

FIELD ADMINISTRATION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

IN

BANGLADESH: THE COLLECTOR'S ROLE

BY


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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

January, 1981.

The thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other higher degree or graduate diploma in any university and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published and written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.


Shawkat Ali

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NOTES ON UNITS OF MEASUREMENTS, VERNACULAR TERMS

AND ABBREVIATIONS

ANSAR	Irregular Volunteer Police Force.
BDO	Basic Democracies Order
BEEL	Low-lying areas normally submerged during rains and mostly dry during winter.
CFT	Cubic Foot
CRORE	Ten Million
CSP	Civil Service of Pakistan
HAOR	Low-lying areas. The term is used in Sylhet District only.
IAS	Indian Administrative Service
ICS	Indian Civil Service
KHAL	Streamlet
LAKH	0.1 Million
MAUND	82.89 lbs.
PARISHAD	Assembly
TAKA	Primary Unit of Currency in Bangladesh.
UP	Union Parishad.

PREFACE

This thesis is by a field administrator about the type of field administration commonly perceived to be colonial. The summary description of colonialism does not adequately reveal the vital role that field administration plays in organizing programmes of rural development. To appreciate this role, it is imperative to explore and explain the symbiotic relationship between field administration and the rural development process in terms of empirics rather than stock jargons. The thesis is an attempt in this direction.

This thesis was completed under the supervision of Dr. R.J.K. Chapman, Department of Political Science, Tasmania University. His constant aid, stimulation and critical guidance have been of inestimable value specially for a civil servant who ventured to provide an empirical view of the role that the colonial pattern of field administration plays in the process of rural development in Bangladesh. In presenting this view an attempt has been made to provide evidential support from materials that do not normally attract attention in the realm of scholarly research. At the same time, due regard has been paid to the existing concepts of field administration which are relevant for the clarification of the basic issues.

Normally, it would have been impossible to get hold of the mass of official records in Tasmania. This problem could be overcome due only to the generosity of my colleagues in Dacca. A.Z.M. Obaidullah Khan, Khundker Asaduzzaman, Muhiuddin Khan Alamgir, Irshadul Huq, Fazlur Rahman, Muyeed Chowdhury, Saiful Islam, Badiur Rahman and many others have been more than

generous with their time and hospitality. I owe special debt of gratitude to my eldest brother, Akhter Ali, who kept on sending numerous references from Dacca during 1978-80. A.S.M. Habibullah, a journalist and an old friend, was particularly helpful in locating useful materials on Swanirvar and newspaper articles.

I am grateful, as well, to the many field administrators who assisted in providing official records. May I also thank the many public leaders, both at local and national levels, who gave their valuable time and opinion to assist me in the preparation of this thesis.

My thanks are also due to Dr. Asim Roy, Fazlul Hassan Yusuf and Asaduzzaman who helped me with relevant materials in Hobart. I am also grateful to A.K.M. Jalaluddin, an old friend, who was generous in sending a lot of materials from Canberra.

And finally, for her patience, significant cartological contribution and inspiring collaboration, I am indebted to my wife. I would also record appreciation of my two children for their forbearance with the preoccupation and withdrawals that work of thesis entails.

Hobart, Sandy Bay,

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November 1980

ABSTRACT

This is a study on the role of the Collector in the process of rural development in Bangladesh within the conceptual framework of comparative field administration. The Collector occupies a pivotal position in field administration that is comparable to that of the Prefect. Research suggests that (a) the role of the Collector is bound up less with supporting stability than with generating popular enthusiasm for rural development and (b) the formal structure does not reveal the functions of the Collector in the sphere of rural development.

Collector's role in rural development is alluded to in the literature of field administration but is yet to be researched. This role cannot be explained by static models of field administration or by an approach that views the Collector as a paradigm of political field administrator concerned with regulatory functions. Evidence suggests that the role has a continuity that is best explained by an analysis of the Collector's relationship with the rural development process in terms of interaction among national political leadership, the field administrative system and participation by the villagers.

Chapter I deals with the origin of field administrative system and analyses the circumstances that led to the mix between regulatory and development functions.

Chapter II analyses the crucial role played by the Collector in the process of building up institutional framework for rural development during the years 1950 to 1971.

Chapter III describes the continuity of the Collector's role in rural development, the failed attempt to

introduce District Governor system and the relationship between the Collectoral pattern and development ministries during the years 1976 to 1979.

Chapter IV deals with the role of the Collector in evocating popular enthusiasm for voluntary participation in labour-intensive schemes between the years 1974 to 1979.

Chapter V argues the case for a micro-level understanding of the cruciality of the Collector's role in the process of rural development based on voluntary labour-utilisation strategy.

Chapter VI explains the theme of incompatibility of the colonial pattern of field administration in generating popular enthusiasm for development in terms of its relationship with the rural society, summarises the major points from the perspective of comparative field administration and indicates the most recent trends with regard to the future role of the Collector.

INTRODUCTION

The comparative literature on field administration has studied the function of bureaucracies in different political systems. It has focussed attention on the political roles of the appointed officials in the field. This role is contrasted with the administrative roles of field administration in such countries as Britain and the United States.

Although it is recognised that the boundary mark between politics and administration is one of identifying dimensions, the argument is still advanced that it is necessary to pay attention to the proportions. It is argued, not without justification, that in the Anglo-American model of field administration "the administrative ingredient is much more substantial than the political ingredient."¹

Beyond the Anglo-American pattern, the political role of field administration becomes increasingly apparent in some of the West European countries. It is also present in developing countries of Africa and Asia which have experienced colonial rule.

The political role of field administration, according to Fesler, is based on the assumption that:

* maintenance of a political system is a value cherished by those who

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1. James W. Fesler, 'The Political Role of Field Administration', in Ferrel Heady and Sybil L. Stokes (eds.), Comparative Public Administration, University of Michigan, 1962, pp. 118-143.

are in control of government;

- * field administration is one of the tools in the pursuit of that value.

The political role of field administration, in Fesler's terms, is limited to maintenance of stability of the state and its existing system of government. The limitations of this approach, admitted by Fesler, are:

- * field administration neither is, nor can be, the only instrument of promoting stability;
- * field administration can serve other goals along with stability;
- * development of field administration may be in response to a variety of needs quite different from one concerned with stability; and
- * field administration is also the result of complex processes of history.

The persistent theme in Fesler's view of field administration, other than the Anglo-American variety, is the relationship between stability and field administration.

This relationship is reflected by the continental mode known as the Prefectoral variety of which the classical example is that of France. The major assumption is that there is a necessary and inevitable nexus between political stability and the Prefectoral variety of field administration. The "rulers tend to invoke patently or latently authoritarian politico-administrative structure" when consensus is absent or weak in support of national stability. Prefectoral system constitutes an important component of such a structure.²

The co-relation between stable democracy with a larger

2. Ibid., p.129.

degree of consensus instrumented through autonomous non-bureaucratic structures and the political role of field administration is well observed. This is, however, subject to qualification, admitted by Fesler, that "programs of economic and social development particularly but not solely in newly developing countries, typically demand intensive mobilisation of manpower and resources, the disturbing of vested interests and cultural habits and the co-ordinating of high priority activities".³

In such a situation, even when specialists are available in the field, a generalist field administrator is nonetheless needed "as co-ordinator, facilitator and influencer of public opinion, and sanction-provoking representatives of the state."⁴ This aspect of the field administration gives a highly significant dimension to the role of the "authoritarian structure" of field administration in socio-economic development in developing countries. This may be seen as an extension to what Fesler had said earlier that a system of field administration may be developed in response to a variety of needs other than political.

THE THREE-FOLD TYPOLOGY OF FIELD ADMINISTRATION

Fesler's distinction between Anglo-American model of field administration where administrative considerations dominate the pattern and the Prefectoral system where political considerations form the basis, has been followed up by research on the function of field administration in such countries as the United States, Germany,

3. Ibid., p.137.

4. Ibid., p.135-136.

France and Italy.⁵ This has led to typological classification of comparative field administration throughout the world into such categories as Functional, Decentralized and Prefectoral. The last mentioned category is further divided into integrated and unintegrated varieties according to the place of the Prefect in the local government system and his relationship with the specialist services.⁶

Field Administration in Developing Countries

Smith discusses field administration of newer nations within the framework of Fried's typology.⁷ By means of specific case studies based on the general attributes of field administration in

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5. Brian C. Smith, 'Field Administration and Political Change: The Case of Northern Nigeria', Administrative Science Quarterly, Vol. 17, No. 1, 1972, pp. 99-109.
 6. Robert C. Fried, Italian Prefects: A Study in Administrative Politics, Yale University Press, 1963. See Introduction for classification of field administration. The differences between Prefectoral and Functional systems are dealt with in pages 302-303. Structural differences between two types of Prefectoral systems are set forth in pages 306-307.
 7. Brian C. Smith, Field Administration: An aspect of decentralisation, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1967. The case of the Burmese Deputy Commissioner is discussed in pages 64-77, while the case of Northern Nigeria is in pages 100-123.

the post-colonial societies of Africa and Asia, Smith finds the Burmese Deputy Commissioner to be an example of the integrated system while the case of Northern Nigeria typifies the unintegrated model.

The classic home of British colonial model of field administration is the Indian sub-continent presently comprising the independent states of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. India and Pakistan are not taken up as separate case-studies but are referred to in the Chapter dealing with the integrated model implying thereby that the pattern in those countries conforms to the French system. References are made to the process of transition from regulatory responsibilities to developmental functions in case of the Indian Collector with arguments in favour or against the retention of the Collector as a supervisor for elected local councils.⁸ The conclusion which he draws is a cautious one and is similar to that of Fried. With Fried, Smith agrees that the Prefectoral administration is "basically a neutral device which can be made to serve a wide range of purposes". It is not to be linked to any ideology or system. Nor is it to be considered "destructive of local autonomy".⁹

8. Ibid., pp. 50-51.

9. Ibid., p. 64.

In discussing the role of the District Officer, Smith has argued that most studies of field administration in different political systems have produced "static models of field administration". The examples cited are those of "nineteenth century Prussia, post-war France, Post-Facist Italy and contemporary Afro-Asian states". His finding is that field administration, in case of Northern Nigeria, is a determining force rather than an outcome of political change. For details see: Smith, Administrative Science Quarterly, Op.cit., p.101.

TOWARDS A DIFFERENT DIMENSION OF FIELD ADMINISTRATION

The political role approach to field administration overlooks the extent to which the British-Indian system of field administration may have played a major part in the process of rural development. Evidence from an analysis of the role of field administration in the post-colonial societies of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh suggests that the colonial pattern of District administration is a crucial variable in the efforts at rural development made by governments of different political ideology. This aspect of the role of field administration is tacitly recognised but is yet to be researched, although in dealing with the political role of field administration Fesler refers to the way performance of new functions of development places strains on the traditional pattern of field administration. The new functions of development require:

- * delegation of the increasing volume of work to subordinates or co-ordinates;
- * co-ordination of specialist services without direct involvement;
- * a different spirit and vigour; and
- * evocation of popular enthusiasm which can adequately build receptivity to new ways and generate substantial voluntary effort by ordinary people.

Fesler raises the question;

"An open question is whether the traditional functions of maintaining law and order, with its considerable emphasis on force, is compatible with the positive function of directing the melange of specialized development programs".¹⁰

10. James W. Fesler, 'Approaches To The Understanding of Decentralization', The Journal of Politics, Vol. 27, 1965, pp.536-566.

This statement has to be seen in conjunction with the conclusion Fesler draws at the end. He views this as much more than a transition from a single role to a double role:

"It may, on the other hand, raise the more serious question of whether functions attuned to security maintenance and revenue extraction are inherently incompatible with functions dependent on motivating individual citizens to help themselves and their community."¹¹

It is necessary to analyse the underlying assumptions of the two statements. In the first, the one relating to the open question, the emphasis is on the element of force as part of the traditional functions which are seen incompatible with development functions. This implies that involvement in matters of a technical nature, which is necessary for development, is not to be expected from the law and order based field administration. No real analysis is made by him of the extent and nature of involvement although the multi-dimensional nature of the development programme is clearly recognised.

This itself may require co-ordination at community level. The co-ordinative need may not necessarily be day to day involvement in details of technical nature. It may require linking of different functions, identification of bottlenecks and co-operation among component parts.

Experience has shown that this co-ordinative problem is better realised in countries "with administrative districts" under a single functionary with co-ordinative authority over other

11. Fesler, Ibid., pp. 565-566.

departments at the District level.¹²

The extent to which this cuts across the separate ministerial responsibilities will necessarily depend on the nature of co-ordinative authority which may be so flexible as to allow substantial independence of the technical departments similar to that of the unintegrated Prefectoral pattern.

Fesler's approach also misses the point that the extent to which development requires specialized skills will necessarily depend on the nature and type of development programmes and the means employed to implement the same. In those developing countries which are overwhelmingly rural with a rising population to feed and prone to recurring floods, development priority will be on increased food production. This may not require sophisticated technical expertise but only supply of improved varieties of seed and use of fertilizer which may be sold by the government at a subsidized rate.

If crops are to be raised and saved, conventional means of flood protection requiring simple skills of earth-cutting and building an embankment, even as a temporary measure, will mean greater relief to the villagers in urgent need of food than years of waiting for a "technically sound scheme" dependent on foreign assistance.

The use of improved variety of seed and fertilizer or adoption of family planning methods may require lot more persuasion than is apparent to an expert from a technologically advanced country. The implementation process of development programmes may itself demand constant persuasion, mediation between

12. United Nations, Public Administration Aspects of Community Development, New York, 1959, p.18.

competing local claims on a day to day basis, arbitration of land disputes and mobilisation of labour.¹³

Finally, the assumed conflict between positive and negative roles may be resolved simply by asserting that in many developing countries, security and development are inter-related goals. This means firstly, that stability is a necessary condition for development; secondly, successful implementation of development projects ensures conditions conducive to political stability.¹⁴

We come now to the second statement relating to the incompatibility of roles. Fesler moves from the question of involvement in specialized programmes to the normative one of motivating the community for development. Evidence from South Asian countries indicates that the British colonial pattern of field administration headed by the functionary, variously called the District Magistrate and Collector, Deputy Commissioner or the District Officer, has been a potent source of providing leadership

13. Administrative Reforms Commission Report on State

Administration (K. Hanumanthaiya, Chairman), Government of India, November, 1969, p. 124. It refers to the Indian experience that officers "may have to cajole, flatter and persuade the farmer to adopt improved methods of farming or accept loans".

14. J.H. Beaglehole, 'The District: Some Aspects of Administration and Politics in Malaysia', Journal of Administration Overseas, Vol. 12, No. 4, October, 1973, pp. 184-198.

to rural development based on community participation.¹⁵

Fesler is not the only one who has raised the question of incompatibility. With many experts of community development, this has been a persistent theme.¹⁶ The assumption is the result of an inadequate appreciation of the relationship between the Collectoral pattern of field administration and the process of rural development, its nature and requirement.

Firstly, it is assumed that force is the primary constituent element of the Collectoral pattern, and as such the pattern is antithetical to community participation. Secondly, it is assumed that community participation can only be handled by a new breed of bureaucrats with special orientations and training and not by those steeped in the colonial system of field administration. These assumptions are based on a static view of the post-colonial system of field administration, the national goals of development and the role that the inherited pattern of field administration is expected to play in the achievement of these goals.

This view overemphasizes the regulatory role of the colonial pattern as being involved merely in security maintenance and revenue collection. It may be that the Collectoral pattern was also involved in rural development long before the end of colonial rule. Its involvement cannot simply be dismissed as isolated and short-lived examples of extra-ordinary dedication on the part of individual

15. For historical continuity and convenience, we shall refer to him as Collector and to the District administration as the Collectoral pattern.

16. Jack D. Mezirow and Peter du Sautoy cited in Chapter II and VI respectively.

colonial Collectors. It needs to be related to the dynamics of field administration, the nature of its relationship with the rural society and the overall framework of the social system within which both operate.

This thesis suggests that the Collectorial pattern in Bangladesh has been involved in the process of rural development since colonial days within and outside the ambit of regular government programmes. During post-colonial days, it has shown remarkable adaptability in terms of organising rural development programmes, in building up rural institutions and, since 1974, it has been the major source of impetus for initiating and sustaining participatory process of development based on the ideology of mass participation.

Its structural form and operation reveals (a) vertical functional departmentalism that vitiates areal co-ordination; (b) reliance on the office of the Collector to secure co-ordination without impairing departmental independence excepting a few cases; (c) excessive reliance, on the part of the ministries, on the leadership role of the Collector in organizing specific development programmes that require community participation and (d) weak local government system rendered weaker by lack of appropriate political direction and village factionalism.

Organizational relations with the rural development programmes represent a process of bureaucratization of participatory development. Yet the organizational relationship of the Collector with the rural development process does not adequately reveal the nature and extent of the Collector's role in generating popular enthusiasm for development. This makes it imperative to study the Collectorial pattern in terms of its role rather than only

in terms of structure. It is within the analytical framework of the Collector's role in rural development process that the question of incompatibility requires to be assessed. The experiences of South Asian countries, specially Bangladesh, display a complexity of variables that influence the pattern and working of field administration not to be explained adequately by the existing typologies or by a static view of the regulatory role of the Collectoral pattern.

The assumption that the Prefectoral pattern is the direct consequence of the need to maintain stability does not apply to the Collectoral pattern with equal force. Its origin is very closely linked to the land system.

The colonial possessions of British India were divided into two distinct types of administration. The territorial jurisdictions were identified as Regulation and Non-Regulation provinces. The former signified the settled areas of Bengal, Madras and Bombay where a legalistic system based on comprehensive Acts or Regulations governed the working of the District administration. The latter related to the newly acquired territories which, because of unstable conditions, demanded a more authoritarian pattern of administration than in the Regulation provinces.¹⁷ Differences in the land system, usages and custom and culture also had a bearing on the pattern of field administration in the Non-Regulation provinces.

In Bengal, the essential feature of the Collector's role in the process of rural development raises substantive issues concerning the administration of community development programmes,

17. Sir Percival Griffiths, British Impact On India, Frank Cass & Company Ltd., 1965, p.164.

the Collector's place in development administration and the local government system. These issues merit analysis in terms of empirical corroboration so that more informed hypotheses about the Collectorial pattern can be made.

A. Purpose of the study

The main purpose of the study is to examine the role of the Collector in the process of rural development and to suggest developmental elements in a type of field administration that is commonly viewed in terms of regulatory functions only. This role is examined within the framework of several major shifts in rural development during and after the colonial rule.

The role is explained in terms of political, administrative and social factors. For purposes of analysis, one may start from the year 1900, although 1885 was the beginning of rural local government in Bangladesh. It has been considered necessary to refer briefly to the earliest phase of colonial rule in order to provide an explanation of the origin of the Collectorial pattern in other than a stability-supporting role. The time horizon extends upto the year 1979.

This broader time-frame represents three different periods in the political system of Bangladesh. First is the colonial period extending upto 1947. The next is the Pakistan period when Bangladesh formed the eastern province of Pakistan (East Pakistan) ending with December, 1971. Finally, Bangladesh period upto the year 1979.

This longitudinal analysis eliminates chances of any snap-shot picture of the relationship between the Collectorial pattern and the process of rural development. The historical

approach has been dictated by the necessity of presenting the relationship under varying political conditions that are essential to the study of the contemporary system.

B. Scope of the study

The scope of the study covers the major phases of rural development activity for each of the three periods with due attention to the structure of regular government departments and local government system in relation to the Collector who remains the focal point of administration of rural development programmes at the regional level. The rationale of the emergence of administrative units is briefly examined in terms of regulatory, welfare and local government functions in order to reveal the nature of the dynamics of continuity in the context of rural development programmes based on the leadership role of the Collector.

The primary unit is the District headed by the Collector. Within the District, specialist services representing various departments operate along-side co-ordinating Committees and the local government council variously called the District Board, the District Council and the Zilla Parishad having conterminal jurisdiction with the District.

Three other units, integrated with the District, form part of the analysis: (a) Subdivision comprising the Subdivisional Officer (SDO) who works under the direct control of the Collector and specialist departments linked vertically to the corresponding organizations at the District level; (b) Thana or Circle headed by the Circle Officer (CO), under the SDO, with the Thana Council and the specialist departments vertically linked to their corresponding organizations at the Subdivisional level and (c) Union comprising

Union Council, an elected body representing a group of villages, which, along with village committees for specific purposes, works under the co-ordinative leadership of Thana Council.

Within this broad scope, the study would focus on two subject areas which are essential to an understanding of the Collector's role in rural development: (a) the actual operation of the Collectoral pattern in relation to the institutional framework of rural development consisting of specialist departments and local government system and (b) the Collector's involvement in programmes of rural development based on voluntary mass participation concept.

Emphasis will be placed on most recent political trends that have a direct bearing on the future role of the Collector in rural development programmes and on local government system. This study will not consider the performance of individual organizations or specific administrative regions. Organizations, whether participatory or administrative, will be viewed as comprising organization sets or sub-sets with the total field administration in the country as an open interactive system in relation to administration of rural development programmes.

C. Other Studies on the subject

Since 1909 when the Royal Commission Upon Decentralization in India published its report, there has been a growing number of governmental Commissions/Committees on administrative and services structure including two Committees of the colonial period which deal specifically with District administration. While these reports provide evidential support to the role of the Collector in relation to specialist services and the local government system, these do not provide a comprehensive basis of Collector's relationship with rural

development programmes. Apart from this, the views need to be collated and analysed in terms of empirics that adequately explain the Collector's role in other than administrative terms.

Only two major researches have been made in respect of District administration during the sixties: one by Richard W. Gable and the other by Najmul Abedin.¹⁸ The role of the Collector is seen from the standpoint of administrative and political development and analysed in terms of formal structural elements that do not adequately reveal Collector's relationship with rural society and by implication with rural development programmes. These studies do not attempt comparative analysis to other countries outside Pakistan.

This study analyses the role of the Collector within the framework of existing typology of field administration that bears reference to cross-cultural models. The thrust of the analysis and hypotheses envisaged in this study have firm empirical foundation.

D. Methodology

The methodology adopted is a combination of description, classification and explanation of the role of the Collector in the rural development process. Rural development is seen as a linked interaction of village participation, field administrative system and national policies on rural development.¹⁹

18. Cited in Chapter II. and I respectively. Abedin's work is based on his doctoral dissertation entitled "The Working of District Administration in Pakistan: 1947-1969" (Durham, 1969).

19. Based on Hart's analysis of community development programmes in India and Pakistan. Cited in Chapter VI.

The broad time-frame, within which the descriptive materials are set, allows analytical classification of the Collectoral pattern according to different models with primary focus on the relationship between the Collector and the rural development programmes.

Comparison with cross-cultural classification of the Prefectoral pattern into integrated and unintegrated systems shows the limitations of the structural approach. At the same time, it calls attention to the futility of assessment on the sole basis of the way in which field administration achieves political stability through regulatory functions.

The existing concepts of the role of comparative field administration is related primarily to a functional analysis not revealed in the structure of the system. The analysis is based principally on the author's experience as an administrator in Pakistan and Bangladesh extending over a period of 12 years of which nearly 10 years were spent in the field. This experience was further sharpened by intensive field study, as part of the preparation of this dissertation, of five Districts during the period from February 1979 to June 1979. During this period, interviews were held with politicians, administrators, elected leaders of local government and the villagers on the relevant issues raised in the study. Secondary source materials on Bangladesh, India and Pakistan and other analytical work on field administration have been used for clarification of basic issues.

The study proposes to establish the following five inter-related hypotheses regarding the field administration in Bangladesh:

- i) Field administration in some colonial societies, in addition to

- stability-supporting role, performed the function of rural development;
- ii) Field administration in a post-colonial state can play a major role in the process of building up rural institutions to further the objectives of rural development;
 - iii) It is unreal to look upon the Collectorial pattern as a threat to stable local government system, the latter being dependent on political and ideological forces rather than on the type of field administration;
 - iv) Although it is possible to compare the Collectorial pattern with the model of unintegrated Prefectoral system from the standpoint of relationship between the Collector and specialist services, the relationship is more complex and varied than is suggested by broad generalisations based on the static model;
 - v) Field administration in a developing country may, with adequate political support, be the essential element in organising and sustaining the process of rural development based on the ideology of mass participation.

Each of these hypotheses will be examined in subsequent Chapters.

E. Limitations

The study combines typological analysis with role-differentiation within the broad framework of Prefectoral system. The limitations of a typological view of field administration imply that role-differentiation and pattern of relationship between the Collector and rural development process suggested in the study may not adequately explain variations in details with regard to the whole

of Indian sub-continent. Collector's role in mass participation projects within Bangladesh is equally subject to variations in the degree of intensity of Collector's involvement and the quality of the work done on participatory basis.

The need to obtain an inter-related and total view of the Collectoral pattern in South Asia would involve a sacrifice of micro-variations and patterns as well as role-differentiation. Despite these limitations, the patterns and trends analysed in this study provide benchmarks from which variations and role-differentiation could be better appreciated.

The study relies less on typological approach than on role-differentiation approach arising out of the interplay of administrative, political, social and cultural factors influencing the relationship between field administration and the process of rural development.

Participatory process of rural development is not viewed in terms of any doctrine that emphasizes the supremacy of people's will. The process is analysed in terms of pragmatic and day to day needs and requirements of the rural people, their attitudes and beliefs in relation to field administration and its norms undergoing a process of change. The extent to which the political process is deficient in responding to the problems of equity, democratic participation, distributive justice and in limiting administrative responsibility in stimulating popular enthusiasm for development, the need for participation by the Collectoral pattern will remain.

The study has been hampered by the absence of comprehensive secondary source material having a direct bearing on the Collector's role in evoking popular enthusiasm for development. This has necessitated use of primary source materials based on government documents which are very hard to come by.

CHAPTER I : THE COLONIAL HERITAGE

This Chapter provides an evaluative analysis of the political, administrative and social circumstances that led to the creation of the Collectoral pattern. This analysis shows that it is as unreal to assess the Collectoral pattern in terms of regulatory functions as it is to look upon the structure to represent only the integrated model of Prefectoral system of administration. It argues the case for (a) viewing the Collectoral pattern in terms both of regulatory and rural welfare functions and (b) assessing its structure in a process of change oscillating between the integrated and unintegrated models with greater propensity towards the latter than the former.

The roots of the Collectoral pattern of field administration are in the land system of Bengal. It is the controversy around the land system that largely determined the differential pattern of field administration in India under British colonial rule. The extent to which the Collectoral pattern owed its existence to the pre-colonial system is difficult to determine with any degree of precision. It is sometimes argued that in case of the Collectoral pattern, there was a fusion of indigenous and English tradition.¹ It is possible to explain this fusion in terms of the broad facts that the system of control of distant areas by centrally appointed officials was essentially derived from the Mughal concept of administration.

This similarity need not imply that the Collectoral

1. Hugh Tinker, The Foundation of Local Self-Government in India, Pakistan and Burma, Pall Mall Press, London, 1968, p.334.

pattern was built out of the pre-colonial model of field administration. It was basically the product of early British experiments with the inherited land system coupled with the need for replacing a decadent system of administration of civil and criminal justice by one more in consonance with British ideal of rule of law and supremacy of civil authority. The Mughal heritage did not involve union of various functions, judicial, executive and revenue, under one single authority, as the Collector under the colonial system came to acquire through a process of experiments. It is true that an essential feature of these experiments was to leave undisturbed, as far as possible, the indigenous usages and custom.

This is reflected in the early administrative policies of the government of East India Company which, because of its commercial constitution, paid more attention to the moulding of such an administrative apparatus as would ensure steady and stable income the principal source of which was land revenue. If the English tradition of rule of law was advocated, it was not practised with rigidity. The principle adopted was one of simplicity and economy. The result was that the field administration came to be based on the management and collection of revenue and then on the maintenance of order.

THE LAND SYSTEM

The importance of the land system, in relation to the field administrative pattern, acquires added relevance in view of the fact that:

- * the roots of the political authority of East India Company started with land administration and revenue management;
- * the recognition given, under the pre-colonial system of

administration, to the institution of Zamindars (land holders) as an unofficial arm of the imperial authority in matters affecting administration of land revenue and internal security; and

* the usurpation by the Zamindars, in the wake of the declining years of the Mughal powers, of regular administrative functions in the field.

Since the institution of the Zamindars was an accepted part of regular field administration before the advent of the British in Bengal, it is important to relate briefly the nature of this institution, its relationship with the land system and the appointed officials in the field responsible for various functions on behalf of the imperial authority.

Individual ownership of land in Bengal was one of the distinguishing features of the socio-political framework. The land undisputedly belonged to the cultivators unlike some parts of India, such as the Punjab and the southern region, where community ownership was recognised. This ancient system came to be affected in two ways. Firstly, the village headman would exact a portion of the produce from the cultivators. Secondly, the community itself would be obliged to pay as tribute, a portion of the produce, to an outside overlord in the form of allegiance to his authority. The king or the state had claim to the portion of the produce but it never went to the extent of absolute ownership. The king had also a right to the waste land and transit dues. The aggregate of these rights, during the early Muslim rule, came to be known as Zamindari.²

2. B.H. Baden-Powell, Land Systems of British India, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1892, Vol. I, pp.97-101.

The Mughal Heritage

The Floud Commission notes that by the time of Mughal conquest "the old State-right or zamindari, had been magnified into a general superior ownership of the entire domain."³ The Mughals did not interfere with the existing system of land management. They did, however, introduce the principle of functional division in field administration. Under the Mughal system, revenue, justice and security maintained their distinct entities. The officials in these fields respectively were : the Amil, the Kazi and the Faujdar.

This official organ of field administration was limited to "the narrow geographical limits of the Home Province".⁴ The administration, both in respect of public peace and land revenue collection, was left to the unofficial organ, the institution of the Zamindars. In the task of internal security, the Zamindars acted as a subordinate agency to the Faujdar but maintained their own armed retainers. They assisted the Amil in revenue collection. Some of the Zamindars of greater influence and authority, known as Raja, literally meaning the king, exercised judicial powers the authority of which was derived from charter granted to them by the imperial authority.⁵

The institution of the Zamindars and the regular administrative organ worked in harmony as long as the Mughal imperial

3. Report of the Land Revenue Commission, Bengal (Sir Francis Floud, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., Chairman) Bengal Government Press, Alipore, 1940, Vol.I, p.9.

4. Griffiths, op.cit., p.158.

5. N. Majumdar, Justice and Police in Bengal (1765-1793), Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyay, Calcutta, 1960, pp.31-61.

authority was strong. With the decline of the Mughal power and the consequent political instability, the regular administration lost its hold over the Zamindars who "superseded the regular machinery of administration."⁶

THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

The mercantile government of East India Company, which inherited this confused state of things, did not have much to build from the regular system of administration. Its rise as a political power itself started when it acquired the right, granted by the governor of Bengal, to collect revenue in the three estates of Govindapur, Sutanati and Calcutta in 1698. The Company became the Zamindar and the post of the Collector was then first created.⁷

The creation of the office of the Collector did not imply the establishment of a regular system of field administration by the colonial powers. The Company was merely a Zamindar for the area assigned to it. Two events of momentous significance changed the character of the Company from a mere trading body to that of a political authority.

