

## DEVELOPMENT OF BUREAUCRACY IN BANGLADESH: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE AND PROBLEM ANALYSIS

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### ABSTRACT

*Bureaucracy is an evitable part in the modern world. In the contemporary world, the bureaucratic machinery is used for vital services of government and proper execution of various programs with a view to attain the socioeconomic development of the country. No government of the world can avoid the necessity to maintain a capable bureaucracy to discharge its functions. Bureaucracy of a country need to be efficient enough to meet the changing demands of the society and response the challenges occurred from socio-cultural, economic and political environment changes. The purpose of this paper is to examine the evolution and development of bureaucracy as a body of government in Bangladesh from historical and administrative viewpoints. Various Hindu rajas, Muslim rulers, Zamindars of the Indian subcontinent and British lords administrated the area of Bangladesh for several hundred years. Though, it is currently an independent country of the world. In this area of the sub-continent, the bureaucracy has experienced many changes throughout the three diverse periods as the British era (1600-1947), the Pakistan era (1947-1971) and Bangladesh era (1971-2015). The organization and functioning style of bureaucracy in Bangladesh are an inheritance of British colonial rule. The chronological growth is described in focusing a quantity of accompanying features of governance. Despite the importance of Bureaucracy, Bangladesh has been suffering from serious problems since the independence of the country. In Bangladesh, the bureaucracy is frequently suspected with corruption, nepotism, ineffectiveness, lack of accountability and a group of other disorders. The paper also prescribes some recommendations for better performance of the Bangladesh bureaucracy.*

Key words: Bureaucracy, Authority, British, Pakistan, Bangladesh.

### Introduction

Bangladesh is a delta in south-Asia, with a total area of 148,460 square kilometers (The World Factbook, 2014). The number of population 159.1 million in this small land makes the country one of the most densely populated states of the world (WB, 2015). Bangladesh is still in the process of taking shape. After a violent liberation war, it became an independent nation from Pakistan on 16th December, 1971 (Lewis, 2011). Bangladesh accepts a colonial legacy in its whole public administration structure. The present Bangladesh was part of the British Empire for nearly two hundred years. Pakistani rulers swapped the British and ruled the area then known as East Pakistan in 1947. The British institution aided the bureaucracy to become a crucial tool of governance. Simultaneously, it is alleged of following the Pakistani style of association with power politics (Jahan, 2006). The present context of Bangladesh Bureaucracy is characterized by an elitist, collectivist and hierarchic sociopolitical culture. People demand more interactions from the administrative institutions.

Bureaucracy is a vital part in the contemporary world. Modern government uses their bureaucratic machineries for the execution of socioeconomic development programmes and the provision of vital services, irrespective of their made-up and ideology. Maintain a competent bureaucracy is vital for every government and it cannot be denied at all (Siddiquee, 1999). The bureaucratic system has a long historical background in Asia and in Europe. Management scientists, economists, political scientists, sociologists have outlined the concept of bureaucracy from a different point of view (Altay, 1999). This paper centered on the analysis of secondary foundations of literature. Consequently, this paper first briefly reviews the historical background of bureaucracy, present trends, problems and issues of bureaucracy of Bangladesh. Finally, the paper will prescribe some recommendations for better performance of the bureaucracy according to the changing needs of the time.

### The British Era (1600–1947)

Over two hundred years, Bangladesh was under the British rule, kept huge impact on politics and administration. A powerful civil servants group recruited and kept domination over the highly centralized structure of administration. They utilized imperial control mechanism apparently to close the differences between the ruler and the ruled. The two major functions performed by them generally are revenue administration and corrective functions. The establishment of bureaucracy was purposefully intended to stall the improvement of indigenous political foundations (Zafarullah & Khan, 2001). The entire British period can be divided into four phases from the perspective of the development of the Bureaucracy. During the Mercantile phase (1600-1765) the civil service of the East India Company was providing only mercantile service. It was basically directed and progressed by commercial necessity of the company. The second phase was Quasi Public Corporation (1765-1833) holding the commercial character side by side, it noticed by the rise of the Company to a quasi-political and managerial body devising territorial power. The third phase, Public Administration under the Company (1833-1858) developed a decently administrative body abandoning all kinds of commercial activities. At this platform in its truest sense, the service converted to a public service. The final phase

Public Administration under the Crown (1858-1947), they're seen clashes between the Company and the imperial interests that reaped up in the earlier phase resolved in this phase by shifting the civil service under the British crown's control and ending the Company (Khan, 2013). In each and every mentioned phases, the bureaucracy experienced conversion both in organizing and characteristically.

