, Dhaka: National Institute of Public Administration, 1969. p. 314.

23 M.R. Masani, "Accountability vs. Autonomy", in Arvind A. Deshpande, (ed.), *Accountability in Development National & International* (New Delhi: Vikas, 1982), p. 38.

and undue political interference.²⁴ To enable the civil servants to redeem their mandated responsibilities objectively upholding the rule of law, it is necessary, as Ahmed says: "to provide for the due safeguards to protect the working civil servants from the evils that might flow from nepotism and political interference in the administration of civil service."²⁵ The zone of interference in the civil service performance is further enlarged with the access of diverse groups of people created mostly out of the political back-up or patronage. Although the entry of the public into the Bangladesh Secretariat is restricted, hundreds of constituents, tadbir-seekers, middlemen, job applicants, local mastans, political activists, friends and relatives of the ministers and the law-makers descend upon the officers and the ministers everyday to obtain, in most cases, illegal favours.²⁶

Absence of constitutional protection to practise neutrality: There are no provisions in the Bangladesh constitution to protect the civil servants from being harassed by the disgruntled political masters who feel aggrieved for non-fulfillment of their illegitimate desires. Article 181 of 1956 and Article 177 of 1962 constitutions of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan provided adequate protection to the civil servants 'from the undue interference with their rights', against arbitrary exercise of power and 'victimisation' by the ministers.²⁷ Article 181 of 1956 provided that no government servant could be "dismissed or removed from service or reduced in rank until he has been given the reasonable opportunity of showing cause against the action proposed to be taken in regard to him."²⁸

The absence of provisions in the Bangladesh constitution to safeguard the rights of the civil servants makes the members of the BCS vulnerable to the politicisation process which seems to be widening by degrees in this country. Truly professionalised civil servants are expected to maintain a high standard of political neutrality; they are expected to resist political pressures and to set examples to the junior civil servants. If they display timidity and avoid their responsibilities merely to satisfy or pacify the

24 Syed Giasuddin Ahmed, *Public Personnel Administration in Bangladesh*, (Dhaka: University of Dhaka, 1986), p. 57.

25 Ibid.

26 M. Rashiduzzaman, "Bonfire of bureaucratic vanity", *The Independent*, April 29, 1998. p. 4.

27 From Mohammed Jainul Abedin's *Papers on Administration and Related Issues*, Academy for Planning & Development, 1991. p. 85.

28 Ibid. p. 46.

avaricious politicians, this attitude is likely to spill over to the juniors. In order to preserve the public interest, senior civil servants must therefore grow courage in maintaining neutrality or impersonality, which is considered an 'essential moral quality'. Courage of the senior civil servants emanates from their experience, expertise and wisdom. "The only three friends of courage in the public service" as Bailey says, "are ambition, a sense of duty and a recognition that inaction may be quite as painful as action."²⁹ But the absence of the right to protection or self-defence does not instill courage in the professionalised civil servants to practise neutrality, the rule of law and integrity in the face of the dishonest politicians. Thus, if Bangladesh requires a professionalised Civil Service for the people, the politicians must put an end to the practice of undue interference 'in the interest of honest and fair administration'.³⁰ Those who are professionally and morally weak tend to be subservient and compromise the public interest. The dishonest politicians not only tend to break the rules and undermine the system, they also try to change or twist rules in the middle of the game, if the game does not suit their purposes.³¹ Civil servants feel insecure when the dishonest political forces put undue pressure on them. It is often found that honest and competent officers are victimised by being posted to odd or unfavourable stations as a part of penalty, some are put as OSDs for not meeting the illegal requests of the elected public representatives.³²

Accountability at the political level and accountability at the administrative level, although closely interlinked, are distinct from each other and they should be allowed to function in their respective domains without interference from each other. Again, although functionally apart, these two levels of accountability should be viewed as integral part of a whole if this value is to be truly meaningful. Accountability of the Civil Service can be truly achieved when a favourable work environment is created for the civil servants to discharge their responsibilities according to the prevailing rules and procedures. It is mostly the responsibility of the politicians to ensure that such

29 Stephen K. Bailey, "Ethics and the Public Service", in Robert T. Golembiewsky's *Public Administration*, (Rand McNally & Company, 1966). p. 30.

30 Muzzaffar Ahmed Chaudhury, *The Civil Service in Pakistan*, Dhaka: National Institute of Public Administration, 1969. p. 71.

31 Badiul Alam Majumdar, "The Political reforms: Which way?", *The Daily Star*, February 4, 2005. p.4

32 AMM Shawkat Ali, *Bangladesh Civil Service: Political-Administrative Perspective* (Dhaka: University Press Limited, 2004), p. 270.

environment prevails.³³ The civil servants can work safely and honestly when politicians behave maturely. Hinting at the need for morally strong political leadership, Dwivedi and Jain comment: "Those who would like to escape accountability must be prevented from doing so; and politicians but must refrain from interfering with the disciplinary process. To achieve such an accountability system, a morally strong political leadership would be required."³⁴

The perception of the common people about our political leaders is however not very favourable. In fact, public confidence in the politicians has atrophied over the years. As Rahman states: "The perception of the people in general about the politicians and political parties is negative; most of the people think they are less sincere, less dedicated and less knowledgeable in the profession they pursue than expected."³⁵ It is observed that the politicians 'have developed highly acquisitive instincts' and politics has become 'largely a game of power, pelf and privilege.'³⁶ About the level of the maturity and quality of our political leaders a citizen writes to the editor of a national daily with a note of sarcasm: "In the public lives of the politicians, there is no room for outsiders and non-politicians. ... Raw and immature politics is dragging morality in infamy and perdition.... The political output is constipated, anaemic and chronically sick."³⁷ A varsity student writes to "The Daily Star": "For the misconduct, rampant corruption, widespread violence by our politicians and their accomplices this land is ahead of all other countries in corruption. Who is to be held responsible? Without any prior judgment, it can be mentioned that it is the political persons who are directly responsible for our predicament."³⁸ Politicians have created a brand of politics in which they are 'not to be held accountable for anything'; they can 'get away with any crime, not the public'³⁹

33 Concluding speech by Quazi M.M. Mowla, Rector, Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, delivered on the occasion "The ASEAN-SAARC Conference on Administrative and Financial Accountability", held in Dhaka in 1995, p. 502.

34 O.P Dwivedi and R.B Jain, *Indian Administration*, (New Delhi: Gitanjali, 1985) p. 132.

35 Ataur Rahman, "A pressing agenda", *The Daily Star*, January 14, 2005. p. 25.

36 Muhammed Nurul Huda, "Cracks in the order and the vision", *The Daily Star*, August 11, 2005. p. 11

37 Abdad Khan, "To the Editor's Columns", *The Daily Star*, 15 September 2004, p. 8.

38 Bazlur Rahman, Letter to the editor, *The Daily Star*, July 29, 2005. p. 12.

39 Syed Ashfaqul Haque, "Politicians must take blame for failures," *The Daily Star*, January 31, 2004.

It is not however justified to blame all politicians on a wholesale basis, as Ali says: "there are of course exceptions in the political leadership who have strong ethical sense but the number one can count by fingers."⁴⁰ It will therefore be unreasonable to blame only the politicians because there are persons in the Civil Service who misguide the politicians to gratify their unlawful demands at the cost of public sufferings. As Chaudhury puts it: "... it will be unfair to condemn the political leaders and others as a whole as bad."⁴¹

Reconciliation between the Civil Service and Politics: In Bangladesh synergy between the politician and the civil servant could not be achieved because both the politician and the civil servant remain obsessed with the thought --- who is bigger and higher, whether the civil servants are more powerful or the politicians, who has more authority "to interrupt or intervene in the process of administration and development."⁴² The real issue however is not whether the politician is more powerful than the civil servant but whether they can work jointly with team spirit and in a climate of mutual respect, trust and cooperation to ensure efficient delivery of services to the citizenry. Thus one of the main reasons behind this conflict is that each does not appreciate the role of the other, i.e. there exists a misconception about their respective roles/positions. This also leads to "mutual exploitation of politicians by the bureaucrats and the bureaucrats by the politicians."⁴³ What is therefore necessary for civil servants is to keep in mind that they should not behave with the committed political leaders 'with impunity and disdain'; 'the politicians in Bangladesh should also overcome their intellectual limitations to exercise reasonable political control over the civil service.'⁴⁴ In Malaysia, a discrete code of conduct has been framed for the Ministers including the Prime Minister; ministers give decisions and directions on policy and programmes but leave the implementation and administration to the civil servants. Politicians are precluded from

40 AMM Shawkat Ali, *The Lore of the Mandarins: Towards a Non-partisan Public Service in Bangladesh* (Dhaka: University Press Limited, 2002), p. 297.

