HERE are several theories

emerge and survive in society

and point to the conditions

the prospect of enhancing effi-

debate on the role of NGOs in

Bangladesh. Hardline analysts

reject the idea that NGOs can

play any role in the social

transformation process. This

group of critics acknowledge

that the NGOs are efficient mo-

bilizers of the rural poor, but re-

ject the claim that the NGOs can

play an effective role in social

transformation. They argue

that the NGOs are weakening

the local government bodies by

installing a parallel institution

for local level development

through ad-hoc-projects. This

school of observers argue that

the NGOs are not politically

strong enough nor have any so-

cial commitment to be able to

bring about any changes in the

existing power structure; rather

it is claimed that the NGOs ei-

ther knowingly or otherwise

serve the interest of interna-

NGOs in Bangladesh

became a part of the institu-

tional framework for ap-

proaching rural development.

poverty alleviation pro-

grammes and disaster man-

agement in Bangladesh. There

has been a steady growth of a

number of national NGOs over

the last one and a half decades.

As of date, there are as many as

14,000 registered NGOs in

Bangladesh. About 1,078 NGOs

are funded by external donors

of which 135 are foreign and

involvement in the overall de-

velopment programmes could

The significance of the NGOs'

Garfield ®

SO, CLIVE, WHERE

WERE 400 BORN?

Tom and Jerry

943 are local NGOs.

Since the early 1970s, NGOs

tional corporate capital.

There has been considerable

ciency of public sector.

that provide alternative

explanations of why NGOs

NGOs and UPs

Towards Institutional Interactions

by Dr. Salahuddin Aminuzzaman

The Government of Bangladesh (GOB) has time and again categorically emphasised the need for and importance of involving the NGOs as partners of development especially at the local level.

bursed through NGOs was about under which the institutional 1 per cent only in 1972-73. During the mid '80s, on an average form is likely to perform better about 16.39 per cent of the total than the state and the market. As far as the role of NGOs are foreign aid inflow was mediated concerned there are three difthrough the NGOs. By the end of ferent perspectives: first, the Fiscal Year 1986-87, the pronotion that NGOs represent a portion has further increased to force towards democratic plu-19.4 per cent. From June '90 to ralist civil society; second, a December '96, NGOs have imview that NGOs have particular plemented 3,873 projects at a strengths in poverty alleviation cost of Taka 498.19 million. and sustainable development; and third, that the NGOs offer

The Government of Bangladesh (GOB) has time and again categorically emphasised the need and importance of involving the NGOs as partners of development especially at the local level. Nevertheless, there seems to be a noticeable ambiguity in the policies of the GOB on the role and scope of the involvement of the NGOs in Bangladesh. Different GOB plan documents have vaguely indicated the possible involvement of the NGOs, but could not identify any specific package of intervention strategy. As a result, NGOs are getting involved in a wide variety of projects. In the absence of an integrated plan, NGOs are working in the local areas almost completely in isolation without any interaction with the GOB functionaries and/or the Local Government

be seen from the pattern of in-

flow of foreign resources to the

sector. The proportion of total

foreign aid to Bangladesh dis-

A review of the overall development management scenario and NGO operations indicates the following general trends:

a. The GOB has, in principal, accepted NGOs as partners of development management. Some experimental collaborative programmes between GOB and selected large NGOs have been designed.

b. The GOB has authorised some NGOs as contractors for the delivery of selected social services e.g. education, health,

c. Donors are increasingly putting pressure on GOB to make use of the services of the NGOs. Donors argue that GOB's institution-building at the local level should be from outside and below through the NGOs and their demonstration effect.

UP-NGO Interactions:

Empirical Analysis

some general discussion on the

role of NGOs in strengthening

the local government bodies,

but no serious empirical study

has so far been undertaken to

examine the institutional in-

teractions between the NGOs

and the Union Parishads. Con-

sidering the expanding role of the NGOs and the overall im-

portance of Union Parishad as

the primary local government

unit in Bangladesh, in our study

we have tried to examine the

present mode and pattern of in-

stitutional linkages between

the UPs and the NGOs and iden-

tify the likely areas where UPs

and the NGOs can enter into ef-

fective and meaningful collabo-

ration. Empirical data for this

study was drawn from 30

Unions representing six divi-

Findings: especially among the

poor, about the NGOs is that

these are the "extension agents"

of the international donor

agencies and are supposed to

provide free relief goods, credit

and other logistic supports to

of an NGO in rural areas usu-

ally, at the beginning, generates

a lot of enthusiasm and interest

among the poorer section of the

to have clear understanding

about the role of NGOs in their

respective localities. Empirical

findings on the level of aware-

ness of the sampled UP officials

reveal that 92 per cent of the

sampled respondents are aware

of the existence and the overall

activities of the NGOs working

in their respective localities.

