

Strengthening Local Govt in Bangladesh

Constitutional Provisions for Local Government: Administration and Development by People's Representatives

by Mohammad Siddiqueur Rahman

Local government may be entrusted with administrative responsibilities of the government within the area of its jurisdiction and may also be authorised to supervise, control or coordinate the work of public officers.

THE Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh contains certain specific provisions for the establishment and strengthening of local government. In the Fundamental Principles of state policy of the constitution it is stated in article 9 that "The state shall encourage local government institutions composed of Representatives of the areas concerned and in such institutions special representation shall be given as far as possible, to peasants, workers and women."

The fundamental principles of state policy thus makes it obligatory on the part of the government to promote local government, composed of the representatives of the people. In order to enable the backward communities like the peasants, workers and women to participate in the local government the constitution provides that they should have special representation as far as possible. It also precludes the formation of a local government with any government official or any other person appointed by the government or inducted from outside the area.

In article 11 it is further stated that "The Republic shall be a democracy in which fundamental human rights and freedoms and respect for the dignity and worth of the human person shall be guaranteed and in which effective participation by the people through their elected representatives in administration at all levels shall be ensured."

Article 59(1) of the Constitution lays down that "The local government in every administrative unit of the Republic shall be entrusted to bodies composed of persons elected in accordance with law."

There is thus no provision for appointment or nomination of any chairman or member of a local government. They must be elected representatives of the people. Since all members must be elected representatives of the people, the question of nomination of women members cannot arise and so is the case with peasants and workers representatives.

each other at the local level towards attaining the common goal. But if a particular aspect of agricultural extension is given to the local government, the officers and staff of the Agricultural extension department within the area should be accountable and responsible to the local government. According to the constitutional provision, one of the most important function that may be entrusted to the local government under an Act of Parliament is the maintenance of public order. Maintenance of public order is fundamental to the socio economic and political stability of the country. Without public order there is neither security nor stability which are the most essential foundations for social harmony, economic growth and social development. One of the most fundamental duties of the National government is the maintenance of law and order

and internal security within the state. The constitutions rightly provides for the local government to under-take this essential function of the state which touches all the people at the grass-root-level. The local government at various levels may be law, be made responsible for prevention and detection of crime, prosecution of offenders and the holding of local courts for awarding punishment to the extent given to these institutions under the act of parliament. The local governments at various levels may have their own police or security force and may have control and coordination and supervisory powers on state police or security forces within the jurisdiction of the respective local government may be provided under the law.

The extent of authority that should be given to local government for maintenance of law and order will vary with the country's chief institutions with the organisation's work, to provide means of information and consultation, carry out projects, publish works, ensure participation in international programmes, organise conferences and spread out UNESCO's ideals.

More than 500 international NGOs are working and have mutual information arrangements with UNESCO. These NGOs have national branches in a large number of countries uniting groups concerned with UNESCO's work: educators, scientists, artists, librarians, museum experts, data specialists, journalists. The activities of UNESCO fall under the following eight broad headings: Education: Eliminating illiteracy and encouraging fundamental education, raising educational standards, promoting through education greater respect for human rights, and making information available on educational techniques.

Natural Sciences: Creating greater collaboration between scientists and encouraging the popularisation of science. Social Sciences: Encouraging the study of the psychological and social problems involved in the development of mutual understanding such as racial prejudice and religious differences. Cultural Activities: Developing cultural exchanges between member-states and giving people access to works of art, literature, and philosophy.

Technical Assistance: Providing expert advice in areas of fundamental education, technical education, scientific research and scientific advisory services. Member-states are advised in such matters as their literacy campaigns, school-building programmes, surveying of mineral resources, teachers training. UNESCO also contributes to the translation of certain masterpieces of world literature, recording of traditional music from all regions of the world and renders valuable assistance and advice in the maintenance of cultural heritages of nations throughout the world and participates in the prevention of drug abuse and AIDS through education programmes and a centre set up to gather assess and distribute educational material on AIDS prevention (ASERC - AIDS School Education Resources Centre - at UNESCO Headquarters, Paris). UNESCO gives top priority to its education programme, which consists of:

1. Basic education for all; 2. Education for the twenty-first century; and 3. Action for progress in education. Teachers training, access to education for girls and women, for peace and international understanding, for environment for AIDS prevention, intellectual, scientific and technological, and vocational and technical education - these are some of the important aspects of education covered by the organisation, particularly under its 'Education for the twenty-first century' programme. Moreover, under the aegis of UNESCO, agreements on the promotion of the mobility of students and teachers through the recognition of their university diplomas have been adopted in all the regions. The UNITWIN Projector inter-

university co-operation aims at supporting higher education of developing countries. Its main objective is to foster a sense of common purpose based on twinning, networking and the establishment of sub-regional, regional and inter-regional co-operation agreements linking universities and scientific institutions throughout the world. UNESCO publishes and distributes numerous periodicals, documents and books dealing with the various aspects of education, including the World Education Report, which first appeared in 1991 and which analyses major educational trends and policies of today's world. Why is UNESCO in high esteem to the teachers worldwide? To recall history, it was at the First Session of the UNESCO General Conference, a delegate requested to "Draft and promulgate a World Teachers' Charter, which would tend to: 1) ensure the material conditions of the teacher; 2) raise his or her moral condition; and 3) protect freedom of teaching. As a follow-up of this, a special inter-governmental conference, held in Paris on October 5, 1966, under the auspices of UNESCO, adopted the magna carta for the teachers world-wide known as 'The UNESCO/ILO Recommendation concerning the status of teachers'. Again at the twenty-sixth session of the UNESCO General Conference, it was decided that a World Teachers' Day should be observed in a particular day of the year, and accordingly, October 5 was chosen. Furthermore, the recent statement of Colin N. Power, Assistant Director General for Education 'Teachers not only feel they are excluded and disempowered; they often are', genuinely reflects the feelings of the teachers throughout the world. UNESCO Commission Bangladesh this year has observed 'Teachers' Day' in collaboration

with different teachers' organisations of Bangladesh. It may be mentioned here that Bangladesh became a member of UNESCO in October 1972 in pursuance of Article VII of UNESCO Constitution. Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO has also been set up by the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the Education Minister being its Chairman and the Secretary Education, Secretary General with 69 government and non-government members including eminent personalities in the field of education, science and culture. Since out of all the 14 specialised agencies of the UN family only UNESCO provides for the organisation of National Commissions (institutions) for the goals and purposes of UNESCO. BNCU has to act, broadly speaking, in the capacities of advisory, liaison, information and executive bodies in respect of UNESCO and its programmes. Its activities, therefore, centre around UNESCO with its headquarters in Paris and different regional offices.

The primary function of BNCU is the involvement of national organisations (institutions) in the programmes and activities of the above-mentioned offices and agencies of UNESCO and its related organisations. In the international arena, UNESCO also works in many fields hand in hand with other bodies. For example, in a comment contributed to the International Herald Tribune last May, Federico Mayor (UNESCO), James Wolfensohn (World Bank), and executives from UNDP, UNICEF and the UN Population Fund (UNPF) deplored that there are still 130 million children who have no access to school and will soon join the world's 885 million illiterate adults, majority of them being girls and women.

It is unacceptable that a world that spends approximately 800 billion a year on weapons cannot find the money - an estimated 36 billion per year - to put every child in school by the year 2000. A mere one per cent decrease in military expenditure worldwide would be sufficient in financial terms" wrote the authors, concluding: "We wish to stress our conviction that basic education for all is not only a human right, but also the cornerstone of human development. Providing access to high-quality basic education is probably the single most effective means to ensure democracy, sustainable development and peace."

In its 1996 Human Development Report published last July, the UNDP deplores the widening wealth gap between different nations of North and South and within many countries such as Australia, Great Britain, Switzerland and the United States of America.

The 1996 'Human Development Report' on Bangladesh by UNDP worth quoting and relevant with the Founding Day of UNESCO in the Bangladesh context. Bangladesh can take pride in impressive gains in human development indicators, but it cannot become complacent. Education, health, nutrition and family planning require unstinting efforts to improve quality and cost-effectiveness. Much also remains to be done to remove obstacles to the greater participation of women in mainstream economic activities. Better implementation and coordination will help ensure that Bangladesh, especially women and children, receive the services they need. "Three measures in the education sector that would have a high pay-off in terms of improving quality and cost-effectiveness are: greater investment in developing the professional capabilities of teachers, especially women, throughout the education system; greater emphasis on learning outcomes at all education levels and more efficient management of human physical, and financial resources."