41 Muzzaffar Ahmed Chaudhury, *The Civil Service in Pakistan*, Dhaka: National Institute of Public Administration, 1969. p. 314.

42 Mohammed Siddiqur Rahman, "The Minister or the Secretary", *The Daily Star*, July 15, 1997. p. 4.

43 Abdullah's comments as chairperson of the presentation session of the Report of the Working Group I in the ASEAN-SAARC regional conference on Administrative and Financial Accountability, *Administrative and Financial Accountability: The ASEAN-SAARC Experience*, (eds.) Sirajuddin H. Salleh & Arabinda Kar, Asia & Pacific Development Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1995. p. 1.

44 Aatur Rahman, *Transparency in a Democratic Government*, a paper presented at a seminar organised by Bangladesh Institute of Administration and Management and BCS (Administration) Academy, August 26, 1994. p. 9.

interfering with administrative decisions like placement, promotion and transfer of government officials. The same is the case with the Singapore government. It has been possible for Malaysia and Singapore to build themselves into model states in Asia because the politicians and civil servants work together without interfering in each other's domain of activities.⁴⁵

Thus the undue interference of the politicians and the conflict between the politicians and the civil servants can be minimized if these two groups clearly perceive or appreciate each other's responsibilities. The job of civil servants is to implement the policies provided by the politicians in power. A clear-cut division of responsibilities and functions needs respectful practice of democratic norms or principles, positive attitude and mutual respect. As Shelley observes: "In situations where the appropriate culture is created and sustained by continuous practices of democracy, the problems of role-overlap and resultant disharmony and conflict are minimized. Unfortunately this has not been the case of Bangladesh."⁴⁶

The problem of misunderstanding and conflict between politicians and civil servants can be further resolved through a truthful and honest observance of the Rules of Business. Two important government documents - *Rules of Business* and *Allocation of Business among the Ministries & Divisions* - have clearly spelled out the relationships between the ministries and the departments and between the ministries and the autonomous bodies operating under them. But the politicians in power often interfere with their day-to-day activities.⁴⁷ The lines of responsibility having been set, there should not be unnecessary interference. Rules of Business have been modified to the extent of strengthening the parliament's political control over the ministries and the civil service. The elected public representatives have, of course, the right to supervise the execution of policies but their 'supervision need not degenerate into continuous pinpricking.'⁴⁸ The fact, however, remains that although *Rules of Business* amended up to 1996 has given more authority to the ministers; the civil servants have practically

45 Pradip N. Khandwalla, *Revitalising the State: A Menu of Options*, (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1999). p. 286.

46 Mizanur Rahman Shelley, "Politics and Bureaucracy: The Experience of Bangladesh", *The Independent*, January 3, 1998. p. 4.

47 M. Abdul Latif Mondal, "People's perception about public offices", *The Daily Star*, January 25, 2005. p. 5.

retained the actual powers of conducting the activities of the government because of their skills acquired through education and training on the one hand and "lack of quality, cowardice and vested interest of the ministers on the other."⁴⁹

Politicians in power have of course the right to put pressures on the civil servants requiring them to deliver efficient or quality services to the people on the ground that any dilution in efficiency or performance ultimately affects the credibility of the government. But this demand should in no way take the form of unjustified interference. However, insulating the Civil Service from undue political interference is perhaps not easy task. In fact, all depends on the positive or healthy attitude of both the politician and the civil servant. But before civil servants change their attitudes, politicians who remain in charge of the country's helm of affairs need to change their own attitude first. As Vries and Miller remark: "Change requires cooperation from those who must change their own attitudes and beliefs."⁵⁰ This implies that politicians must take the lead and the civil servants are to follow them. If politicians are selfish and corrupt, civil servants 'will take cues from them and will partner them in a spoils system.'⁵¹ As Ali Ahmed says: "a great obligation of guiding our civil servants to rise above individual or group interests rests with the political leaders."⁵² If politicians fail, the civil servants will have little to succeed and the citizenry little to gain. What is, therefore, important is to put the political house in order.

Discussions in the foregoing paragraphs lead one to conclude that unless the quality of political leadership improves, the civil servants cannot alone achieve the level of performance the citizenry expects or demands from them. The people must vote for the appropriate representatives who can meet their genuine needs and do not eat away their part. This issue has been discussed in the concluding chapter. On the whole, what is necessary is to create a new breed of "educated, dignified, self-respecting, pragmatic, open-minded, nationalistic, tolerant, progressive looking, pro-people and democratic

48 AD Gorwala, *The Role of the Administrator, Past, Present and Future*, R.R. Kale Memorial Lecture, Gokhale Institute of Politics & Economics, 1952. p. 38.

49 Mohammed Siddiquir Rahman, "The Minister or the Secretary", *The Daily Star*, July 15, 1997. p. 4.

50 F. R. Kets de Vries and Danny Miller, *The Neurotic Organisation* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1987), p. 93.

51 Ahmed Mahmudur Raza Chowdhury, "En-masse contractual appointments", *The Daily Star*, January 30, 2005. p. 5.

52 Ali Ahmed, "Module for Modernising the Civil Service", *The Bangladesh Observer*, December 12, 1992. p. 5.

leadership"⁵³ that can extricate Bangladesh from the vicious cycle of 'old-style feudal politics' having the sole intention of grabbing power.

Politicisation of the Civil Service

Politicisation of the civil service dates back to the days of the then East Pakistan and beyond but "the process went down to its dizzying depth in recent years."⁵⁴ As Zaman says: "It is the political leaders who had sown the seeds of partisan politics in bureaucracy. Now they are only harvesting the poisoned fruits."⁵⁵ In Bangladesh, there has been a visible trend of politicisation of bureaucracy since the time of military rule of Ershad who seized state power in 1982 by overthrowing an elected civilian government.⁵⁶ His nine-year anti-democratic rule systematically weakened all government institutions and led to the creation of a highly politicized administration. Instead of curbing corruption, his misrule promoted rent-seeking culture in all spheres of public life.⁵⁷ This happened because any authoritarian government, civil or military tends to remain morally or ideologically weak and therefore they tend to depend significantly on the civil servants for their political survival. Again, 'civil servants under an authoritarian government exercise greater power and influence than under a properly-constituted democratic system where there is a vigilant parliament.'⁵⁸ It is a common tendency of the authoritarian government to politicise the Civil Service by reducing neutrality and efficiency and by making it incapable of meeting the legitimate needs of the citizenry.⁵⁹ Personal loyalty to the 'boss' rather than public accountability becomes preponderant. Huda, a former Inspector-General of Police, opines that because of politicisation of administration, professionalism and efficiency of the civil servants become 'the worst casualty' and civil servants 'turn into personal servants with the attendant ignominy.'⁶⁰ According to Sobhan: "Whatever may be the logic of the

53 Mansoor Mamoon, "Politics of Misgovernance", *The Daily Star*, July 26, 2000. p. 4.

54 M. Rashiduzzaman, "Bonfire of bureaucratic vanity", *The Independent*, April 29, 1998. p. 4.

55 Ibid.

56 Hasnat Abdul Hye, "Politicisation of Bureaucracy", *The Daily Star*, 8 December 2000, p. 8.

57 Mohammed Shahidul Alam and Nasser Ahmed, "Good Governance in Bangladesh" a paper presented at a seminar at BCS (Administration) Academy on August 26, 1994. p. 5.

58 Dilara Chowdhury, *Constitutional Development in Bangladesh: Stresses and Strains*, Dhaka: University Press Limited, 1994), p. 219.

59 Mizanur Rahman Shelley, "Governance and Administration: Challenge of New Millennium" in Hasnat Abdul Hye's (ed.) *Governance : South Asian Perspective*, Dhaka: University Press Limited, 2000. p. 174.