In the battle of Plassey (1757), the Company's forces defeated the Nawab (governor) of Bengal. The Company became the de facto political authority. The other event is the grant of Diwani (civil administration) by Shah Alam, the then Mughal emperor, to the Company over the provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. It implied, in effect, de jure recognition of the Company's right to

6. B.B. Misra, 'The Evolution of the Office of Collector', Indian Journal of Public Administration, Vol.11, 1965, pp.345-367.

7. Griffiths, op. cit., p.159.

govern the territories placed under its charge by the decree of the Mughal emperor. This decree is dated 12th August, 1765.⁸

The Company did not readily assume the charge of civil administration. It chose to keep its authority masked.⁹ Two factors appear to have dictated this choice. The first was that its servants were trained in trade and profit-making was their sole objective. They could not have overnight transformed into administrators in a country with the laws and custom of which they were totally unfamiliar. The second factor was the dual nature of the Company's authority. Its right to trade overseas was conditioned by the charters granted by the British Crown while its Zamindari and Diwani rights derived their authority from the Mughal emperor. Consequently, a policy of non-intervention in internal administration was followed during the early years.

Supervisors

The lack of "a stable political policy" led to frequent changes in field administration for nearly two decades since 1765.¹⁰ For four years after the grant of Diwani, the Company chose to collect land revenue through native agents. In 1769, it decided to obtain more information with a view to improving the method of revenue collection. On August 16, 1769, it was decided that "in every

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8. Rai Monmohan Chakrabatti Bahadur, A Summary of the Changes in the Jurisdiction of Districts in Bengal (1757-1916), The Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1918, p.3.
 9. Eric Stokes, The English Utilitarians and India, Oxford University Press, London, 1959, p.1.
 10. B.B. Misra, The Central Administration of East India Company (1773-1834), Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1959, p.7.

province or district a gentleman in service should be appointed under the name of Supravisor (Sic)."¹¹

The duties of the Supervisor were to make detailed local investigation with regard to management and collection of revenue. The official instructions issued to the Supervisors explicitly stated that their business was not to be limited to superintendence of revenue matters. They were to be sole custodians of public welfare of the area under their charge. Eradication of oppression of any kind "which are as grievous to the poor as they are injurious to the Government" was also to be their duty.¹² One can find in these words the foundation of the pattern of field administration that was eventually to emerge based on the concept of a generalist administrator responsible for good government. Under these arrangements, the present Districts of Bangladesh such as Dacca, Jessore, Dinajpur, Rajshahi and Comilla came under the Supervisors.

The Appointment of Collectors

The attempt to reorganise field administration through the

11. Chakrabatti Bahadur, op. cit., p.8.

12. Griffiths, op. cit., p.160. Griffiths quotes from the official instructions to the Supervisors to emphasize the fact that "a lofty standard" was expected from the Supervisors in the discharge of their role as custodians public weal. The reference to oppressions implies the then foundation of the rural social order, the oppression of the peasantry by the Zamindars and their agents in the absence of any organised system of administration following the disruption of the Mughal authority.

appointment of Supervisors did not prove satisfactory principally for the reason that they had no executive authority. Their primary duty was limited to local investigation concerning land revenue, economic system and administration of justice. In 1772, the Company decided to get directly involved in the administration of land revenue. The appointment of the Collectors was designed to fulfil this objective. A Committee of Revenue was set up in Calcutta whose correspondence shows that the whole of Bengal was divided into nineteen Collectorships of which nine belonged to the areas now constituting Bangladesh.¹³

The Company hoped that by this arrangement, revenue collections would improve. This did not happen and it is likely that to lessen the burden of administrative expenditure the Collectors were recalled in 1773. The native officers who were already there to assist the Collectors, took over charge of revenue collections. For the purposes of revenue administration, "the whole of Bengal was divided into five grand divisions". These were placed under the superintendence and control of the Provincial Councils of Revenue for each of the divisions. In 1781, revenue administration was further centralised by abolishing the Councils and replacing them by a Committee of Revenue.¹⁴

It was soon realised that without a local agency of its own the task of revenue collection was difficult specially in far flung areas. This led to the reversion to Collectorships in 1786. The Court of Directors of East India Company, in their letter to the government of Bengal, issued instructions in this regard. This

13. Ibid., pp.9-10.

14. Ibid., pp.10-12.

letter is dated 12th April, 1786.¹⁵ The letter is a comprehensive document which sets forth the future of field administration in Bengal. It lays down that "a moderate number of our principal Covenanted Servants, distinguished for good Conduct and Abilities, and conversant in the Country Languages" should be posted in the Districts to be assisted by the native officers of revenue. (Para.72)

The April 12 letter laid down certain fundamental principles with regard to the future of the Collectorial pattern. Collectorships (revenue districts) were to be considered as a part of the permanent system and the Company's governor in Bengal was authorised to proceed with the arrangement subject to the final approval of the Company's Court of Directors. (Para.73)

For the first time, some rationale was provided for the constitution of the Collectorships. It was laid down in the April 12 letter that:

- * Each Zamindari should remain undivided under one authority;
- * No Collectorship should have a revenue below rupees five lakhs;
- * The total number of Collectorships should be between twenty to twenty five. (Para.74)

On the basis of these guidelines, the whole of Bengal was organised into twenty-four Districts. This arrangement was notified in the Calcutta gazette on 29th March, 1787.¹⁶

15. Raghubir Sinh (ed.), Fort William-India House Correspondence And Contemporary Papers Relating Thereto (Public Series): 1786-1788, Vol.10, Manager of Publications, Government of India, Delhi, 1972, pp.121-138.

16. Chakrabatti Bahadur, Op. cit., p.67.

The same letter enunciated principles which were to guide the Company's government in the future reorganisation of the Collectorial pattern with regard to the union of executive, judicial and revenue powers in the hands of the Collector. These are set forth in paragraphs 81-88 of the letter under reference. It expressed first the general opinion that the ends of justice would be defeated if the magistrates were not given authority to inspect revenue accounts (Para.84). The basis of this view rested on the fact that in Bengal, every individual was concerned with cultivation. Consequently, the individual is "implicated in the immediate demands of Government or those of the Zamindars (Para.84).

With regard to the union of judicial and revenue powers, the letter finally concluded:

"We are actuated, in all our Ideas concerning the preservation and Government of our Possessions in India by the necessity of accommodating our views and interests to the Subsisting manners and usages of the People; rather than by any abstract theory, drawn from other Countries or applicable to a different State of things. We have therefore upon a full view of the subject, adopted this conclusion that it will tend more to simplicity, Energy, Justice and Economy, to reinvest the provincial Chiefs or Collectors, with the Superintendence of the Courts of Dewanny Adawlet (Sic)." (Para.85)¹⁷

17. "Dewany Adawlet" means the Civil Courts as distinguished from "Faujdari Adawlet" (Criminal Courts). Since 1774, the trial of civil cases were left entirely to the Indian officers. This explains the term "reinvest" in paragraph 85 of the letter quoted above. For details see Chakrabatti Bahadur, Op.cit., pp.19-20.

The principles concerning the administration of justice further laid down that the Collector was to have powers of apprehending criminals but not the power to try offenders which were to be left to "established officers of Mahomedan Judicature" (Para.87).

The main principles as outlined in April 12 letter were already in the process of execution since 1772, when the Company's government, under Warren Hastings, introduced changes in the spheres of civil and criminal justice. Under Regulations passed on 21st August, 1772, criminal courts called Faujdari Adalat were set up in the outlying areas. The trial was to be conducted by the Kazi, but the Collector was to attend the court to ensure that justice was done. In consequence of the directives contained in April 12 letter, Regulations were passed on 27th June, 1787, which vested the Collectors with the powers of a Judge and Magistrate.¹⁸

Changes in Collector's Powers

Although the Company's government under Hastings had led the way to the foundation of the Collectoral pattern for the whole of India, it was in Bengal again that important changes took place during the governorship of Cornwallis who succeeded Hastings. Cornwallis reformed the land system under the mistaken idea of regarding the Zamindars as real proprietors of land. Lands were settled with the Zamindars, regardless of title, in perpetuity in return for a fixed sum of rent. This system, known as the Permanent Settlement, came to be enforced in Bengal in 1793. The Collector was stripped of his judicial and police powers.¹⁹

18. Chakrabatti Bahadur, Op.cit., p.20.

19. On the question of separation of powers, see Stokes, Op.cit. pp.140-233.

Restoration of Collector's Powers

Under the reforms introduced by Cornwallis, the Judge-Magistrate became the chief functionary in the District. Attempts to introduce the same system in other parts of India such as Madras met with opposition as the land tenure pattern was different.²⁰ The administrative reforms initiated by Cornwallis failed to sustain itself. Madras rejected this pattern and reverted to the old system of union of powers. In Bengal, by 1831, some of the Collectors were reinvested with judicial powers.²¹ Although the theory of separation of powers was again advocated in 1837, the issue was settled after India's first war of independence (otherwise known as the Sepoy Mutiny) in 1857. It was found politically expedient to maintain the union of powers in the hands of the Collector. It should be distinctly understood that the Collector's magisterial and police powers are not of unlimited nature. His powers are codified under various laws and regulations.²² In 1858, the Company's rule ended and the governance of India passed on to the British Crown. The political, social and economic policies followed since then drew the Collector into the mainstream of the rural development process.

20. Misra, The Central Administration of East India Company, Op.cit., pp.267-270.

21. Misra, 'The Evolution of the Office of Collector', Op.cit., pp.352-353.

22. Collector's magisterial powers are laid down in the Code of Criminal Procedure (Act XXV of 1898) and his orders are subject to appeal to the Sessions Judge.

EMERGENCE OF ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS

The police, revenue and magisterial functions of the Collector led to the emergence of different administrative units in Bengal. A brief discussion on these units is vital to our study as the units are inter-related and provide the basis for institutional arrangements for rural development in Bangladesh. We have seen that the emergence of District is related to the revenue functions of the Collector. As the April 12 letter made it clear, revenue-paying estates not below rupees five lakhs formed the basis of the jurisdictional limits of a District. Collector's functions in the sphere of internal security and administration of criminal justice led to the creation of sub-units forming part of the District while the need to supervise the revenue functions of the Collector formed the basis of the unit above the District level.

We have mentioned that the task of internal security was, during the early phase of colonial rule, left to the Zamindars. This system continued till 1792 when the Zamindars were divested of their police powers. A regular police administration, under the direct control of the government, was formed during the governorship of Cornwallis. Under Regulation dated November 7, 1792, the Magistrates were asked to divide the District into police jurisdictions called Thana (police station) the area of which was not to exceed "ten coss square".²³ The Regulation was later printed as Regulation XXII of 1793.

If the creation of the Thana was the result of reorganisation of police administration, the creation of Division above the District level was for supervision of Collector's work.

23. Bengal Regulation XXII of 1793.

A Division, consisting of four to five Districts, was placed in charge of a functionary called Commissioner. This was done under Regulation passed in 1829.²⁴

Similarly, between the Thana and the District, sub-districts known as Subdivisions were created in 1859 primarily for expeditious disposal of criminal cases. These units were, and still are, headed by Subdivisional Magistrates more popularly known as Subdivisional Officers (SDOs). As an unit, this was peculiar to Bengal only, its corresponding unit in other provinces were Tahsils under the charge of a functionary called Tahsildar who was primarily a revenue officer.²⁵

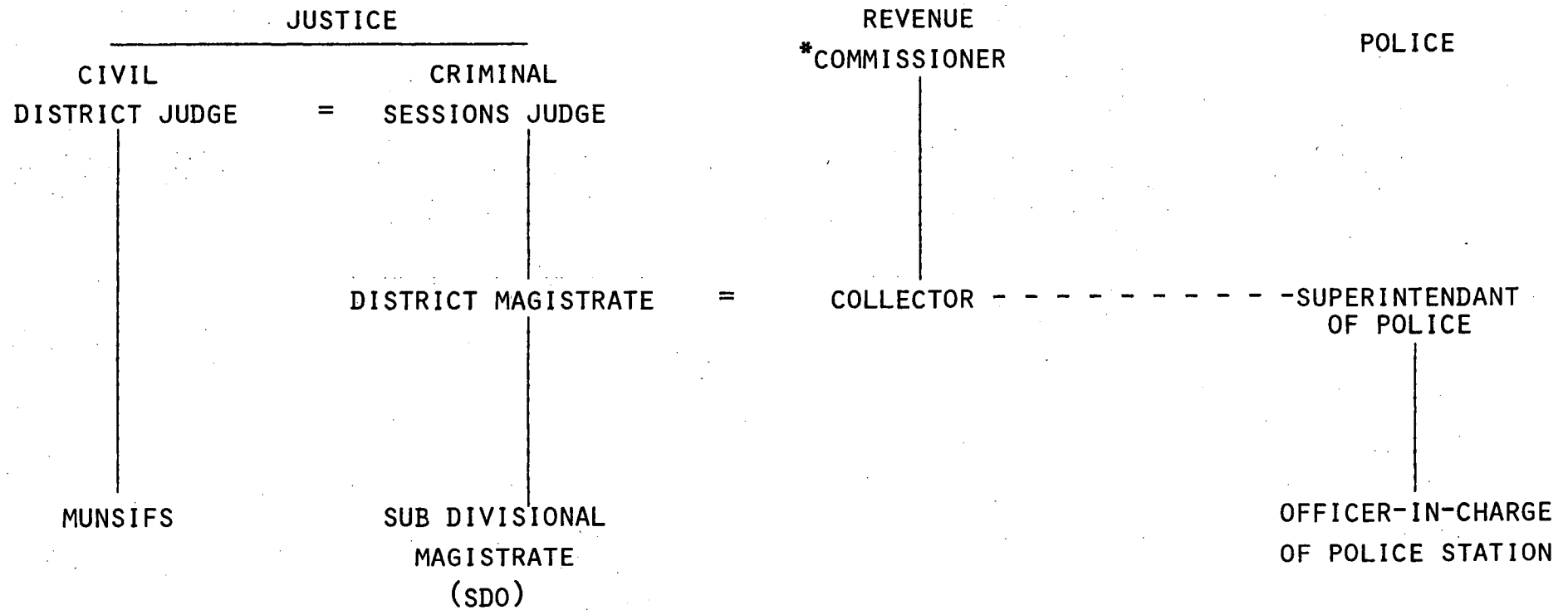
The regional administrative structure in Bengal during the years 1850 to 1885 is shown in Figure 1.1.

If one looks at the regional administrative structure as shown in Figure 1.1 one would be justified in saying that the machinery of administration at the District level was purely law and order and revenue oriented. Yet the course of events in the next few decades brought the Collector into the mainstream of the rural development process in a way not fully recorded in the existing literature of District administration. The Collector became much more than a functionary concerned with internal security and revenue administration. He became increasingly occupied with the general welfare of the people in the District and to that end his role was conceived to be the general controlling authority over all other activities in his jurisdiction.

24. Misra, The Central Administration of the East India Company, Op.cit., pp.149-151.

25. In some provinces, this unit is known as Taluqa.

THE COLLECTORAL PATTERN IN BENGAL (1850-1885)



Key

= Denotes Offices are united

- - - - Denotes Line of Influence

* Divisional Level only

Source: Stokes, op.cit., pp.142-43.

This trend was set as early as in 1872 by Sir George Campbell, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal. He is quoted to have said:

"The Magistrate Collector of a Great Bengal district generally comprising one and a half to two and a half million inhabitants is the real executive chief and administrator of the tract of country committed to him and supreme over everyone and everything except the proceedings of the courts of justice."²⁶

It is easy to pick up such extracts from the annual publication of Bengal government called Bengal Administration Report and to say that it was essentially an authoritarian structure that was built around the office of the Collector. It may equally be tempting to assume that such an office would be ill-suited for meeting the ends of development. While such assumptions are much too frequent and common, it may as easily be shown that the Collector's involvement in the rural development process became so deep-rooted by the end of the colonial rule as not to be severed in subsequent years.

It is more relevant to explain and analyse the question of continuing relationship of the Collector with the rural development process than to summarily debunk the system in terms of such cliches as authoritarian, orthodox and paternalistic. It is more important to analyse the circumstances surrounding the Collector's

26. Quoted by A.T.R. Rahman, 'Politics in District Administration', in Prabhash Kanti Nandy (ed.), Problems of District Administration, National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA), Dacca, July, 1970, (Mimeo), p.100.

role in the sphere of rural welfare which is not fully revealed in the structure of the system than to resort to oversimplistic assertions that fit it into the typology of the French Prefectoral system.

In terms of historical evidence, the conclusion is incontrovertible that, along with promoting stability and collecting taxes, the Collector became increasingly drawn into rural welfare programmes. This association of the Collector with rural welfare measures, during colonial rule, occurred first because of his relationship with the local government system and secondly, by the creation of a new unit of development administration called the Circle.

The concept of the Circle as an unit of development administration requires analysis in terms of its actual working for a fuller understanding of the relationship of the Collector and the rural development process. This is primarily for the reason that the unit has continued to leave an undiminished range of influence on the programmes of rural development in Bangladesh upto the present times. The local government system and the concept of Circle are inter-related although the latter arose in consequence of the need for a closer link of the Collectorial pattern with village life and conditions. We deal first with the local government system in relation to the Collector.

COLLECTOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN BENGAL

It may be recalled that our discussion on the Collectorial pattern begins with a reference to Tinker's view that the pattern grew out of a blending of indigenous and English tradition. Tinker contrasts this with the local government system which is purely a western

innovation.²⁷ Some official documents of the Government of India also lend credence to this view. Thus the Indian Statutory Commission (1930) quotes an official document entitled 'Memorandum on the Development and Working of Representative Institutions in the Sphere of Local Self-Government'. Paragraph 333 of the Commission's Report states as under:

"Local Self-Government in India, in the sense of a representative organization, responsible to a body of electors, enjoying the powers of taxation and functioning both as a school of training in responsibility and a vital link in the chain of organizations that make up the Government of the country, is a British creation."²⁸

It is needless to enter into the controversy of whether the local government system would have greater chances of success if it were built with due regard ^{to} tradition. Whatever one might say about the Panchayats of ancient India, their existence or viability as representative fora is open to doubt.²⁹

In Bengal, the Collector's association with the improvement of rural roads began more than a decade before the introduction of local government system. As Chairman of Ferry Funds Committee, the Collector was involved in building, repair and maintenance of rural roads. The details of this aspect of the Collector's work are recorded in a Bengal government

27. Tinker, Op.cit., p.334.

28. Indian Statutory Commission (Sir John Simon, Chairman), HMSO, May, 1930, Vol. I, p.298.

29. N.C. Roy, Rural Self-Government in Bengal, University of Calcutta, Calcutta, 1936, p.1.

publication.³⁰ These Committees were given statutory recognition in 1871, when under the District Road Cess Act of the same year, the Collector became the president of the District Road Cess Committee. It included non-official members.

In 1870 again, efforts were made to create village level bodies under Village Chaukidari Act. Under this Act, villages were grouped into Unions to provide for a system of watch and ward in each village. The guidelines for the creation of Unions is laid down in articles 2 and 3 of the Bengal Chaukidari Manual.

Thus emerged the concept of a local government unit which, though limited to security functions at the beginning, formed the basis of the primary unit of local government in later years. It still exists as does the watch and ward system known as the Chaukidari system. It will thus be seen that in Bengal the existence of District Committees and Unions provided a firm basis for latter-day introduction of representative local councils. This occurred in 1885 under Lord Ripon who envisaged representative popular institutions the details of which are elaborately set forth in the Government of India's Resolution of 18 May, 1882 on the constitution of local councils.³¹

30. Selections From The Records of The Bengal Government, No. XXIV, Correspondence Relating To The Ferry Funds In The Lower Provinces, F. Carbery, Military Orphan Press, Calcutta, 1856, pp. 106-178.

31. C.H. Philips (ed.), Select Documents On The History Of India and Pakistan, IV : The Evolution of India and Pakistan, 1858 to 1947, Oxford University Press, London, 1962, pp.50-56.

We are not concerned with the controversy surrounding the place of the Collector as head of the District Boards. It will be sufficient for purposes of our consideration to point out that for nearly three decades since 1885, the Collector continued to be the Chairman of District Board. It was only in 1920's, following the recommendations of Edwin Montagu, that the District Boards were "freed from the control of the District Magistrate".³² This freedom from control of the Collector did not necessarily lead to his withdrawal from the sphere of rural development programmes. His relationship with the programmes of rural development remained unaffected through the creation of Circles to which we now turn our attention.

Emergence of Circle As An Unit Of Administration

Since 1871, the need for a subordinate agency, below the Sub-divisions in Bengal, has been keenly felt by the government.³³ Our discussion on the creation of administrative units such as the District, Sub-division and the Thana has shown that while the District level provided the unified command of the three functions of Justice, Security and

32. Tinker, Op.cit., p.119.

33. Bengal Administration Report, Government of Bengal, Calcutta, 1871-72, p.44.

"Many things done by tahsildars (village revenue officials and book-keepers) in other parts of India are not done at all and many things we ought to know from them we do not know it has happened that in the province we have held the longest we have less familiarity with the people than in any other province, that British authority is less brought home to the people, that the rich are less restrained and the poor and weak less protected than elsewhere, and that we have infinitely less knowledge of statistical, agricultural and other facts."

Revenue, the Subdivision and the Thana were for specified purposes only.

The Tahsils in other provinces in India were used as revenue units to obtain information on crop conditions, village agricultural system and land-use pattern. Collector's annual inspection of Tahsil offices, his monthly tour of Tahsils and visits to the office of Patwari (village revenue accountant) would furnish him with all the information about village life and conditions. No such agency existed in Bengal. This gap was also pointed out by the Royal Commission Upon Decentralization in India (1909) in paragraphs 601 and 699-702 of the Report.³⁴

Based on the recommendation of the Decentralization Commission, the Circle system came to be introduced in the selected Subdivisions of Bengal in 1911. Under this system, the Unions were grouped into Circles under the charge of government officer called CO, a member of the junior civil service, whose main function was to supervise and guide the Union Boards (then called Union Panchayats). Thus was born a new administrative unit which was to form the basis of present day Thana Councils in Bangladesh.³⁵

The Report, while giving full support to the Circle Officers' scheme, recommended formation of Circle Boards, a new tier of local government institution below the subdivisional level, initially under the chairmanship of CO. This recommendation is made in paragraph 142 of the Report.³⁶ The Circle Boards were never set

34. Royal Commission Upon Decentralization in India (C.E.H.

Hobhouse, Chairman), HMSO, 1909, Vol.I, pp.209 and 238-240.

35. The Bengal District Administration Enquiry Committee Report,

1913-1914, (.E.V.Levinge, C.S.I., Chairman), Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1915, pp.103-136. The validity of this assertion is apparent from the views of the Levinge Committee.

36. Levinge, Report, p.123.

up during British colonial rule. Yet the recommendations of the Committee dealing with the necessity of Circle Boards, their constitution and functions show striking similarity to the present day role of the CO and the Thana Council. The actual working of the system in its experimental stage also shows similarity to the recent trends in rural development in Bangladesh based on the concept of mobilising the rural people for voluntary participation in development.³⁷

The Levinge Committee emphasized the role of the Circle Boards "in directions other than the local government, as for example relieving distress in times of flood and famine, in helping on schemes in connection with cooperative credit movement and the development of agricultural demonstration, and in advising the District Officer with regard to certain local and administrative problems".³⁸

This new system had its effect on the future role of the

37. Report On The Experimental Introduction Of The Circle System Into Selected Subdivisions Of The Presidency Of Bengal

(J.N. Gupta, M.A. I.C.S.), Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1914, pp.10.50. This is evidenced from the Gupta Report.

The Report cites commendable work of rural improvement programmes, undertaken on voluntary basis, in those Subdivisions where the Circle system was introduced.

Rural development in Bangladesh based on voluntary labour-utilisation strategy is discussed in Chapters IV & V of this thesis.

38. Levinge, Report, p.88.

Collector below the Subdivisional level and formed a vital link between the Collector and the rural people. The extent and the nature of this link and the objectives thereof are clearly brought out by the enumeration of the original functions of the CO in Union Board Manual, in the Chief Secretary, Government of Bengal's Memorandum to the Home Secretary, Government of India and the letter addressed by the Governor General of India to the Secretary of State for India bearing No. 213 dated 7th August, 1913.³⁹

The functions of the CO as laid down in these documents and his place in the hierarchy of the Collectorial pattern clearly show that besides being an agency for supervision and guidance of Union Boards, the CO was to be the repository of all information relating to the general welfare of the rural people in such areas as agriculture, education, health and roads and communication. In the field of local government, the system may be said to have led to encouraging results as is evident from Table 1.1.

Consequent upon the introduction of the Circle system, the Collectorial pattern was brought into close contact with rural institutions and rural development. The introduction of the elective principles in case of the District Boards in 1920, did not materially alter the Collector's relationship with representative institutions below the District level. Nor did it mean any reduction of his functions with regard to rural welfare which the Collector was called upon to perform outside his regulatory role.

39. Md. Anisuzzaman, The Circle Officer: A Study of his Role,

NIPA, Dacca, 1963. This study reproduces the Governor General's letter as Appendix A, Sections of Union Board Manual as Appendix B and the letter from the Chief Secretary of Bengal to Home Secretary of India in pp.16-17.

TABLE 1.1
NUMBER OF UNION BOARDS IN BENGAL (1914-1937)

YEAR	NUMBER OF VILLAGES	NUMBER OF BOARDS	REMARKS
1914	70,000	60	NOMINATED
1918	-	400	NOMINATED
1920	-	295	ELECTED
1921	84,981	1600	ELECTED
1926	-	2419	ELECTED
1937	-	5046	ELECTED

Source: Tinker, op.cit., p.56, 118 and 200.

This is the view expressed in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report.⁴⁰ The same view is also taken by the Indian Statutory Commission.⁴¹ The Collector's work more and more tended to be involved in providing supervision and guidance in programmes of rural development by providing co-ordinative leadership to the various specialized services in the field as well as by generating popular enthusiasm for development in such fields as agriculture, education and health.

40. Report On Indian Constitutional Reforms, (Edwin S. Montagu and Chelmsford), HMSO, 1918, pp.102-103.

41. Simon, Report, Op.cit., Vol I, pp.286-288.

It is worthwhile to quote from the Montagu-Chelmsford Report about the role of the Collector in this regard as against his relationship with the specialised services:

"Several other specialised services exist with staffs of their own, such as the establishments for irrigation, roads and buildings, agriculture, industries, factories and co-operative credit. These are controlled not by the district officer but by their own heads; they may be regarded as a different set of strings connecting the Government with the people. But in varying degrees the district officer influences the policy in all these matters, and he is always there in the background to lend his support, or, if need be, to mediate between specialised service and the people."⁴²

This mediatory role was not easy to perform specially in the years following the introduction of elected legislature in the provinces when most of the development departments were taken over by elected Ministers who were answerable to the legislature. The position of the Collector remained far from satisfactory as the Memorandum submitted by the Government of Bengal to the Simon Commission makes it clear.

The Memorandum states as follows:

"Although the government clung to the principle that the authority of the District Collector must be maintained in all departments, it was obvious that as the departments grew in strength and appointed their own local officers, his advice and control were less needed and the tendency

42. Montagu-Chelmsford, Report, Op.cit., pp.103.

was to transfer this control to local departmental officers (Of course, these officers) were instructed to keep in touch with the District Officer, and sought his help when they required it."⁴³

It is clear from the views quoted above that the Collector's position in relation to specialised services was not, as is ordinarily supposed, that of supremacy in terms of superior-subordinate relationship. Each of the specialised departments had their own chain of command. The Collector was in no way directly controlling their affairs. This lends support to the view that the Collectoral pattern, as it evolved, was run on the recognition of the functional independence of other field agencies. This means that it was more akin to the unintegrated variety of Prefectoral system than to the integrated.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE COLLECTOR AND THE SPECIALISED SERVICES

The myth of the Collector's supremacy built around the inadequate analysis of his relationship with other field agencies has led to the popular belief that his position is comparable to that of the French Prefect. Even the similarity of the Collectoral pattern to the unintegrated Prefectoral system must be seen in the limited context of comparative analysis that is based on structural elements. The lack of administrative supremacy of the Italian Prefect in relation to field officers is compensated by "his political position not revealed in the structure of the system".⁴⁴ The same argument is

43. Najmul Abedin, Local Administration and Politics in Modernising Societies Bangladesh and Pakistan, National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA), Dacca, 1973, p.330.

44. Smith, Field Administration, Op.cit., p.81.

not applicable to the Collector.

This is borne out by the continued stress on the need to strengthen the position of the Collector as head of administration in the District. We have seen that this was the policy enunciated by the government of Bengal as far back as in 1872. The Decentralisation Commission in 1909 echoed similar sentiments.⁴⁵ Yet the position did not improve as have been shown by the views of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report and the Bengal government's opinion to the Simon Commission to which we have referred.

The Collector's relationship with the field services has been built around administrative conventions and a complex web of socio-political factors which have a direct bearing on the process of rural development. Political support, in the sense in which it is available to the Italian Prefect, was not available to the Collector during the period between 1919 to 1947:

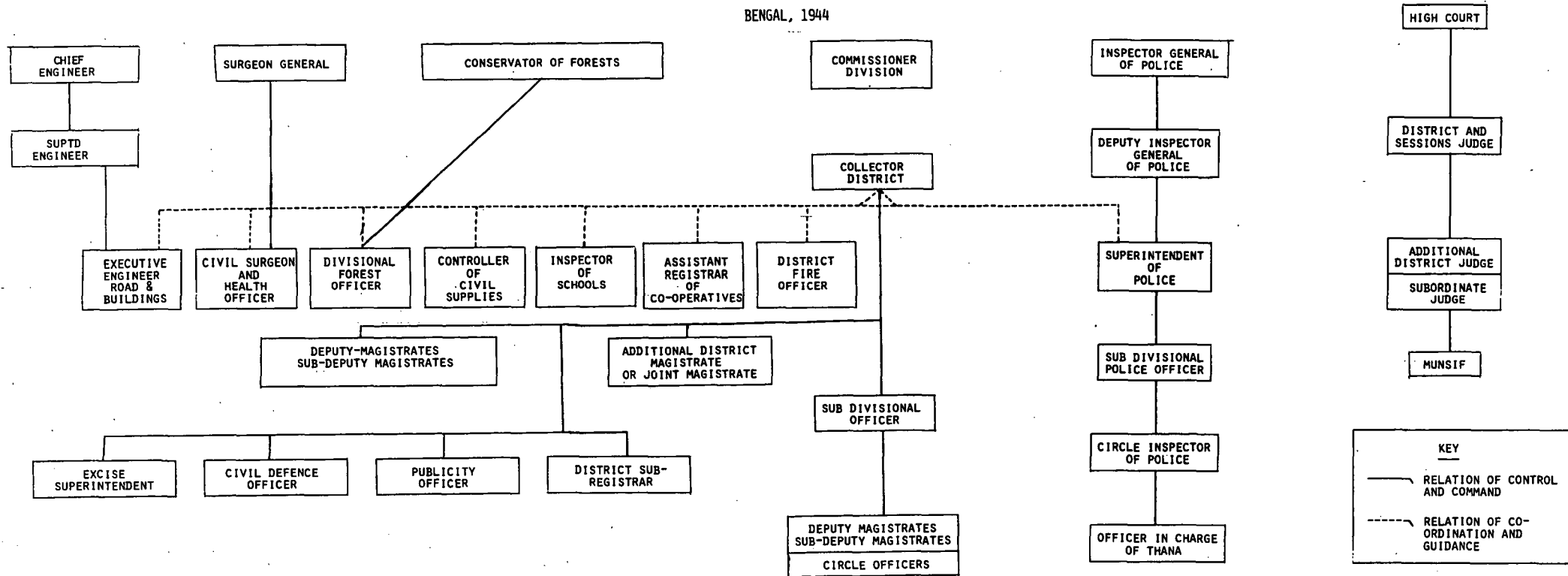
"But now he had to work in the district alongside of politicians whose dislike for him bordered on hostility and contempt. The tendency in the last days of the freedom struggle was to damage his power and influence as the head of the district and as the co-ordinating authority over all other district officers, each engaged in his own field of specialization."⁴⁶

The relationship between the Collector and the specialised services between the years 1920 to 1947 is shown in the Figure below:

45. Hobhouse, Report, Vol.I, Op.cit., p.188.

46. Haridwar Rai, 'Institution of the District Collector', Indian Journal of Public Administration, Vol.11, 1965, pp.644-659.