This indicates the overall

awareness and interest of the

UP officials regarding the pro-

grammes and activities of the

INVISIBLE COUNTY HOSPITAL?)

Rural elite and leaders seem

the poor and destitute. Presence

Summary of Empirical

Though there have been

Respondents were further asked to name the projects being administered by the NGOs. A significant percentage (83.14 per cent) of the respondents were able to describe the projects and their beneficiaries. Rest of the respondents gave some vague impressions about the NGO programmes. This once again illustrates a considerably high degree of understanding of the UP officials as regards to the NGO operations in their respective areas. The researchers were inter-

ested to know whether the NGOs maintain any formal communication with the UP officials in organising and managing their projects. It is quite evident from the findings that the NGOs are working almost in 'isolation' from the local bodies especially from the Union Parishads. Ninety-four per cent of the respondent UP officials noted that the NGOs do not formally communicate (official letters, formal meetings etc.) with them at any stage of their programme operations. Though the respondents reported that in some occasions, field functionaries of the NGOs visit them socially and at times ask for suggestions and casual advice. but they do not maintain any formal communication with the UP as such. Even those who reported (only 6 per cent) the existence of formal communication with NGOs could not specifically refer to the content of such communication. Upon further scrutiny it was revealed that most of these communications were merely letters from the NGO head offices appreciating the overall support rendered

However, to make the NGO projects more effective and responsive, the UP officials strongly believe that there

JIM DAY 95 4-24

By Hanna-Barbera

YEAH, RIGHT. NEVER)

by the UPs to the concerned

should be some mode of formal linkages between the NGOs and the UPs concerned in organising and managing the projects. A significant majority of the respondents (75.33 per cent) emphasised the need for formal communications between the UP and the NGOs. This demonstrates a greater degree of interest on the part of the UP officials to maintain a formal channel of communication and interactions with the NGOs at the operational level.

The respondents were asked to identify the functional areas in which UPs and NGOs could launch such collaboration. Almost 75 per cent of the sampled UP officials decisively noted that NGOs should consult the UP in project selection, about 65 per cent observed that NGOs could formally involve in the process of implementing the projects, and 63 per cent emphasised that NGOs should be in touch with UPs in identifying the target groups. UP officials, thus, claimed that a more formal and structured linkages with the NGOs at the local level would help the later in getting administrative and political support, resolving local level functional problems, and also monitoring and evaluation of the projects.

UP officials, considering their limitation of resources and capability, have specifically marked some programme areas and projects where NGOs could provide necessary support and assistance to the Union Parishads. The suggested areas of programme support are: health and family planning services, design and management of income generating and poverty alleviation projects. mass education, livestock and fisheries, social forestry and environment, infrastructure and agricultural development.

hand, also asserted that UPs can extend meaningful and effective support to the NGOs in their programme operations. UP officials, in general. expressed their keen interest to extend their support and assistance to the NGOs in solving different operational and field-level problems during project implementation (74.66 per cent), the implementation of projects (65.33 per cent) and identification of target groups (56.66 per cent), monitoring and evaluation of NGO projects (51.33 per cent)and planning future projects 47.33 per cent. UP officials appear to be quiet concerned about their po-

UP leaders, on the other

litical representativeness. They consider representativeness as the strongest strength of the UP as an institution. Popular participation and political accountability is considered to be the important aspects of the institutional strength of the UP. It also appears from the findings that the UP officials are fully aware of the fact that their power base and representation are democratic and popular. Besides, UP officials noted that as a grassroots level popular institution, UP in general receive a lot of support from the national government.

UP leaders have found to be concerned about their limitations too. Given the role and functions delegated by the Local Government Ordinance, they were asked to identify some of their institutional and functional weaknesses. As regards to weaknesses, the UP officials have categorically noted that lack of financial resources weakens the UP severely (84.67 per cent), which is followed by the high degree of control of the Thana and District level officials of the national government (65.33 per cent). The other weaknesses include failure to mobilise local resources, lack of manpower and logistics, too much dependence on national government and poor management skill.

UP officials also acknowledged that because of local politics and culture of murubbism (rule of elders). gushti (kinship) lineage, they failed to mobilise the local resources through collection of taxes and tolls. Lack of adequate manpower is also a

problem for the UPs. Apart from the Secretary and the chawkidars. UPs do not have any staff to organise, plan and implement the local level development projects, which, eventually, make them dependent upon the local level national government functionar-

UP leaders are, however, guiet appreciative of the performance of the NGOs. UP officials have given a sort of impressionistic observation as regards to the strengths of the NGOs. They duly recognised the institutional strengths of the NGOs. A significant percentage (67.61) of the respondents regarded that NGOs, in general, receive generous logistic support from the donors which make their work easier and more effective. 63.38 per cent of the UP officials noted that regular flow of fund have made the NGOs responsive to the clientele need and functionally more active. UP officials also recognised that the technical skills of the NGO staff contribute significantly to their institutional strengths. UP officials admitted that NGO staff are highly disciplined too. Furthermore, NGO officials tend to maintain good links with the Thana Level Officers (TLOs) which contribute to the overall effectiveness of the NGO functionaries at the local level.