#### **The Pakistan Era (1947-1971)**

Pakistan achieved its independence in 1947. Its civil service was the Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP) continued intensely embedded in British principles and customs. The Civil Service of Pakistan was justly imitative structurally and philosophically from the Indian Civil Service (ICS) (Bribanti, 1966). This caused in the prolongation of the system of an administration which was soundly adjusted to colonial administrative pattern and to comparatively stagnant circumstances, though it was in principally and methodologically out-dated compared to the needs and demands of a modern state with diverse goals and objectives. Sustained and incessant link with an invalid administrative pattern and acceptance of outlandish ideas led to resistance to a change in the administration (Khan, 2009).

The arena of East Bengal encompassing the present grounds of Bangladesh was shaped as the eastern part of Pakistan after the divagation of India in 1947. The bureaucracy was an elite civil service from 1947–71 comprising of the members of the Civil Service of Pakistan. They had the top positions in the secretariat, districts and sub-divisions. There were other distinctive elite services. These incorporated the Taxation, Audit and Accounts, Customs and Excise, Pakistan Foreign Service, Military Accounts, Postal Services and Secretariat. Elitism pervaded every sub-the superior sector of service. The displayed distinctive characteristics elite civil services are linked to an arrangement of recruitment, advancement, training and philosophy. The members of all the elite cadre services after the recruitment in the civil service were visible to thorough and demanding training for two years of the period. Though, administrative inadequacy may be produced by issues other than cadre related political affairs, as well as lack of accountability, poor administration and lack of motivation. It is also mostly produced by the absence of an arrangement of impartial recruitment, deficiency of sufficient training and acceptable competition and deficiency of assurance about a guaranteed career and safeguard against target on party-political or other grounds. Lastly, it may also be produced by repeated interfering with the services organization in the name of reform (Mollah, 2011).

#### **The Bangladesh Era (1971-Till)**

Bangladesh appeared as an independent country in 1971 after a blood stained war with West Pakistan. Later part of liberation, it accepted a parliamentary method of government with the head of the government as the prime minister and as the head of the state was the president. Fronting different growing financial, societal, and party-political catastrophes, the government, founded one-party rule with the president at the peak of state supremacy by a constitutional modification. The experimentation was short-term, by way of the government was brutally removed from power in August 1975 by a clutch of military generals. The military governments governed the state from August 1975 to November 1991. In December 1991, the government formed by the military background person General Ershad was defeated by a general surge. Yet again, Bangladesh returned to a parliamentary method of government by a constitutional modification in 1991 (Sarker, 2004).

In Bangladesh, the Government personnel vertically have its place into four classes that is Class I Officers, Class II Officers, Class III staffs and Class IV staffs. The employees are categorized as gazetted officers and non-gazetted officers as well. The employees are recognized as gazetted officers whose appointment, transfer, promotion, posting and the related issues are reported in the government gazette. All the Class I employees and part of the Class II employees are accepted as gazetted employees. Some of the Class I employees have its place to the cadre services (Wahhab, 2009). The Bangladesh government has an administrative system with two-tier. The Bangladesh civil service has more than one million civil servants presently are accepted as "gazetted" employees; others are measured as "non-gazetted" employees. The approximate number of Class I employees is 40,000. 70% of them are recruited into 28 cadres; the others do not represent to a certain cadre but serve in purposeful parts. Recruitment is steered by the Bangladesh Public Service Commission (BPSC) according to requirement carried by the Ministry of Public Administration (MoPA), which is liable for the employment strategy of the human resources function of the civil service (Jahan, 2006).

The Bangladesh, India and Pakistan's civil service establishments are continuing to be keep impact in a significant way by British colonial administrative witnesses and idea, however a long time passed in the Indian subcontinent after that the termination of the British rule. The administrative arrangements in wholly the three states are still now relying on the dominance, elitism and distrust that also within the common publics and elected representatives. Many unproductive determinations are the consequence of the absenteeism of political willpower and administrative confrontation.