FIGURE 1.2
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION AND SPECIALISED SERVICES IN
BENGAL, 1944



Source: An Outline of District Administration in Bengal (1944), NIPA,
Dacca, Reprint No. 113, 1967.

COLLECTOR AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The involvement of the Collector in rural welfare programmes right from the 1850's, through Ferry Funds Committees, District Road Cess Committees, the local government system and finally the Circle system, points out the futility, in terms of evidential corroboration, of looking at the pattern as an instrument of regulatory functions only. Rural Development received an added impetus during the 1930's following the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Agriculture in India (1928). While calling attention of the Government of India to the need for changing the outlook of the villagers as a first step towards improvement of rural life, the Commission pleaded for governmental responsibility for rural development.⁴⁷ This led to specific government policy, at all-India level, on rural development in 1935. The Government of India "allotted Rs. one crore for distribution to the provinces for the economic development of the rural areas".⁴⁸

Consequent upon this governmental policy focus on rural development, a separate department of Rural Reconstruction was set up almost in every province between the years 1935 to 1939. Committees were set up at the District level under the control of the Collector to carry out schemes of rural development touching on almost every aspect of rural life.⁴⁹ Although it may be correct to hold that this consciousness, on the part of the government, arose principally out of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Agriculture, the significant contribution made by the individual efforts of some of

47. Phillips, Op.cit., p.665.

48. Ibid., p.665.

49. Tinker, Op.cit., p.208.

the Collectors prior to 1928 in the sphere of rejuvenation of rural life, did also have their impact both on the Commission and the future government policy. This is evident from a reference to F.L. Brayne in the Commission's Report dealing with the Punjab.⁵⁰

The Populist Movement of Rural Development in Bengal

The Collector's involvement in the process of rural development shows two distinct strands. One is the official rural development policy and the work done in pursuance of that policy. The other is the work done outside the ambit of governmental activity. It is the latter aspect that can be called the populist movement in rural development. It is customary to associate the populist movement of rural development with the work of M.L. Darling and F.L. Brayne, both were ICS officers who served in the Punjab. They became famous for organizing rural development work as Collectors in the Districts in which they were posted.⁵¹

Our discussion on the emergence of the Circle system and the work done by the COs, under the overall guidance and supervision of the Collectors, indicate that the Collectorial pattern in Bengal was involved in organising the rural people for development. Evidences are also available that, apart from the Circle system, some of the Collectors and SDOs provided leadership for the betterment of rural conditions. It is unfortunate that, except for the Gupta Report on the Circle system, no systematic record is available in this regard.

50. Phillips, Op.cit., pp.662-663.

51. Ralph Braibanti, Research on the Bureaucracy of Pakistan, Duke University Press, Durham, 1966, pp.201-202.

The only document available on the leadership role of the Collectorial pattern in the process of rural development in Bengal is a small brochure, now out of print, called A B C of Rural Reconstruction by H.S.M. Ishaque, I.C.S.⁵²

Chapter I of this brochure deals with the history and development of rural reconstruction movement in India. The first section of the Chapter is devoted to the work done in other provinces in India while the second section gives a resume of what happened in Bengal both officially and unofficially. The unofficial part includes a reference to the work done by Tagore in Sri Niketan in 1922 and some of the work of Christian Missionaries. At the other end, we have references to the work done by G.S. Dutt, I.C.S., who organised rural development societies first in the District of Birbhum and then in Mymensingh. His work dates back to 1916.

There is a brief reference to the work done by N.M. Khan, I.C.S. as SDO Brahmanbaria. Khan set an example of organising voluntary rural labour in eradicating water hyacinth and in excavating a canal. Ishaque records this as follows:

"Mr. Khan's achievement created a sensation and showed what could be done by voluntary effort and there is no doubt

52. H.S.M. Ishaque, A B C of Rural Reconstruction, East Bengal Government Press, Dacca, 1948. The monograph of Ishaque was first published before the partition of India. The page numbers are according to a typed copy obtained from the Dacca Collectorate library.

that it was Khan's work which, though temporarily, gave a filip to the movement."⁵³

Another officer who became prominent for his work in rural development is T.I.M. Nurunnabi Chaudhuri, I.C.S. Chaudhuri made a genuine effort in organising the villagers by creating village-based organisation. As Collector of Bogra District, he organised many village samities (associations), introduced village development funds, village halls and model villages.⁵⁴ Chaudhuri later became the Director of the newly created department of Rural Reconstruction. He organised similar work in the District of Mymensingh as Collector.

Finally, some mention may be made of Ishaque's work in Sirajganj Subdivision during the year 1939-40. As SDO Sirajganj, Ishaque organised the villagers with the slogan "Better Homes and Villages". He succeeded in enlisting voluntary support for an ambitious programme for eradication of illiteracy. Under the programme, 1500 night schools were opened attended by 50,000 adults while 35,000 children attended 1250 primary schools opened for the purpose. Teacher's training camps were organised to provide instructors for the schools. Improvement in agriculture, cottage industry, communications, health and sanitation also received equal attention. In the field of agriculture, twenty-one model farms were opened.

Improved plough and seeds were distributed and a demonstrator was provided at each farm to impart knowledge and

53. Ibid., p.9.

54. Ibid., p.9.

expert advice to the farmers. Seven new weaving schools were established to train the villagers in the art of weaving as a means for supplementary source of income. Voluntary groups were formed to clear the jungles and eradicate water hyacinth as well as to build roads. All these were reported in an editorial of The Statesman, a leading English daily published from Calcutta.⁵⁵ Later, Ishaque succeeded Chaudhuri as Director of Rural Reconstruction department in October 1940.

These are some of the recorded evidence of the leadership role provided by the Collector and his staff in the process of rural development in Bengal during the first half of this century. It is not our intention to draw any conclusion at this stage. What we wish to point out is an aspect of relationship between the Collectoral pattern and the process of rural development. Short-lived though these efforts were, they do point out the fact that the Collectoral pattern has been the chief source of impetus for the concept of voluntary labour utilisation strategy. The revival of the same strategy in Bangladesh during the seventies, underscores the importance of analysing the relationship in terms of social and political factors that influence village participation.

Views of Rowlands Committee, 1944-45

As the British colonial rule was drawing to a close, modifications occurred in the concept of the developmental role of the Collector. The evidence of the last hundred years or so puts forth a convincing argument in favour of the Collectoral pattern as an instrument for stimulating rural development activities. It was

55. Ibid., pp.10-11.

this argument that was put forward by the Rowlands Committee.⁵⁶

The Committee looked upon rural development as the end-product of the activities of several departments and did not favour the idea of a separate agency "wholly independent of the District Officer" on grounds of conflict in jurisdiction and friction. It recommended the abolition of the Rural Reconstruction department as a separate agency.

While appreciating the work of the department and noting that it has inspired many a young officer "with a new vision of service to rural population of the province" the Committee observed thus:

"As will be clear from what we have already said, it will be the District Officer through his own subordinates and as coordinator of the activities of the technical officers, who will be responsible for rural reconstruction. We propose to reinforce him in pursuit of this goal in two ways. We propose -

- (1) an increase in the number of Circle Officers with corresponding reduction in the area in their jurisdiction; and
- (2) the strengthening and expansion of Union Boards' activities".⁵⁷

The Committee emphasized the integrated approach to development with the Collector as the head of a combined team of

56. Report of the Bengal Administration Enquiry Committee: 1944-45

(Sir Archibald Rowlands, K.C.B., M.B.E., Chairman), Bengal Secretariat Press, Alipore, 1945.

57. Ibid., p.22.

operations at the District level and recommended that the task of rural development be assigned to the Collector. The loosely defined jurisdiction of the Collector in matters affecting the welfare of the District which started since the second half of the nineteenth century through the policy of the Bengal Government, strengthened later through the Circle Officers' system, thus found its culmination in the recommendations of the Rowlands Committee.

It may well be asked why should a generalist administrator be responsible for activities which are carried out by individual departments. Smith's observations with regard to the unintegrated system of Prefectoral variety is relevant:

"The answer is partly administrative and partly political. It must be remembered that the prefect is an office which pre-dates most of the government's external services which have developed as the state has taken on more positive functions on economic and social affairs. It is still politically expedient for some countries to maintain an officer with a general responsibility for peace, order and stability in the province. The long established traditions of his office, and the fact that for most people that office is almost indistinguishable from the ordinary person's concept of "the Government" means that the prefect may enjoy great authority, and a corresponding degree of power in his area, despite the absence of legal supremacy. This may be extremely useful for a national executive wishing to 'dampen down' local and provincial loyalties."⁵⁸

58. Smith, Field Administration, Op.cit., p.80.

With some modification as regards political responsibility, the argument holds good for the Collectorial pattern which has the added advantage of overall responsibility for the welfare of the rural people. The immense prestige of his office was considered useful for purposes of development. To the ordinary villager, he was the government. The Rowlands Committee used exactly the same arguments when it said that "the status and prestige of the District Magistrate in the eyes of the people is still very high and it is desirable to utilise this prestige and harness it to the work of development."⁵⁹ It wanted to utilise the Collector for the work of development not for dealing with the problem of local or provincial loyalties but for ensuring an integrated and co-ordinated approach to rural development.

The recommendations of the Rowlands Committee with regard to the role of the Collector in the process of rural development was not primarily to make him the recognised overlord in relation to the specialist services. It was to make him more directly involved in the process of rural development than has earlier been done. If the Collector was to utilise the services of other departments, his authority was clearly excluded from the "internal administration and technical methods of those agencies".⁶⁰

In recommending development to be one of the major responsibilities of the Collector, the Committee displayed a remarkable degree of foresight in that the trend of administrative reforms in both India and Pakistan after the end of the colonial rule (1947) showed that exclusion of the Collector from this

59. Rowlands, Report, Op.cit., p.20.

60. Ibid., p.21.

supposedly new responsibility was not desirable. The experiences of these two countries in community development programmes have shown that the Collector is an useful agency for enthusing rural people for development, mobilising local resources and integrating the fragmented efforts of specialised services into a meaningful programme of action.

While this is being discussed in the Chapter that follows, it is contended that emphasis on the regulatory role of the Collector provides but a very partial and incomplete picture of the field administration in Bangladesh even during the colonial rule. The conceptual framework of comparative field administration that seeks to explain the Collectorial pattern in terms of stability-supporting role fails to account for the development functions of the Collector. These functions relating to the welfare of the rural people have formed an integral part of the field administrative system during colonial rule.

COLLECTOR AND RELIEF ADMINISTRATION

Our discussion on the Collector's role in the process of rural development would remain incomplete without a brief appreciation of his assigned functions in relief administration. It is sometimes called famine administration because famine occupies "a large place in Indian history and tradition".⁶¹ For purposes of our consideration, this has special significance in that the historical and conceptual antecedents of rural development during colonial era can partly be traced to the three Famine Commission Reports which "called attention to the need for a co-ordinated attack on crop

61. Griffiths, Op.cit., p.180.

yield ..."⁶²

The first of these Reports enunciated a set of principles which in 1883 formed the basis of Famine Code in each of the provinces in India. The Code provided exhaustive guideline for the Collector and his staff to undertake functions to combat famine. The responsibility for organising relief and rehabilitation of the people affected was assigned to the Collector:

"The burden of their implementation was to fall mainly upon the District Officer, and it is perhaps in famine assistance that the Indian Civil Service Officer was seen at its best."⁶³

The Bengal Famine Code and the Bengal Famine Manual elaborately lay down the responsibility for welfare measures to be undertaken by the Collector. It is a comprehensive code of disaster control. The functions of the Collector under the Code have two principal aspects. One relates to pre-disaster preparedness to combat natural calamities leading or likely to lead to famine conditions. The other is the post-disaster operations which involve the Collector in overall organisation and distribution of relief. The major provisions of the Code were compiled in the form of a manual known as the "Manual of Practical Instructions regarding Famine Relief Administration in Bengal" in 1923. This was replaced in 1941 by the Famine Manual.⁶⁴ The

62. Braibanti, Op.cit., p.200.

63. Griffiths, Op.cit., p.188.

64. Bengal Famine Code (Revised edition of 1913), The Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, Calcutta, 1913; Government of Bengal (Revenue Department), Famine Manual, Bengal Government Press, Alipore, 1941.

Collector is required, under section 9 and 10 of the Manual, to be thoroughly conversant with the economic condition and problems of the District.

He is required to "see that the Circle Officer and other officers doing rural development work encourage the construction of protective works" (section 16); he is required to be conversant with the history, causes and effects of floods (section 104). The Collector is to make "a liberal distribution of loans under the Agricultural Loans Act" and Land Improvement Act (section 19) and organise "Test Works" in affected areas (section 32). A host of other duties are mentioned a detailed discussion of which is outside the scope of our study.

The duties of the Collector as outlined in the Manual with regard to relief administration have survived to this day with very little modification.⁶⁵ It is through the discharge of these duties that the welfare image of the Collector has been built up over the years. The rural society, through generations, have been conditioned to look up to the Collector for support and assistance at times of distress.

Our references to some of the relevant sections bearing on the Collector's role bring out that (a) the Collector's office was moulded into an office of welfare administration and (b) to fit into this role, the Collector was to remain constantly in touch with the rural conditions in so far as they affect the daily lives of the

65. Government of East Pakistan, Emergency Orders for Relief, 1961, Part II, p.4. It refers to the Famine Code and Manual for detailed instructions for dealing with natural calamities.

people. It was for him to organise and encourage flood control measures, take steps for improvement in agriculture, enthuse public and private charity, ensure co-ordinated action for relief work, put up demands to the government for relief funds, set up organisation with local resources for efficient distribution of relief materials and finally to remain accountable to the government for overall welfare of the people.

All these go to show how misleading it can be to look upon the Collectorial pattern in terms of public order and revenue administration alone. The Collector's administrative responsibilities have been much broader than is usually supposed.

Proposition I

This leads us to formulate our proposition I: "Field administration in some colonial societies, in addition to stability-supporting role, also performed the function of rural development."

Further to the aforesaid proposition, we may point out that the evolution of the Collectorial pattern, as we have discussed it, signifies the limitation of the political role approach that is based on the assumption of maintenance of stability. The Collectorial pattern, as it eventually emerged, shows that:

- * it has never been single-role oriented in terms of maintaining stability in the society;
- * it can serve other goals alongwith stability;
- * it has not originated basically in response to the need for promoting stability;
- * it has assumed, over time, a complexity of functions in response to a variety of needs quite different from one concerned principally with stability;

* its eventual emergence combining judicial, executive, revenue and development functions is the outcome of social, political and administrative factors.

The unverified observations of Fesler with regard to the political role approach having thus been tested in the light of historical evidence, we wish now to examine his general view that field administration in a newly independent country may be required to perform the function of co-ordination of development activities and facilitating public opinion for purposes of development. We may add one qualification. The Collectorial pattern, as it evolved, was already performing this role long before the independent states of India and Pakistan emerged out of British India. In the Chapter that follows, we wish to present the argument that in a post-colonial situation, it is essential to harness the inherited structure of field administration to the needs of rural development. This can be done by continued national policy focus on rural development coupled with bringing about attitudinal change in the bureaucracy. It is contended that the inherited structure has a necessary function in the process of institutionalization of rural development efforts. A dominant aspect of the attempt at institutionalization is the need to combine elements of popular with administrative participation.

CHAPTER II

THE COLLECTOR AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (1950-1971)

This Chapter analyses attempts at institutionalization of rural development following the end of the colonial era which saw the emergence of two newly independent states of India and Pakistan in 1947. The Chapter, with a brief reference to the Indian experience, has been divided into two sections, each representing a distinct phase of rural development. The first phase represents the well known community development concept which was accepted as a model for rural development both in India and Pakistan during the fifties.

The second phase represents the more comprehensive attempts at formal institutionalization of rural development by combining "the style of persuasion which was the hallmark of Village AID with sanctional powers of a formal bureaucracy".¹ The first phase is known as the Village Agricultural and Industrial Development more commonly known as Village AID or V-AID. The second phase is known as the Basic Democracies System, more popularly known as the BD system.

From the standpoint of historical perspective relating to the rural development process, neither of the two phases offers any novel feature save in terms of increasing expenditure, elaborate organisation and perhaps a more serious attempt at institution-building.

The concept and practice of community development in case of Bengal was not unknown if we keep in view our discussion on the

1. Braibanti, Op.cit., p.203.

Circle system and the populist movement of rural development during the first half of this century. Similarly, organising rural development work through the united efforts of the Collectorial pattern and the local government system was also not unknown. The Gupta Report on the Circle system and the views of the Levinge Committee, to which we have referred in Chapter I, clearly substantiate this contention.

The experiences of both India and Pakistan in community development programme show that the colonial pattern of field administration may have a necessary function to contribute to the achievement of community development objectives. This has been the lesson from the experiences of both India and Pakistan despite what the critics may say about the unsuitability of the traditional pattern to meet the needs of development.²

As a distinct programme of rural development, nation-wide in scope, community development approach was adopted in India and Pakistan during the fifties. In both the cases the example and experience of the agricultural extension work in the United States provided the basis for launching the programme.³ It is unnecessary

2. Jack D. Mezirow, The Dynamics of Community Development, The Scare Crow Press, Inc., New York, 1963. Mezirow states:

"A government structure designed to fulfil the limited administrative functions - law enforcement and revenue function primarily - has been perhaps the most seriously retarding factor in rural development." p.47.

3. Braibanti, Op.cit., pp.200-202; Mezirow, Op.cit., pp.50-51; B. Mukerjee, Community Development in India, Orient Longmans, Bombay, 1963, p.51.

to go into the details of the concept and practice of community development approach. The various Reports of the United Nations have discussed this in detail.⁴ The Reports, relating to the working of community development concept, bring out clearly that:

- * the task of administrative co-ordination of specialist services is less difficult in countries with administrative Districts where the traditional District administrators have horizontal control over the specialised departments operating in the field;⁵
- * there is need in such countries for adjustment of the roles of the District administrators to the conceptual framework of community development;⁶
- * inspite of paradoxical relationship between community development programme and the local government system, the success of the former depends, to a large extent, on the success of the latter.⁷

How were these issues resolved in India and Pakistan? What was the nature of adjustment of the role of the Collector in the context of community development programme? We will address ourselves to these questions and the relationship that eventually

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4. United Nations, Report on the Mission on Community Organization and Development in South and South-East Asia, New York, 1953; Public Administration Aspects of Community Development Programme, Op.cit., United Nations, Popular Participation in Development: Emerging Trends of Community Development, New York, 1971.
 5. Public Administration Aspects of Community Development, Op.cit., p.18.
 6. Ibid., p.18,
 7. Ibid., pp.47-48.

emerged between rural development process and the Collector. We begin first with a brief reference to the Indian experience and then in greater detail in case of Bangladesh when it formed part of Pakistan.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND THE COLLECTORAL PATTERN: THE NATURE OF
ADJUSTMENT IN INDIA

The Indian experience deserves reference for several reasons. It has an uninterrupted history of western type of political democracy. Its community development programme "is perhaps the best known example in Asia of concentrated and sustained national effort for establishing a national community development structure, covering the entire country."⁸ The Collector played a vital role in the execution of community development programme in India.

The earliest attempt at community development in India is the Etawah Pilot Project in the District of Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh. The project was started in October, 1948 by the government of the state of Uttar Pradesh. The role that the Collector of Gorakhpur was called upon to play in respect of administrative co-ordination, set the general pattern for the future involvement of the Collector in community development programme. As the programme was multi-dimensional in nature, it demanded a close interlinking of the various components. This involved co-ordination of the various specialist services.

Park states the problem of administrative co-ordination as follows:

8. Popular Participation in Development, Op.cit., p.262.

"Whereas the Collectorate was calculated to operate effectively when the pace of movement and change was slow or routinely haphazard, the new developmental effort was dynamic, irregular in notion, often nervous, and called for hand-tailored, snappy attention, and thus not adapted to the routines of file noting. The clash was partially resolved in Etawah by the personal involvement of the Collector in pilot project activities; partially the clash was unresolved."⁹

This analysis of Park must be seen in the context of the operational responsibilities of the project. The responsibility for ^{was} co-ordination/vested in the District Development Officer as head of the District Development Branch and the staff attached to it. They were not part of the Collectorate but of the project organisation.¹⁰

The fact that the Collector had to pay personal attention in order to ensure co-ordination implies that his involvement was needed. Although Park finds a clash between the routine-oriented Collectorate and the demands of a new development effort, the clash could be resolved, albeit partially, with greater attention from the Collector. What was needed was to institutionalize the co-ordinative role of the Collector rather than call upon his service only when difficulties arose.

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9. Richard L. Park, 'Administrative Co-ordination and Economic Development in the Districts of India, in Ralph Braibanti (ed.), Administration and Economic Development in India, Duke University Press, Durham, 1963, pp.141-142.
 10. Report of the Mission on Community Organization and Development in South and South-East Asia, Op.cit., p.108.

This institutionalization occurred in 1952 when the community development programme was extended throughout India. In an attempt to find solution to the problems of co-ordination, the Collectors in 1955 were made responsible for development functions. The Collector was given the role of the captain and co-ordinator of all developmental activities in the District:

"He was given specific responsibilities in connection with the community development programme such as he had not been given in respect of the general programme of development even when he was the captain and co-ordinator for it the District Collector's position as the captain and co-ordinator over the entire field of development began to become more specific and one of expanding responsibilities and growing complexities."¹¹

The Collectoral Pattern And The Panchayati Raj

One of the major aspects of community development in India is the attempt at integration of the rural development process and an elected local government system. It is necessary to delineate this attempt in terms of the relationship between local government system, the Collector and the rural development process.

The Panchayati Raj is the name of the rural local government system in India which is often described as democratic decentralization. It is the outcome of a report commonly known as Mehta Report.¹² The report led to a series of debate which

11. Mukerjee, Op.cit., pp.134-135.

12. Report of the Team for the Study of Community Projects and National Extension Service, (Balwantray Mehta, Chairman), Government of India, Manager of Publications, Delhi, 1957.

principally centred on the question of relationship between the Collector and Zila Parishad (District Board). The report recommended that "the Collector will be the Chairman of the Parishad (zila parishad) and one of his officers will be secretary".¹³

The question was first discussed in the sixth meeting of the Central Council of Local Self-Government held at Bangalore on November 1, 1960. The consensus in the meeting was that the Collector should be kept outside the three-tier system of elected local government but he might be allowed to attend meetings of the Zila Parishad with the proviso that if the Zila Parishad was a co-ordinating and advisory body, he could be more closely associated than where it was an executive body.¹⁴

The question again came up for discussion at the Annual Conference on Community Development held at Hyderabad in July 1961. The conference discussed the following alternative roles of the Collector as:

- * Chairman Zila Parishad;
- * Chairman of Standing Committee, though not Chairman of the whole body; and
- * Completely outside the local government system.

While the conference emphasized the need for the

13. Haridwar Rai, 'Local Government, Local Administration and Development: Role Adaptation of the District Officer in India', Indian Journal of Public Administration, Vol. 14, No.1, January-March, 1968, pp.89-104.

14. Ibid. The word 'Zila' means District. It is also spelt 'Zilla'. The word 'parishad' means assembly or council, pp.94-95.

Collector to be "in constant touch with the Zila Parishad with regard to planning and implementation of various development programme", it could not decide on the alternatives and felt that it was too early to indicate which of the alternatives was the best.¹⁵

By 1965, the different states of India had chosen one or the other alternatives mentioned above or a combination of them. The position is summarised thus:

"A perusal of the State legislations relating to Panchayati Raj would show that the Collector, in view of his special position, has been given a distinctive role in the scheme of Panchayati Raj. Apart from that, the Collector has been made, following the recommendations of the Working Group on Inter-Departmental and Institutional Co-ordination for Agricultural Production, the Chairman of the Agricultural Production Committee of the Zila Parishad in six states, viz., Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Madhya Pradesh, Mysore, the Punjab and Rajasthan."¹⁶

The position of the Collector signifies political response to rural development in India involving a system of inter-dependence between the elected local councils and the inherited pattern of field administration. It is not seen as a threat to local democracy but as an essential and contributing element in the process of rural development. The pattern of relationship that

15. Ibid., p.95.

16. H.C. Pande, 'The Collector and Panchayati Raj Institutions', Indian Journal of Public Administration, Vol. 11, 1965, pp.637-643.

developed between the two is marked by uniformity in diversity in that the Collector, regardless of his position in or out of the Zila Parishad, remains a constant factor in the process of development at the local level as well as in Panchayati Raj institutions. This is reflected in the views of the Third Five Year Plan of India which stressed that "the Collector will continue to have large share of responsibility in facilitating the success of Panchayati Raj institutions."¹⁷ Besides ensuring effective co-ordination of various services in the field, "an important aspect of the Collector's work will be to assist the democratic institutions and the public services in developing the right conventions in day-to-day work and in administrative relationship based on recognition of their distinctive contribution in fulfilling common objectives."¹⁸

The role of the appointed officials is not seen limited to the narrow bureaucratic involvement in policy implementation. The official is also perceived in the role of a popular leader. This perception is part of the political culture and it issues principally out of the requirements of development which cannot be the same as that of a developed country. The Collectorial pattern acquires its legitimacy for its leadership role in the process of development out of this perception.

This role is summed up by Prime Minister Nehru who is quoted to have said, "officials should bring the experience and training of disciplined services. The non-officials should represent and bring that urge and enthusiasm which gives life to the

17. Ibid., p.637.

18. Ibid., p.638.

movement. Both have to think and act in a dynamic way and develop initiative. The official has to develop the qualities of a popular leader, the people's representatives have to develop discipline and training of the official, so that they approximate to each other and both should be guided by the ideal of disciplined service in a common cause."¹⁹.

Nehru's successor in office, Lal Bahadur Shastri spoke in a more direct manner with regard to the role of the Collector. During his address at the National Development Council on 27th October, 1964, Shastri suggested to the Chief Ministers present that "they should restore to the District Officer, whether he is known as the Collector or the Deputy Commissioner, the status of a co-ordinator of all responsibility of guiding all the efforts undertaken on behalf of Government, Central or State."²⁰ Again, in a nation-wide broadcast on October 10, 1965, Shastri stressed the role of the Collector in the drive to attain self-sufficiency in food production. He emphasized that the Collector "should regard himself in all humility as a commander who has to organize this drive and achieve the target which must be clearly laid down."²¹

COLLECTOR'S ROLE IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: THE NATURE OF ADJUSTMENT IN PAKISTAN

Pakistan's response to the problem of relationship between the Collectoral pattern and the community development programme

19. Ibid. p.642.

20. P.K. Dave, 'The Collector, Today and Tomorrow', Indian Journal of Public Administration, Vol. 11, 1965, pp.376-388.

21. Ibid., p.380.

represents basically the same attitude but with much less appreciation of the administrative and political realities involved in the process of rural development. The initial response is marked by hesitation and ambivalence which had its impact on the relative success of the programme.²²

In case of Pakistan, the traditional pattern of field administration came under heavy fire as being the only impediment to development while at the same time emphasis was laid on the potentialities of its role in development. This note of ambivalence is clearly noticed in the First Five Year Plan of Pakistan (FFYP). Mezirow quotes from the FFYP in support of his contention regarding the unsuitability of the Collectorial pattern for purposes of community development programme but does not mention the other view of its potentialities in the implementation of the programme.

The denunciation is made in these words:

"With the attainment of independence and the shift of emphasis from regulating the life of the community to positive function of promoting its welfare, the (administrative) system has become outdated and seriously inadequate. So far as law and order, administration of justice, and collection of revenue are concerned, the system continues to serve the country reasonably well. However, its efficiency in these essential fields tends to invest it with a fictitious appearance of adequacy for all purposes, including the new and supremely important task

22. Government of Pakistan, The First Five Year Plan, (1955-60), Superintendent, Government Printing Press, Karachi, 1957, pp.101-199.

of planned development."²³

The same plan document points out in the same breath:

"The institution of the district officer is important from the point of view of unity of administration, public relations, and local self-government, and has large potentialities in the realm of development. The district officer must continue to perform his important traditional function, but he must also increasingly reflect the role of responsibility for the welfare of the people which the Government has assumed."²⁴

The Plan perceives the Collector's place in the politico-administrative system as "the most important link between the government and the people".²⁵ It expresses concern at departmental separatism that hampers co-ordination. To ensure co-ordination, it calls for investing the Collector with authority to write the annual confidential reports on the efficiency of the departmental officers in implementing development programmes.²⁶

Collector's leadership role in V-AID is considered essential to its success. To enable the Collector to discharge this role, the Plan recommends the appointment of a whole time assistant to the Collector to be called District Development Officer.²⁷

23. Quoted in Mezirow, Op.cit., pp.155-156.

24. FFYP, Op.cit., p.101.

25. Ibid., p.101.

26. Ibid., p.102.

27. Ibid., p.199.

The recommendations made by FFYP were not acted upon. Mezirow's analysis of the failure of the programme is silent on these details. There was a big gap between what the FFYP perceived the Collector's role to be and what it actually was for not implementing the recommendations.

Organizational Issues of Community Development

The failure to work out the administrative relationship among the Collector, the specialist services and the V-AID personnel can be attributed to the lack of sound organizational structure of the programme. This implies the lack of political awareness of the importance of V-AID which is evident from a comparative study of India and Pakistan.²⁸

In India, the central organization consisted of an apex Committee under the Prime Minister and a separate ministry of Community Development. The Minister in charge was assisted by a Deputy Minister and a Parliamentary Secretary on the political side with staff support of a Secretary, two Joint Secretaries and other officers.

In Pakistan, community development never was an independent ministry. It was tagged first to the ministry of Health and Social Welfare and then to the ministry of Economic Affairs. The top organisation was under an officer called Chief V-AID administrator of the rank of Joint Secretary.

It is not contended that a top-heavy organisation would have removed the operational deficiency of V-AID or made it more effective. What is contended is that the lack of permanence of the

28. For organisational details and operational responsibilities from National government to District level, see Appendix II, pp.71-87 of Public Administration Aspects of Community Development, Op.cit. For the same details in case of Pakistan, see Mezirow, Op.cit., pp.59-60.