60 Muhammad Nurul Huda, "The intelligence fiasco and all that", *The Daily Star*, September 2, 2005.

politicization of the bureaucracy, the end result has been the erosion of good governance. Bureaucrats embedded in collusion links with their political patrons, use these links to advance themselves beyond their merit, to acquire private wealth and to accumulate power within the bureaucracy by promoting collective interests"⁶¹. He goes on saying that the politicization of bureaucracy thus "undermines bureaucratic discipline, erodes accountability, promotes inefficiency and encourages corruption"⁶²

The degree of politicization of the civil servants seems to be increasing day by day as political leaders themselves encourage them directly or indirectly to get involved in politics. According to Ali: "Taking part in politics has more or less become the norm of the day on the part of the civil servants."⁶³ The value of political neutrality or non-partisanship has been affected causing serious performance problems in the Civil Service. 'The good name and reputation of a fine national institution like the civil administration is being besmirched and its efficacy impaired because of the evil of politicisation.'⁶⁴ As a matter of fact, the politicisation is threatening the democratic process and political stability in Bangladesh. This in turn is affecting the economic advancement of the country. As Zaman puts it: "Much of the institutional slump in general and legislative decline in particular, disorder, terrorism, unpunished killings and rapes and abuse of power is attributed to the excessive politicisation in Bangladesh."⁶⁵ Compared to Bangladesh, the civil service in India is generally trusted by the people for running the affairs of the country 'while the politicians frayed'.⁶⁶

Politicisation is affecting the total performance in the civil service because officers with overt or covert political affiliation are favoured with powerful decision-making positions in the government although many of them do not have the competence or eligibility to hold the offices. According to the participants of a discussion meeting on

61 Rehman Sobhan, "The State of Governance in Bangladesh", in Rehman Sobhan, ed., *Changes and Challenges* (UPL, Dhaka, 2000), p. 93.

62 Ibid., p. 93.

63 AMM Shawkat Ali, *Bangladesh Civil Service: Political-Administrative Perspective*, (Dhaka: University Press Limited, 2004), p. 162.

64 Hasnat Abdul Hye, "Politicisation of Bureaucracy", *The Daily Star*, 8 December 2000, p. 8.

65 M. Rashiduzzaman, "Bangladesh: An Overpoliticised Democracy", *The Daily Star*, May 20, 1999. p. 4

66 Ibid.

"Good governance, social security and human rights", 'politicisation of administration and the posting inappropriate personnel in important areas of responsibility' contribute to 'unaccountable corruption' in the country.⁶⁷ 'The government officials' political loyalty is now a factor in deciding who will get promotion and this trend has created a crisis in the administration'.⁶⁸ When politicisation goes rampant and merit is compromised, meritorious and non-partisan officers are deprived of the appropriate positions or ranks.⁶⁹ On the effects of politicisation on the civil service, Rao says: "What the politicians get is a thoroughly demoralised civil service which soon loses its capability even to carry out the whims of politicians."⁷⁰ Civil servants feel disillusioned and they get little chance to use their knowledge, skills, wisdom and experience for the cause of the people. Again, a when civil servant showing substandard performance is rewarded, and a civil servant is penalised for efficient performance because of the influence of politicization, the very fabric of administration is shaken. "If such trends continue," as Zaman remarks, "public administration as a whole will suffer because its accountability is then undermined. Instead of being accountable to the constitutional bodies, it will be accountable to the party individuals. That will be an irreparable loss in constitutional terms."⁷¹ Moreover, the core value of the rule of law required for dispensation of justice to the people will be cast aside. As Shamsuddin Ahmed puts it: "the biggest casualty of politicised bureaucracy is the rule of law. Where there is no rule of law, there can be no security of life and property of people, no justice and truth..."⁷² Thus if the rule of law is to be secured in the society, "there must be understanding and cooperation between the political leaders and the administrative officials."⁷³

67 Views expressed by the participants at a discussion meeting on "Good governance, social security and human rights" organised by Samajik Unnayan O Chetona Bikash Kendra at National Press Club on September 2, 2005.

68 Views expressed by the participants at a discussion meeting on "Politicisation of Administration : Crisis and its Remedy" organised by Peshajibi Samannoy Parishad at National Press Club on September 8, 2005.

69 AMM Shawkat Ali, *The Lore of the Mandarins: Towards a Non-partisan Public Service in Bangladesh* (Dhaka: University Press Limited, 2002), p. 16.

70 N. Venkateshwara Rao, *Public Administration and Development Dynamics*, (Kanishka Publishers, 1995). p. 203.

71 Muhammad Anissuzaman, "Public Administration: A View from Bangladesh Constitution", *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh*, Vol. 49, No.1, June 2004, p. 149.

72 Shamsuddin Ahmed, "Depoliticising the bureaucracy", *The Independent*, 1 August 2001, p. 4.

73 Mizanur Rahman Shelley, "Governance and Administration: Challenge of New Millennium" in Hasnat Abdul Hye's (ed.) *Governance: South Asian Perspective*, Dhaka: University Press Limited, 2000. p. 177.

The potential areas of politicization are recruitment of the party loyalists at the entry level, their subsequent placement and promotion.⁷⁴ According to Hannan: "Whoever comes to power, by and large, tends to appoint individuals who are known to them or who support them."⁷⁵ In 1972, the government of Bangladesh created "a new cadre of service through direct political appointment that was contrary to the tradition of non-political civil servants in most public administration systems around the world."⁷⁶ Another way how the civil service got politicised directly or indirectly is the induction of the retired civil servants or army officers into the regimes. As Zaman observes: "Bangladesh has a serious shortage of experienced politicians; so the political parties welcome the ex-bureaucrats and retired military officers with previous knowledge of running the affairs of the state."⁷⁷ One reason for which individual civil servants come close to partisan politics is that they will be able to exercise more powers and prestige through such contacts.⁷⁸ Political interference in the recruitment of civil servants has heightened the low esteem in which the people hold the government officials.⁷⁹ This unhealthy tendency is disapproved equally by civil servants themselves. As Hannan, a retired civil servant, says: "This is extremely inappropriate.... Not even appointments in the Public Service Commission (PSC) are free from nepotism. This leads to politicisation of administration..."⁸⁰ In addition, party loyalists, even if they are known to be corrupt or inefficient, get promotions or extensions while the competent ones are pushed aside.⁸¹ Another manifest trend of politicisation process is the quick or often steady replacement of a group of civil servants holding powerful positions in the secretariat and in the field administration as soon as a new government emerges. Ali calls this change as 'reshuffling'; as he says: "Reshuffling of civil servants from one Ministry or Division to other is as frequent as is the reshuffle of those civil servants who are in the field administration. ... In this process, the primary criteria is whether a civil servant in question is 'our man'."⁸² The result is that the continuity as well as

74 AMM Shawkat Ali, *The Lore of the Mandarins: Towards a Non-partisan Public Service in Bangladesh* (Dhaka: University Press Limited, 2002), p. 193.

75 Shah Abdul Hannan, "Pitfalls of our democracy", *The Daily Star*, January 14, 2005. p. 11.

76 M. Rashiduzzaman, "Bonfire of bureaucratic vanity", *The Independent*, April 29, 1998. p. 4.

77 Ibid.

78 Ibid.

79 From "The National Integrity System Transparency International Country Study Report", published in *The Daily Star*, 15 September 2004, p. 11.

80 Shah Abdul Hannan, "Pitfalls of our democracy", *The Daily Star*, January 14, 2005. p. 11

81 Abdul Bayes, "Kibria's death and devil's days", *The Daily Star*, February 1, 2005. p. 4

82 AMM Shawkat Ali, *The Lore of the Mandarins: Towards a Non-partisan Public Service in Bangladesh* (Dhaka: UPL, 2002), p. 270.

quality of performance of civil servants and the process of policy implementation by them is affected.