#### **Current Realities of Bangladesh Bureaucracy**

Bangladesh has accepted a colonial organization of civil service categorized by the elite, superior and unfriendly characteristically (Khan & Naziz, 2013). The bureaucracy of Bangladesh at present is succeeding a closed system for numerous reasons.

#### **Colonial Heritage**

For virtually two hundred years up to 1947 Bangladesh was one of the part of the British Domain and then it was under the control Pakistani rule till 1971. Therefore, colonial rule and Pakistani ways currently keep it up in managerial and political

measures of Bangladesh. The British institution facilitated the bureaucracy to develop as an indispensable instrument of governance and the Pakistani settlement stimulated bureaucrats to become included in power policies. The colonial inheritance rooms the bureaucracy in a more complicated situation (Jahan & Shahan, 2009).

### **Failure of Administrative Reform**

However the current times past of Public Administration Reforms has turned into zero more than an arrangement of reform works and suggestions, by the small sign of actual modification. After independence 17 reform Commissions or Committees created by the various regimes with the intention to rearrange public sector and the civil service. By various Commissions and Committees more than 20 reports on administrative reform have been prepared and several reports of those were arranged at the effort of some of the vital development associates, principally the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Department for International Development (DFID) (Kim & Monem, 2009). However, in spite of all these determinations, not considerably was prepared to better the condition. Absence of political determination and bureaucratic confrontation to change sustained to discourage all determinations.

### **Elitism**

The elites of Bureaucracy exerts huge official power, the government organizations provided that to them all the essential foundations of influence, of prosperity, and of respect, and simultaneously, the principal resources of exercising influence, of obtaining and holding means. Such inspirations may make possible to exploitation of authority, organizational ill will, corruptibility, disrespect of societal and administrative controls, defense of elite benefits and separation from the common people. In spite of various progressive characteristics in modern bureaucracies the threats of bureaucratic elitism are a lot of. Every now and then, an elitist bureaucracy possibly will not sufficiently perform its active and productive roles sound, by this way inadequate to accomplish its expectation and down its acceptability to support the public devotion (Zafarullah, 2007).

### **Politicization of Bureaucracy**

The people of Bangladesh are facing a lot of problems as a result of poor facilities from the bureaucrats since independence. Moreover, people are not pleased at the bureaucrat's because of on-going relation to the ruling political parties to get an advantage, special treatment and welfares. It is estimated that the bureaucrats had better be neutral and impartial in their works and they had better not include themselves in the politics. Moreover, this is one of the mutual objectives of any representative society. For the sake of public interests, there are definite extents of an administration that must be protected from politics. The impartial role of bureaucrats is as well vital in the execution of good governance schedule which have come to be an essential part of the state goal of the emerging states in the era of globalization. However, the success of the good governance driver has become depressed due to the politicization of the bureaucracy. Bureaucracy is going to be ineffective and unproductive in the nonexistence of efficiency, equality and neutrality is an apparent drawback of the politicization of bureaucracy (Doullah, 2016).

### **Resistance to Change**

The matter of inclusive administrative reform has to be realized in the perspective of the function and inspiration of the civic bureaucracy. Administrative reforms in Bangladesh have weakened for absence of support of the civil servants who are liable for executing reforms that are probable to make an influence on them. The maximum number of civil servants accepts a protective approach to the prevailing power conformation, which generally welfares to themselves as well as the concerned group of interests. They perceive reform efforts as a demotion of their current position, status, and authority and coordinate resistance to discourage reform execution. The propensity of maximum number of civil servants to reserve the present circumstances, and, preferably, lengthen their area of impact in the public service arrangement, is highly seen in Bangladesh. The fragile structure of political leadership added encouragement to bureaucratic resistance in the matter of administrative reforms. This matter is principally significant when the government of Bangladesh has undertaken an NPM-style reform program on the desk (Sarker, 2004).

### **Groupism in the Public Sector**

Rather than executing extensive reform programs, consecutive governments have been concerned in performing with the prevailing groupism friction in the bureaucracy, in the issue of the continuing current situation, and in constructing their individual back up. The deep-rooted groupism have several magnitudes: spoils system contestants versus employee's entrance through open competitive exams, freedom fighters versus non-freedom fighters, supporters of Awami league versus supporters of Bangladesh Nationalist Party civil servants, military background civil servants versus civilian civil servants, and groupism grounded on district attachment. Wholly these sets contest with the political leadership concerning difficulties distressing their personal gain. The reform program if create dissatisfaction regarding the benefits of specific sets, and then they have a tendency to support maximum struggles to stop execution of the reform (Sarker, 2004).