V-AID organisation was a positive impediment to its operational effectiveness at the higher levels of government. Social and economic programmes to be successful on a nation-wide scale, must have strong and continuing political support.

Of more fundamental significance was the fact that whereas in case of India, State-level community development organisation was integrated with the top-most tier of administration, in case of Pakistan very little or no integration took place. The State-level organisation in India started at the top with a State Development Committee. The Chief Minister acted as Chairman assisted by a consultative Committee in which State legislators and Members of Parliament (MP) were represented. Below the Development Committee came the Development Commissioner who, in five States, was also the Chief Secretary, generally responsible for supervision of field administration at the higher level. At the District level and below, the Collector was given overall responsibility for implementation of the programme.²⁹

The neat administrative and participatory linkage which is evidenced in the organisational structure of community development programme in India was missing in case of Pakistan. The provincial level organisation in Pakistan represented a somewhat amorphous structure. A separate official called V-AID Administrator was appointed for each of the two provinces of East and West Pakistan. He was made responsible for overall operation of the programme. There was a Provincial V-AID Advisory Committee but the Administrator was required to report to the Provincial Secretary

29. Public Administration Aspects of Community Development,

Op.cit., Appendix II, p.87.

for Social Welfare in case of West Pakistan and the Commissioner in charge of Planning Division in case of East Pakistan.³⁰

In India, the operational responsibility lay with the State government through its established machinery with strong and unbroken links with the Collectorial pattern. In case of Pakistan, the Administrator was kept outside the locus of decision-making at the provincial level. This weakened the organisational relationship of the programme with the Collector. Add to this the fact that, unlike in India, no attempt was made to develop working relationship with the local councils although, during the fifties, both Union and District Boards in East Pakistan were popularly elected bodies.³¹

The organisational analysis between the two countries shows how different achievements can be due to a difference in the degree of involvement of the Collectorial pattern, the political leadership and the local government system. It is not contended that the total involvement of the Collector was not contemplated in the FFYP. The involvement of the Collector was not followed by determined and well-thought action.³²

Lack of Trust by V-AID Planners

The situation was made worse by the element of distrust on the part of the proponents of V-AID in Pakistan. The proponents had a misconception of the role of the Collectorial pattern in the process of rural development. This misconception, together with the

30. Mezirow, Op.cit., p.57.

31. We have noted in Chapter I that since 1920, the Union and District Boards in Bengal had elected members and Chairmen.

32. We have referred to this in citation 27 of this Chapter.

gap between rhetoric and action as evidenced in the views of the FFYP and the inability of the government to utilise the Collectoral pattern, had an adverse effect on the implementation of V-AID programme.

Abedin quotes from Comilla Rural Administration Report and the speeches of Akhtar Hameed Khan in support of this contention:

"The V-AID personnel tried to perform their duties as independently as possible and to avoid any control and supervision of the local executive authority. Such behaviour of the V-AID personnel was, in fact, the result of the fact that the planners (most of whom were US ICA advisors) of the programme were cynical about the executive authority in the district and preferred to keep the V-AID organisation independent of its influence."³³

The assessment made by the Comilla Academy on this issue was:

"The early designers of the programme had a basic misconception that law and order administration would by nature be an obstruction rather than a help to the programme because of the inherent unpleasantness of tax collection and police functions. The planners did not realise that all local development effort would have to be related closely with the civil administration because it has many constructive functions aside from tax

33. Abedin, Op.cit., pp.288-289.

Akhtar Hameed Khan was the Director of V-AID programme in East Pakistan. He later became famous for initiating what has come to be known as the Comilla Approach to Rural Development.

collection and maintenance of peace."³⁴

This assessment is reinforced by the views of Akhtar

Hameed Khan:

"The community development people seem to have an allergy or special antipathy to public administration and economic planning. They think that there is a law and order mentality which vitiates the administrative machinery of the colonial countries, and they think, a new spirit is needed in development programmes, a spirit which is to be supplied by community development workers and officers."³⁵

The insular approach as reflected in the attitude of the protagonists of V-AID was specially fatal to the success of the programme in East Pakistan. It had, as we have seen in Chapter I, an administrative base for rural development work in the Circle system. Instead of utilising this base which was intimately linked to the local government system at the village level, an attempt was made to superimpose a new structure under a separate organisation.

34. The Comilla Rural Administration: History and Report, 1962-63, Pakistan Academy for Rural Development (PARAD), Comilla, 1963, p.4.

The term 'civil administration' here refers to the Collectorial pattern. We have seen in Chapter I that the role of the Collector was not limited to regulatory functions. The term 'constructive functions' refers to the development and welfare role of the Collector.

35. Rural Development in East Pakistan: Speeches of Akhtar Hameed Khan, Asian Studies Centre, Michigan State University, Spring, 1965, p.11.

This led to unnecessary inter-departmental jealousy which eventually found expression in terms of open hostility to the programme. The strongest resistance to the programme came, not from the Collectoral pattern, but from the specialist services.³⁶ The lack of co-operation from the specialist services was all the more acute as both the Collectoral pattern and the local government system were not involved in the programme to the extent that was desirable. Consequently, complaints were heard that many specialist services did not depute their personnel in the development areas under V-AID.³⁷

The loudest protest, verging on open hostility, came from the department of Agriculture. The Director-General of Agriculture in East Pakistan, while asserting in All Pakistan Seminar on V-AID held in May, 1959, in Dacca, that "commissioners and district officers had not been involved in the supervision of development areas" demanded that for "better co-ordination, the Agriculture Department should supervise the working of Village Aid."³⁸

Analysis of V-AID Experience

V-AID was heavily dependent on American aid. The total investment amounted to US\$ 27 million. This was the second largest in the world in terms of investment.³⁹ It would amount to sheer cynicism

36. Mezirow, Op.cit., pp.129-133.

37. Ibid., p.129.

38. Ibid., p.134.

39. Jack D. Mezirow and Frank A. Santopolo, 'Community Development in Pakistan: The First Five Years', International Social Sciences Journal, Vol 12, 1960, pp.433-439.

to assume that the programme was a total failure. Although it failed to bring about any significant change in the rural areas of East Pakistan in terms of improving the quality of rural life, it did leave a large number of trained personnel for future use. It also left a number of training institutions of which the major one was the Academy for Rural Development at Comilla more commonly known as the Comilla Academy. This academy played a dominant role in subsequent efforts for rural development for the next two decades.⁴⁰

The V-AID also exemplified the first ever effort, on a nation-wide scale, to bring about attitudinal change for national development. There was growing awareness in all segments of the population, political leaders, bureaucrats and villagers, that any future programme of national development must necessarily accord priority to rural development in terms of increased food production and development of rural infra-structure, because it is only in the country side that the overwhelming number of people live and work.⁴¹

The lesson that emerged from the V-AID experience was that, for any rural development programme to be successful, there must be:

- * continuing political commitment;
- * active involvement of the national administrative system;
- * participation by the villagers.

Development for a less developed country like Bangladesh

40. For details see Mezirow, Dynamics of Community Development, Op.cit., pp.171-185.

41. Ibid., p.38.

or India is essentially a function of these variables. The relationship among them, from the standpoint of development, is one of interaction rather than of independent/dependent action.

The Indian case brings out clearly the harmonious interplay of national political policy of rural development, the active involvement of field administration and popular participation by Panchayati Raj. The result was a positive one of achievement of those goals for which community development programme was undertaken. It is not contended that the programme transformed the Indian rural life to a remarkable degree. It would be too naive to assume that it achieved a miracle, for, rural development must be seen as a continuous process rather than a short-term programme capable of achieving spectacular results in purely physical terms. What is contended is its relative degree of success on which observers widely agree and its break-through in rural institution building through the Panchayati Raj.⁴²

Far from being condemned, let alone discarded, the efficacy of the Collectorial pattern was clearly recognised and specific role assigned to the Collector.⁴³ In Pakistan, the

42. Two UN Reports acclaim India to be the best example of and a model for other countries in the field of community development: Popular Participation in Development, Op.cit., p.262 and Public Administration Aspects of Community Development, Op.cit., p.14.

43. See citation 10 in this Chapter. Mukerjee goes to the extent of saying "it would have been a folly not to have used his unique position to the best advantage. The community development programme further highlighted his role in planning, development and co-ordination". Mukerjee, Op.cit., p.134.

condemnation in FFYP was followed by rhetoric of its potentialities. Reorganisation of the Collectoral pattern was proposed but not acted upon. The result was a failure in institution-building at the local level and a situation where every department pursued its own whims which was precisely what the Rowlands Committee had warned about.⁴⁴

The experiences of both the countries show that the role of the field administrative system must be clearly recognised in any effort at development in which community participation is the goal. Unnecessary polemics about the colonial administrative system being a positive impediment to foster community participation is not borne out by the example of India and Pakistan during the fifties. On the contrary, the opposite argument may be sustained: the lack of involvement of the Collectoral pattern may retard, rather than facilitate the process of rural development based on community participation.

This finds further support from the conclusion drawn by the UN Report on popular participation: "The administrative arrangements governing community development programmes should be determined by local administrative and other conditions in each country."⁴⁵ V-AID as a programme was terminated in 1961 following the cessation of American aid.⁴⁶

FIELD ADMINISTRATION AS AN AID TO RURAL INSTITUTION BUILDING THROUGH COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Experience in Pakistan shows that community development programme

44. Rowlands, Report, Op.cit., p.18.

45. Popular Participation in Development, Op.cit., p.39.

46. Mezirow, Dynamics of Community Development, Op.cit., p.223.

must take due cognizance of the role of the field administrative system. This cognizance, we may add, is all the more necessary in a country having an administrative heritage of involvement in rural development programmes. Instead of realising that the historical and conceptual antecedents of rural development drew its strength and inspiration from the Collectorial pattern in a situation where extensive and continued involvement of the government in terms of capital and organisation was lacking and further that the Collectorial pattern was nearer to the rural people charged with the responsibility of dealing with circumstances that adversely affect rural welfare, the proponents of the community development programme chose to brand the system as a positive impediment to development.

This myopic vision has led them to look upon community development as ^{an} end in itself and not as a means to an end. The end is, and ought to be, institution building at the local level that can involve the community in development programme on a long term and sustained basis.

The process of institution building includes not only promotion of organisational groups and local government system but "strengthening, wherever necessary, of the national administrative machinery and of technical services and an improvement in the manner in which all these services, groups and bodies work together in a co-ordinated manner to help communities in their development efforts."⁴⁷

In case of India, the community development programme gave due recognition to this aspect. The Panchayati Raj was perceived to

47. Popular Participation in Development, Op.cit., p.23.

be an attempt at building up participatory institutions that could sustain the community development programme without fundamentally altering its relationship with the Collectorial pattern. If the Collector was made a member or associate member or kept completely outside the local government system in some of the states, this need not imply an attempt to completely replace the colonial pattern of field administration as some writers would have us believe.⁴⁸

The Collector was in any event out of Zila Parishad since 1920. Under Panchayati Raj, the political perception of the role of the Collector has been that of guiding the local government bodies and providing support to them whenever necessary. This means that there is no abrupt break with past traditions. In India, in the process of transition from community development to institution building, the Collector was assigned a major role. Once the institutions were built, or to be precise, rebuilt and renovated, the Collectorial pattern did not become politically or administratively irrelevant. The Collector continues to remain a major element of influence in the process of strengthening the local institutions in relation to the process of rural development.

This aspect of the relationship between the local institutions and the Collectorial pattern is viewed by some scholars

48. A.T.R. Rahman, 'Theories of Administrative and Political Development and Rural Institutions in India and Pakistan', Journal of Administration Overseas, Vol. 8, No. 4, October 1969, pp.243-256.

with concern.⁴⁹

This expression of concern is based on the assumption that the Anglo-Saxon type of local government is the only way to ensure popular participation and the only way to local democracy. This view misses the point that there are may be other forms of participation in the process of development than the one found in more developed political systems. This is not to argue against the desirability of elected autonomous local government systems but to argue for a more unbiased and objective appreciation of the role of the Collectorial pattern in the process of rural development.

The basic premise of such an appreciation must be that the colonial pattern of field administration may be a necessary element in the process of building up local institutions to facilitate the rural development process through popular participation. The BD system which followed the V-AID was built upon this premise. The fundamental deficiencies of the V-AID, as exemplified by its inability to understand the role of the

49. Henry Maddick, Panchayati Raj, Longman, London, 1970, p.4.

Maddick states: "Unfortunately the working of basic democracy is mostly defective". This expression of concern in the opening pages is followed up in Chapter 16 in the section dealing with the future of field administration where he summarily argues in favour of the extinction of the Collectorial pattern. See page 239. For the other point of view, see Guy Hunter's review of Panchayati Raj by Maddick in South Asian Review, Vol. 4, 1970-71, pp.166-168. Hunter finds Maddick's suggestion "a terrifying risk".

Collectoral pattern in institution building and in co-ordination of specialist services, were sought to be removed by an integrated pattern of local government and local administration. Unlike in India, the Collector was made Chairman of Zila Parishad with co-ordinative authority over the specialist services.

The Collector's role in facilitating popular participation in development was to be from within rather than from without. This meant a virtual return to pre-1920 period. Basically the approach was similar both in India and Pakistan in that both attempted to utilise the Collectoral pattern for purposes of development as well as for guiding and strengthening the elected local councils. It was merely a question of difference of emphasis on the Collector's role in relation to local government and rural development.

In Pakistan, the involvement was more direct, in India it was less direct but with full recognition of the potentialities of Collector's role in the process of rural development. India also had a relatively more stable political process than that of Pakistan.⁵⁰

50. During the period from 1953 to 1958, there were as many as six cabinets in the Centre alone. The situation in East Pakistan was no better. Between March, 1956 to October, 1958, there were six changes of government. One of these lasted for four hours and another for four days. For details, see M. Rashiduzzaman, Pakistan : A Study of Government and Politics, Ideal Library, Dacca, 1967; K.P. Misra and others, Pakistan's Search for Constitutional Crisis, Impex India, New Delhi, 1967.

The lesser degree of political stability in Pakistan does not fully explain the return to the integrated pattern of field administration. Stable political process in India in no way rendered the Collectoral pattern irrelevant in relation to local government. The invoking of the integrated pattern in case of Pakistan could appear to a casual observer to be the logical outcome of the desire, on the part of the ruling elite, to ensure stability. Yet it was not for its ancient political role that the pattern was invoked. It was adopted to play a major role in strengthening local councils in relation to rural development. More than ever before, the Collector was required to play an effective role in popular participation for rural development. His regulatory functions were to be shared by subordinates which involved an expansion of the Collector's office. Even one of his basic regulatory powers relating to the control over the police was taken away.⁵¹

BASIC DEMOCRACIES, COLLECTORAL PATTERN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

There is a large volume of literature on BD system, but its assessment is fraught with difficulties.⁵² This is because it can

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51. Under Regulation 75 A of the Police Regulation of Bengal, 1943, the Collector had the authority to write annual confidential report of the Superintendent of Police. This power was withdrawn by Zakir Hussain who was Governor of East Pakistan in 1958.
52. Herbert Feldman, Revolution in Pakistan, Oxford University Press, 1967; S.M.Z. Rizvi (ed.), A Reader in Basic Democracy, Pakistan Academy for Rural Development, Peshawar, 1961; Speeches and Statements of Field Marshal Mohammed Ayub Khan, H.P.K., H.J., President of Pakistan, Vols. I, II, and III, Pakistan Patriotic Publications,

(continued)

be looked at from a number of different angles. The most common angle has been that of politics. Critics point out that it was a deliberately clever mechanism, first to secure legitimacy for the military government of Ayub Khan, and secondly, to perpetuate Ayub's authority as President through a system of direct and indirect elections.

Under direct adult franchise, the voters would elect 40,000 basic democrats in each of the two provinces of East and West Pakistan. These basic democrats would constitute the electoral college for election to the Presidency, national and provincial legislatures. Ayub's own argument in favour of such an arrangement was that democracy must grow from the bottom up and not from top down. We need not go into this question as this is outside the sphere of our consideration. For our purposes, it may be sufficient to point out that the basic democrats were members of local councils. Our concern is to assess the system in terms of its relationship with the Collectorial pattern and the process of rural development.

When viewed as a system of local government, the BD has been debunked as a retrograde step in that except for Union Council, all the three other councils are headed by the Commissioner, the

52. Rawalpindi, 1961; Grass Roots Government, Pakistan Patriotic Publications, Rawalpindi, 1962; Lawrence Ziring, The Ayub Khan Era: Politics in Pakistan (1958-1969), Syracuse University Press, 1971; A.M.S. Ahmad, Community Development and Local Government in Pakistan, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (Basic Democracies Wing), 1962, Government of Pakistan.

Collector and his staff including membership of the heads of specialist services at Thana, District and Divisional levels. The pattern would indicate that it retained the basic feature of the local government system of pre-1920 period except for councils at Thana and Divisional levels.

The Council at the Thana level, it may be argued, was not entirely unforeseen. Its constitution was foreshadowed by the recommendations of the Levinge Committee as early as in 1913-1914 when the Committee proposed to set up Circle Boards under the Chairmanship of the CO. This recommendation was not accepted in those days, but the Circle system was fully utilised and accepted for province-wide replication in 1962.⁵³

As repeated references will have to be made to the local councils, we give below the structure of the system as shown in Figure 2.1.

Basic Democracies: Local Government With A Difference

The striking similarities between the old system of local government and the new have given the impression that the latter was tailored to fit the colonial mode. In spirit and style, the BD system was different from the old system in that the purpose was not so much to guide and regulate the conduct of local councils as

53. Government of East Pakistan, Home (GA & APPTT) Department, Section-VIII, Memorandum No. GA VIII/1236(90), dated, Dacca, the 23rd December, 1961. Under this government order, 413 Circles were created in East Pakistan. As there were 413 Thanas in East Pakistan in those days, this meant that the jurisdiction of a Circle was equal to that of a Thana.

FIGURE 2.1

B.D. SYSTEM IN EAST PAKISTAN 1962

DIVISIONAL COUNCIL-4

CHAIRMAN	COMMISSIONER
MEMBERS	
OFFICIAL 50% OR LESS	ELECTED 50% OR MORE

DISTRICT COUNCIL-17

CHAIRMAN	COLLECTOR
VICE-CHAIRMAN	ELECTED BY THE MEMBERS
MEMBERS	
OFFICIAL 50% OR LESS	ELECTED 50% OR MORE

THANA COUNCIL-396

CHAIRMAN	SUB-DIVISIONAL OFFICER
VICE-CHAIRMAN	(SDO)
	CIRCLE OFFICER
MEMBERS	
OFFICIAL 50% OR LESS	ELECTED CHAIRMAN OF UNION COUNCILS & TOWN COMMITTEES 50% OR MORE

UNION COUNCIL-4032

CHAIRMAN-ELECTED
MEMBERS-ALL ELECTED

SOURCE: A.M.S. Ahmad, Community Development and Local Government in Pakistan, Op.Cit., p.17.

to combine the elements of administrative and popular participation by using the institutions of local councils.⁵⁴ It was designed to:

- * ensure co-ordinated administration of governmental services and supplies for accelerating socio-economic development of rural areas;
- * utilise viewpoints and experiences of both the elected representatives and trained governmental functionaries by bringing them together under the local councils at all levels of field administration;
- * make the field bureaucracy responsible and responsive to the demands of the rural populace whose elected representatives could freely discuss their needs and press for meeting them in the forum of the local councils.

It is not our intention to defend the BD system. What we wish to emphasize is that elements of administrative and popular participation have been essential requirements in the process of rural development in the ex-colonial countries of India and Pakistan. In the latter, it is conceded, greater emphasis was given on administrative participation through the Collectorial pattern. The emphasis arose out of the ruling elite's preference to utilise a tried system of administration for meeting the objectives of development in the same way but with greater sense of reliance than in India.

The ruling elite, proceeding on the assumption that the parliamentary form of government was not suited to the requirements

54. Richard S. Wheeler, 'Changing Pattern of Local Government and Administration in Pakistan', South Atlantic Quarterly, Vol.62, 1963, pp.67-77.

of Pakistan, set about the task of building up political process at the regional level and of linking it with the national political superstructure at the top through the electoral process. The Collectorial pattern was used for building up local councils as well as for maximising utilisation of scarce resources.⁵⁵

If the BD system is shorn of its ideology of "guided democracy", the importance of improving the quality of life in the rural areas through such programmes as Rural Works Programmes (RWP), Thana Training and Development Centre (TTDC), and Thana Irrigation Programme (TIP) can hardly be questioned. In execution of all these programmes, the Collectorial pattern played a key role right from the experimental stage upto their replication throughout the country. Without these programmes, the Thana Council might have been relegated to the position of being a mere deliberative body and probably would have met the same fate as the local boards created at the Subdivisional levels under Bengal Local Self-Government Act, 1885.⁵⁶

The RWP and TTDC have given life to the councils and have brought them into the process of regional planning and regional development. The concept and practice of RWP, TTDC and TIP are intimately associated with the Comilla Academy. The application of these concepts were first tested in the Academy which was also responsible for an innovative co-operative programme which formed the

55. Elliot L. Tepper, 'Administration of Rural Reform', in Robert D. Stevens and others (eds.), Rural Development in Bangladesh and Pakistan, Hawaii University Press, 1976, Honolulu, 1976, pp.47-48.

56. Tinker, Op.cit., p.187.

basis of Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP). The Academy accepted the role of the Collectoral pattern in the process of development which the V-AID tended to ignore. The result was a more comprehensive and relatively successful attempt at institution building.

THE ROLE OF THE COMILLA ACADEMY AND THE COLLECTORAL IN DEVELOPING A
NEW MODEL OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

It is not necessary for purposes of our consideration to go into the background of the circumstances that led to the establishment of Comilla Academy. These have been dealt with elsewhere.⁵⁷ We wish to examine the role of the Collectoral pattern in relation to the new model of rural development and administration which the Academy had designed. We begin by a description of the early experiments of the Academy in the development of Thana Council, RWP, TIP and TTDC including the rural co-operatives. We are conscious that much has been written on the Comilla model and the different segments that constitute the model, but these have been written from considerations other than our own. We hope to fill up the gap by relating the Collectoral pattern to the new experiment.

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57. Arthur F. Raper, Rural Development in Action, Cornell University Press, 1970; Edgar A. Schuler, 'The Origin and Nature of The Academies For Village Development', Rural Sociology, Vol. 29, 1964, pp.304-312; A. Aziz Khan and M. Solaiman, The Academy At Comilla, Bangladesh Academy For Rural Development, Comilla, January, 1978.
- Since 1972, the Academy came to be known as Bangladesh Academy For Rural Development (BARD).

A. Development Of Thana Council

Consequent upon the introduction of the BD system, the Academy took up the task of experimenting with the new Thana Council concept. Kotwali Thana of Comilla District where the Academy is located, came to be designated as the laboratory area for the purpose. The Kotwali Thana Council had 12 Chairmen of Union Councils, 7 official and five non-official members.⁵⁸ The SDO and the CO were Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively of the Council.

At first the concept of mutual exchange of views in the Thana Council did not prove satisfactory. There was need to reorient the outlook of both the villagers and the officials working at the Thana level. This was done by posting an Additional Subdivisional Officer to the Academy. He was given overall charge of the development area, the Kotwali Thana.⁵⁹ Efforts were made for slow and gradual development of the council where government representatives of different departments and the public representatives freely and frankly exchanged their views with regard to the problems facing the community.

The Thana Council provided a two-way channel of communication between the public servants and the popular representatives.⁶⁰

58. The non-official members were nominated during the first two years of the BD system first introduced in 1959 under an Act called The Basic Democracies Order, 1959. The nomination system was abolished in 1962. See A.M.S. Ahmed, Op.cit., p.17.

59. Raper, Op.cit., p.103.

60. Ibid., pp.104-105.

By 1961, the Thana Council experiment at Comilla had taken definite shape. The Thana level bureaucracy began responding to the needs of the villagers on the basis of the deliberations held in the council meetings. The village leaders also began to evoke keen interest in the affairs of the council. The Additional SDO and the CO took initiative in ascertaining more local needs and demands through systematic visits to the Unions. Out of this emerged a team spirit between the officials and the elected members of the council.

B. Rural Works Programme (RWP)

The concept of RWP involved the question of using counter-part funds, generated by PL-480 programme of the US government, to finance the labour-intensive schemes in the rural areas. The purpose was two-fold: (a) to generate employment to the idle labour-force in the villages, and (b) to build up rural infrastructure.⁶¹

Comilla Kotwali Thana was taken as the experimental area. As many as 21 projects were taken up. The CO was given the task of overall supervision and payment to the Chairman of Project Committees formed by the Chairmen of Union Councils. The experiment was a success both economically and in terms of improvement of

61. The concept of RWP is associated with Richard V. Gilbert, Chief of Harvard Advisory Group to Pakistan Planning Commission. For details see John Woodward Thomas, 'The Rural Public Works Program in East Pakistan' in Walter P. Falcon and Gustav F. Papanek (eds.), Development Policy II: The Pakistan Experience, Harvard University Press, 1971, pp.186-231.

rural conditions.⁶²

The Programme was extended throughout East Pakistan in 1962-63. A manual was prepared by the Academy called A Manual of Rural Public Works, which outlined the procedural details to be followed in planning and execution of the projects under the programme. The replication of the programme involved 54 Thanas at the rate of one Thana per Subdivision. Short training courses were organised for the Circle Officers in the Academy. During their stay at the Academy, they gained on-the-spot experience of how the system worked. The Collectors were given overall responsibility of successful execution of the programmes in their respective Districts.⁶³

In spite of the success of the experimental programme at Comilla, there was scepticism at the policy-making level regarding the viability of the programme. This scepticism was founded on two hypothetical considerations: (a) the villagers knew nothing about the problems of "hydraulics, road construction, proper drainage and the like" and (b) the Collectorial pattern could never organize such works on a massive scale.⁶⁴ Arguments were made that the success of

62. Richard V. Gilbert, 'The Works Programme in East Pakistan', International Labour Review, Vol.89, 1964, pp.213-226.

63. Ibid., p.221. For a first hand account of the pilot programme in Kotwali Thana, see Akhter Hameed Khan and A.K.M. Mohsen, 'Mobilizing Village Leadership', International Development Review, September, 1962, pp.4-9.

64. An Evaluation of Rural Public Works Programme, East Pakistan, 1962-63, Academy for Rural Development, Comilla, October, 1963, p.5. The same report observes: "And so the Comilla pilot works programme was undertaken, based on two assumptions: that the

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the programme in the Academy was due to Khan's involvement in the programme and the fact that an Additional SDO was placed there to oversee the implementation of the programme. There was no such officer in other Subdivisions where the programme was to be extended.

To these sceptics, Akhter Hameed Khan replied:

"Let us try. It is no use arguing whether the people are competent or incompetent, or whether the officers of the civil administration can mobilize them. Let us try it and find out what happens."⁶⁵

After the execution of the programme in the 54 selected Thanas, scepticism gave way to confidence in the capability of the local councils to organize such a programme and in the efficacy of the colonial pattern of field administration to mobilize village leadership for purposes of development. Consequently, this led to a reversal of priorities in the allocation of resources in the following years. This is reflected in Table 2.1.

C. Thana Irrigation Programme (TIP)

Closely linked to the RWP was the launching of TIP. This was done in selected Thanas in 1967. The objective was to increase food production by utilising surface water through installation of low-lift pumps during winter months, from November to April. This programme

64. local people have the knowledge, the competence and the integrity to undertake this work; and the civil administration can mobilise the people without contractors and with minimum advice from engineers." pp.5-6.

65. Ibid., p.5.

TABLE 2.1

WORKS PROGRAMME ALLOCATION UNDER VARIOUS HEADS
DURING 1962-63 and 1963-64

	(RS. MILLION)	
	<u>1962-63</u>	<u>1963-64</u>
1. DISTRICT COUNCILS	50.00	60.00
2. THANA COUNCILS	6.21	57.00
3. UNION COUNCILS	20.00	30.00
4. THANA TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT CENTRES	4.59	18.50
5. MUNICIPAL/TOWN COMMITTEES	19.20	20.28
6. DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITIES (SLUM CLEARANCE & REHABILITATION ETC.)	-	10.00
7. COMILLA KOTWALI PROJECT	-	2.00
8. TRAINING AND EVALUATION	-	2.00

Source: Third Five Year Plan of Pakistan.⁶⁶

was well-suited to the climatic and topographical conditions of East Pakistan. The rice-eating population of the province is heavily dependent on monsoon for production of rice while during the dry season most of the agricultural fields remain uncultivated for want of water.⁶⁷ In developing this programme, the Academy and with

66. Government of Pakistan, Third Five Year Plan (1965-70), Karachi, 1967, p.511.

67. For topographical and other details see, Haroon-er-Rashid, East Pakistan : A Systematic Regional Geography And Its Development Planning Aspects, Sheikh Ghulam Abbas & Sons, Lahore, 1967.

it, the Kotwali Thana, played the pioneering role. The operating assumptions and the implementative agency were the same as the RWP.

The programme involves co-ordinated action of the officers at Thana level such as the CO, Agricultural Officer, Co-operative Officer and Irrigation Officer. Where surface water is available, the cultivators are organised into co-operatives. Each co-operative elects one manager, a pump operator and a model farmer.

The group is to bear the fuel costs and pay for the rental of pumps supplied by the Agricultural Development Corporation.⁶⁸ Where surface water is not available, tubewells may be sunk depending on the availability of ground water. In this case too, co-operatives are to be formed. The programme is linked to RWP in that it may involve re-excavation of silted up canals to ensure availability of surface water. Separate funds are allocated for the purpose to the Thana Councils.

Between the years 1968 to 1972, a total of 23, 892 pumps were installed which irrigated an area of 8, 28, 067 acres. In terms of rural co-operative institutions for agricultural development and trained village cadres, this would mean 23, 892 co-operative groups with an equal number in each category of managers, model farmers, pump operators and chairmen of co-operative societies.⁶⁹

68. East Pakistan Agricultural Development Corporation (EPADC) was established by government in 1961 to promote development of agriculture. For details of functions and performance, see Basic Statistics, Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC), Dacca, October, 1977. After 1971, it came to be known as BADC.

69. Evaluation of Thana Irrigation Programme, 1971-72, Academy For Rural Development, Comilla, June, 1974, p.3. The report reviews progress of TIP upto 1972.

D. Thana Training And Development Centre (TTDC)

The growth of TTDC has also been the result of the Academy's experiment to devise a new pattern of rural administration. The annual reports of the Academy (1963-69) contain the details of this experiment. The system was introduced throughout the province in 1964. The concept involves the creation of a complex of all specialist departments of the government at Thana level with facilities for accommodation for each department. The major objective is to make available to the villagers a pool of officers located physically at Thana so that they are easily available/ accessible to them and at the same time to enable the local officers to become familiar with local conditions.

The TTDC enables the villager to get directly in touch with the relevant department whenever such need arises. The CO acts as the head of a combined team of operations at the Thana level and is responsible for co-ordination of governmental services. He has no executive or administrative authority of his own which at times makes his task difficult. In most cases matters of co-ordination are sorted out in the Thana Council meetings where the departmental officers have to face questions from the elected representatives. In extreme cases, administrative support from the Collector becomes necessary. In settling differences, the Collector works through the District head of the relevant department in his capacity as a co-ordinator.