The writer is General Secretary of Bangladesh Federation of Teachers' Association (BFTA) and Bangladesh College Teachers' Association (BCTA).

On the Founding Day of UNESCO

by Quazi Faruque Ahmed

TODAY, November 4, is the founding day of UNESCO, one of the specialised agencies of the United Nations. UNESCO which stands for United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation came into existence today (4 November) in 1946 with the objective, according to its Constitution, of contributing to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law, and for the human rights which are affirmed by the Charter of the United Nations. UNESCO's Constitution further says that since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the defence of peace must be constructed. Building these defences through international intellectual co-operation remains UNESCO's prime objective. UNESCO currently comprises of 184 member-states which was 20 at the time of its inception. Its three bodies are: a General Conference, comprising one representative from each member state, which meets every two years to approve the programme and budget; an Executive Board of 51 members which meets at least twice a year and is responsible for the execution of the programme adopted by the Conference and a Secretariat under a Director-General with Headquarters in Paris. Programmes are decided by a biennial General Conference of all member-states, who also contribute money (the current budget amounts to 290 million dollars) to carry those out. A 51-member Executive Board supervises execution of the programmes by the Secretariat. The Secretariat, drawn from more than 130 nations and a wide range of specialties, works either at Paris Headquarters or on projects around the globe. At its head is a Director-General elected for six years. Most member-states, including Bangladesh, have set up UNESCO National Commissions which number 177 now to associate educational, scientific and cultural circles and he

The Daily Star Entertainment Guide

Monday 4th November (All programmes are in local time. There may be changes in the programmes.)
BTV: 3:00 Opening Announcement, 3:10 Quran Programme Summary, 3:15 Reclation From The Bible, 3:15 Cartoon Film: Macron 3:45 Drama Series: Retelecast of Selected Dramas 4:00 News in Bangla 4:45 Esho Gan Shikhi 5:00 News in Bangla 5:25 Nazrul Songs 5:50 Sports Programme 6:00 News in Bangla 6:30 Tarunnya 7:00 The News 7:05 Open University 7:25 Antare-Antare 8:00 News in Bangla 8:40 Package Drama 10:00 News in English 10:30 Shasthathatha 10:35 Sukher Thakur 10:55 Comedy Series Coach 11:30 News in Bangla 11:35 Tuesday's Programme 11:40 Close down.
CHANNEL V: 6:00 Frame by Frame 7:00 Rewind VJ Sophia 8:00 Frame by Frame 9:00 Big Bang VJ Alessandra 10:30 Frame by Frame 11:00 The Vibe VJ Luke 12:00 Rewind VJ Sophia 1:00 By Demand VJ Trey 2:00 Frame by Frame 2:30 First Day First Show 3:00 Sansui Mangla Hai 4:00 Planet Ruby 4:30 By Demand VJ Trey 5:30 Rewind VJ Alessandra 7:00 Big Bang VJ Sophia 7:00 Planet Ruby 9:00 BFL Cye! 10:00 First Day First Show 11:00 Launch Pad VJ Sophia 12:00 Over The Edge VJ Sophia 12:30 Big Bang VJ Alessandra 1:00 Haysah 2:00 By Demand VJ Trey 3:00 Big Bang VJ Alessandra 4:30 Asian Top 20 VJ Trey.
STAR PLUS: 6:00am Home and Away 6:30 The Sullivan 7:00 American Oz Style 7:30 Star News 8:00 Style News 8:30 Star News 9:00 Style News 9:30 Aerobics Oz Style 10:00 Nathalie Dupree Cooks 10:30 Videofashion Best Bon Paris 11:00 Kate & Alie 11:30 The Oprah Winfrey Show 12:30 Dynesty 1:30 Santa Barbara 2:30 The Bold & The Beautiful 3:00 Bunniyaad 3:30 Lifetime 4:00 Home and Away 4:30 Lost in Space 5:30 Adventures Of Black Stallion 6:00 Kate & Alie 6:30 Nathalie Dupree Cooks 7:00 The Amul India Show 7:30 Star News Hindi 8:00 Small Wonder 8:30 The Bold and the Beautiful 9:00 Intihan 9:30 Star News 10:00 Yes Minister 10:30 Chicago Hope 11:30 The Bold & The Beautiful 12:00 Santa Barbara 1:00 The X Files 2:00 Star Trek 3:00 Quincy 4:00 The Oprah Winfrey Show 5:00 Barnaby Jones.
STAR MOVIES: 7:30 Classic: Sons and Lovers 15 (Hindi Subtitles) 9:30 Adventure: Beyond The Call Of Duty 15 (Arabic Subtitles) 11:30 Classic: House of Bamboo (PG) (Arabic Subtitles) 1:30 Romance: Kentucky Woman 1 (Hindi Subtitles) 3:30 Family: King of the Wind PG (Hindi Subtitles) 5:30 Film Club: Rescue Me 15 (Arabic Subtitles) 7:30 Film FC