In Bangladesh, three kinds of civil servants have emerged in the meantime. There is one group of civil servants who declare openly their bias towards a particular regime and through political persuasion tend to capture the strategic administrative positions superseding the competent seniors and bypassing prevailing rules, laws or acts. Many civil servants of this category have grown a tendency to establish 'god-fatherly' relations with political high-ups who often interfere and intervene when the former are taken to task or penalised for their proven malpractices. Their interference is more acute when politicians prefer serving the party interest and in the process accountability is subverted.⁸³ Another group comprises shrewd and self-seeking persons who change their political colour quickly with the change of a regime. They try to reap the best harvest in all the regimes particularly if any regime is deficient or immature in political capacity. Regarding this genre of civil servants, Karim remarks: "Some bureaucrats have proved themselves to be consummate survivalists. Without slightest hesitation or remorse, those civil servants have routinely changed colour."⁸⁴ The third category is the ideal type, 'the rare breed' who embodies the fundamental values of 'the public interest', 'the rule of law', 'neutrality' confronting all the unfavourable conditions not excluding undue penalty. As Ali observes: "The vast majority of civil servants remain mute spectators for fear of political or administrative reprisals."⁸⁵ Despite their capacity for efficient performance, leadership skills, high degree of commitment to the public service, many of the civil servants are not given the opportunity to contribute to implementation of the civil service vision as well as the national vision. The same views are corroborated by Raza Chowdhury: "Still, by far the vast majority of civil servants are careerists who want to abhor political involvement and pursue an honest, impartial and professional track."⁸⁶ On the whole, the quality of civil service

83 Ekramul Ahsan and Syed Naquib Muslim, "Administrative and Financial Accountability in Bangladesh", in Sirajuddin H. Salleh & Arabinda Kar, *Administrative and Financial Accountability: ASEAN-SAARC Experience*, (Asia & Pacific Development Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1995, p. 205.

84 M.Z Rashedul Karim, "Politicisation of bureaucracy can destroy democracy", *The Independent*, 29 July 2001, p. 4.

85 AMM Shawkat Ali, *The Lore of the Mandarins: Towards a Non-partisan Public Service in Bangladesh* (University Press Limited, Dhaka, 2002), p. 276.

86 Ahmed Mahmudur Raza Chowdhury, "Saga of a politicised civil service", *The Daily Star*, 13 January 2005, p. 5.

performance depends on the quality of political leadership; neutrality in the civil service can be ensured if political commitment is available. The non-partisanship of the Civil Service is affected when its homogeneity is affected. As mentioned earlier it was in 1972 that the Civil Service “lost its homogeneous character which is so vital for the morale of the Civil Service and the element of the esprit de corps that are necessary for maintaining good working relationship and environment”.⁸⁷ Rewards given in the form of appointment, placement and promotion to the new recruits for political service generated tension that continues to plague the civil service till today.⁸⁸ On the whole, unless the political leadership moves away from the concept of a politically loyal civil servant, it is not possible to secure a non-partisan civil service in this country.⁸⁹

In Chapter-IV, we have seen how corruption affects administrative as well as political performance and in turn undermines good governance. Although discussed earlier, the issue of corruption merits repeated references because the process of corruption practically begins with politicians and civil servants including others tend to follow them; its beginning, continuity or absence depends mostly on their decision or commitment. As Wilmshurst states: “Lack of accountability in terms of the political process, of accountability for performance and stewardship of resources enables corruption to flourish.”⁹⁰ The process of accountability is subverted when the politicians who are supposed to guide the nation in the proper direction themselves turn corrupt and they harbour the corrupt civil servants for their fulfilling illegal political interests. This has been occurring in almost all the regimes in Bangladesh with variance of intensity or degree.

Why politicisation of the Civil Service is increasing by degrees is a matter to ponder over. One of the reasons the politicization process goes unabated in Bangladesh is that neither the political parties or nor the senior civil servants evidently show courage to establish the Civil Service in its rightful position as an efficient, honest and non-political institution that will remain accountable to the people.⁹¹ Unfortunately, the high-ranking civil servants in almost all public agencies tend to be “responsive to

87 AMM Shawkat Ali, op. cit., p. 193.

88 Robert LaPorte, “Governance and Public Administration” in Hasnat Abdul Hye’s *Governance: South Asian Perspective*, Dhaka: University Press Limited, 2000. p. 188.

89 Ahmed Mahmudur Raza Chowdhury, op. cit.

90 Jon Wilmshurst, “Corruption and good governance”, *The Independent*, October 17, 1995. p. 4.

91 M. Rashiduzzaman, “Bonfire of bureaucratic vanity”, *The Independent*, April 29, 1998. p. 4.

political demands and pressures and policy shifts and have behaved like political partisans. The lower echelons have followed the suit."⁹² Thus when seniors falter or vacillate, juniors simply take them as norms and follow their senior colleagues to remain safe.

As one deliberates on the problem of politicisation, one naturally feels like asking how to confront this lingering problem. It seems that the process of politicisation can be halted when all political parties "come to an agreement about keeping civil administrators above partisan politics and punish those who take part in partisan politics while in the civil administration."⁹³ Otherwise, no government will be able to function properly in future and people will continue to suffer. All political parties, big or small, need to appreciate that civil service rules must be implemented irrespective of party positions to ensure justice and fairplay. An orientation on the expected conduct of the elected public representative and the civil servant can therefore be provided through "seminars for both sets of people (separately and together) so that both are schooled in how to behave towards one another in a considerate manner."⁹⁴ But if the political leaders are oriented towards "personal aggrandizement, distribution of state patronage to cronies, bending the rule of law to serve parochial interests and rewarding public servants on the basis of their political affiliation rather than meritorious service, good governance and with it a much higher trajectory of development will remain distant dreams."⁹⁵

Practice of values by civil servants as discussed in chapter V is possible when politicians are not only educated, they are also equally morally strong. As a matter of fact, the civil servants draw authority, support and inspiration to act ethically from political leadership. As Ali says: "Bureaucratic authority is essentially derivative. To the extent that the political leadership is strong in an ethical sense, bureaucracy is also fair and strong and display the same ethical sense in the decision-making process that the political leadership would like it to display."⁹⁶ In fact, accountability at every level

92 Abdul Khaleque, "Reforming the administration", *The Daily Star*, January 17, 2005. p. 4.

93 Kabir U. Ahmed, "Democracy without Democratic Values", *The Daily Star*, May 5, 1997. p. 4.

94 James Manor, "Bureaucrats, Elected Representatives and Decentralisation", *The Daily Star*, March 30, 1997. p. 4.

95 Mirza Azizul Islam, "Governance for development: A revisionist view," *The Bangladesh Today*, May 5, 2003. p. 4.

96 AMM Shawkat Ali, *The Lore of the Mandarins: Towards a Non-partisan Public Service in Bangladesh* (Dhaka: UPL, 2002), p. 102.

lies with the highest level of leadership that is political; it is the political leaders who make the abstract values concrete by their behaviours or actions or performance. Leaders create, promote and preserve values. The examples they show have therefore a highly influential force. The very personality of politicians, their political maturity, wisdom and the examples they set themselves act as deterrent to administrative irregularities and malpractices by others. In the reverse way, corruption and malpractices of political leaders give birth to more corruption at different levels of the Civil Service and in other spheres. On the whole, justice and fair-play should be practised and upheld at the political arena first. A pithy sentence in the World Development Report published back in 1983 reminds us: "There is little point in establishing accountability, if political leaders do not enforce it."⁹⁷ Thus, the onus of building an ethical and neutral civil service "rests squarely with the politicians, the civil society and the top brasses of bureaucracy"⁹⁸ Lack of integrity among political leaders is one of the important causes for the unethical conduct of our civil servants; in fact, the standards exemplified in the outlook and activities of the political leaders exercise a profound influence on the integrity of the civil servants. Accountability either in administration or in politics, cannot be installed by repeated promulgation of ordinances or enactment of laws; it, like democracy, evolves over a period of time and through a process of trial and error. Professionalised civil servants, honest and committed politicians and conscious citizenry have to form a strong triangle to build a culture of accountability in the society and this will ensure good governance in Bangladesh.

If in the Civil Service there is hardly any scope for amateurs, there is also little scope for amateurs in politics. The beginning of professionalism in politics is that merit must prevail and muscle should not be allowed to overpower merit. This will occur when politicians themselves will practise the values discussed above. Moreover, if politicians are not politically and intellectually mature they will have to depend upon civil servants and those who are disgruntled will tend to exploit the weaknesses of the former. Conversely, when politicians are intellectually strong and ethically sound, it is easy for them to exact accountability of civil servants. The whole-hearted practice of the

⁹⁷ World Bank, *World Development Report*, 1983, p. 123.