E. The New Comilla Co-operative System

While RWP and TTDC are an integral part of local government and local administration, the co-operative model designed by the Academy at about the same time was intended to make a breakthrough in rural

development through the institution of co-operatives. Not that the idea was entirely new to East Pakistan.

The co-operative approach in Bengal dates back to 1904 when an act was passed to strengthen the co-operative movement.⁷⁰ The Collector and SDO were associated with co-operative societies as Chairmen of Co-operative Banks. Later, the Rowlands Committee advised against it but stressed the need for the Collector's leadership role in fostering co-operative spirit among villagers.⁷¹

The model designed by the Academy consists of a two-tier structure. Farmers are organised into co-operative groups of village-based multi-purpose societies called Krishak Samabay Samity (KSS) meaning peasants' co-operative society. The village units are federated at Thana level which is known as Thana Central Co-operative Association (TCCA).

By 1970, the Comilla type co-operative societies gave strong evidence of its financial and administrative capacity. In the same year, the programme was accepted by the government of Pakistan for expansion throughout the province over a period of nine years. This expanded programme now is known as IRDP.

The Comilla experiments led to a new pattern of rural administration with primary focus on Thana. It became a new symbol. The traditional image of the Thana as nothing more than a police

70. Hedayet Ahmed, 'Co-operative Movement in Bangladesh----- A Historical Review' (Mimeo), Dacca, 1978. Ahmed was Director-General, Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), and Registrar, Co-operative Societies of Bangladesh. The Act is known as Bengal Co-operative Societies Act, 1904.

71. Rowlands Committee, Op.cit., p.55.

outpost gave in to one where the villagers could find a way to reach the government in respect of their needs. The Thana became connected directly to their day to day needs in such fields as health, agriculture, education and animal husbandry. This probably would have happened fifty years ago if only the recommendations of the Levinge Committee had been accepted.

THE COMILLA MODEL AND THE COLLECTORAL PATTERN

Despite a steady stream of literature on the Comilla approach to rural development, its relationship with the Collectoral pattern has received scanty attention from the scholars. The architect of the Comilla model deeply believed in the partnership between the Collectoral pattern and the villagers as a starting point for revival of village economy.⁷²

The Collectoral pattern played a vital role in implementing the innovative programmes of rural development based on

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72. A.Z.M. Obaidullah Khan, 'An Experiment in Modernization of Rural Community in East Pakistan', Indian Quarterly, 19, 1963, pp.370-380. Obaidullah quotes Akhter Hameed Khan:

"Good local administration, based on full collaboration between the people and the Government, ensuring adequate infusion of resources and mobilization of rural manpower, serves as a starting point for revival of village economy. The uneducated, tradition-bound peasants, thousands and thousands of them are to be persuaded to accept innovations which require fundamental changes in attitude and outlook."

Comilla approach. Our discussion on the Comilla experiments during the early stages of their implementation makes it abundantly clear. When the question of replicating the Comilla model came up, Comilla District was taken as the experimental area. The Comilla District Pilot Project document emphasized the need for an effective framework of administration and warned that the weaknesses of V-AID programme must not be repeated. Before starting the programme, the project document asked for (i) one whole-time Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC), (ii) one whole-time Additional SDO for each of the Subdivisions and (iii) one Additional SDO for each of the Twenty Thanas.⁷³

The Collectoral Pattern was seen as the major driving force for the successful expansion of the programme:⁷⁴

73. Fifth Annual Report, PARD, Comilla, July, 1964, p.134. The Report emphatically stated: "If the Government cannot make this commitment firmly, the idea of a pilot project should be discarded forthwith". The term commitment here refers to the commitment of personnel as above. The reference to personnel, specially an ADC is repeated in the Report in pages 134-135.

74. Sixth Annual Report, PARD, Comilla, October, 1965, p.79.

"One of the major purposes of this experiment (the District Programme) is to involve district administration and departmental district officers in order to ascertain how the Thana institutions can best be supported from the district headquarters....The scheme envisages administrative, technical and supply and servicing support from the district level, the organisational complex at the Thana level remaining the same as at

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The role of the Collectoral pattern needs also to be viewed from the standpoint^{of} trained manpower in the rural areas. The local councils were to involve the villagers in the execution of schemes. This was done by constituting project Committee for each project. The member of the council representing the area in which the project was located, became the Chairman of the project Committee while 5 to 6 villagers were taken as members. Two of these members acted as secretary and cashier of the Committee. In this process of involvement, the villagers as well as the members of local councils gained experience and expertise in the implementation of simple schemes. The trained cadres of RWP between the years 1962-71 are estimated as shown in Table 2.2.

In building up this trained man-power in the country side, the Collectoral pattern played a major role. The machinery of the Collector from the Thana to the District level was made

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74. Comilla Kotwali. Support will come through a District Co-ordination Committee under the chairmanship of the Additional Deputy Commissioner (Dev.); the Additional Subdivisional Officers (Dev.); at the Sub-divisional level will have a similar function. District level officers of the technical departments will constitute a technical committee, including the Academy Instructor concerned, to provide technical support. Training, guidance and upgrading the knowledge and skill of the Thana level officers will be their continuous effort."

TABLE 2.2

TRAINED CADRES OF RWP FROM 1962-71

Sl. No.	Type of Projects	Number of Projects	No. of Trained Village Cadres
1.	District	1,756	5,268
2.	Thana	11,537	34,611
3.	Union	6,528	18,584
TOTAL		19,821	59,463

Source: Akhter Hameed Khan.⁷⁵

responsible for organisation, implementation and supervision of RWP.⁷⁶

75. Akhter Hameed Khan, Framework for Rural Development In Bangladesh and a Plan for 250 Co-operatively Organised Thanas, N.I.P.A.

Dacca, Reprint No. 606, March 31, 1979, p.26.

76. Third Five Year Plan of Pakistan, Op.cit., p.512.

"The work of the Project Committees was supervised by the Circle Officer and his staff and the Assistant Director of Basic Democracies under the general guidance of the Deputy Commissioner who was made responsible for the successful implementation of the Works programme within his jurisdiction. Training courses were organised for the Subdivisional Officers and the Circle Officers in the Pakistan Academy for Rural Development at Comilla and the Circle Officers in their turn, gave necessary training to the members of the Basic Democracies and Project Committees in regard to the implementation of the projects."

The recurrent emphasis of the Comilla Academy to provide staff support to the Collector for successful expansion of programmes of rural development is indicative of its reliance on the Collectoral pattern. Rural development is seen as the result of village participation through local councils under the co-ordinative leadership of the Collector. This brings up the question of reorganisation of the Collectoral pattern and a re-definition of its responsibility.⁷⁷

THE PROCESS OF EXPANSION OF THE COLLECTORAL PATTERN (1956-1967)

In 1956, a step towards expansion of the Collectoral pattern was taken to share the increasing work-load in revenue work following the abolition of the Zamindari system in East Pakistan. The provisions relating to the change in land system are embodied in East Bengal State Acquisition and Tenancy Act, 1950. Under this Act, all lands in excess of 33.3 acres which were privately owned, were taken over by the government (Section 90). The procedure for taking over and payment of compensation entailed heavy work for which additional staff was necessary. In bigger Districts, the post of an Additional Collector for revenue work was created while in

77. The demand for additional officers to share the increasing work-load of the Collector and to recognise development as one of his major functions was, as already noted at p.72, made by the FFYP. The same view was held by Rowlands Committee. For details see Rowlands, Report, Op.cit., p.27.

Both the Rowlands Committee and FFYP defined development as a major function of the Collector. Yet nothing was done to provide additional staff support for the Collector until 1956.

smaller Districts, the post of a Joint Collector was created.⁷⁸

The Haider Sub-Committee Report (1960) broadly divided the Collector's office into three divisions: General, Development and Revenue with related number of sections under each divisions. Deputy Magistrates, renamed as Extra Assistant Commissioner (EAC), became head of sections.

One of the major recommendations of the Report was to relieve the Collector of all routine work for which three ADCs in charge of the aforesaid three divisions were to be appointed. The Collector was to "devote his whole-time attention to supervision and co-ordination of nation-building activities."⁷⁹ The position of the Collectoral pattern at the end of the sixties is shown in Figure 2.2:

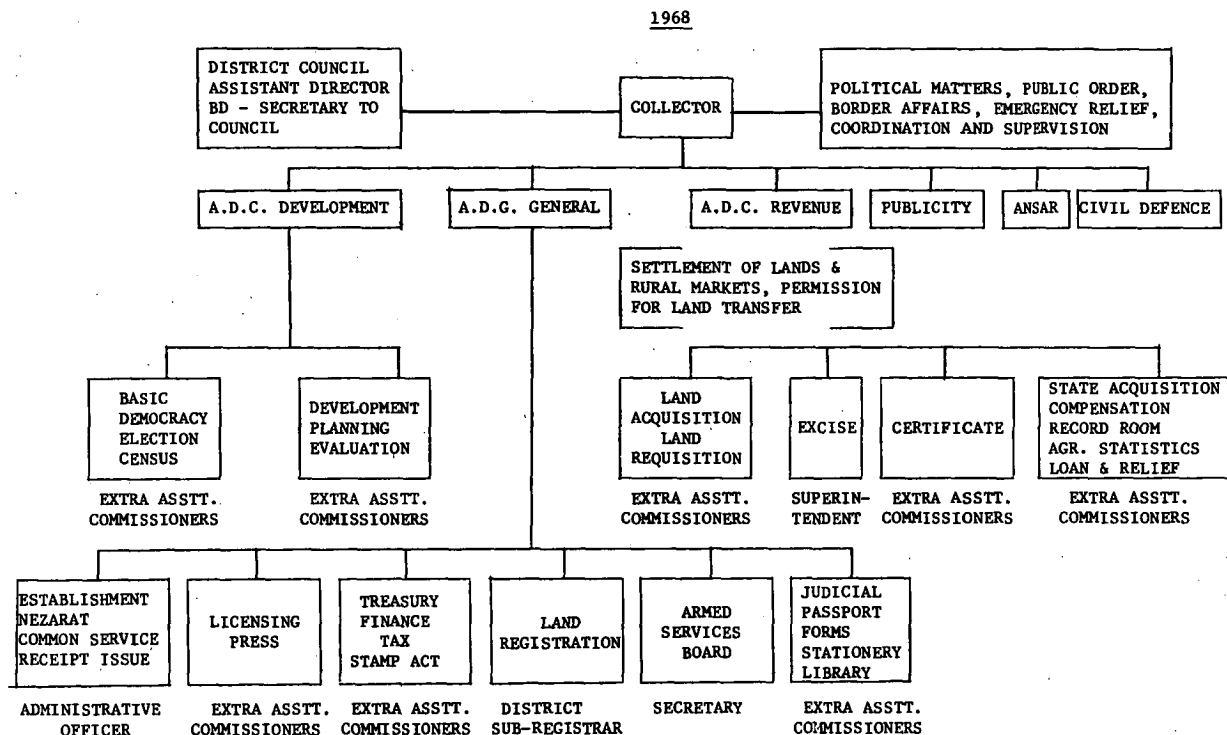
78. This is evidenced from the subsequent official reports:

Government of East Pakistan, November, 1960, Report of The Implementation Sub-Committee On The Re-Organisation of District Offices, (H. Haider, Chairman); Government of East Pakistan, Services and General Administration (O & M) Department, 1967, Report on The Review Of The Work-load At The District Level With A View To Making Recommendations For Improving Efficiency In The Administration, (S. Khan, Chairman).

79. Haider, Report, Op.cit., p.7.

In the same Report at p.7, the government endorsed the view and added: "Along with overall responsibility for the administration of the district as a whole, he shall be specially responsible for political matters, public order, border matters, emergent relief, ansars, civil defence, public relations and the working of the District Council."

FIGURE 2.2
EXPANSION OF COLLECTORAL PATTERN



Source: A.M.A. Muhith, Deputy Commissioner in East Pakistan, NIPA, Dacca, June, 1968, p.87

The special responsibilities of the Collector as shown in Figure 2.2, are explained as follows:

(a) Political Matters

These include keeping the government informed of the activities of the political organisations, meetings, processions/demonstrations organised by them in the District which have a likely bearing on public order. This is a routine, though special, responsibility of the Collector.

The Collector is required to send a report to the government every month on these and other related issues. This report is known as Monthly Confidential Report. He is provided with intelligence from the District Special Branch, under the Superintendent of Police, every day on political matters. In addition, the Collector obtains, through his own agency and other departments, information with regard to prices of food grains, labour situation and availability of essential commodities.⁸⁰

In the situational context of Bangladesh and the socio-economic environment in which the Collector operates, the line between political action and violence is very thin. Politics principally centre on rise in prices of food grains and/or scarcity of daily necessities such as salt, sugar, edible and kerosene oils. Viewed against this ecology of social system, public order and

80. Based on the author's experience as Collector of Dacca and Sylhet Districts.

His function is one of collating and analysing the situation in the District in all its aspects and send his own independent appreciation of the information thus collected.

development become inter-related goals. One supports the other.

The importance of food grains and daily necessities have relevance for citizens in every country. They acquire greater relevance in a country with heavy dependence on import of food grains and other essential consumer goods. Unlike the affluent nations, the government in a less developed country has to respond to the needs and requirements of the people on day to day basis. The heavy dependence on the import of food in a country like Bangladesh can be seen from Table 2.3:

TABLE 2.3
PER CAPITA AVAILABILITY OF FOOD GRAINS
1964/65 - 1970/71

YEAR	ESTIMATED POPULATION (IN MILLION)	TOTAL PRODUCTION ('000 ' tons)		NET PRODUCTION ('000 ' tons)		IMPORTS ('000 ' tons)	
		RICE	WHEAT	RICE	WHEAT	RICE	WHEAT
1964-65	50.9	10334	34	9301	31	95	250
1965-66	61.7	10335	35	9301	32	310	540
1966-67	63.5	9424	56	8482	53	432	663
1967-68	65.3	10095	58	9896	52	307	712
1968-69	67.2	11165	92	10043	83	236	833
1969-70	69.2	11816	108	10684	93	502	1045
1970-71	70.8	10063	110	9671	99	342	801

Notes: (a) Estimated population is at mid-year i.e. 1st January.

(b) Deduction for seed, wastage etc. has been taken as 10% of total production.

Source: Government of Bangladesh, Statistical Year Book of Bangladesh, 1979, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Dacca, April, 1979, p.470.

Hereafter cited as BBS, 1979.

The position with regard to other daily necessities is no better. Between the years 1965-1971, East Pakistan imported a total of 1,96,000 tons of sugar.⁸¹ The figures for the consumer goods for the years indicated in Table 2.3 are not available. The recent figures between the years 1973-77 show that consumer goods during the aforesaid period account for 57.3% of the total imports.⁸² From this the magnitude of providing goods and services to the community can better be imagined than described specially in a country with inadequate system of transport.⁸³

The special political responsibilities of the Collector cannot thus be conceived in terms of securing loyalty of citizens to the government in power by the use or threat of force. His political role transcends the normal dimensions of containing political violence by means other than the use of force.

A functional example may help. Lack of availability of food grains in a particular District may cause a rise in prices. Timely information of the impending rise may help the Collector to keep down the food prices by the method that is commonly known as "Marketing Operations".⁸⁴

81. BBS, 1979, p.467.

82. Ibid., p.291. The post-1971 figures (1972-78) of import of food grains show that during this period a total of 16,30,000 tons of rice and 92,72,000 tons of wheat had been imported. For details see, BBS, 1979, Ibid., p.470.

83. On the inadequate system of transport, see figures in BBS, 1979, pages 429 and 454.

84. The method involves sale of food grains from government sources in open market to stabilise prices. By this device, a situation, which could be politically exploited to organise "hunger processions", is averted.

Scarcity may also occur due to hoarding or smuggling food grains to India. The Collector is empowered to deal with both the situations. Under East Bengal Anti-hoarding Order, 1953 and Essential Commodities Order, 1956, the Collector can take penal measures against those responsible for hoarding.

(b) Border Affairs

Collector's role in prevention of smuggling is related to his responsibility in border affairs. The direct responsibility for prevention of smuggling is vested in the para-military force called East Pakistan Rifles (EPR). The Collector as Chairman of the District Anti-Smuggling Committee, is responsible for ensuring co-ordinated actions on the part of the agencies involved such as the EPR, Police and Customs authorities. He is also required to enlist public support to anti-smuggling drives conducted by these agencies.⁸⁵

(c) Public Order

The ultimate responsibility for maintaining public order is vested in the Collector under the Police Act of 1861 and the Police Regulation of Bengal, 1913 as amended in 1943. This does not mean Collector's personal involvement in each and every case.

85. Based on the author's experience as Collector of Sylhet which has common borders with three provinces in India: Meghalaya, Assam and Tripura. Also see Qazi Azher Ali, District Administration in Bangladesh, NIPA, Dacca, 1978, pp.22.23.

After 1971, EPR has been renamed as Bangladesh Rifles (BDR). Its counterpart in India is Border Security Force (BSF). It is not unusual for these forces to exchange fire in which case the Collector is involved in border meetings with his counter-part in India.

The spirit of the Police Regulation is that the Collector and through him the magistracy, should exercise moderation and check on the police as regards use of force. This requires that the Superintendent of Police should seek advice from the Collector to deal with a law and order situation. The usual practice is to depute a subordinate magistrate with the police force whenever such occasion arises. In many cases, the Collector's local decision based on his own appreciation of events renders use of force unnecessary.⁸⁶

(d) Emergency Relief

In Chapter I, while dealing with Relief Administration, we discussed the Collector's role in emergency relief as laid down in the Famine Code and Manual of the colonial era.⁸⁷

Further instructions in regard to the Collector's responsibility during emergency situations were issued on August 24, 1962 in a booklet entitled "Emergency Standing Orders for Relief".⁸⁸ This booklet reiterated the continuity of the provisions of Famine Code and Manual and provided guidelines for formation of District, Subdivisional and Union Relief Committees. The duties of the Collector, as head of the District Committee, are outlined in paragraphs 29 to 38.

(e) Co-ordination and Supervision of Development Work:

Attempts to ensure co-ordination through Committees set up during

86. Ibid., p.41.

87. Chapter I, pp. 56-58.

88. Government of East Pakistan, 1962, Relief Department.

V-AID era did not succeed.⁸⁹ It was not until the sixties that serious attention was paid to this problem. Akhter Husain Commission dealt with the issue of co-ordination. Besides recommending territorial re-organisation of some of the Districts, the Commission referred to the serious situation arising out of "the present independent and disconnected activities at district/divisional level."⁹⁰

The Akhter Husain Commission recommended that the Collector be authorised to assess the performance of departmental officers in respect of their (a) integrity, (b) co-operation with other departments, (c) relations with the public and (d) interest shown in development work.⁹¹ The provincial government finally took decision in this regard in May, 1962.⁹²

89. Mezirow, Op.cit., p.41. The failure was largely due to the lack of Collector's co-ordinative authority over field services.

90. Report of the Provincial Administration Commission (Akhter Husain, Chairman), West Pakistan Government Printing Press, Lahore, 1960, p.98. Views of the Commission, endorsed by the Cabinet on 23rd June, 1960, form Chapter IV of the Report entitled "Decisions Of The Cabinet On the Report Of The Provincial Administration Commission".

91. Ibid., pp.99-100.

92. Government of East Pakistan Order No. IC-20/62 dated 18th May, 1962, Services and General Administration department. Under this Order, the Collector was not given the authority as recommended by the Akhter Husain Commission. He could only recommend transfer of a departmental officer on grounds of lack of interest in development work.

A District Development Co-ordination Committee was constituted with the Collector as Chairman and heads of specialist services in the District as members. Since the Collector was also the head of District Council, he had the advantage of having information from two channels, one official and the other, elected. His position in the Council served to strengthen his role as co-ordinator.⁹³

The repeated emphasis on administrative arrangements for co-ordination is related to the social and administrative factors not easily discernible to an outsider.⁹⁴ The factors include:

- * narrow departmentalism which vitiates team-spirit and perception of rural problem as a whole;
- * interdependence of services specially in the field of agriculture;
- * need for mobilization of rural public opinion;
- * need for settling disputes as between departments and local council and/or villagers.

Some functional examples will help clarify these peculiarities.⁹⁵

93. A.M.A. Muhith, Op.cit., p.31.

94. Mezirow, Dynamics of Community Development, Op.cit., pp.141-144.

Mezirow finds "unrealistic" emphasis on administrative arrangements of co-ordination in many developing countries. He calls for effecting co-ordination through training and communication. Effective communication and training may facilitate co-ordination but they do not eliminate the need for institutional arrangements for co-ordination in Bangladesh. The co-ordinative need is contingent on the nature of the administrative system and the goals of development.

95. S.A.W. Moini, 'The Deputy Commissioner as Co-ordinator of Governmental Activities in the District', NIPA, Lahore, 1962 (Mimeo).

Specific cases in relation to Bangladesh are:

- (i) Agriculture department takes up programme for intensive cultivation of high yielding varieties (HYV) of rice in selected areas. This involves timely provision of inputs such as fertilizer, seeds, low-lift pumps, diesel oil and organization of co-operatives. A number of agencies are involved: Agriculture, Agricultural Development Corporation, Thana and Union Councils and Co-operatives. The Co-operative department may be unwilling to get involved on the plea that in the area selected there is a large number of defaulters in respect of co-operative credit.

Similar plea may be taken by the Agricultural Corporation that many of the farmers have not either returned the low-lift pumps which they had taken last year or they have not paid the rentals in full. The officer responsible for distribution of fertilizers and seeds may complain of non-availability of transport such as trucks.

It then becomes the responsibility of the Collector to bring all the agencies together, identify the bottlenecks and take steps to remove them. It becomes his duty to organise a special drive for collection of arrear credit, rental and ensure return of power pumps.⁹⁶

96. Based on the minutes of meetings of District Development Co-ordination Committee and District Approving Authority for the Districts of Dacca, Jessore, Sylhet, Bogra and Mymensingh (1973-78). According to BBS, 1979, the unrecovered loans of Primary Co-operative Societies rose from 79.6 million Taka in

- (ii) The Roads and Highways department takes up road project for which acquisition of private lands is necessary. Some of the private land owners may not be agreeable to allow their lands to be acquired and file civil suits. The Collector intervenes and mobilises public opinion in favour of the road project with assurances of quick and fair dispensation of compensation award.⁹⁷
- (iii) The road-side ditch owned by the department of Roads may be fruitfully utilised for small irrigation project. Such use of the land may be objected to in the first instance by the department of Roads on "technical" grounds of the roads being damaged by the flow of water in the road-side ditch. The Collector mediates in such a dispute. By virtue of his position, he is able to secure the approval of the Roads ministry by short-circuiting normal channels of correspondence thereby avoiding delay.⁹⁸
- (iv) Collector's mediatory role extends to disputes between local councils and between local councils and government

96. 1964-65 to 219.2 million Taka in 1970-71, (p.337). The Collector is authorised under Public Demands Recovery Act, 1913 to recover arrears of public demands. His regulatory function is thus supportive of his development function.

97. Based on the minutes of District Land Allocation Committee, Dacca, 1975-78. The Collector is empowered by law to acquire lands for public purposes. He also acts as the head of the Land Allocation Committee.

98. Aricha-Ichamati project in Dacca is a case in point. This is being discussed in Chapter V.

departments. In case of a difference of opinion as to whether a particular project should be taken up by the Thana or District Council, the Collector, on the basis of his access to information of funds and technical competence of the personnel required, arbitrates in such a dispute. A particular project may be too big or beyond the competence of the District Council to undertake. The Collector takes up such issue with the department concerned at the highest level for implementation of the project by the department.⁹⁹

- (v) Projects may be held up for want of materials such as bricks, bitumen, cement or shingles. This may delay project implementation of a local council or a department, say, Irrigation or Education. The Irrigation department may need these for immediate flood-protection work. The Roads department may have the materials. The Collector mediates in such a crisis and persuades the Roads department to lend or sell materials to the Irrigation department.^{100.}

- (vi) The Collector's mediatory role is essential to cope with a natural disaster such as floods and cyclones. In such a situation, the Collector is involved in mobilisation of manpower and resources locally to deal with the situation.

Repair of breaches in dams or embankments and

99. Based on Thana Council proceedings of Dacca District, 1973-78.

100. Based on interview with the Commissioners and Collectors of Khulna, Dacca and Chittagong Divisions.

undertaking of flood protection measures on an immediate basis often become impossible for the concerned agency because of procedural delays, sanction of funds, calling of tenders and issue of work order to the lowest bidder. Collector's involvement helps in dealing with the situation locally.¹⁰¹

Obstacles To Co-ordination

The repeated government circulars on the co-ordinative role of the Collector and the recommendations of various Commissions/Committees both during and after the colonial rule imply that the Collector has no legal authority for his work as co-ordinator. The problem is further accentuated by inter-departmental jealousy and lack of a spirit of mutual accommodation and co-operation between and among departments. Even after 1962 government Order, there have been refusal to accept Collector's co-ordinative authority.¹⁰²

In the absence of statutory authority defining Collector's position in relation to other departments, co-ordination is bound to be less than would be desirable. It is only long-standing convention, strengthened occasionally by government orders, that makes the task of co-ordination easy for the Collector. Lack of legal authority implies that success of co-ordination eventually becomes a matter of human relations.¹⁰³

101. Construction of Pandarkahl Dam in Sylhet is a case in point.

This is being discussed in Chapter V.

102. Abedin, Op.cit., pp.353-356.

103. Akhter Husain, Report, Op.cit., pp.183-184.

The personality of the Collector, his tact, intelligence and

(Continued)

At times the Collector's linkage with top administrative authorities such as Secretaries of departments and Chief Secretary and through them with the highest political office, enables him to secure consensus of the dissident departmental heads at the local level.¹⁰⁴

COLLECTORAL PATTERN AS RESUSCITATOR OR RURAL INSTITUTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT

The Collector's role in rural development, both in India and Pakistan since the fifties, was perceived to be one of strengthening rural institutions and through them stimulate development of rural life. This perception of the Collector's role in India was supported by participatory and administrative relationship earlier

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103. standard of performance have a direct bearing on the success of co-ordination. The Akhter Husain Commission recognised this aspect and emphasized the same in the report.
104. Services structure as part of the administrative system is well-documented and indicates the vital role played by membership of ICS & CSP in decision process in field and headquarters. Ralph Braibanti (ed.), Asian Bureaucratic Systems Emergent from the British Imperial Tradition, Duke University Press, Durham, 1966; Research on the Bureaucracy of Pakistan by the same author already cited; M.A. Chaudhuri, The Civil Service in Pakistan, NIPA, Dacca, 1963; Muneer Ahmed, The Civil Servant in Pakistan, Oxford University Press, Karachi, 1964; Henry Frank Goodnow, The Civil Service in Pakistan: A Study in Bureaucracy, Yale University Press, 1964.

than in case of Pakistan. The result was that the Collectoral pattern succeeded in revitalising local councils where V-AID had failed.¹⁰⁵

Collector's relationship with local councils is misunderstood by some scholars. The Collectoral pattern is looked upon as a threat to local government system:

"District administration had the effect of largely destroying local government. The British did not desire to encourage the growth of local government which would threaten colonial rule."¹⁰⁶

The naivety of this assertion is too clear to be explained. It would be a travesty of truth to say that the British did not

105. As already noted, the community development programme in India, under Collector's leadership, succeeded in supporting rural institutions of Panchayati Raj. The experience of V-AID presents the opposite situation reversed subsequently by the role played by the Collectoral pattern in the experimental programmes of Comilla Academy. The finding of the Academy on the impact of RWP has been that the local bodies were vitalised as never before, planning was done by local leaders and a new pattern of rural administration was evolved. For details see An Evaluation of Rural Public Works Programme, 1962, Op.cit., p.124.

106. Richard W. Gable, Introduction to District Administration, University of Southern California, Public Administration Project, Lahore, 1963, (Mimeo), p.143.

desire to encourage the growth of local government system.¹⁰⁷

It is inaccurate to link the failure or limited success of the local councils to the Collectorial pattern as Tinker's study has shown. Tinker sums up the reasons:

"What were the causes of failure? Faction and division in the village, poverty, a lack of competent leadership and of the co-operation of traders and professional men to assist with problems of finance and procedure, a lack of interest shown by district boards and often by District Officers who largely failed to train up village leaders in the technique of public administration, adverse political propaganda, the revolt of sections of village community---- particularly the menials, against traditional village leadership. It is easy to go on with list ---- reasons varied from village to village."¹⁰⁸

The most important part of the above analysis is the reference to the District Officer. This implies that the leadership role of the Collector was an essential requirement in adding strength to local councils. The trend of events in the post-colonial phase, which we have analysed, provides a firm empirical basis of what Tinker has said.

107. The Government of India Resolution of May 18, 1885 to which we have referred in Chapter I, p.38, negates this view. It is true that the Resolution was not implemented in letter and spirit. The District Boards were under official tutelage during the years 1885 to 1918. What about the post-1918 period?

108. Tinker, Op.cit., p.210.

It is no part of our business to argue in favour of the Collectoral pattern at the expense of the popularly elected councils. What we wish to call attention to is totally unfounded assessment of the Collectoral pattern based on shop-talk analysis. Our proposition, on the basis of the evidence we have presented in this Chapter is very clear: Proposition II: Field administration in a post-colonial state can play a major role in the process of building up rural institutions to further the objectives of rural development.

CHAPTER III

EMERGENCE OF BANGLADESH AND THE COLLECTORAL PATTERN (1971-1979)

The preceding Chapter has shown that the Collectoral pattern has a necessary function in (a) strengthening local councils and (b) supporting the process of rural development initiated by the Comilla approach. The evaluative analysis of the Collector's function involved a discussion of administrative arrangements of co-ordination centering on the Collector's relationship with the specialist services and the local government system.

This Chapter develops the theme further within the comparative framework of Prefectoral typology and in the context of changed political environment.¹

This Chapter has two sections. The first section shows:

- * the need for restoration of field administration in a war-ravaged country for rehabilitation of displaced persons and ensuring normal conditions of life;

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1. Bangladesh emerged out of the declaration of independence by the province of East Pakistan following the failure to reach political settlement on the question of provincial autonomy. For details see: Golam Wahed Chowdhury, The Last Days of United Pakistan, Hurst, London, 1974; Herbert Feldman, The End and the Beginning: Pakistan 1969-1971, Oxford University Press, London, 1975; Subash C. Kashyap, Bangladesh, Background and Perspectives, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, Delhi, 1971.

- * the attempts made by Awami League as a dominant mass party organisation to reorganise local government and field administration;
- * the change in political ideology of Awami League resulting in one-party rule and the proposed reform of the Collectoral pattern.

These features imply that political change affected the Collectoral pattern. The dimensions of that effect strengthen our argument that the process of rural development or of institution-building is linked with the Collectoral pattern. This linkage is not substantially different from what we have discussed already even though the political context is different. The difference consists in the fact that emergence of Bangladesh symbolises the transition from a military-oligarchy to political democracy.²

Yet, as the subsequent events proved, this was only a temporary phase. Political democracy gave way to political autocracy in the form of one-party rule under the charismatic leadership of Shiekh Mujibur Rahman. The dominating factor throughout in the national political process was Awami League which secured 292 out of 300 seats in the national parliament in the election held in 1973.³ Within two years, it opted for one-party rule.