The author is a Professor. Department of Public Administration, University of Dhaka. The above is a summary version

of his research study.

Tomorrow: Towards an Effective Partnership.

BANGABANDHU MURDER CASE

Verbatim Text of Cross Examination of 47th Prosecution Witness

(Continued from yesterday) Defence lawyers on Tuesday continued the cross-examination of PW-47, Major General (retd) Khalilur Rahman, in the Bangabandhu murder case. by Jim Davis

Following are the excerpts from examination by advocate Khan Saifur Rahman, counsel for accused Lt Col (dismissed) Syed Farooq Rahman:

Q: Will you go to court regarding the your interview published in Abu Sayeed's

A: Without going through the book, I would not say anything in this regard. I would decide after reading the book whether I will go to the court or

Q: Had you and the chiefs of three services suggested Khandakar Mustaque to form the cabinet with civilians?

A: I did not give any sugges-Q: Did you have acquaintance with lather of Zobaida

Rashid? A : Yes. We had studied together. Q: Is verbal order effective

under Army Act? A: Yes. Q: Did the chiefs of different

services have to show allegiance to a new President of the country? A: Showing allegiance is not

needed if the government or the President changes constitutionally. Q : Did you express allegiance when the first constitution

formulated in 1973? A: I was not in the country that time. Besides, there was no

need for it. Q: That's mean, you had expressed allegiance once after the Independence and it was to August 15 with a view to avoiding civil war? A: Yes.

Khandakar Mustaque?

Mustaque?

the president.

A: Yes. But I signed a form

Q: Did you work for any

A: Did not work directly un-

showing allegiance to

Bangladesh after repatriation.

president before Khandaker

der any president, but before

Mustaque, Bangabandhu

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was

Q: Is it correct that you (BDR)

did not go for any action after

the incident in the morning on

Q: Is BDR under Defence Service? A: Yes. Q: There was consensus among the members of defence service not to go for any action

against one another? A: Yes. Correct. Q: Had you heard the proclamation of martial law

through radio on August 20, A: I heard it in the radio but

did not read. Q: Did you hear the proclamation of martial law on Au-

gust 15? A: Heard the promulgation of curfew and martial law in radio in Major Dalim's voice.

Q: Did you resign or protest after the proclamation of martial law on August 20? A: No. I did not.

Q: In which incident did you come for giving witness? A: Bangabandhu and other murder case.

Q: Are you an eye witnesses? A: I had not seen any

Q : You have given witnesses about the situation after the killing.

A : No I have given witness on situation before, after and during the incident. Q: DGFI had informed you

about the November 3 troops movement in Cantonment. A: DGFI informed me the

incident as well the president. Q: Had you detained the Q: Who was the DGFI's concaptains who met you in the cern officer beside the President morning on August 15, 1975. during the incident on August. A: No. I did not. 1975?

> A: Defence Ministry. Q: Had you taken any step as Chief of Defence Staff on the August 15 incident?

A . Situation was not favourable at that time because Indemnity Ordinance was promulgated and the work was at the government level.

Q : You knew the incident before hand and you have supported for it and that's why you did not let the BDR to go for any action even after the order of the Home Minister?

A: It's not true. Q : You have given statement about the incident in the past but your present description is

not consistent with it. A: It's not true. Q: Had not some captains come to you with some message

on August 15, 1975? A: It's not true. Q: A message of allegiance had been sent on behalf of

Khandaker Mustaque. A: Not true.

Q: You and the senior army officials were involved in the incident. A: Not involved.

Examination by advocate Sharfuddin Mukul, defence lawyer for accused for mer minister Taheruddin Thakur:

Q: You and other senior officers at a meeting at Army HQ decided that the cabinet should be formed comprising civilians and political leaders. You proposed Khandaker Mustaque Ahmed it and he formed the cabinet as per your proposal. A: I can't recall such a mat-

Q: Did you know Taheruddin

Thakur from earlier? A: Yes, after returning from Pakistan, I found him as a state minister of Bangabandhu cab-

9: What was the relation between the army and BDR?

A: Army officers were in deputation to BDR to command. Q: Before you expressed allegiance, were you confirmed about the allegiance by three

chiefs to the new government? A: There was no necessity to be confirmed. I listened to their oath of allegiance.