⁹⁸ Ahmed Mahmudur Raza Chowdhury, "En-masse contractual appointments", *The Daily Star*, January 30, 2005. p. 5.

codified values depends upon the political leadership and its commitment. The firmness of political will and a clear sense of direction or vision of the politicians will determine the success in the practice or cultivation of the professed values.⁹⁹ It is possible to exact or achieve accountability of the administrators if and when accountability of the elected public representatives is ensured. Rahman, an ex-private secretary to a central minister of the government of Pakistan, maintains: "Unless there is a real change of heart at the political level, we cannot have a neutral and incorruptible bureaucracy."¹⁰⁰ When a dishonest politician depends on a dishonest civil servant, much of the accountability of the government is vitiated and citizens do not get the service they deserve. This situation can be ameliorated if a code of political ethics is evolved for regulating conduct and activities of the politicians in this country.

99 T.N. Chaturvedi, in Prem Kumar and AK Ghosh, eds., *Management in Government & Public Services*, (Delhi: Anmol Publications, 1992), p. 43.

100 Syed Zillur Rahman, "The Role of Public Servants", *The Bangladesh Observer*, 8 November 1986, p. 5.

Chapter XII

CONCLUSION

This study has been designed to achieve six main objectives. First, to demystify the notion of 'accountability' and justify its importance in enhancing the quality of civil service performance in Bangladesh. Secondly, to identify the forces or factors that affect the practice, enforcement and promotion of accountability in the Bangladesh Civil Service . Thirdly, to suggest a cluster of core professional values and the code of conduct or ethics necessary for a new administrative culture aimed at building a citizens-friendly civil service in Bangladesh. Fourthly, to identify the weaknesses in the design and delivery system of the civil service training. Fifthly, to review the existing performance appraisal system in the Civil Service and to suggest an alternative performance appraisal format. Sixth and lastly, to recommend a few doable strategies for the solution of the identified problems so that a responsive and accountable civil service system in Bangladesh can be installed.

Chapter II of the thesis accounts for the achievement of the first objective. After clarifying the conceptual facets of the notion 'accountability', the chapter has sought to amplify the conceptual setting of the rest of the study. Chapters III through XI have included detailed discussions on the structural-functional features of BCS and such issues/practices of its management as functional civil service values, civil service conduct rules, civil service ethics, system of civil service performance appraisal and civil service training. The discussions so made have been arranged to achieve the remainder five objectives. The theme focused throughout with its varied ramifications has been the promotion of civil service accountability. References to factors impeding the achievement and promotion of accountability of the BCS also have been made with due analyses in these chapters. The remedies of the identified problems have been suggested as and when appropriate. Most importantly, a national vision has been suggested and along with it the vision of the BCS.

Finally, this chapter (i.e., chapter XII) concludes the study by recapitulating some of the main civil service management issues/points treated in the previous chapters. It also

includes suggestions of the researcher emphasizing in particular the role of a responsible citizenry for overcoming the major political constraints or exogenous factors identified in chapter XI that seem to have been impeding the achievement and promotion of accountability of the BCS.

Most civil service specialists in this country argue that achievement and promotion of accountability of BCS depend on the efficient performance of its role in the light of democratic administration reintroduced beginning in 1991, and that its role is intimately linked to implementing a national vision. But, unfortunately for Bangladesh, its civil servants seem to have not been able to perform their role in keeping with the expectation of the people and the country has been running without a codified national vision since its independence. Successive governments in this country have not been able to formulate and declare a clear, brief and simple statement of vision as have been done by Malaysia. In the absence of a national vision, the people, the civil servants and the politicians remain in a state of confusion or ambivalence; they cannot determine in which direction the nation is going and how and when to channelize the human resources.

Indications have it that there has been serious erosion in the morale and morality of the civil servants since the independence of Bangladesh. Existence of such punitive legal instruments as The Government Servants' Conduct Rules and the Anti-corruption laws/rules could contribute little in improving the performance and ethical behaviour of officers. One of the reasons is that there has been no formal declaration or codification of a set of common civil service values. No civil servant can readily answer what values he or she has to practise and nurture while performing the mandated professional responsibilities. The twelve core values that have been suggested in Chapter V of this thesis are-- '*accountability*', '*transparency*', '*responsiveness*', '*equity*', '*the public interest*', '*the rule of law*', '*probity*', '*austerity*', '*innovation*', '*civility*'; '*neutrality*' and '*efficiency*'. If these values are internalised and practised by civil servants, a democratic culture can be truly installed. In order to ensure internalisation and systematic pursuit of these values by civil servants in their day-to-day work, appropriate strategies have also been suggested. These include wide publicity about the significance of values (to be declared), modeling by the seniors, oath-taking by civil servants on completion of the mandatory foundation course, developing an exclusive training package on ethics as has been done in the US and Malaysia, revision of the existing traditional performance

appraisal format, introduction of citizen's charter in the civil service agencies and rationalization of the incentive structure or reward system.

Punitive instruments like the Government Servants' Conduct Rules inherited from the British colonial administration have proved dysfunctional. Compliance on the part of the civil servants and enforcement on the part of the authorities seem elusive. In tune with the values identified and keeping in view the prospects of their enforceability, a new Code of Ethics for Government/Civil Service has been suggested in this thesis (see last part of Chapter V). It will be possible to foster professional cohesion among the members of the Civil Service if they maintain the suggested principles of the Code of Ethics.

The institutions of civil service in most countries in contemporary world are moving away from the traditional hierarchical structures and leaning consciously towards the team-based structures and leadership development at all levels of officers. This is occurring because of the increasing public pressure for delivery of quality services and the demand for results, more productivity and innovation. What is therefore necessary is to make a paradigmatic shift from the traditional work style and apply Organisation Development (OD) concepts in the civil service agencies in a planned fashion as have already been done by Malaysia, Singapore, India and Korea. All reform initiatives to be taken up by the government will not succeed unless the mindset of the civil servants is changed. Absence of team spirit, lack of collegiality in interpersonal conduct, leadership gaps are putting barriers to the growth of innovation and quality decisions in the civil service agencies. Application of OD concepts in the civil service agencies and a massive orientation of the civil servants on OD through training intervention have been suggested to bring about a psychic transformation in the traditional mindset of the civil servants (see Chapter VIII). One expects that the behavioral problems like malice, arrogance, fear, fault-finding/buck-passing tendency as observed both in the senior and the junior will be neutralized once the OD concepts are put into practice.

Performance appraisal system now in vogue in the Bangladesh Civil Service is subjected to continuous criticism by the civil servants and non-civil servants alike because of its structural and substantive weaknesses. The present appraisal system is outmoded and does not work as an effective means of meaning performance and ensuring accountability. It focuses more on personality factors than on performance indicators; there is no mechanism to measure the results or output or productivity of an

Need for a Responsible Citizenry

All the mechanisms of enforcing accountability will be ineffective if citizens themselves do not care and do not behave responsibly. The people themselves cannot escape their respective accountability. If people are not included within the orbit of accountability, accountability remains a segmented and incomplete entity. Informed and interested public is the ultimate safeguard against administrative arbitrariness and malpractices. In Bangladesh, one of the reasons why the process of politicisation goes unchecked is that the citizenry has not yet grown capacity and courage to resist or protest against injustice, discrimination and deprivation arising out of the politicised bureaucracy. As the people become the ultimate casualty of the politicisation process, they have to put up the resistance or show disapproval through judicious use of their voting power. They should therefore no longer allow themselves to be disenfranchised by the foul, dishonest politicians who cast aside the matters of the public interest and public welfare with the help of the politicised and non-professionalised civil servants.

The majority of the people in this country are fatalistic, impulsive and individualistic in outlook; they are quick-tempered, aggressive, amenable but hospitable and warm at heart.¹ They are quickly swayed by emotive speeches of the political leaders; their sense of reason is overpowered by impulses. The lack or loss of the value of accountability within the citizenry themselves will multiply when they remain ignorant, insensitive and reticent. Growing public awareness of and familiarity with their own rights, obligations will create in the civil servants a sense of positive fear that will check their malpractices and irregularities. As the majority of our people are illiterate, they have no other option than tolerating helplessly the corrupt and unethical practices of the elected public representatives and the civil servants. Therefore, an informed and empowered citizenry is a built-in guarantee against abuse of power, arbitrariness, unrefined conduct of civil servants and ever-increasing politicisation of civil servants by regimes. According to Muzzafer Ahmed, real empowerment of the people will be established when they will be able to register their protest against the undemocratic activities of the government.² Both electronic and print media can instill in people

¹ S R Sen, "Moving towards new goals", *Dialogue* (Bangladesh), May 10, 1991. p. 19.