The second section attempts to show the relationship between the Collectoral pattern, the development ministries and their affiliated agencies. An appreciation of this relationship is crucial

2. A.T.R, Rahman, 'Administration and Its Political Environment in Bangladesh', Pacific Affairs, Vol. 47, 1974-75, pp.171-191.

3. Zillur R. Khan, 'Leadership, Parties and Politics in Bangladesh', Western Political Quarterly, Vol. 29, 1976, pp.102-125.

to an understanding of the Collector's role in the process of rural development. It is equally useful for comparative analysis within the framework of existing typologies of field administration.

THE SITUATION IN 1971-72

Between the years 1971 to 1972, the Collectoral pattern acted under great stress and strain. The political leadership had to fall back on the Collectoral pattern in a bid to restore normal conditions of life. The traumatic events for Bangladesh during the war of liberation, which lasted for nine months and the subsequent attempts to restore civil administration, underscore the importance of the Collectoral pattern as an essential element for orderly management of public affairs in a war-torn country.⁴ The civil administration completely broke down first in March 1971 when the Pakistan army unleashed a reign of terror in East Pakistan in a desperate bid to secure the loyalty of the Bengalis who responded to the call Sheikh Mujibur Rahman made in his famous speech of March 7, 1971 at Dacca Race Course ground.⁵

In consequence of indiscriminate killing of the civilian population by the Pakistan army, nearly ten million people from all walks of life took refuge in India.⁶ The Bengali elements of the

4. Liberation war refers to the struggle for independence led by Awami League in March, 1971.

5. Ramendu Majumdar (ed.), Sheikh Mujibur Rahman: Bangladesh, My Bangladesh: Selected Speeches and Statements, October 28, 1970 to March 26, 1971, Orient Longmans, New Delhi, 1972.

6. Government of Bangladesh, The Two Year Plan: 1978-80, Planning Commission, September, 1978, p.1.

army and other para-military forces organised a resistance movement under the overall leadership of Awami League which formed a provisional government in India.

Inside what was then East Pakistan, the civilian government was non-existent. A hierarchy of Pakistan army officers superseded the regular administrative machinery which was there only to carry out orders.⁷

The Need for Restoration of the Collectorial Pattern

With the emergence of Bangladesh on December 16, 1971, the urgency of restoring field administration was dictated by the need for orderly management of public affairs specially in the sphere of rehabilitation of nearly thirty million displaced persons and post-war reconstruction of the economy.⁸ It was equally

7. Government of Bangladesh, Report of the Civil Administration

Restoration Committee, (M.M. Zaman, Chairman), January, 1972,

pp.3-5. The Committee was constituted under government notification No. GA IV/417/71-1573 dated December 27, 1971. It was asked, among other things, to "suggest ways and means for restoration of civil administration at the subdivisional, district and divisional levels as it existed before the outbreak of independence war pending final decision of administrative reorganisation". The Report was not made public. A copy of the Report is available in the ministry of Cabinet Affairs.

8. Two-Year Plan: 1978-80, Op.cit., p.1. The Plan quotes from the report of the United Nations Relief Operations at Dacca (UNROD) to say that the damages to the economy amounted to US\$ 1.2 billion. Thirty million displaced persons include ten million refugees.

necessary for removing overlapping of functions flowing from the organizations created by the provisional government during and immediately after the liberation war.⁹

Zonal Administration, composed and headed by Awami League elements, supplanted the regular field administration in the Districts. Instances were not rare when elected representatives of Awami League, in the name of Zonal Council, passed orders of detention against public servants without any legal authority. This resulted in a large-scale exodus of public servants from the Districts.¹⁰ Although as a necessary pre-condition for return to normality, the Zaman Committee emphasized the need for regular organs of field administration to function, it was not until the end of February, 1972 that a firm decision was taken by the government on this issue.¹¹

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9. The organizations were variously called Zonal Council, Zonal Administration, Civil Liaison Officer and Mukti Fouz (Freedom Fighters).
 10. A specific case relates to Sylhet District where a Member of Parliament (MP) ordered the detention of a Superintending Engineer of Roads department. This is based on the interview with the relevant Collector and the officer affected. Zaman Committee repeatedly emphasized the need for resumption of duties by public servants at their respective positions (para. 2.2).
 11. Item 8 of the decision of the Cabinet Meeting No. 5/72 held on 23rd February, 1972. It was decided that these organisations should cease to function forthwith and civil administration should take over their normal functions.

The measures recommended by the Zaman Committee, which are relevant for our purposes, are as follows:

- * CO to co-ordinate relief and rehabilitation programme in his jurisdiction with powers to secure the services of other officers to that end. He should also take over administration of Union Councils (para. 3.4).
- * A Deputy Magistrate should be posted at the Subdivision to take charge of relief and rehabilitation work (para.4.3).
- * an ADC should be provided exclusively for supervision and co-ordination of relief and rehabilitation programme (para. 5.3).
- * the Collector should "take over the administration of District Council pending introduction of Gram Panchayat System" (para. 5.5 and 5.6).
- * the Collector to co-ordinate all measures for "the restoration of Communication and Power Supply Systems" (para. 5.12).

The recommendations with regard to the taking over of local councils must be seen against the background of the position of local councils immediately after the liberation war. There was a big vacuum in the administration of local councils.¹²

INTERIM POLITICAL RESPONSE TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

The immediate step taken by the Awami League was to dissolve the

12. Government of Bangladesh, Year Book, 1972-73, ministry of Local Government, p.1. "The office bearers specially the Chairman of the then Union Councils were not, in most cases, in their respective positions but had to leave for elsewhere for various reasons."

local councils at all levels. The objects were to (a) dissolve the local councils "because they do not represent the people and there has been persistent demand from the people for their dissolution" and (b) to provide for "the performance of functions of the Local Councils and Municipal Committees till such time as new Local Government Institutions are established under the law made by the Legislature of Bangladesh".¹³ Article 3(1) of the Order, while declaring that "all Local Councils and Municipal Committees shall stand dissolved", renames the local Councils. It lays down that "a Union Council shall be called Union Panchayat" and "a District Council shall be called Zilla Board."

No reference is made to the Thana and Divisional Councils. This indicates that the government did not want these two Councils to function. This assumption is based on the construction of the subsequent Article 4(1):

"Notwithstanding anything contained in any Local Government Law, or the exercise of powers and performance of functions of Dissolved Local Councils or Municipal Committees, other than Divisional Councils, Thana Councils or Union Committees, there shall be appointed a Committee."¹⁴

The provisions in subclauses (a) and (b) further lay down that in

13. Government of Bangladesh, Preamble to The Bangladesh Local Councils and Municipal Committees (Dissolution and Administration) Order, 1972, President's Order No. 7, 20th January, 1972.

14. Ibid.; Union Committee in a constituent part of a municipality.

case of the Union Panchayat, the Committee is to be appointed by the SDO while in case of Zilla Board, pending formation of the Committee, the functions are to be performed by an administrator appointed by the government. On 28th February, 1972, Article 4 was amended by President's Order No. 17. The amendment included a reference to the Thana Development Committee to be appointed by the Collector (Subclause b, of Article 4).¹⁵

Lack of Consistent and Appropriate Political Direction

The quick succession of local government laws and the frequency of their amendments exhibit lack of consistent and appropriate political direction. The following facts lend further credence to this view:

- a. The ministry of Local Government appointed the Collector and the CO as administrators of Zilla Board and Thana Development Committee respectively. For Union Councils, village level officials were similarly appointed.¹⁶
- b. A conflicting arrangement was made subsequently by a government circular providing for selection of Committees with political elements by the MCAs.¹⁷

15. President's Order No. 17/1972.

16. Local Government ministry's telegram No.S-1/DC-2/72-pt/19(62) dated 20th January, 1972. For details see Year Book, 1972-73, Op.cit., p.8.

17. Local Government ministry Circular No.S-1/1U-7/72/69 dated 29th February, 1972. Please note that the President's Order No. 7 and 17 predates this circular. The term MCA refers to Members of Constituent Assembly constituted under President's Order No. 22

The MCAs were to select, in consultation with other political leaders, Chairmen and members of Union Panchayats. For Thana Development Committee, they were to select one of them as Chairman. In Zilla Board, the MCAs were to select one of them as a member from each Subdivision. The government was to select, in consultation with the MCAs and other political leaders, a non-official member from each Thana and appoint a Chairman. The Collector and other departmental officers were to be official members.

- c. The composition of local councils thus laid down was revoked by another circular in April, 1972. This circular provided for official administrators.¹⁸

It is not difficult to deduce some conclusions from the change of policy. One of these is the lack of unanimity among the MCAs at the local level. This was the strongest retarding factor in the constitution of Committees based on the consensus of local

17. dated 23rd March, 1972. Those elected to the central and provincial legislatures in the election of 1970 under united Pakistan, became MCAs.

18. Year Book, 1972-73, Op.cit., p.8. The reversal of policy is explained in the Year Book in these terms:

"Difficulties were, however, faced with regard to selection of persons for nomination and appointment for the different bodies. Moreover, though for the interim period, nomination to the Local Bodies also provoked serious public criticism. This Ministry, therefore, had to stay the constitution of committees envisaged in the said circular."

political leaders. This lack of agreement was not confined to the MCAs alone. The non-elected political leaders holding party office at the local level had to be consulted, according to the circular, which did not specify, for fear of public criticism, the party affiliations of this string of political leadership to be associated in the decision-making process.

The reference to public criticism is based on this consideration that in a multi-party framework, selection of members of local councils in a situation dominated by inter and intra-party rivalries and factions becomes a difficult process. Left to MCAs themselves, they would have selected members from their own party which in this case was the Awami League. This would have intensified internal dissensions as their choice might well have been in conflict with the views of the non-elected component of the party leadership at the local level.¹⁹

The failure to run the local councils with selected popular Committees is also attributable to the lack of a dedicated sense of public service on the part of the MCAs. In some Districts, the MCAs took over the administration of Thana Development Committees as Chairmen but failed to run the affairs of the Committees on the basis of fixed agenda.²⁰

Reliance on the Collectorial Pattern

The interim political response to the administration of local

19. Based on the interview with the MCAs and other political leaders of Sylhet. See citation 18, p.

20. Thirteenth Annual Report: July 1971 - June 1972, BARD, Comilla, June, 1974, p.45.

councils shows that as a neutral and legitimate agency of the government, the Collectoral pattern steps in to fill up the vacuum and thus acts as a stabilising element in an otherwise chaotic situation flowing from the failure of the political elements to work out institutional arrangements for popular participation in the orderly management of public services.²¹

This reliance on the Collectoral pattern is less open to public criticism than the politically selected Committees. This is substantiated by the government explanation of the difficulties encountered in the selection of Committees.

The political choice of management of conflict through the Collectoral pattern is related to the societal context in which it functions. The nature of the social system is characterized by all-pervasive poverty. In Bangladesh context, the problem was aggravated by the war-ravaged economy. The entire process of rehabilitation was dependent on the government. The capacity of the government to provide assistance was limited. It had to depend heavily on external aid.²²

21. The failure to create popular institutions is reflected in the local government policy of the government during the years 1973-75.

22. Government of Bangladesh, Seven Years of Assistance to Bangladesh, ministry of Planning, External Resources Division, June 1977, p.16. During the years 1971 to 1973, Bangladesh received Food aid worth US \$ 296 million, Project aid worth US \$ 130.2 and Non-Project aid worth US \$ 375.5 million.

The scarcity of resources leads to intense competition. This breeds "generalized inter group and interpersonal suspicion, corrosive of the social trust which is essential to effective individual and organizational co-operation".²³

The Awami League could not depend on the MCAs and political elements for formation of Committees due to lack of trust. The top political leadership knew that the formation of Committees along lines of personal loyalty of individual members was a key to access to resources. This access was vitally important for their future political standing. For, the gain of one village or one Thana must be at the expense of another. The result was the choice of the Collectoral pattern as the neutral agency for utilization of resources at the local level. The legitimacy of the Collectoral pattern as an instrument of management of conflict thus derives from the societal context as well as from the Collector's traditional expertise and skill in dealing with emergencies.²⁴

23. Milton J. Esman, Administration and Development in Malaysia: Institution Building and Reform in Plural Society, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1972, p.114.

24. The minutes of the meetings of District Relief Committees formed in 1972 under the Chairmanship of one of the MCAs provide evidence of scarcity of resources being a constraint on individual and organizational co-operation. The MCAs as members of the Committee would insist on distribution of relief on the basis of population rather than on the extent of damages. The Collector, as Member-Secretary often had to mediate between competing claims.

POST-CONSTITUTIONAL APPROACH TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT, FIELD

ADMINISTRATION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The lack of clear and consistent action by Awami League continued despite specific constitutional provisions dealing with the conceptual and operational framework of field administration, local government and rural development.²⁵ The constitution provided for (a) effective participation of people's representatives at every level of administration and (b) elimination of disparity in the level of living between urban and rural areas. These remained only in paper except for legislation with regard to elections to municipalities and Union Councils.²⁶

No step was taken during the post-constitutional period to have elected local councils at Thana and District levels. This was so despite the elaborate recommendations made by the Choudhuri Committee on the reorganization of local government and the Collectorial pattern. Under these recommendations, the future role

25. Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (As amended upto 1975), Manager, Government Printing Press, Dacca, 1975. The constitution was adopted on November 4, 1972. The conceptual and operational framework of field administration, local government and rural development is laid down in Articles 10, 11, 14 and 16 as part of the directive principles of state policy while the relationship between local government and field administration is laid down in Article 59. Under this Article, elected local councils were to take over both regulatory and development functions of field administration.

26. President's Order No. 22 of 1973 dated March 23, 1973.

of the Collector was to be confined to regulatory duties except for co-ordination of services of inter-district nature. The Collector's welfare functions in case of natural calamities were to remain unaffected. The development administration at various levels of field administration was to be transferred to the elected local councils. The departmental officers were to be placed under the control of the local councils.²⁷

Popular Mobilization For Rural Development: The Planning Commission Approach

The relationship among rural development, field administration and local government as outlined in the constitution and the views of the Chowdhuri Committee must be seen in conjunction with the Planning Commission approach to popular mobilization of rural people for development. The First Five Year Plan (FFYPB) opens with a discussion on the four basic pillars of the State: Democracy, Nationalism, Secularism and Socialism. The Plan discards the role

27. Government of Bangladesh, Report of The Administrative and Services Reorganisation Committee (Muzaffar Ahmed Chaudhuri, Chairman), April, 1973. The Report, which was not made public, repeatedly invoked Article 59 of the constitution to justify the case for elected local government at all levels. Part II, (pp.249 to 325), deals with the future role of the Collector and the elected local government system. The cases of inter-district services are classified as "generation and transmission of power, largescale irrigation, national roads and highways".

of administration in development and calls for creation of party cadre to function as an agent of change.²⁸

The stress on the creation of cadres is set against the assumption of what the Plan calls "the objective conditions of Bangladesh". The inherent contradiction in the creation of cadres in a multi-party framework committed to democratic rights is lost sight of in the rhetoric of commitment to socialism although the Plan does point out the need for keeping the cadre outside the bureaucratic machinery:

"The Bangladesh Constitution has precluded the emergence of a one-party state. In a multi-party state, the administration is expected to maintain an identity which is separate from the ruling party so that party cadres cannot automatically be injected into the machine to supervise its operation. All that the party cadres can do is to supervise the machine from outside."²⁹

The manner of supervision of the administration from outside is not spelt out. A partial solution is offered but not without an expression of doubt: "The problem may have been partially mitigated by giving ideological orientation to the bureaucracy" and at the same time doubt is expressed because of (a) the colonial heritage of the administrative system and (b) alienation of a government functionary from the people.³⁰

The rejection of the administrative system as an agent of popular

28. Government of Bangladesh, The First Five Year Plan of Bangladesh, 1973-78, Planning Commission, November, 1973, p.4.

29. Ibid., pp.4-5.

30. Ibid., p.5.

mobilization for development is followed by emphasis on elected and autonomous local councils. The views are identical with those of the Chaudhuri Committee reinforced by the use of such cliches as "paternalism of government functionaries" and reference to colonial tradition.³¹

In Chapter VI, the Plan proceeds to recommend a programme for voluntary labour mobilization for rural development. It calls for utilising the students for supervising development programme. It recommends the role of the students "as watch-dogs for the speedy implementation of the projects in their areas, ensure that supplies of materials and inputs arrive in time, and that the malpractices by the executing agencies in the field are avoided".³²

It is not for us to analyse the thoroughly unworkable scheme which the Plan recommends. However, a brief discussion may not be out of place since the Chapter that follows develops the theme that self-reliance programmes have been successfully launched and sustained by the Collectorial pattern which was summarily discarded in the Plan as an agency for mobilization.

The strategy for voluntary labour mobilization is far removed from the objective conditions of Bangladesh to which the Plan refers and on which it claims to have based its recommendations. The students have always been a major force in shaping the politics of the country. They are more politicised than any other segment of the society. They are divided in their allegiance to the number of political parties that operate in the country. Each

31. Ibid., p.79.

32. Ibid., p.68.

party has its student wing. According to the number of factions in the party, the students are similarly divided.³³

If the mobilization programme was to centre around the local councils, which the Plan recommends,³⁴ the superimposition of the students and party cadres divided by different ideologies, interests and factions, would have led to complete disorganisation and confusion. They would have worked at cross-purposes because of individual party ideologies and inter-personal loyalty. Besides, to what extent such an arrangement would be compatible with the concept of autonomous local councils and accountability of the public servants to the councils and the government remains an open question.

THE ACTUAL WORKING OF THE COLLECTORAL PATTERN AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Awami League regime did nothing to establish elected local government except at the Union level.³⁵ The preference, on the part of the governing elite, to maintain status quo, implied that the responsibilities of the Collectoral pattern continued to be the same as during Ayub Khan era. Programmes under RWP, TIP and TTDC continued to operate under the co-ordinative leadership of the

33. Talukder Maniruzzaman, 'Bangladesh: An Unfinished Revolution?', Journal of Asian Studies, Vol. 34, August, 1975, pp.893-911.

34. The FFYPB, Op.cit., p.69.

35. Rahman, Pacific Affairs, Op.cit., p.179. Election to Union Councils renamed as Union Parishads was held in December, 1973.

Collector. The Thana Development Committee operated under the CO up to September, 1974 and then under the SDO with the local MP as adviser and elected Chairmen of Union Parishads as members.³⁶ No such Committee, in respect of Zilla Parishad, was formed to associate popular participation even as an interim measure.

The absence of elected Zilla Parishad did not imply unlimited freedom in decision-making by the Collector with regard to preparation of plans and their implementation. His position became worse than under the BD system in which his role was institutionalised by the statutory recognition of his position inside the local council. The decision-making was corporate and organizational not individual. The elected members of legislatures then had but little scope in interfering with the local decision-making process except through request and persuasion upon the Collector and council members. Absence of elected local council made the position of the Collector very delicate which was further aggravated by conflicting demands upon the Collector for allocation of resources for development.

The yardstick for judging the Collector as good or bad by the political elements in Awami League depended on the Collector's ability to satisfy conflicting demands. In many cases, due to resource-constraints, demands could not be met which led to tension and bitterness between the Collector and the political elements.

A specific case is that of Tajpur-Balaganj Road in Sylhet District. One Minister, in whose constituency this road

36. Sixteenth Annual Report, July 1974-June 1975, BARD, September, 1976, p.53.

was located, got special allocations for completing the project in 1973-74. As this was a District Council project, the Collector was involved. This caused another Minister belonging to the same District but representing a different constituency to place demands upon the Collector to take up a similar road project during the same year in his constituency. He would not listen to arguments that in the former case, special allocation outside RWP was made by the ministry of Local Government and Rural Development. Besides, the Minister for Rural Development specifically instructed the Collector in writing that the road in question should be completed without waiting for formal approval of his ministry. This was done presumably on the persuasion of the Minister interested in Tajpur-Balaganj Road.³⁷

The Collector had no choice but to act upon the decision of the competent authority. In the process, he earned the hostility of the Minister whose demands could not be met. Disciplined and organizational decision-making in administration of public services whether in the field of development or otherwise is an exception rather than a rule in the politico-administrative

37. This is based on the unpublished official papers which include a number of semi-official letters between the Minister interested in Tajpur-Balaganj Road and the Minister for Local Government between the period of 12th February 1973 to 8th January 1974. The letter no. MU-IV/S-10/72/80 dated 12th February, 1973, from the Minister for Local Government to the Minister who initiated Tajpur-Balaganj Road refers to the specific instructions issued to the Collector to "go ahead with the work without waiting for formal approval of the same by the Government".

system of Bangladesh.³⁸

The lack of organizational approach was also reflected in the sale and distribution of essential commodities like clothes, cement, baby food and other imported consumer goods. The procedure for the sale of these items involved appointment of dealers. The ministry of Commerce authorised the Collector and his staff to select dealers according to a clearly laid down criterion. The local political elements showed an increasing propensity to have a share in the decision-making process which at times embittered the relationship between them and the Collector. The more the government became involved in new policies and programmes, the greater became the responsibility of the Collector with corresponding authority to make decisions.³⁹

38. Based on the interview with senior politicians, administrators and Collectors. The lack of organizational approach to decision-making is reflected in undue demand for transfer of the Collectors and SDOs by local politicians. This is also supported by the experience recorded by a former Chief Minister of Awami League in a book written in Bengali: Ataur Rahman Khan, Ojaratir Dui Bachar (Two Years of Chief Ministership), Dacca, n.d. Mr. Khan, who was Chief Minister in East Pakistan in 1956, was interviewed by the author in 1979.

39. Based on the author's experience as Collector during 1973-74. For details of the Collector's responsibility in selection of dealers, see the notifications of ministry of Commerce: 2(1) DS(C)/73 dated 24th July, 1973; 27(3)/73-Commerce II dated 19th November, 1973; MC-120/72 IMP II dated 31st July, 1973 and I/60/73 pt. 1/1469 dated 15th November, 1974.

The situation as it obtained in the Districts during 1973-75 supports the thesis that bureaucratic power may not always have an inverse relationship to executive authority. It is most commonly asserted that absence or weakness of political authority strengthens the bureaucratic position. This might have been true in case of Ayub regime. The Shiekh regime in Bangladesh has evidences to support just the opposite argument. That bureaucratic power is mostly derivative. "Without a strong executive to back it up, to legitimize its policies and activities, the bureaucracy can often do very little."⁴⁰

The Prime Minister strongly felt the necessity of backing up the Collectorial pattern so that the latter could implement his various policies and programme. The extent of top executive support to the Collector and his staff varied depending on the circumstances of each case and the personalities involved. The top executive support is indicated by the composition and function of various Committees at the District level. The local MPs were

40. Robert C. Fried, Comparative Political Institutions, The Macmillan Company, London, 1966, p.66.

Two indicators of Awami League's political strength were (a) overwhelming parliamentary majority and (b) mass appeal of its leader, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, publicly acclaimed as Banga Bandhu (Friend of Bengal) and as the Father of the Nation. This situation did not in any way lead to the weakening of Collector's power. The top executive found it to be serving its purposes as well in the face of the increasing involvement of the state in spheres other than regulatory administration.

associated in these Committees as members with the Collector as Chairman of the Committee.⁴¹

The question of relationship between the Collector and the local political elements was thus only partially resolved until the end of the parliamentary rule in January, 1975. It may be that the formation of one-party by the Awami League and the consequent introduction of the District Governor scheme was the compromise formula accepted by Awami League to resolve the question.

THE END OF PARLIAMENTARY RULE AND THE EMERGENCE OF ONE-PARTY STATE

In the absence of elected local government at District and Thana levels, the Collectoral pattern remained the only instrument for carrying out the principal function of providing goods and services to the people as well as for guidance and supervision of development projects. In the face of open indulgence of the party-workers in anti-social activities, the Collectoral pattern had to work under extreme stress and strain. It was thought, not unjustly, that the regular police machinery could not function effectively due to ever-increasing incidence of interference with the normal police work of prevention and detection of crime. Commission of crimes of all descriptions reached its peak in 1974 as is evident from the following table:

41. Based on unpublished office records of various ministries and Collector's office. The local MPs were associated in Committees relating to relief, Agriculture, Family Planning and Food for Works. One may compare the situation with that mentioned in citation 24, p.134.

TABLE 3.1

Number of crimes by types as registered with the police,
1965 to 1975.

Year	Dacoity	Robbery	Burglary	Theft	Murder	Rioting	Others	Total
1965	884	733	15042	11397	823	3391	169	32439
1966	945	717	15685	12553	938	3414	163	34420
1967	1002	590	14874	12196	900	3363	201	67546
1968	1197	880	16030	14209	1138	7713	260	41427
1969	1339	1020	18444	16781	1350	8714	215	47863
1970	1351	1075	16540	17779	1264	8774	381	47152
1971	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1972	4906	3539	12649	17418	5357	11094	156	55119
1973	5173	4345	13825	16009	1494	7140	25789	74275
1974	4731	4307	16391	19228	2703	8316	29972	85648
1975	2947	3131	14804	17290	1590	7891	26638	74291

Source: BBS, 1979, p.415.

Law-enforcing agencies, under the command of Bangladesh army, were deployed "in aid of civil power" to deal with the deteriorating crime situation. This special drive was known as "Operation Silver Lining".⁴² But before the silver lining behind the dark clouds was even visible, the army was withdrawn within a few weeks after their deployment. The crisis deepened in July-August, 1974 with the ravages of devastating flood which led to

42. The operation was launched in April, 1974.

Based on the interview with relevant officials.

famine. On December 28, 1974, government proclaimed a state of emergency in the country.⁴³

The new year ushered in radical political change. On 25th January, the Prime Minister amended the constitution providing for a one-party state and a presidential form of government. The President was authorised to form a national party called BAKSAL. The amendment further provided that "Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Father of the Nation" would hold office for a period of five years.⁴⁴

The Changes in District Administration

The political change following the formation of one-party state had its effect on local government and field administration. The Fourth Amendment of the constitution deleted the relevant Articles of the constitution relating to elected local government system. This was followed by a decision by BAKSAL to replace the Collectorial pattern by a new system of District Governor.⁴⁵

43. Maniruzzaman, Journal of Asian Studies, Op.cit., p.908.

44. Constitution (Fourth Amendment) Act, (Act II of 1975). BAKSAL is the abbreviated form of Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League. The word 'Krishak' is a Bengali word for peasants and the word 'Sramik' is a Bengali word for labourers.

45. The decision was taken by the President at the Central Committee meeting of BAKSAL on May 19, 1975. Bangladesh Times of July 17, 1975 reported:

"The new system is being introduced in place of the old colonial administrative set up which has been found totally inadequate to meet the requirements of a progressive,

(continued)

The new scheme was designed "to provide for the better administration of the districts".⁴⁶ For each of the 61 Districts, a District Governor was to be appointed by the President from amongst the members of public service, the elected MPs and members of BAKSAL.

The Governors were to hold office during the pleasure of the President and on such terms and conditions as the President might determine. Functions of the Governor were substantially the same as those of the Collector. The Governor was declared to be "the chief officer in charge of the general and revenue administration of the district" with powers of superintendence and control over all officers and authorities except the courts. In the discharge of his duties, the Governor was made responsible to the government and subject to its direction and control.⁴⁷

The Collector occupied an important place in the new administrative framework. In the absence of the Governor, the Collector was to act as the Governor. He was also made the Member-Secretary of the District Administration Council of which the Governor was the Chairman.⁴⁸

45. dynamic society of the post-liberation era". The same newspaper on the same date reported the creation of 61 Districts.

46. District Administration Act (Act VI of 1975), 1975.

47. Ibid., Sections 4-6.

48. Ibid., Sections 7-9. The membership of the District Administration Council included the members of law-enforcing agencies and defence services stationed in the District, nominated political elements from BAKSAL and Chairmen of municipalities (Section 9).

End of One-Party Rule

It is idle to speculate whether the District Governor scheme would have worked to the best interests of the country as the proposed reorganization did not have any chance to be introduced. The scheme provided that the newly appointed Governors would enter office with effect from September 1, 1975.⁴⁹ On August 15, 1975, some junior officers of the army seized power. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was killed by those who organized the coup. Leading Ministers and other political leaders were arrested and Martial Law was proclaimed.⁵⁰ The new government repealed the District Administration Act by an ordinance promulgated on 27th August (Ordinance No. XLV of 1975).

ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL CHANGE AND THE COLLECTORAL PATTERN

The experiment at evolving a political process through one-party government entailed colossal loss of time and energy which could have been diverted to more meaningful purposes of national development. This loss of time and energy can be judged from the fact that between August, 1975 till the Referendum held in March, 1977 which gave a vote of confidence to General Ziaur Rahman as

49. Bangladesh Times, Op.cit.

50. Zillur R. Khan, Western Political Quarterly, Op.cit., pp.123-125. The imposition of Martial Law did not involve abrogation of the constitution. The constitution of 1972 continued to operate with such amendments as were thought politically expedient. The amendments were made by the successive Presidents under 'proclamations' as the legislature was not allowed to function by the new government.

President, the political future of the country was as uncertain as could be.⁵¹

In a country where the line between the office of President and the guillotine is very thin, as has been proved by the scramble for authority by various factions of the army during the days immediately following the August coup, it was only the Collectoral pattern which did not lose its touch with the rural society and patiently carried on the numerous activities designed to improve the level of living in the rural areas.

The political experience of Bangladesh during the years 1971 to 1977 raises substantive issues concerning the relationship between local government and the Collectoral pattern. The complexity of the variables influencing this relationship principally centres on the political perception of the role of local government in the process of rural development. The extent to which the local government is effective in the due discharge of its functions is

51. Robert S. Anderson, 'Impressions of Bangladesh: The Rule of Arms and the Politics of Exhortation', Pacific Affairs, Vol. 49, 1976-77, pp.443-475. The army officers, who organized the August coup, installed Khundker Mustaque Ahmed, as President and Chief Martial Law Administrator (CMLA). Following two more attempts to change government by violent means in the month of November, Mustaque handed over power to the Chief Justice and was later sent to prison. The Chief Justice handed over power to General Ziaur Rahman, popularly referred to as Zia, in early 1977. Zia was then the Chief of Army Staff and Deputy Chief Martial Law Administrator (DCMLA).

contingent on the political direction that is appropriate, consistent and responsible. It is within and against this framework of political direction that the relationship between the Collectorial pattern and local government must be assessed rather than in romantic terms that view this particular type of field administration as a threat to local participation through elected councils.

The political perception must be based on firm ideological foundation and backed by effective political action. The constitutional provisions of the role of local government were very clear as already noted. Administrative arrangements to implement the framework of local government and field administration were laid down by the Chowdhuri Committee. All that was needed was to fulfil the constitutional obligation and, through a process of evolution, as in India, evolve a working relationship between the Collectorial pattern and the elected councils at and below the District level. Instead, revolutionary change in ideology led to a situation in which the possibility of local democracy was completely destroyed.

Analysis of local government legislations in this Chapter shows a preference, on the part of the political elite, to fall back on interim arrangements of administration of local councils through the Collectorial pattern. The inevitable result is that the fate of locally elected councils lies in the hands of the political authority.