### **Corruption**

Corruption is widespread in Bangladesh. However, corruption has been considered as a part of our political and administrative life. After the independence of the state, the organs of corruption have surrounded the whole society. Therefore, solid and continuous is the impact of corruption that maximum number of the people is admitting it such as a fait accompli. It is generally

recognized that practically all categories of corruption are continuing in the administrative and the political sector in Bangladesh. The utmost common method of corruption is monetary inducements. Other practices of corruption are including exploitation of power, favoritism, discrimination, deception, support, larceny and trickery. The motives for all types of corruption are: Firstly, in general civil servants does not lose their jobs in spite of having corrupt rehearses. Secondly, people have a propensity not simply to accept corruption, but as well show appreciation to the civil servants who have created prosperity through doubtful means. Thirdly, for a citizen it is more relaxed to acquire rapid service as he has by this time funded the civil servant rather than delay for his chance to get the service. Fourthly, currently there is social approval of corruption by the civil servants. Fifthly, politicians who are in power, are reluctant to get active actions to control corrupt rehearses in public transactions (Khan, 2003).

### **Recruitment Problems**

The problematic issue in the recruitment procedure is twofold. The first one is organizational problem which contains the long process and the insufficient salary arrangement. The second one is party-political and corruption associated issues which comprise leak of question papers and recruitment on political consideration as the follower of the political parties. Neither the issue is too challenging or difficult to resolve. Donor's society is eager to provide funding in different reform projects since development aid is more possible to prosper if there is an operating organizational device. That is why the development associates frequently stress on capability increase of the civil servants. The intensification in contractual recruitment in the civil service possibly as well reproduces the skill difficulty: the government frequently has no substitute, then again to contract owing to the inadequate figure of expert public employees (Jahan, 2006).

### **Lack of Transparency and Accountability**

In Bangladesh, the procedure of decision making in the civil service is not transparent still now. Concerned people of the country do not have any prospect to understand almost how particular judgments have been attained at. Nontransparent procedure of making judgment has made it challenging to make civil servants accountable for their judgments. Making the civil servants accountable for their activities has shown to be a problematic job in Bangladesh. Outdated instruments such as hierarchy and control have unsuccessful frequently. Other instruments like parliamentary control mechanisms, including numerous committees, legal interference, press and media have basically been fruitless in creating civil servants responsible for their performances (Khan, 2013).

### **Recommendations**

In the prevalent condition particular constructive steps important to be taken to restructure the bureaucracy of Bangladesh. The recommendations are:

- a) A mission statement of the civil service can help to generate a flawless logic of the path and guidelines for civil servants working in different divisions within the organization.
- b) Stimulates the civil servants with a sense of connectivity in the organization.
- c) Transforming the socioeconomic condition, principally growing provisions for transparency have requirement of the state for appraisal and modify procedures to settle that civil servant's activities match to expected principles and ideals.
- d) Combating corruption should be the country's number-one vital task for reducing political and administrative corruption and its miscellaneous effect on the society largely.
- e) The oaths of political leadership can perform as an influential power after the implementation of administrative reform efforts. However, in the perspective of Bangladesh, political leadership is liable for diverting the all-inclusive reform programs.
- f) Recruitments would be transparent and neutral.
- g) Efficient and competent functioning of the civil service through the use of ICT.

### **Conclusion**

The Bureaucracy of Bangladesh had been a well-established service by means of its particular established standards, which established in more than one hundred years (Rahman, 2002). But, it is needed strong determinations to be prepared to generate the co-operation to prepare sound civil service which is pivotal for presenting major changes in the organization (Mollah, 2014). The output, efficiency and accountability of the administration is needed with the changing needs of the time. However the situation is not adequate to accomplish the aim. The government requires to do promise itself to ensure proper reform sets; according to they are guaranteed to produce mutually political and financial success. The regime needed to perform prompt to regenerate discipline in the principal organization through constructive apparatuses of direction, justification, distribution and instruction before embarking on micro level variations in the administrative organization.

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