² Muzzafer Ahmed at a discussion meeting on 'Good governance, social security and human rights' organised by Samajik Unnayan O Chetona Bikash Kendra at National Press Club on September 2, 2005.

including civil servants what Dobel calls 'civic virtue'³ that deters excessively self-interested behaviour in them and make them committed to common good. Media can sensitise the citizenry in two ways-- i) by disseminating information and ideas on the national problems or issues, and ii) by publishing news on the malpractices and corruption of the public servants including those of the politicians so that dishonest and anti-democratic persons who aspire to get elected through foul means are voted out.⁴ The civil society has to raise a strong resistance and build up public opinion against the avaricious persons who seek to grab power through the use of money and muscle. 'Black money and illegal arms and those who hold them must be banished from the arena of politics. Our politicians must stand on the high moral ground of impeccable personal honesty, integrity, knowledge, vision and commitment to serve the people and the country.'⁵

However, while deliberating on the issues of bureaucratic and political accountability in Bangladesh, a question thus slowly or silently creeps in our minds - are the people, the rate-payers, the citizenry, the electorate themselves exempt or immune from the accountability syndrome? Can administrative or political accountability be achieved and sustained in an isolated way? In fact, the problems of Bangladesh cannot be solved only by a few in politics and in the Civil Service. The people must be made to discern that they can participate or get involved in the political and development process. They will have to demand and if necessary 'arrogate the right of participation. Otherwise, democracy might be in peril.'⁶ As a matter of fact, accountability cannot be established in an isolated way. Accountability has to be perceived as a part of a system. In the words of Day and Klein: "Accountability must be seen in terms not of individual institutions but as a system which is woven into the fabric of political and social life as a whole."⁷ Thus the people are not immune from their own accountability as 'accountability cannot be seen as an island by itself.'⁸

3 Patrick Dobel, "The Corruption of a State", *The American Political Science Review Journal*, Vol.72. p. 960.

4 Naresh Madhu, "Role of Media in Democratic System of Good Governance", *The Bangladesh Observer*, April 18, 2005. p. 4.

5 Shamsuddin Ahmed, "Bad politics is the bane of this country", *The Daily Star*, 18 July 2004, p. 4.

6 AZM Shamsul Alam, *Democracy and Election*, (Dhaka: Bangladesh Cooperative Book Society Ltd, 1996) p. 63.

7 Patricia Day & Rudolf Klein, *Accountabilities: Five Public Services*, (London: Tavistock, 1987), .p. 249.

8 AMM Shawkat Ali, *The Lore of the Mandarins: Towards a Non-partisan Public Service in Bangladesh* (Dhaka: UPL, 2002), p. 213.

Moreover, much of the effectiveness of administration and achievement of socio-economic goals relies on the quality of relationship between the citizenry and civil servants. The relationship between civil servants and the citizenry is a reciprocal one. As Peters observes: "... in the long run responsibility in government can come only from the interplay of responsible officials and citizens."⁹ In a democratic milieu, the relations between the citizenry and the civil servants should be based on trust and cooperation, not on suspicion and antagonism. Civil servants can command respect and cooperation of the public when they perform their duties according to the extant rules and laws. The relations between citizens and civil servants become intimate when both redeem their respective responsibilities and obligations. When civil servants become responsive and accessible to the people, the latter tend to be protective or supportive to the former. As Marx remarks: "As the civil service leans towards the people, so the people back the service."¹⁰ The people of a country would like that civil service best which can provide them best services in terms of security of life and property, justice, economic benefits and other facilities.¹¹ Thus through committed and honest services, administrators can forge a bond between the Civil Service and the citizenry and if this bond turns 'indestructible', it is possible to counter the evil forces in society, that hinder performance of civil service responsibilities and thwart the process of democracy. It is a known fact that in the US public administration, field level civil servants remain 'a hot favourite of the people. People adore bureaucrats and bureaucrats love people.'¹² This has not been possible in Bangladesh as emulating the examples of the conventional civil servants, the civil servants of Bangladesh prefer to "defend and protect the selfish interests of its elite in the face of impending reforms to solve their dichotomous position between the people and the politicians."¹³ Experience suggests that agenda setting within the civil service 'tends to favour those with wealth, power, expertise, time and information'.¹⁴ Paradoxically, this conventional behaviour of the civil servants

9 Guy Peters, *The Politics of Bureaucracy*, (New York: Longman, 1984), p. 266.

10 Fritz Morstein Marx, "Civil Service in Germany", in Leonard H. White et al (eds.), *Civil Service Abroad* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1935). p. 218.

11 AZM Shamsul Alam, *Democracy and Election*, (Dhaka: Bangladesh Cooperative Book Society Ltd, 1996), p. 16.

12 Syndicate report of Group-A of the 14th Senior Staff Course on Transparency in Bureaucracy prepared and presented at BPATC, March, 1992. p. 3.

13 Ibid. p. 24.

14 Ibid. p. 11.

cuts short the prospects of people's participation in nation-building programmes and subverts the process of achievement of their own accountability.

The above discussion shows that people have twin roles to play--- as the source of information about the legitimate demands and genuine needs of the public and as the clientele as well as judges of administrative services. "The people are the final judge," as Zaman states, "and the jury who decide whether the same government continues or a new one is voted for. So, the people are not only the prologue, they are the epilogue of government."¹⁵ The concern for accountability should therefore not merely be focussed on the civil service or politics only. People are an important factor to establish or institutionalise democratic politics and administration. The standards of the people influence those of public officials; on the whole, it is not possible to create accountable civil servants when people themselves are non-accountable and they do not fulfil their obligations as citizens. Crichley suggests: "The status of the Civil Service is largely in the hands of the public"¹⁶. So they must be educated and conscientious enough to elect the right leaders who will act their 'service providers' making public administration by the public, not merely for the people. The ASEAN-SAARC Conference on Administrative and Financial Accountability held in 1995 in Dhaka resolved: "People are the ultimate custodian of their own rights and they alone can enforce and exact accountability from public servants. Therefore, people's education and awareness will equip them better to realize those rights and promote accountability."¹⁷ When the public representatives fail to deliver the expected level of services, the innocent, genuine service-seeking public have the right to 'claim back'¹⁸ the power or authority bestowed upon them and eventually install an alternative system to obtain services they essentially require for their survival and security. It is ultimately a strong, conscious and conscientious electorate who, in each constituency, can mobilise themselves to combat and vote out the unscrupulous persons who aspire to grab power or win in the elections resorting to ill-gotten black money and terrorism. The people should not 'choose the hands which oppress them.'¹⁹

15 Muhammad Anissuzaman, "Public Administration: A View from Bangladesh Constitution", *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh*, Vol. 49, No. 1, June 2004, p. 126.

16 T A Crichley, *The Civil Service Today*, (London: Victor, 1951), p. 88.

17 Sirajuddin H. Salleh & Arabinda Kar, eds., *Administrative and Financial Accountability: The ASEAN-SAARC Experience*, (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1995), p. 20.

18 Nighat Ara, Interpreter of Maladies, Life Style, *The Daily Star*, August 23, 2005. p. 6

19 Mohammed Badrul Ahsan, "Leaders and politicians", *The Daily Star*, January 31, 2004.p.7

If the people can succeed in two or three terms, the climate for emergence of genuine political leadership and extinction of the anti-people leadership will automatically be set. In other words, the honest, ethical, cautious civil servants and the conscious electorate must build a formidable collective resistance to fight against the selfish, greedy, exploitative, anti-people and anti-democratic politicians so that their malpractices do not go unchallenged.²⁰ Thus before citizens hold the civil servants accountable, they have to ask themselves if they have redeemed their duties or obligations as citizens or as voters as required by the Constitution that instrumentalises their will. They must exercise their rights and privileges responsibly for the sake of the common benefit and the national interest.