Q: Why did you go to the radio station despite the Home Minister asked you to contact

the three chiefs? A: After hearing the oath of allegiance by the three chiefs, I, after consultation with my offi-

cers, went to the radio station.

Q: You said that some army officers led by Col Shafaat Jamil stormed the Bangabhaban on November 4, 1975. They forced Mustaque to resign at gun point. Sayem was made President. Had Jamil any authority to force Mustaque to re-

A: It is not known to me.

nations shall be published as

and when received.

Further text of crossexami-

Metropolitan

S Korea donates 5 ambulances

The Republic of Korea has donated five ambulances for development of health sector of Bangladesh, reports UNB.

South Korean Ambassador to Bangladesh Tae Kyo Han handed over documents of the vehicles to Health and Family Welfare Minister Salahuddin Yusuf when he called on him at his office yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed matters relating to mutual interest, said an official handout.

Of the ambulances, two are allotted for Savar Hospital and one each for Khulna Medical College Hospital, Habiganj Sadar Hospital and Bhola Sadar Hospital.

3 youth training centres to be built in CHT

State Minister for Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs Obaidul Quader yesterday said that three youth training centres with an expenditure of Taka seven and a half crore will soon be built at three hill districts for imparting training to the vast unemployed youths of the Chittagong Hill Tracts re-gions, reports BSS.

The minister announced this while exchanging views with the local fournalists and cultural activists at Khagrach-hari Circuit House here.

The minister further said a gymnasium will be built at Khagrachhari Stadium and three modern auditoriums will also be developed at Bandarban Rangamati and Khagrachhari Shilpakala Academy for flourishment of art and culture.



Five women, residents of a slum at Uttara at a press conference organised by UBINIG at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday claimed that they had been sterflised without their knowledge by an NGO-run clinic at Mirpur. -Star photo

Nat'l Nutrition Week from Apr 22

A meeting of the executive committee of Bangladesh National Nutrition Council was held Tuesday at the conference room of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Salahuddin Yusuf, Minister for Health and Family Welfare presided.

reports BSS. The meeting decided to observe National Nutrition Week from April 22 throughout the country from centre to thana level. Main objective of the week is to create awareness to the general mass by arranging rallies and exhibitions of nutrition in various national and local institutions. Besides, workshop, seminar, essay competition and publicity through newspaper, radio and television will also be launched. Meeting also decided to pub-

lish an annual report on the

various activities on nutrition

by government, non-govern-

ment and related organisation

throughout the country in 1997.

Khaleque visits Postogola fire victims

State Minister for Relief Talukder Abdul Khaleque visited the fire affected area at Postogola in the city yesterday, reports UNB.

He distributed 15 kg rice, one

saree and one lungi to each af-

fected family, a PID handout

Establishment of DIMC: Body formed to make recommendations By Staff Correspondent

A ten-member committee has been formed recently to make recommendations to the Ministry of Health for the establishment of a drug information monitoring cell (DIMC).

The committee, named Adverse Drug Reactions Advisory Committee (ADRAC), will advise the government on setting up of a programme on adverse drug reactions (ADRs) with the aim of collecting and providing information on ADRs and cautioning health professionals about use of drugs.

The committee will also evaluate and make recommendations to the licencing authority of drugs for regulatory actions and providing information to health practitioners. Earlier, a proposal to set up a DIMC had been shelved at the

concerned ministry since 1994. According to a source in the drug administration, the proposal stated that a computerised drug information cell should have administrative linkages with all hospitals and relevant sectors. In addition, the DIMC should have data filing system for immediate access to any information in case

A drug administration official told The Daily Star: "As there is no monitoring arrangement in the country, we have to depend on the World Health Organisation's (WHO) information exchange system to alert the local drug manufacturing companies about adverse effects of certain drugs."

of emergency.



The boundary wall of the Bangla Academy is being decorated with a mural on the occasion of Ekushey Boi Mela (Book Fair) '98, which begins on the Academy premises from Feb 7. - Star photo

Body of young girl found on hilltop at Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Feb 4: Police recovered the body of a young girl from Ispahani Hill top in the port city today, reports

On a tip-off, police rushed to the sport and recovered the body, which had a scarf tied around the neck.

Police suspected that the girl and 60. was strangulated after rape.

World Vision distributes blankets

World Vision, an international Christian relief and development organisation, distributed 450 blankets among the slum people in the city on Tuesday, reports UNB.

The blankets have been distributed among the slum dwellers of ward number 48, 58

136 arrested on various charges

Police rounded up 136 people from different parts of the city on various charges during last 24 hours, said a DMP press release yesterday, reports UNB.

Of the arrested, 15 were wanted criminals, 31 held on charges of murder, dacoity, snatching, extortion and terrorism, and 68 others under DMP act.