This premise is further substantiated by the trend of events during the post-Awami League era. The local government law of 1976 provided for elected local councils at all levels except Thana. The structure and composition of Thana Parishad were the

same as under the BD system. The elections to the Union Parishads and municipalities were held in January, 1977 but nothing was done for an elected Zilla Parishad. The elections to Union Parishads and municipalities were unnecessary from the strict legal point of view as the elected representatives for these councils had been elected for a period of five years in 1973. The legal difficulty was taken care of by dissolving duly elected councils under the new local government law.⁵²

This was followed by constitutional amendment dealing with local councils. The amendment read as follows:

"The State shall encourage local Government institutions composed of the representatives of the areas concerned and in such institutions special representation shall be given, as far as possible, to peasants, workers and women."⁵³

The unwillingness or inability of the political elite to effect a meaningful devolution of authority to local government is symptomatic of its fear of loss of control over the local councils. In the event of elections, many of the Zilla Parishads may be controlled by people with different political views or ideologies. The political elite is not prepared to face this situation. It is more important to analyse this situation in terms of the political perception of the role of local government in relation to local participation and development than to summarily describe the Collectorial pattern as a threat to local government.⁵⁴ The real

52. Local Government Ordinance, 1976.

53. Proclamation Order I, 1977 dated 23rd April, Article 4.

54. Rahman, 'Politics in District Administration' Op.cit., pp.100-105.

threat, paradoxically, comes from the elected leaders of national government who find it convenient to choose administrative decentralization (deconcentration) rather than devolution of authority to elected local councils.

In the real world of government in Bangladesh, the boundary mark between matters of national concern and those purely of local concern is very thin because of all-pervasive poverty. The inevitable consequence of this is greater involvement of development ministries in programmes of rural development, through administrative arrangements, which, according to their perception, is conducive to maintenance of distinct departmental identities. The elected local councils, and for the past decade there is only the Union Parishad, are asked to co-operate with the departmental programmes. The Collector is also asked to ensure this co-operation.⁵⁵

This brings the Collector in tangential relationship not only with the rural society and local councils as has been shown, but also with the departments involved in the process of rural development. Collector's relationship with rural development programmes must be seen against this symbiotic relationship between him, the rural society and the departmental programmes. It is necessary to investigate further the relationship between and among the ministries, their field agencies and the local councils

54. Rahman describes the Collectorial pattern as "micro imperial bottom" and as such unsuitable for "legitimate expression of local politics and development".

55. A detailed analysis is made in the next Chapter.

relative to the Collector's role in the process of rural development.

RELATIONSHIP AMONG MINISTRIES, FIELD SERVICES, LOCAL COUNCILS AND THE COLLECTOR

This symbiotic relationship needs analysis to better appreciate the place of the Collectoral pattern in the typologies of integrated and unintegrated Prefectoral systems. It is further necessary for an understanding of the ways in which political reliance on the Collector is reflected in matters affecting the process of rural development based on specific programmes of different ministries.

The examination of this relationship shows an asymmetrical pattern. The extent of reliance varies from ministry to ministry. The only element of uniformity in the pattern is the willingness, on the part of most development ministries, to associate the Collector in the specific programmes of development without completely surrendering their vertical line of command and control over their respective field officers.

The discussion on the Collector's administrative control over field services in the preceding Chapters will have made it clear that the nature and extent of the Collector's co-ordinative authority has been a question of constant concern to different governments.⁵⁶ Although the need for co-ordination was repeatedly stressed, the Collector was not given any direct authority over the field services. This tends to confirm the view that the Collectoral pattern is nearer to the unintegrated system than to the integrated.

56. Chapter I, pp.44-45 and Chapter II, pp.113-119.

Even this is, at the most, a broad generalisation that does not reveal the exact structural-functional relationship between the Collector and the field services. In case of few field services, the Collector has some measure of authority, in case of most others, his authority is derived from the way he is associated by different ministries in specific development programmes. The relationship of the Collector with the ministries, local councils and field services is explained in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1 shows that the Collector comes under the ministry of Cabinet Affairs which is looked after by the President. This is a continuation of the long-established tradition of keeping the Collector's office under the direct control of the top political executive.⁵⁷ This ministry has two Divisions: Cabinet and Establishment.⁵⁸ Till 1975, the Establishment Division used to deal with District administration. Since the beginning of 1976, there has been a bifurcation of functions which is shown in Figure 3.2.

57. During Ayub era, the Collectoral pattern was under Services and General Administration Department looked after by the Governor. Under Awami League regime, it was under the Prime Minister.

58. Division in the context of a ministry denotes constituent part of the ministry dealing with a separate subject. For details see: Allocation of Business and Organisations among The Different Ministries and Divisions, Cabinet Division, June 24, 1972 and List of Attached Departments and Sub-ordinate Offices under different Ministries/Divisions, January 1, 1978, Statistics and Research Branch, O & M Wing, Establishment Division. All figures in this Chapter except Figure 3.6, are based on these two official documents and discussion with heads of field services at the District and Divisional levels.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOVERNMENT, LOCAL COUNCILS AND
FIELD AGENCIES IN BANGLADESH 1976-79

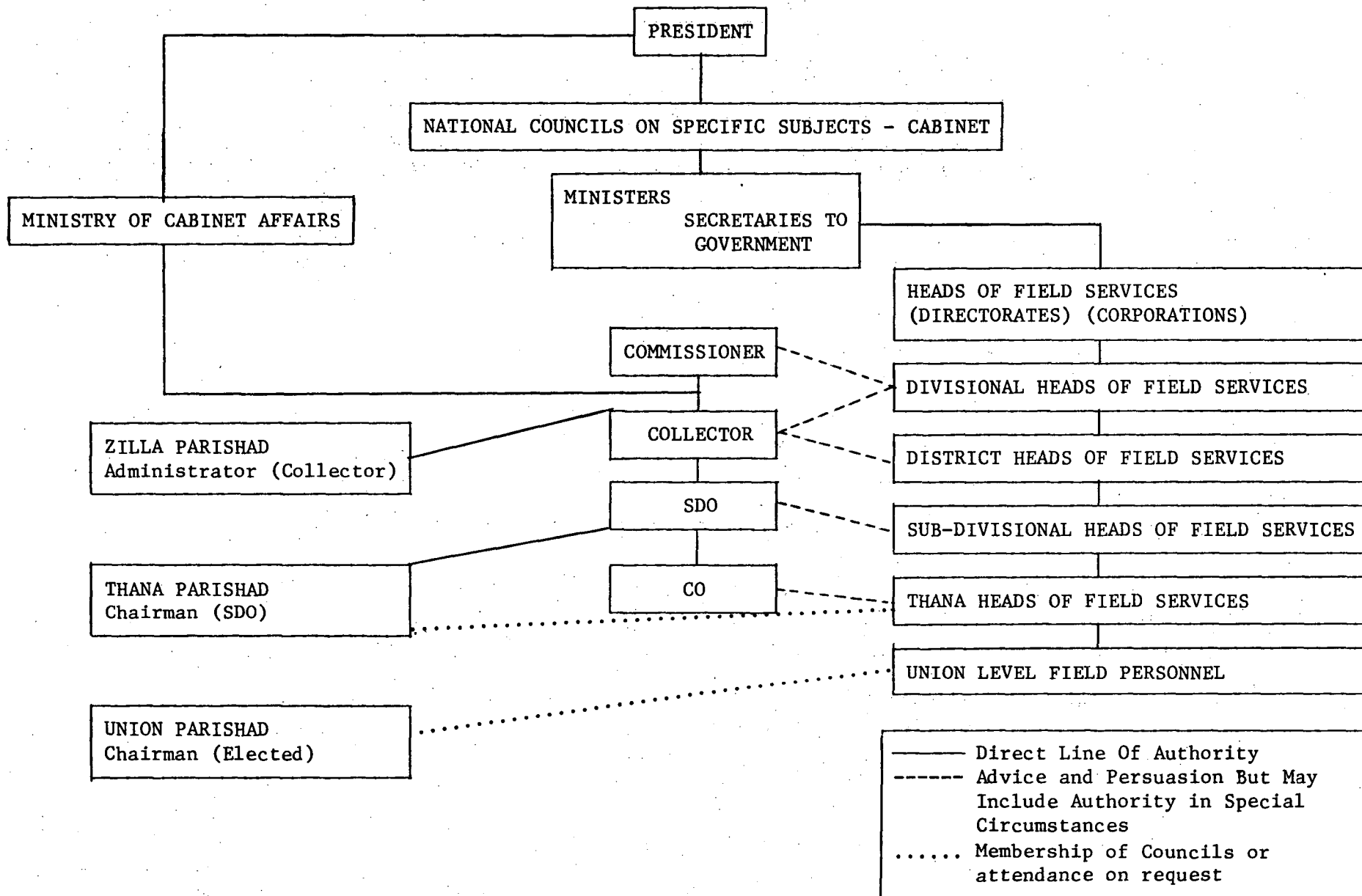
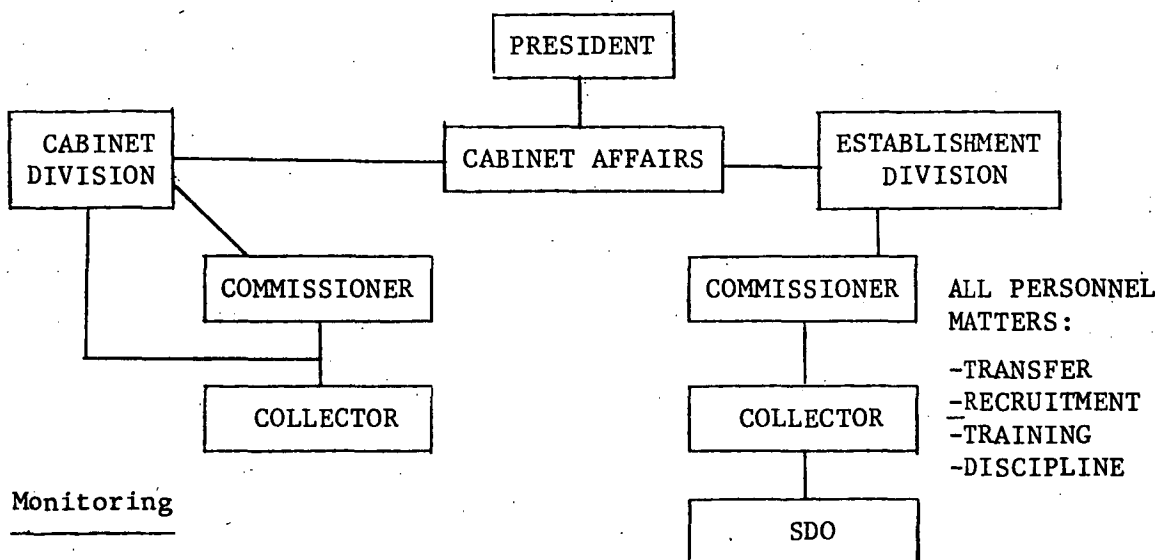


FIGURE 3.2

BIFURCATION OF FUNCTIONS BETWEEN CABINET AND
ESTABLISHMENT DIVISIONS IN RESPECT OF DISTRICT
ADMINISTRATION (1976-79)



Note: Since February 1979, a separate Minister has been appointed for Establishment Division. Cabinet Division continues to lie under the President

The channel of communication between the Collector, the Cabinet Division and other ministries is direct. The Commissioner is kept informed by the Collector of all such correspondence. It is against this perspective that the Collector's role in matters affecting the general welfare of the people in the District has to be judged: his direct access to the top political executive. This places him in an advantageous position compared to heads of field services who have to maintain communication "through proper channel", the Divisional heads and the Directorates.

A functional example is the "Fortnightly Confidential Report" sent by the Collector direct to the Cabinet Division. This report contains a specific sub-heading under the title: Matters Requiring Immediate Attention of the Government. The Collector is not directly under any ministry except the Cabinet but he is constantly in touch with all of them because of his association with departmental programmes. Conversely, the ministries are also in touch with the Collector in addition to their own field personnel. When it comes to organizing a nation-wide programme, the ministries invariably fall back on the Collector and associate him in what should be their own departmental programme.

With some ministries such as Home Affairs, Land Revenue, Relief and Rehabilitation, Local Government and Rural Development, Collector's relationship is close because he acts as their chief field agent in a more direct sense than in cases of Agriculture, Education and Health. Specific examples are as follows:

i) Home Affairs

This ministry is responsible for public order, criminal and prison administration. Collector's functions in these areas are codified by law. He is not immediately concerned with any of these for which there are separate officials. The law enjoins that he must oversee the functions with the spirit of "judicial detachment" keeping public welfare in view. A functional example is in the sphere of law and order.

The overall responsibility for maintenance of security rests with the ministry and its attached office, the Police Directorate. The chief of police called the Inspector General has his own personnel in the field: Deputy Inspector General in the Division, Superintendent of Police in the District, Subdivisional

Police Officer in the Subdivision and Officer in charge of Police at Thana level. Yet when it comes to arrest and detention of persons on political grounds, the authority is exercised by the Collector or by one of the ADCs.

The Collector may or may not accept the views of the police regarding the grounds of detention. This is because the law governing detention without trial requires that the authority exercising the power should "apply his mind judicially" before taking a decision. Added caution is required by his answerability before the High Court in matters pertaining to detention on political grounds.⁵⁹

ii) Land Revenue and Land Administration

Collector's functions in this sphere is similarly codified by law. He is the chief field agent of the ministry but in practice, the ADC (Revenue) exercises all powers as Collector. The Collector is only involved in cases requiring mediation between field services or between field services and the people.

iii) Agriculture

Collector's relationship with the ministry provides an

59. Criminal Miscellaneous Case No. 161, dated 8th August, 1977.

In this case, the High Court passed strictures on ADC Sylhet for passing orders of detention on insufficient grounds as provided by the police. The object of associating the Collector in detention cases is to ensure impartial and fair considerations of each case. This flows from the juridical foundation of the state that recognises the necessity of checking arbitrary harassment to the citizens by the police.

example of ministerial reliance on his leadership role without impairing departmental control over its field services. The relationship is based on Committee system the pattern of which was set first in 1963.⁶⁰

Since then the Collector has continued to be responsible for co-ordinating the work of various agencies under the ministry. Besides co-ordination, his functions include (a) enlisting public co-operation to new programmes of food production, (b) ensuring timely delivery of agricultural inputs and (c) mediating disputes between different agencies of the ministry or between the agencies and other allied field services.

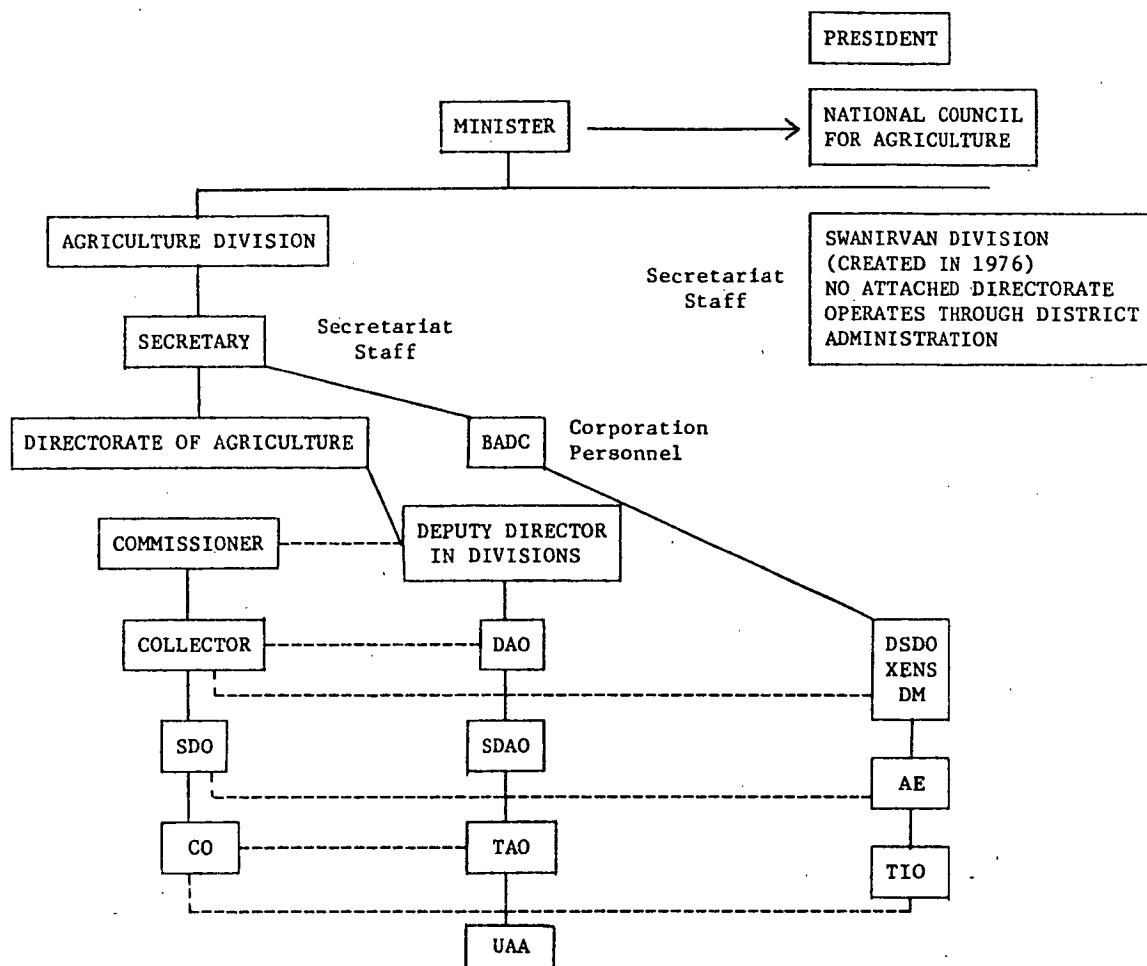
The relationship is shown in Figure 3.3.

Ministerial reliance on the Collector's leadership role in implementing new programmes of agricultural development, designed to raise food productivity, is not revealed in the relationship as shown in Figure 3.3. Two specific cases of such reliance are: decision to constitute Village Food Production Committees and Taka 100 Crore Agricultural Credit Programme in 1977.

With regard to the Committees, the Secretary to the ministry requested the Collectors to organise village level Committees in their respective jurisdictions as a step towards increasing food production.

60. The East Pakistan Local Councils (Constitution and Functions of Agricultural Development Committee) Rules 1963, Basic Democracies and Local Government Department, Government of East Pakistan. The rules provide for composition and functions of Committees at every unit of administration for development of agriculture. The Collector is the Chairman of the District Committee.

FIGURE 3.3

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE COLLECTOR AND THE FIELD AGENCIESMINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (1976-79)

- DAO - DISTRICT AGRICULTURE OFFICER
- SDAO - SUB DIVISIONAL AGRICULTURE OFFICER
- TAO - THANA AGRICULTURE OFFICER
- UAA - UNION AGRICULTURE ASSISTANT
- DSDO - DISTRICT SEED DEVELOPMENT OFFICER
- XEN - EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
- DM - DISTRICT MANAGER
- AE - ASSISTANT ENGINEER
- TIO - THANA IRRIGATION OFFICER
- BADC - BANGLADESH AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION.

LEGEND
AS IN FIGURE
3.1

The letter was followed by preparation of a manual in Bengali under the title "Village Food Production Committee Manual".⁶¹

In the nation-wide programme of distribution of agricultural credit, the Bangladesh Bank (Central Bank) and the ministry of Agriculture found it necessary to involve the Collector as the chief co-ordinator for the programme at and below the District level. All banks were involved in the programme under the co-ordinative leadership of the Collector who was the Chairman of the District Committee constituted for the purpose.⁶²

The factors which influenced the decision to utilise the Collector in the programme are:

- His involvement in matters affecting rural development in general;
- His leadership role in agricultural development programme on a continuing basis;
- His function as chief co-ordinator of all development activities in the District;
- His wide public contact with people in the rural areas;
- His relationship with elected local councils;

61. Secretary's semi-official letter bearing No. Agri/XVII/Food-1/77 dated 31st March, 1977. It was addressed to all Collectors. Swanirvar Division followed it up in a circular bearing No. Shawmirvar-1/77 dated 6th April, 1977. The SDOs were requested to implement the decision according to the instructions contained in the Secretary's letter.

Swanirvar is a Bengali word meaning self-reliance. It is spelt both as Shawnirvar and Swanirvar. We shall discuss Swanirvar in the next Chapter.

62. Based on official records of Dacca Collectorate.

- His informal authority of direct communication with headquarter offices; and
- His statutory authority in all matters affecting land revenue and land administration.

His authority in the sphere of land administration was a necessary element which facilitated quick disbursement of agricultural credit because the credit distribution programme depended for its success on ascertaining the title of land of each individual farmer. Authentic records in this respect were needed as collateral security before any loan could be advanced. This title of land known as 'record of rights' is maintained by the subordinate village revenue officials under the administrative control of the Collector. It was essential that the revenue machinery at the village level was geared to the task of quick distribution of credit. Instructions from the Collector to the revenue officials for making available updated record of rights to the farmers without delay facilitated quick disbursement of credit.

iv) Education

Collector's relationship with the ministry of Education and its departmental officers is shown in Figure 3.4. (p. 164)

Collector's formal relationship with national education administration gives little indication of the much larger role that he plays in management, promotion and development of education in the country. The privately organized educational institutions vastly outnumber those that are directly managed by the government. Of the 611 colleges, as many as 575 are privately managed. Of the 8083 high schools, as many as 7933 are privately administered. As regards primary schools, the position till 1974 was that as many

as 36,165 out of 44,165 were private institutions.⁶³ It is in this management of non-government institutions that the Collector has been associated since the colonial days.⁶⁴

The Bengal Education Code and the Primary Schools Act, 1920 are the two basic documents relating to the management and administration of colleges and schools. Later Acts and Rules framed thereunder envisaged that at the District headquarters, the Collector or an officer nominated by him would be the Chairman of the Governing Body or the Managing Committees of privately run schools and colleges. In the outlying areas, the SDO or an officer nominated by the SDO and approved by the Collector would be the Chairman.

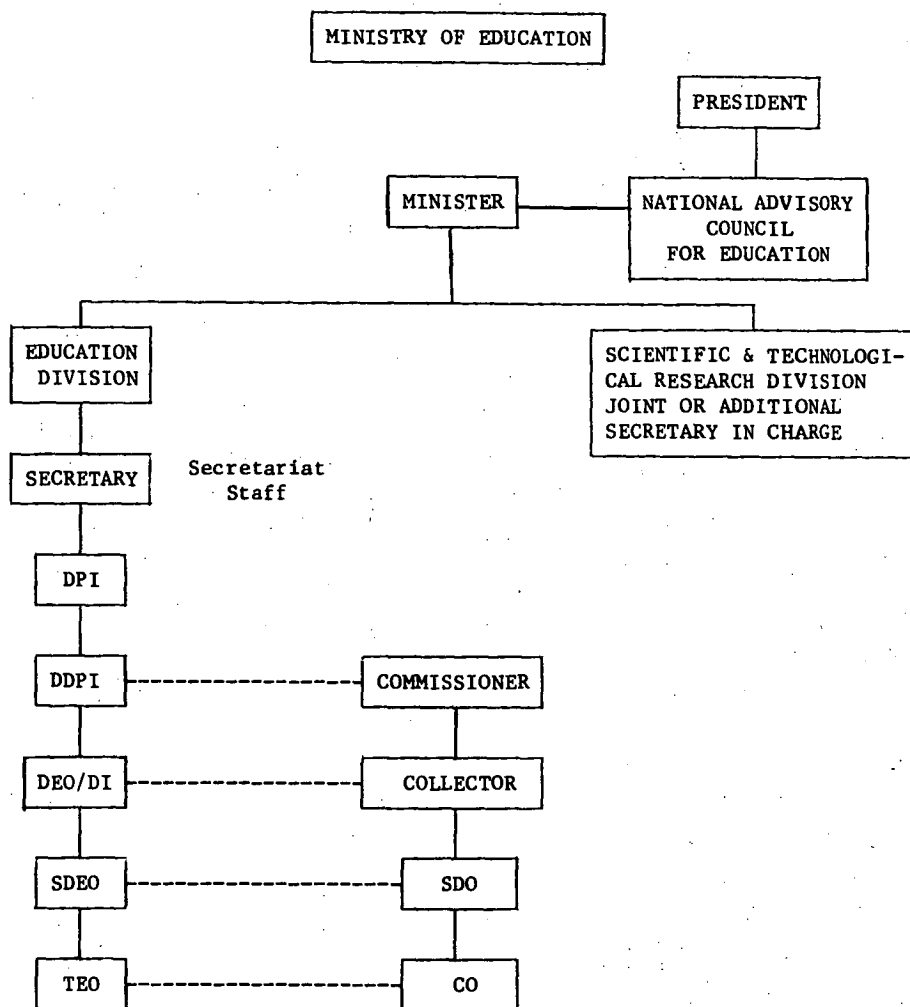
During Awami League era, this provision was further amended to empower the Collector and the Commissioner to nominate any non-official as Chairman. This provision is still followed.⁶⁵

63. Government of Bangladesh, Education in Bangladesh: Policy and Development, August, 1975, pp.12-228 and pp.29-32.

64. Tinker, Op.cit., p.335. On this role of the Collector, Tinker states: "Their best efforts were devoted to roads, schools and dispensaries. They constantly importuned Government for grants-in-aid, they cajoled subscriptions from local men of wealth, they pressed all the resources of administration----- revenue and public works staff, village labour and whatever material was available----into building up of public services on a scale never seen before."

65. Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (Constitution, Powers and Duties of Governing Bodies of Non-Government Intermediate Colleges) Regulations, Jessore, 1975. The Rules for similar Boards of other regions are identical with regard to constitution of Committees.

FIGURE 3.4
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE COLLECTOR AND THE FIELD AGENCIES
OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION (1976-79)



DPI - DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (HEAD OF THE DIRECTORATE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION)

DDPI - DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

DEO - DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICER (FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS)

DI - DISTRICT INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS (FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS)

SDEO - SUB-DIVISIONAL EDUCATION OFFICER

TEO - THANA EDUCATION OFFICER

LEGEND
 AS IN
 FIGURE 3.1

The membership of Committees are filled up by election from different categories such as donors and guardians of pupils. There is also provision for nominated members from amongst persons interested in education. The rationale of keeping official Chairman is primarily to ensure financial discipline and maintain quality in recruitment of teachers.

In executing development programmes, the ministry leans heavily on the Collector as an implementation agency. This, notwithstanding the fact that the ministry has its own field agency reaching down to the Thana level as shown in Figure 3.4. Thus in 1976-78, the government decided to develop one girls and one boys high school in each Thana headquarter. In the sphere of college education, it decided to develop one college per Thana. The task of selecting these institutions to be taken up under development programme fell on the Collector and his staff.⁶⁶

Similarly, when the ministry took up a nation-wide programme for development of primary education, it decided to give full operational responsibility to the Collector as head of the District level committee:

"Operational responsibilities for implementation will rest at the district level under the overall control and supervision of the Deputy Commissioners, assisted by the District Primary School Development Committees (DPSDC) comprising the following:

Chairman	: Deputy Commissioner
Vice-Chairman	: A.D.C. (Development)
Member-Secretary	: District Inspector of Schools

66. Based on official records of Dacca Collectorate.

Members : District Education Officer,
Principal Boy's College (where there is
more than one the college will be
specified by the DPI),
Assistant Engineer (Education
Directorate),
Two persons interested in education to
be nominated by the Commissioner.

The Committee will meet monthly, or more frequently if
found necessary. Full minutes of all meetings will be
kept and copies be provided to all members and to the
Project Director in Dacca."⁶⁷

Subdivisional Primary Schools Development Committees
(SDPSDC) were formed on the same lines as the DSPSDC under the SDO.

The functions of the Committee were to:

- submit recommendations, for schools to be taken up for development,
to the Collector;
- motivate the communities to make any possible contribution to
supplement government funds;
- monitor progress of work to the Collector and solve local problems
for speedy implementation of the programme; and
- submit monthly progress report to the Collector and inform him of
any problem requiring his attention.⁶⁸

67. Government of Bangladesh, Education Division, Development of
Primary Education in Bangladesh (1976-78), July, 1976, pp.10-11.

This responsibility was given to the Collector despite the fact
that a separate project implementation cell was formed with a
Project Director under the DPI.

68. Ibid., p.12.

Apart from involving the Collector in the implementation of development programmes, the ministry associates him in what is purely a departmental affair. As head of the District Panel Committee, the Collector is responsible for recruitment of primary school teachers.

v) Health and Family Planning

a. Health

Collector's authority over officials of Health Division is limited to persuasion and advice only although inspection of government hospitals in the rural areas is one of his functions.⁶⁹ The Collector can request the Civil Surgeon and his staff to provide special medical attention to the community in case of flood and cyclone or outbreak of epidemics. In the latter case, the ministry usually calls upon the Collector to elicit public co-operation for preventive measures that involve inoculation and vaccination on a large scale.⁷⁰

The ministry also associates the Collector in specific development programmes such as establishment of Thana Health Complex and Union Health Centres. As Chairman of the District Site Selection Committee, the Collector selects the site for expansion of rural health facilities. The Collector's relationship with the

69. Government of East Pakistan, Inspection Manual, Services and General Administration Department, 1965. No new manual has yet replaced this manual.