That people's power is invincible has been proved time and again in this part of the globe. It has been observed that since 1947, power-hungry, corrupt politicians, and military dictators have been disgracefully overthrown and sent into oblivion by the people. As Kabir Ahmed remarks: "No sensible historian can dust them down and present them as clean and respectable leaders and patriots ... Ordinary people have won and they have lost out."²¹ The mass upsurge of 1989 has demonstrated that the people of this country have the power to disempower the most powerful ruler and the coterie when things go beyond public tolerance. Moreover, the people have been able to realise through their experiences in the elections of 1991, 1996 and 2001 that 'they can make or break if not singly but collectively any aspirant to the public office through the election.'²² It is not enough that the government as a whole will be accountable to the people; the people should also be able 'to identify the responsible authorities and hold them accountable as a group for their deeds and misdeeds.'²³ A foul political aspirant can win or survive for the first time, perhaps for the second time but not any further if he or she fails to perform according to the standard set by the electorate. What is therefore needed is the continuity of the democratic process and prudent exercise of power or will by the people.

20 Ibid., p. 4.

21 Kabir U. Ahmed, "Democracy without Democratic Values", *The Daily Star*, May 5, 1997. p. 4.

22 Hybat Jan Chowdhury, "It is high time we consolidate our democracy", *The Daily Independent*, April 19, 1996. p. 4.

23 J. Roland Pennock quoted in the book *Responsibility in Government: Theory and Practice* by Herbert J. Spiro, (New York : Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1949). p. 22.

Again, people have to convince themselves that they cannot be the substitute for civil servants, they cannot by themselves solve such daunting problems as alleviating poverty, curbing terrorism or crimes, ensuring social justice, providing education to all and therefore they should not have an anti-civil service attitude and civil servants likewise should not harbour any anti-people attitude. It is hard to develop honest civil servants and genuine politicians when people tend to be degenerating and dishonest. Citizens must set up a civic culture through a comprehensive civic education overcoming inequity, injustice and arbitrariness to secure a good civil service for the country. The people have to acknowledge the truth that in the absence of good politics, they cannot achieve good governance and without good governance, they cannot enjoy a better quality of life.

On the whole, the accountability of the civil servants can be best ensured if a conscience culture can be built in the government. Two types of authority coexist in an individual --- internal authority and external authority. If the internal authority represented by the dictates of conscience and the external authority represented by the legal code meet and reinforce each other, the situation is ideal. Thus what is more important is conscience, the seat of the ethical values. As an anti-bureaucratic theorist Bennis says: "if people in authority believe that competence and conscience must be restored, then they must demonstrate both ... Whatever be the question, competence and conscience are part of the answer and unless we accept that fundamental fact we'll all, sooner or later, fall down".²⁴

One seems tempted to argue that democracy is more efficient than efficiency; democracy can be made really efficient when all including public representatives, civil servants, and the people behave in a responsible manner. As a matter of fact, accountability flourishes and thrives in a democratic culture. Again, continuous practice and nurturance of democratic values and principles facilitates conscientisation of the public who can gain the power of distinguishing between good and evil. Through democracy, one among the people teaches the other unobtrusively. Wisdom and commitment of politicians, efficiency of civil servants or administrators and consciousness of the citizenry are essential to building a sustainable democratic culture in the civil service. Democracy survives in a climate of mutual trust, respect and

24 Warren Bennis, *Why Leaders Can't Lead* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990), p. 154.

toleration. A culture where coercion prevails, where free communication is discouraged, even a curbed democracy cannot flourish in. However, a democratic culture cannot be built overnight; it is not a quick fix. Democratic culture evolves incrementally over a period of time. Its process is thwarted when practice of mutual cancellation either in politics or in administration creeps in.

When a democratic process truly operates and the electoral system is made free, fair and transparent, people can exercise their inherent power of exercising their will. Thus what is essential is to create a favourable and safe environment so that the people who embody the absolute power of the state can vote for the ideal, conscientious, people-oriented and honest leaders and vote out the 'scoundrels', 'rascals'²⁵ and 'little better than criminals'²⁶ who are guilty of embezzlement, extortion, corruption and who resort to violence and manipulations to grab power. We must not forget that if political leaders gain ascendancy through foul means, they cannot install a credible civil service; in the same way if the voters are not capable of casting their votes judiciously, a just government cannot be established.²⁷ Appropriate steps must therefore be taken by the Election Commission to ensure that 'the electoral process is not only administratively correct but also free from the perception of partisanship.'²⁸

Apart from the political process, the common people can reject the unscrupulous persons by boycotting them socially or by putting them into social disgrace. People must exert their strength of the majority because musclemen-politicians are numerically few; they must not allow these power-hungry, anti-democratic elements to secure votes by black money and violence. On the whole, social mobilisation seems to be the only antidote to rid the society of the evil forces that disrupt the peace, welfare, and development of the common people.

The US government has established a culture of 'efficiency' in administration; Malaysia and Singapore have introduced a culture of 'quality'; Japan a culture of 'productivity';

25 In George B. Shaw's views, politics is the refuse of scoundrels and *The Economist* of April 26-May 2, 1997 observes that election kicks out one set of rascals to give opportunities to another. This has been cited in the article by Kabir U. Ahmed, "Democracy without Democratic Values", *The Daily Star*, May 5, 1997. p. 4.

26 Scores of Indian politicians were branded by the Indian press as 'little better than criminals' according to a news item published in *The Daily Star*, February 28, 1998. p. 5.

27 AZM Shamsul Alam, *Democracy and Election*, (Dhaka: Bangladesh Cooperative Book Society Ltd., 1996) p. 16.

28 Feroz M. Hassan, "Democratic Elections and Citizens' Confidence", *The Daily Star*, April 28, 1996. p. 4.

and Canada a culture of 'compassion'. Bangladesh can likewise install a culture of 'accountability' rather than a culture of mutual blaming, sycophancy, malice, arrogance, inefficiency and mediocrity. The meaning and operationalising of accountability have to be rooted in the cultural fabric and value system of politics and administration. In other words, accountability must be accepted as an essential ingredient of the civil service culture, not simply as an administrative fad. This is possible when a strong, genuine political commitment is available. As a matter of fact, "the whole process of accountability will become natural and purposeful if an attitudinal revolution can be brought about both among the people and the bureaucracy."²⁹

Many nations around the world take pride of having an efficient and innovative civil service. In Europe, France and Sweden are proud of having a dignified, strong and meritorious civil service. In Asia, Singapore claims to have the best civil service. According to a survey by a Hong Kong-based think-tank, Political and Economic Risk Consultancy: "Bureaucracy in Singapore and Hong Kong is about equal, if not slightly better than Britain, the US and Australia."³⁰ Bangladesh Civil Service must join the caravan of the civil services of those countries which compete for enhancing quality and which are poised for transforming themselves into institutions capable of giving governmental leadership in the world.

This chapter and indeed this thesis have sought to identify and discuss various problems that seem to have been hindering the practice and promotion of accountability of Bangladesh Civil Service. It is not that everyone is unaware of these problems. Rather, the difficulty is how to resolve them. Piecemeal remedial suggestions such as that of "Responsible Citizenry" have been made, but underlying causes of the problems will not be so easily overcome. One needs to understand, however, that accountability has two facets, apparently discrete but interrelated ; the 'first' is basically political, and in a parliamentary system of government like that of Bangladesh, the executive (i.e., the council of ministers) is kept under an obligation to give an account of its

29 Aslam Iqbal, key-note address in the ASEAN-SAARC regional conference on Administrative and Financial Accountability, in Sirajuddin H. Salleh & Arabinda Kar, eds., *Administrative and Financial Accountability: The ASEAN-SAARC Experience*, (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1995), p. 63.

30 A news item published in *The Financial Express*, Dhaka, 9 March 1998, p. 5.

performance to the *Jatiya Sangshad*, i.e. the Parliament; the 'second' facet is primarily administrative and the executive in its turn holds the civil servants (i.e., BCS officers) working in ministries/departments and other public agencies accountable for carrying out their responsibilities. These two are complementary and they together ensure the promotion of accountability, thereby form the foundation of good governance in Bangladesh.

Annexes

Annex- 1

Course Title: *Effective Supervision and Techniques of On-the -Job Training*

Course Duration: 10 Working Days

Objectives: The major objectives of the Course are ---

- i) to enable mid-level officers working in the Civil Service agencies to play effective supervisory role ;
- ii) to transfer to them a set of instructional skills so that they can act as trainers to the relevant juniors working under them ; and
- iii) to enable them to conceptualise the significance of mentorship and to acquire the related skills and values so that they can work as mentors.