PTV: 8:00 am Tilawat Aur Tarjuma/Hamd/Naat 8:30 Cartoon 8:30 Khabran: 8:45 Abb Pata Challa 9:05 Khat Fairmash 9:20 Sargam Sargam 9:45 Ilaq-Bal-Ghiza Pakistan 10:05 Shab Daigh 10:35 English Film: Gool Troop 10:55 Milli Naghma 11:00 Khabran 11:10 The Saint (Roger Moor) 12:00 Shama (Drama Serial) 12:55pm Quran-e-Hakeem 1:02 Bismillah 1:15 Anjar (Drama Serial) 2:00 Shehrad (Drama Serial) 2:50 The Face Of Cultural 3:15 Roushni 3:30 Paimaney 4:00 Gharidhar 4:35 Biology for 10th Geography Chemistry 5:25 Inter College Quiz 6:25 Asia Courses 7:00 Tararum (Drama Serial) 7:45 English News 8:00 Potluck 8:20 Ali Baba 8:45 Tum Se Kahen Tha (Serial) 9:00 Break for Headline News 10:00 Khabarnama 11:15 Classics Drama Serial: Janglee 12:20 Special: TBA 1:00 Khas Khas Khathar: Close down.
ZEE TV: 6:00 The News 6:30 Jagran 7:00 A to Z of Computer 8:00 ZEE education prog 8:30 The Dream Merchants 9:00 Hum Zamam 9:30 Gaane Anjane 10:00 Sailaab 11:00 Dak Ghar/Apna Ghar 11:30 Gopajee 12:00 Suno Suno Tring Tring 12:30 Celeste 1:00 A to Z of Computer 1:30 Asian Sky-Marketing 2:30 Tara 3:00 Kurukshetra 3:30 Mere Ghar Ana Zindagi 4:00 Mano Ya Na Mano 4:30 Khana Khanaza 5:00 A to Z of Computer 5:30 Akbar Birbal 6:00 Cartoons 6:30 Love Story 7:00 ZED 7:30 Gaane Anjane 8:00 Tol Mol Ka Bol 8:30 TVS Sa Re Ga Ma 8:15 Akha Jhaas 9:30 Campus 10:00 Darar 10:30 The News 11:00 Shayed 11:30 Close Up Antakshari 12:00 Prerivan 12:30 Andaz 1:00 9 Melaab 1:30 Aap Ki Pasand 2:00 Zee Arabia Arabic Programme 2:30 Zee Arabia: Infotainment -TMM.
DD 7: 10:30 Janmadin 10:35 Educ Prog 11:00 Nazruligeli 11:15 Folk Songs 10:00 Janani 1:30 Monorama Cabin 2:30 Aiy Chandee Ki Anandey (Serial) 3:00 Bahari (Serial) 3:30 Isha (Serial) 5:05 Nepali Programme 5:30 News 5:35 Dush Bidasher Khela 6:00 Pali Katha 6:30 Batayan (Serial) 6:55 Arati (Serial) 7:30 Bangla Sambad 7:55 Drindan 8:00 Gan Sudra Gan (Serial) 8:45 Sapthaha 9:00 Janar 9:30 Monorama Cabin 10:00 Bengali Movie Club Film Show 1:00 Close.
SONY ET: 8:30am Yaadon Ki Baraat 9:00 The Three Stooges 9:30 Denial of the Manes 10:00 I Dream Of Jeannie 11:00 Surf Wheel Of Fortune (Game Show) 11:00 Cover Story-Hostel (Serial) 12:00 Mere Message Meri Gest 1:30 Boat Ek Raz Ki (Serial)

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