Methodology: Most of the course contents will be administered through the use of lecture method. *Syndicate work, case study* and *role play* will be also be employed side by side with lecture presentations.

COURSE CONTENTS

Module 1 : *Fundamental Principles of Supervision*

1. Theories and Concepts of Supervision
2. Traditional Supervision and Modern Supervision
3. Delegation as a Training Strategy
4. Mentorship : Concepts, Values and Skills
5. Preparing Performance Appraisal Report

Module-2 : *Instructional Techniques*

1. On-the Job-Training: What, Why and How
2. Methods of On-the Job-Training
3. Methods of OJT Needs Assessment
4. The Art of Presentation/ Public Speaking
5. Listening Skills for Supervisors
6. Coaching and Counselling Skills
7. Transactional Analysis

Annex-II

Present ACR Format

Confidential

Bangladesh form No. 290 Gha (Review) Annual Confidential Report Form-1

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Annual / Special Confidential Report

Year/Duration

Name

Designation.....

Service/Cadre/Post.....

Identification (ID) No.

Confidential

Confidential

Name Designation.....
.....

Part I- Medical Examination Report

(To be filled in by an authorised Medical Officer)

1. Height..... Weight Over/Under
Eyesight Blood group
Blood Pressure X-ray Report
ECG Report
2. Medical Category / Classification
3. Physical inability/ Nature of disability (in brief)

Date:

.....
Signature of the Medical Officer
(with name & designation)

(Part III & IV to be filled in by ORU Putting initial in the respective column)

Part III-Personal Traits

Subject of Evaluation	Marks obtained			
	1	2	3	4
2.1 Sense of discipline				
2.2 Judgement & Sense of proportion				
2.3 Intelligence				
2.4 Initiative & drive				
2.5 Personality				
2.6 Cooperation				
2.7 Punctuality				
2.8 Reliability				
2.9 Sense of responsibility				
2.10 Interest in work				
2.11 Promptness in taking action and carrying out orders				
2.12 Security consciousness				
2.13 Public relations				

Part IV- Work Performed

3.1 Professional knowledge				
3.2 Quality of work				
3.3 Quantity of work				
3.4 Ability to supervise & guide				
3.5 Relations with colleagues				
3.6 Ability to take decision				
3.7 Ability to implement decision				
3.8 Interest & ability to train subordinates				
3.9 Power to express (Written)				
3.10 Power to express (Oral)				
3.11 Promptness in writing & countersigning ACR				
3.12 Devotion to duty				

Total marks obtained:

Outstanding	Very good	Good	Average	Below average
95.100	85.94	61.84	41.60	40 and below

Signature of ORU

Part VII- Comments by the Countersigning Officer (CSO)

I think that the Evaluation of the RIO is very good/ reasonably good/ strict/liberal/ biased.

Moreover, I would like to add the following comments.

a) General Comments

b) Total Number due on the basis of overall evaluation-

Signature & Seal of CSO

Name (in block letter)

Designation.....

Date.....

Part VIII

(To be filled in by the Ministry/ Division)

1. Date of receipt of the filled in form:
2. Reason for inordinate delay:
3. Action to be taken on the application (if any):

Signature & Seal of Officer-in-Charge

Name (in block letter):

Designation:.....

Date:

Proposed Annual Performance Appraisal Format

PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN (PRIP)

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT DEFINITION

i) *Outstanding*

Performance is characterised by exceptionally high quality of work which leaves little or nothing to be desired. Officers who earn this grade have made highly significant contribution to the office, have frequently exceeded objectives.

ii) *Very good*

Performance is marked by effectiveness and high quality work. Officers rated as such are those who have made valuable contributions to the office. Key objectives have been achieved to a high standard of proficiency.

iii) *Satisfactory*

A Satisfactory Performance is that which has fully met the expectations of the position. Responsibilities/tasks have been handled competently.

iv) *Unsatisfactory*

Performance has been consistently below acceptable standards.

v) *Below average*

The officer has not been able to demonstrate a minimum level of proficiency.

Part-1

Officer's name	Identity number.....
Position.....	Grade
Department/ Ministry	
Reporting Period to	
Supervisor's Name	Position

Part-II : Generic Competency

(To be filled by RIO putting initial in the respective column)

Knowledge factors	Marks obtained			
	1	2	3	4
1. Knowledge of the job				
2. Knowledge of the relevant policies, rules and procedures				
Skill factors				
3. Analytical and Decision-making ability				
4. Ability to plan activities				
5. Ability to maintain good relations with clients/customers				
6. Communication skills : Writing skill				
7. Communication skills : Verbal skill				
8. Ability to work in a team				
9. Ability to adapt change and cope with pressure				
10. Ability to contribute innovative ideas				
Value factors				
11. Practice of the Public Interest				
12. Practice of Austerity				
13. Practice of Neutrality (non-partisanship)				
14. Practice of Responsiveness				
15. Practice of Probity				

Part-III : Specific Competency

[This part of the assessment will be based on the Work Plan Implementation Record which will be indicated in Part-IV. A Work Plan is developed jointly by ORU and RIO. Key Tasks and performance standards are agreed in line with the Ministry /Department's objectives. Both ORU and RIO will keep a copy of the Work Plan.]

Work performance factors	1	2	3	4
1. Ability to frame sound Work Plan				
2. Ability to prioritize tasks/work				
3. Commitment to implement tasks or produce results				
4. Quantity of Key Tasks done				
5. Quality of Key Tasks done				
6. Timeliness to meet targets				
7. Ability to self-monitor work plan implementation				
8. Capacity for innovation				
9. Seeks and accepts new tasks				
10. Ability to cope with implementation barriers				

Part- V

[At the end of the assessment period ORU meets the RIO and the next level manager to complete the review of performance. ORU's overall performance will be rated **Outstanding, Very good, Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory, Below average**]

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

[In completing the review the supervisor provides comments on Work plan Achievement, Performance Standards, and Additional Contributions. In deciding on the Review Recommendation all these factors are considered]

<p>Supervisor's Comments and Recommendations</p> <p>Comment on General and Specific Performance Standards _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Comment on Work plan Achievement _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Additional Contributions to Division/Unit _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Comment on Career Potential _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Training Plan _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
--

Total marks obtained:

Outstanding	Very good	Good	Average	Below average
95.100	85.94	61.84	41.60	40 and below

Annual Performance Overall Review

Outstanding Very good Good Satisfactory Unsatisfactory

Signature of the Supervisor _____ Date

Counter-signing Officer's Comments on achievements for the year and the Review Recommendation

Counter-signing Officer's Signature _____ Date.....

Annex- IV

Example of probable Key Tasks, Performance Indicators and Targets for an Assistant Commissioner (Land)

KEY TASKS COMPLETE IN DECEMBER EACH YEAR OR WHEN A NEW EMPLOYEE JOINS THE DIVISION/ UNIT	INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE STANDARDS COMPLETE WITH KEY TASKS, MUST BE ACHIEVABLE, OBSERVABLE OR MEASUREABLE	ACHIEVEMENT TOWARDS INDIVIDUAL STANDARDS COMPLETE IN NOVEMBER AS PART OF ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW
Implement one-week training programme for Tahsildars	By June 30	Training course completed Evaluation Report submitted
Disposal of mutation cases	One week from the date of receipt of the case	Number of cases disposed matched with no. of cases received
Monthly collection of LD tax	Target amount to be fixed	Highly satisfactory amount collected
Submission of monthly LD tax collection report	Completing the report by 29 th day of each month	Report received in the 1st week of the each following month
Monthly inspection of Tahsil offices	Inspection of two tahsil offices per month	Inspection reports received in time
Organising meetings with Tahsildars	One meeting per month	Meeting held/Minutes sent to the ADC's office
Complete recruitment of 10 new surveyors	By 30 th October	Recruitment accomplished
Complete inquiry into unauthorized occupancy of holding no.	By 30 th May	Inquiry report submitted
Recovery of khas land	Cases lodged with the court/attending the court	Decisions obtained in favour of the Government

Annex-V

[ORU will meet regularly with RIO to discuss progress of implementation of the work plan and adjust the Work Plan and measures if deemed necessary.]

WORK PLAN PROGRESS RECORD

Key Task no.	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
Progress Discussed & Adjustment Agreed as Detailed	Date
Supervisee's Signature	Supervisor's Signature

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