70. On the reported outbreak of cholera, in April, 1977, in the District of Comilla, the Presidential adviser in charge of the ministry thought it appropriate to address all Collectors and request them to monitor progress of preventive measures.

ministry is shown in Figure 3.5.

b. Family Planning

Collector's relationship with the officials of Family Planning Division, as shown in Figure 3.5, implies a more direct authority over the officials than in the case of Health ministry. This relationship is a continuation of the days when Family Planning was first introduced as a government programme throughout the country. As Chairman of the District Family Planning Board during the late sixties, the Collector had full operational responsibility for implementation of the programme including administrative authority over the field officials.⁷¹

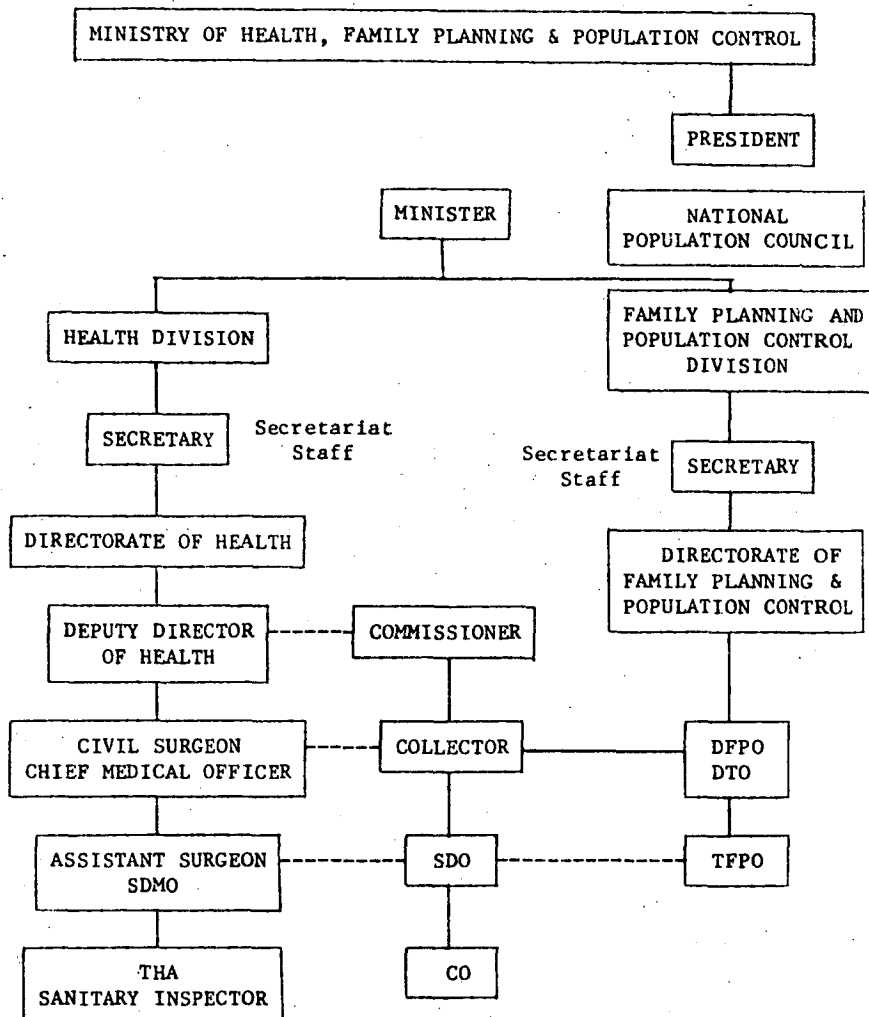
After 1971, the Provincial Family Planning Board was replaced by the Directorate of Family Planning under the ministry of Health. The Board at the District level was also abolished although the Collector continued to have the same operational responsibility and administrative authority as before.⁷²

71. The details of the organizational set-up at the central, provincial and District levels are outlined in the document entitled Family Planning for Pakistan (1965-70), published by the Government of Pakistan in May, 1965. The other references for Bangladesh are: Resolution No. HSLG/S-II/1F-7/65/101 dated 10th June, issued by the department of Health, Government of East Pakistan and Notification No. Dev-1/S-91/65/290 dated 17th July, 1965 of the same department. The June Notification deals with the creation of Provincial Family Planning Board while the July Notification deals with the composition and functions of District Family Planning Board.

72. Based on the author's experience as Collector.

FIGURE 3.5

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE COLLECTOR AND THE FIELD AGENCIES
OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH, FAMILY PLANNING AND
POPULATION CONTROL, (1976-79)



DFPO - DISTRICT FAMILY PLANNING OFFICER

DTO - DISTRICT TECHNICAL OFFICER

SDMO - SUB DIVISIONAL MEDICAL OFFICER

THA - THANA HEALTH ADMINISTRATOR

SDFPO - SUB DIVISIONAL FAMILY PLANNING OFFICER

TFPO - THANA FAMILY PLANNING OFFICER

Note: (1) The posts of Civil Surgeon and Chief Medical Officer were united in 1976.

(2) Collector's relationship with the field agency of Family Planning Division at the District level and below is shown separately in Figure 3.6.

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The FFYPB accorded top priority to population control programme and stressed the need for a separate Division as part of the ministry of Health. It also recommended that the operational responsibility at the District and Thana levels should be vested in the elected Chairman of the councils at these levels.⁷³

This did not materially alter Collector's relationship with the family planning programme as elections to these councils never took place. Later in 1976, the Family Planning Division was created. The Division decided to organize its programme through Committees from District to Union levels under the overall co-ordinative and administrative leadership of the Collector. The reorganized set up is shown in Figure 3.6.

Under the latest reorganization (1978), the post of the DFPO has been renamed as Deputy Director. He is under vertical control of the PC & FP Directorate but the Collector's horizontal control over this functionary continues to remain the same as before. The Collector is responsible for efficient functioning of the field personnel, assessing the annual performance of the Deputy Director, approve his tour diaries and grant him casual leave.⁷⁴

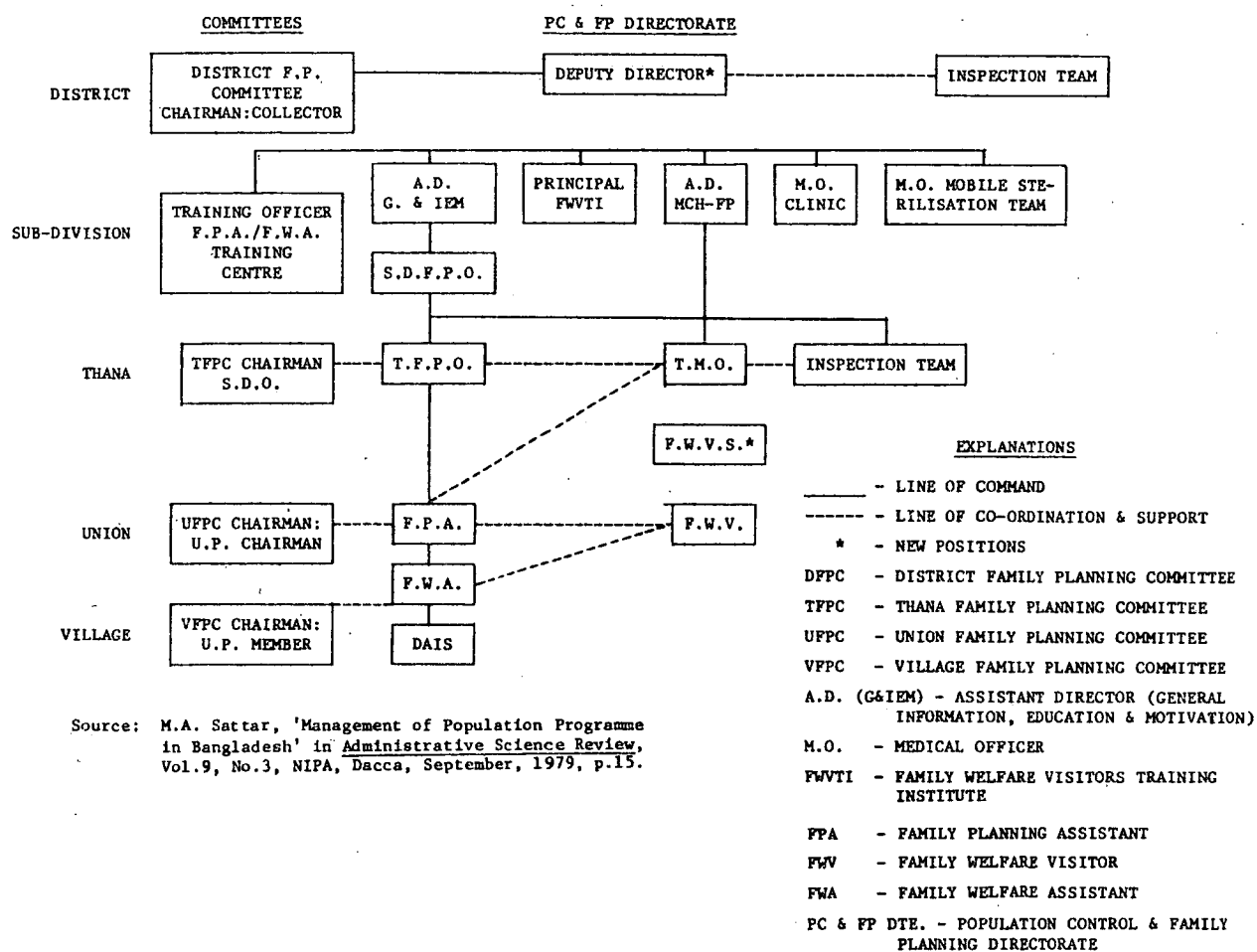
vi) Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives

Our analysis of the Collector's role in the process of rural development made in Chapters I and II has shown that he has been very intimately connected with Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives primarily through the Circle system.

73. FFYPB, Op.cit., pp.547-549

74. Memorandum No. PP/IB-7/77/317 dated September 29, 1978 of the Population Control and Family Planning Division. The memorandum contains details of the powers of the Collector in relation to its field officers.

FIGURE 3.6
DISTRICT ORGANIZATION (1978)



Source: M.A. Sattar, 'Management of Population Programme in Bangladesh' in *Administrative Science Review*, Vol.9, No.3, NIPA, Dacca, September, 1979, p.15.

Like Family Planning, this ministry has its field personnel at different administrative units. During colonial days, the Collector had direct control over the CO. After 1962, his authority in respect of assessment of performance, approval of tour diaries and grant of casual leave, has been delegated to the SDO. As regards ADRD, the Collector continues to exercise these powers. Thus for all practical purposes, the ADRD and the CO are part of the Collector's office which is also the main channel of communication between these officers and the ministry. Subject to the overall direction and control of the Collector, these officers are responsible for RWP and TIP including efficient functioning of TTDC and such other development programme as may be assigned by the Collector from time to time.

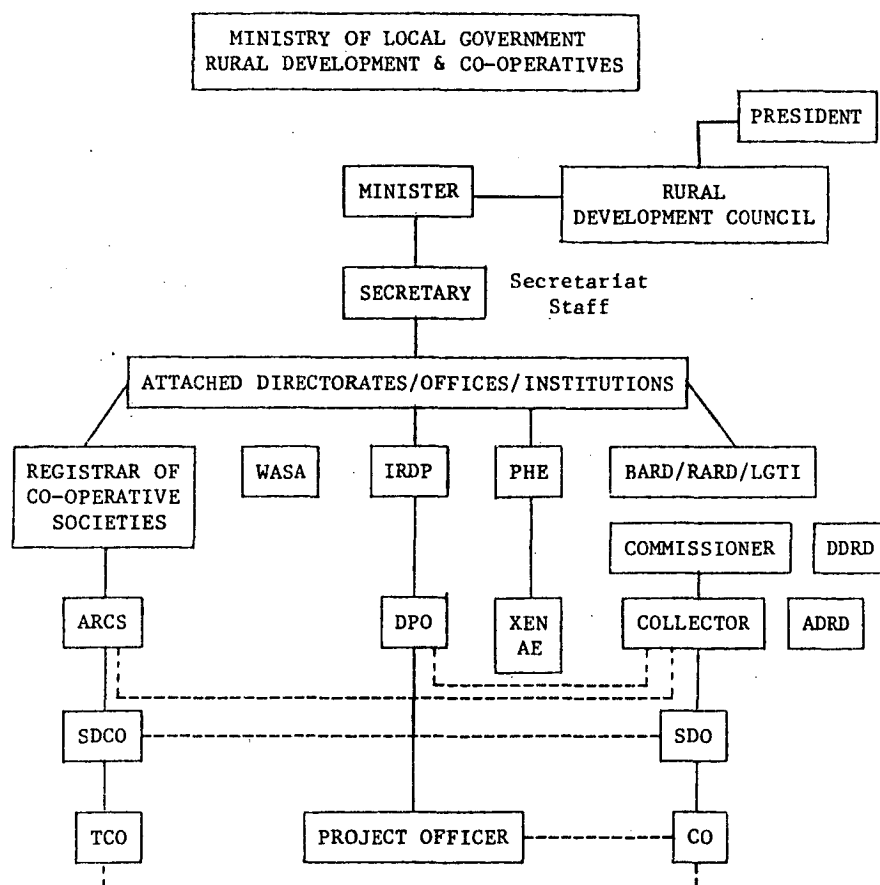
The three attached organizations of the ministry such as Co-operatives, IRDP and PHE have their field officers engaged in the rural sector but the Collector has no direct control over them. The officials, under these organizations, are required to maintain close liaison with the Collector and his staff for co-ordinated approach at field level. Collector's authority in respect of these officials is limited to co-ordination, advice and assistance only. The position is shown in Figure 3.7.

vii) Relief and Rehabilitation

The relationship between the Collector and the ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation is similar to that between the Local Government and Rural Development. Relief ministry has no independent field agency of its own but operates through the Collector. Its officers, from District to Thana levels, are fully under the administrative control of the Collector as are its development programmes.

FIGURE 3.7

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE COLLECTOR AND THE FIELD AGENCIES OF
THE MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, RURAL DEVELOPMENT & CO-OPERATIVES, 1976-79



WASA - WATER AND SEWERAGE AUTHORITY (FOR DACCA & CHITTAGONG CITIES ONLY).

IRDP - INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (HEADED BY A DIRECTOR GENERAL)

PHE - PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT (HEADED BY A CHIEF ENGINEER)

BARD - BANGLADESH ACADEMY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

* RARD - REGIONAL ACADEMY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

LGTI - LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRAINING INSTITUTE

ARCS - ASSISTANT REGISTRAR, CO-OPERATIVES

SDCO - SUB DIVISIONAL CO-OPERATIVE OFFICER

TCO - THANA CO-OPERATIVE OFFICER

DPO - DISTRICT PROJECT OFFICER

DDRD - DEPUTY DIRECTOR, RURAL DEVELOPMENT

ADRD - ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, RURAL DEVELOPMENT

* The regional academy is located at
Bogra District.

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There is no affiliated agency between the Collector and the ministry. The channel of communication is through the Collector and sometimes, depending on urgency of the situation, directly through the SDO with information to the Collector.

As explained in Chapter I, relief and rehabilitation has formed a regular part of the Collector's duties since colonial days. Since 1974, the task of the ministry was geared to assisting efforts at raising food productivity through Food for Works Programme (FFW). With the wheat provided by the World Food Programme (WFP), small labour-intensive programmes are undertaken to augment food production. Payment to the labourers is made in wheat. The relationship between the Collector and the ministry is shown in Figure 3.8.

The two major objectives of FFW are (a) to provide seasonal employment to the unemployed rural labour-force and (b) to promote national land and water development.⁷⁵

75. WFP Outline, ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation, Government of Bangladesh, (mimeo), p.1. The outline states as follows:

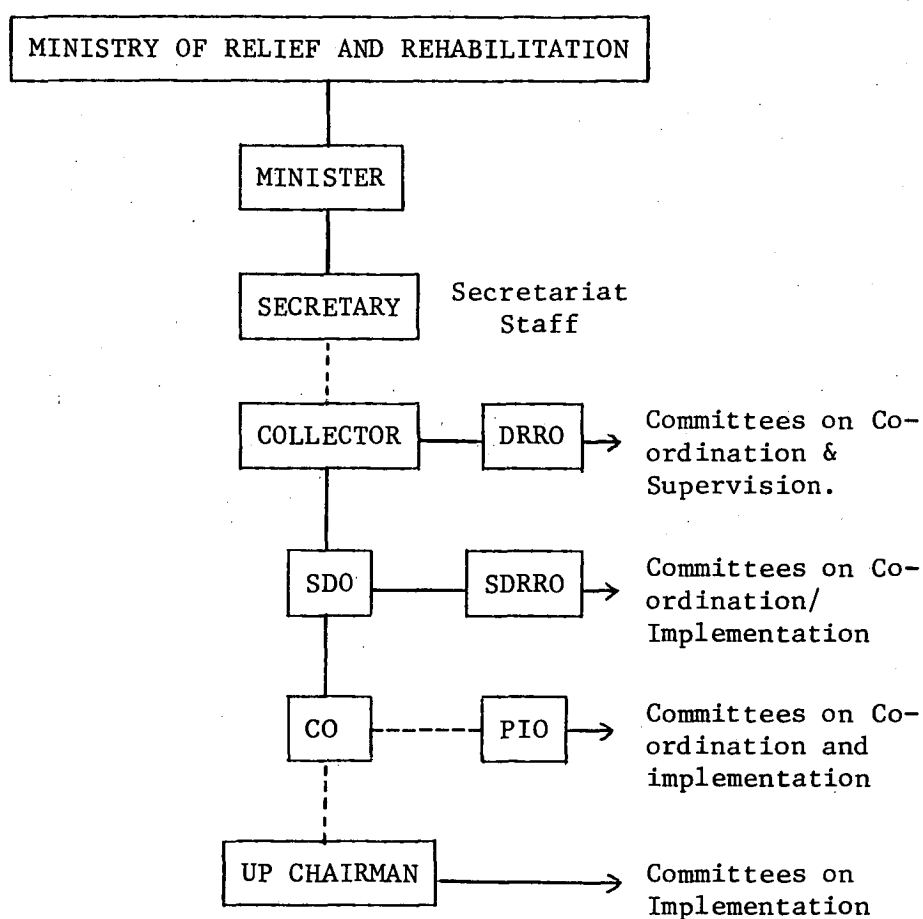
"The primary emphasis is on providing off season relief work and a food-wage to otherwise unemployed rural labour. The programme also provides a means of respectable livelihood for the chronically destitute. It is not intended as a competitive alternative to other means of productive employment, but is a more acceptable form of relief for the jobless than dole handouts.

Although primarily relief oriented, FFW schemes are selected and designed with a secondary function of national land and water development. They provide much needed

(Continued)

FIGURE 3.8

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE MINISTRY OF RELIEF
AND REHABILITATION, ITS FIELD AGENCY AND THE COLLECTOR
(1976-79)



DRRO - DISTRICT RELIEF AND REHABILITATION OFFICER
 SDRRO - SUB-DIVISIONAL RELIEF AND REHABILITATION OFFICER
 PIO - PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER
 UP - UNION PARISHAD

LEGEND
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 FIGURE 3.1

75. flood protection, irrigation, drainage and help to increase agricultural production."

The concept of providing relief for the needy in return for their labour is not a new one. During colonial and Pakistan days, this form of relief used to be provided for the distressed areas under the name of "Test Relief". The only difference between "Test Relief" and the relief under FFW is that whereas "Test Relief" would be undertaken in distressed pockets where there had been a failure of crops, FFW is a regular development programme on lines similar to that of RWP. It is part of the annual development programme of the government, although continuation of the programme depends wholly on the commitment of wheat made by WFP.

The usual procedure followed in planning and implementation of FFW schemes is:

- * The ministry gets the indication of the total allotment of wheat committed by WFP during a given year;
- * the ministry then calls upon the Collector and his staff to prepare schemes on the basis of notional allotment of wheat per District;
- * the schemes are initially drawn up by CO in consultation with the elected leaders of Union Parishads and sent to the ministry after approval has been obtained from the Collector;
- * the ministry finally selects the schemes with such modifications as it thinks fit and issues letters of sanction of wheat against each scheme.

In early 1975, there was a three-tier Committee for the programme: (a) at national level the Committee consisted of Ministers for Agriculture and Flood Control with the Relief Minister as convenor; (b) at Subdivisional level with the SDO as Chairman, officers connected with agriculture, President and Secretary of local BAKSAL unit as members and MPs as advisers; (c) at Project level consisting of "engineers, local administrators and local

leaders".⁷⁶

In November 1975, all these Committees were reconstituted in view of the changed political context in the country. As the guidelines for constitution of Committees at the lowest tier were vague, a Thana level Committee was formed with the CO as Chairman and Chairmen of Union Parishads and other officials as members.⁷⁷

In February 1976, ministerial reliance on the Collector was specifically stated:

"Like all other administrative and development activities within the district, Deputy Commissioner will remain in overall charge for the successful implementation of all "Food-for-Work projects."⁷⁸

In December, 1977, a separate Committee known as District Steering Committee was constituted under the Chairmanship of the Collector with the primary aim of ensuring timely and proper

76. Memorandum No. 97(100)-WFP dated February 26, 1975, ministry of Relief. This was addressed to all Collectors who, as Chairmen of District Relief Committees, continued to be responsible for overall supervision and co-ordination. The District Relief Committee, under the Collector, included MPs as advisers. This Committee was for co-ordination of relief during emergency situations.

77. Memorandum No. 2M-5/75/135/508/DS, USAID, dated November 22, 1975, ministry of Relief.

78. Memorandum No. WFP-2/76-82(19) dated February 10, 1976, ministry of Relief.

implementation of projects, to investigate complaints of corruption or misuse of allotted wheat and to take appropriate action against those responsible.⁷⁹

THE PLACE OF THE COLLECTORAL PATTERN IN PREFECTORAL TYPOLOGY

The two types of integrated and unintegrated Prefectoral systems, suggested by Fried, are based on six clearly identifiable characteristics: locus of authority, communications, auxiliary services, areas, echelons and local government.⁸⁰ Judged from the standpoint of these characteristics, the place of the Collectoral pattern may be summed up as follows:

- a. locus of authority: It conforms more to the unintegrated system than to the integrated. The Collector is neither the exclusive repository of authority on behalf of ministries nor is he the hierrarchical superior of heads of field services in the District. His authority is largely limited to co-ordination only involving persuasion and advice.
- b. communications : It conforms to the unintegrated system with few exceptions. Collector is not the prescribed channel of communications between specialist departments in the capital and those in the field. Communication is direct via corresponding Divisional head.

79. Cabinet Division Memorandum No. CD/DA/S(4)/77-477(129) dated 2nd December, 1977.

80. Fried, Italian Prefects, Op.cit., pp.306-307.

c. auxiliary services : It conforms to the unintegrated system.

The field services in the District has their own independent offices, finance and supplies. These are provided by the respective ministries.

d. areas : It conforms to the integrated system with few exceptions.

e. echelons : It conforms to the unintegrated system with variations.

f. local government : Under the Local Government Ordinance of 1976, the local government unit at the District level is to have a directly elected Chairman. This makes the pattern similar to the unintegrated system.

This summary is at best useful for comparative purposes. As our analysis of the Collector's relationship with development ministries has shown, the relationship is more complex and varied than is suggested by simplistic assertions of conformity to the unintegrated system. The relationship between the Collector and the various field services engaged in the rural sector is marked by varying degrees of delegation of authority from the ministries to the Collector.

The following development ministries appear to have greater dependence on the Collectorial pattern in respect of administration of their programmes:

- * Local Government and Rural Development;
- * Population Control and Family Planning;
- * Relief and Rehabilitation.

Beyond these ministries, the Collector's control over

field officials tends to be diffuse as are the cases with the ministries of Agriculture and Education. This does not necessarily mean lesser degree of reliance on the leadership role of the Collector. The reliance is there but it is not accompanied by a conferment of direct administrative control over the field officers to the extent that is noticed in the aforesaid cases. The Collector is not required to assess the performance of the DAO or the DEO although his control over specific programmes of development may be clearly spelt out by the ministry as has been done for development of primary schools or food production programmes through village level Committees.

Even within the same ministry, the relationship may vary from agency to agency. Specific examples are (a) Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives and (b) Health, Population Control and Family Planning. Collector has no authority over Assistant Registrar, Co-operatives, Project Director, IRDP and Executive Engineer, PHE. Similarly, he has no authority over the Civil Surgeon.

A distinctive feature of this varying degree of relationship with the ministries or their field services is clearly identifiable in terms of their programme content. The choice of the Collectoral pattern as an associative element in the implementation process tends to flow from the necessity of mobilizing rural public opinion. In cases where the specific programme involves active co-operation from villagers such as increased food productivity, adoption of family planning programme and promotion of literacy, the Collectoral pattern is invariably relied on by the ministries with the expectation that the leadership role of the Collector will facilitate the success of the programme.

As against this, there is much less reliance in case of programmes where community participation as a contributing element is not so important for their success. In these categories fall nationally organized services like generation and transmission of power, building of national highways, large irrigation projects and maintenance of forests.

None of the field services except Local Government, Rural Development, Relief and Family Planning, is required to communicate with their headquarter office in the capital via the Collector. They have their regional offices at the Divisional level and the communication is made through these regional offices above the District level. All field services, without exception, have their separate budget provided by the ministry concerned. All, except Relief, Local Government and Rural Development maintain separate offices.

As regards areas, variations are mostly in cases of the ministries of Forests, Water Resources, Power and Public Works.⁸¹

A review of the local government system in relation to the Collector shows the unstable nature of the relationship between the two. Thus between the years 1885 to 1920, the Collector was the chief executive of the District Council. Between 1920 to 1958, the Collector was replaced by the elected Chairman. Between

81. Forest jurisdictions usually embrace more than one District.

Hence the designation: Divisional Forest Officer. The term 'Division' is also used in cases of the jurisdictional limits of Executive Engineers of Water Resources, Power, Public Works, Roads and PHE signifying their separate identity from revenue Districts.

1959 to 1971, the Collector reverted to his original position. Since 1972, he is an appointed administrator of the Council and the present law contemplates an elected chief executive.⁸² As already noted in this and the previous Chapters, Collector's place in the local government system is marked by uncertainty that flows from the ideology of particular political authority. Even in relation to the same authority, the ideology is subject to change, as for instance, has been the case with the Awami League during the years 1972-75.

The basis of comparative analysis of the two types of Prefectoral systems rests primarily on the Prefect's relationship with (a) local government system and (b) the specialist services in the field. The foregoing discussion makes it clear that the Collectoral pattern cannot bear comparison with the Prefectoral systems of either variety in absolute terms.

Collector's relationship with field services and the local government system is influenced by the overriding concern for rural development as well as by the ruling elite's preference for utilising the Collector for administration of local councils. As our discussion in Chapter II has shown, the Collectoral pattern is an important element in revitalising local councils, in strengthening the process of institutionalizing rural development process, in mobilizing rural leadership and the available governmental resources of different agencies for improvement of rural conditions.

This leads us to formulate the following propositions:

Proposition III: It is unreal to look upon the Collectoral pattern as a threat to stable local government system, the

82. Local Government Ordinance, 1976, Section 7(5).

latter being dependent on political and ideological forces rather than on the type of field administration.

Proposition IV : Although it is possible to compare the Collectoral pattern with the unintegrated system from the standpoint of relationship between the Collector and the specialist services, the relationship is more complex and varied than is suggested by broad generalisations based on the static model.

CHAPTER IV

SWANIRVAR: REVIVAL OF POPULIST TRADITION OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

In the last Chapters it was shown that the Collectoral pattern is vital to the implementation of rural development schemes through local government, ministerial department and field agencies.

This Chapter analyses the trend of Swanirvar movement in Bangladesh and its relationship with the Collectoral pattern. The analysis, when set against the voluntary labour utilisation strategy as designed by the framers of the FFYPB, proves the futility, in terms of empirical corroboration, of discarding the Collectoral pattern as an agent for mobilizing voluntary labour in the rural areas.

As a rural uplift movement, Swanirvar is based on the principle of community development, underlying as it does, the concept of people's voluntary participation in rural development. It is claimed to be different from other community development programmes in that it is essentially non-official in character. It avoids the elaborate bureaucratic community development organisation at different levels nor is there monetary incentive involved. Its principal objective is to generate mass enthusiasm for development of the rural areas. To the extent that it aims at mobilizing public opinion for voluntary labour for development of rural areas, it may be seen as a revival of the populist tradition of rural development.

In practice, this difference loses much of its significance. Instead of the bureaucratic organisation as seen in normal community development progress, it attempts to utilise the leadership and guidance of the Collectoral pattern as a means of ensuring voluntary participation of the people in the process of rural

development. The creation of Swanirvar Division as part of the ministry of Agriculture in 1975, preceded by the creation of Committees at District, Subdivision and Thana levels headed respectively by the Collector, SDOs and the CO, implies that it can no longer be called non-official in character. As regards monetary incentives, the practical application of the principle of voluntary labour varies from project to project. It would be nothing short of romantic idealism to claim that the Swanirvar movement can make any meaningful contribution to the process of rural development without monetary or material incentive.¹

THE BEGINNING OF SWANIRVAR MOVEMENT

A perusal of available documents on Swanirvar shows that its growth as a movement of rural development, based on the concept of voluntary participation, can be divided into three distinct phases: (1) isolated locally organised programmes in 1972-73, (2) District Development Programmes in 1974-75 and (3) the consolidation of the District Development Programmes into a national programme in the later part of 1975.²

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1. M.A. Hamid, 'Swanirvar (Self-Reliant) Rural Bangladesh: Problems and Prospects', in M.K. Chowdhury (Chief ed.), Political Economy, Vol.2, No. I, Dacca, June, 1977, pp.200-217. This is a Journal of Bangladesh Economic Association. The volume contains papers presented at the Second Annual Conference of the Bangladesh Economic Association held in March, 1976. Hamid refers to source of finance of Swanirvar Local Programmes at p.206 and that of the District Programmes at pp.209-210.
 2. Ibid., p.200.

Swanirvar Phase I relates to isolated locally organised programmes involving local social welfare oriented organisations, villagers and the student community. Hamid calls this phase Swanirvar Local Programmes (SLP). The SLP failed to leave any impact in terms of continuity due mainly to organisational problems including problems of lack of leadership.³

During the first phase, attempts were made to enthuse and mobilize students, as explicated in the FFYPB, to provide leadership in voluntary mobilisation of labour without prejudice to their normal academic life. This did not succeed. According to a small booklet published by the Central Swanirvar office, this embraced only ten colleges and the Universities of Dacca, Rajshahi, Mymensingh and Chittagong.⁴ As of 1974-75, Bangladesh had six Universities, 611 colleges and 8083 high schools with a roll-strength respectively of 33,617, 57, 3835 and 16,78260. This excludes a number of professional colleges in such fields as engineering, medicine and agriculture.⁵

These were scattered over the countryside while the government high schools did not go beyond the subdivisional headquarters at the most. As regards the very small number of government colleges and the Universities, these were all urban-based. Psychologically, the urban-based students were averse to manual work.

3. Ibid., pp.207-209.

4. Union O Gram Sarker, (in Bengali, meaning Union and Village Government), Swanirvar Bangladesh, Dacca, January, 1978, p.47.

5. Education in Bangladesh: Policy and Development, Op.cit., pp.12-

22. See citation 63 in Chapter III.

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Besides, their contribution in terms of output was an open question.⁶ Attempts to organise the students throughout the country by sporadic motivational lectures undertaken by some proponents of Swanirvar did not produce desired effect. The problem was that the motivational aspect was not supported by organisational links.⁷

In the situational context of Bangladesh, there were two ways to reach these institutions. One way was through the student wings of the political parties. The combined efforts of the political parties with their affiliated student organs could have made it possible to send the message of self-reliance to the educational institutions of the country-side. Given the necessary motivation and training, it might have been possible to organise the students on a nation-wide scale. This combination and the consequent plan of action were clearly out of question within the framework of multi-party politics with the accentuated problem of internal factions and lack of consensus in drawing up a cohesive programme of action.

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6. Rene Dumont, Problems and Prospects For Rural Development In Bangladesh, The Ford Foundation, Dacca, November, 1973, pp.28-31.
 7. Mahbub Alam Chasi (M A Chasi) is a diplomat turned social worker. He is considered to be the chief spokesman of Swanirvar. Chasi is a Bengali word for farmer. Alam adopted this as part of his name to signify his conviction in the dignity of labour. During 1973-74, he visited many educational institutions in the country and delivered motivational lectures. The author was present in one such lecture delivered in 1974 in Sylhet Government College. No student participation programme took place in Sylhet for lack of organisation.

The other alternative was to utilise the Collectoral pattern as a firm organisational base for dissemination of the idea of self-reliance. Apart from the question of the Collector's relationship with the field services, his intimate knowledge of the District and the ordinary villager's perception of his role, the Collector has traditionally provided leadership to set up schools and colleges in the country-side outside the ambit of regular government plans for promotion of education as noted in the previous chapter. In colonial days, the institution of the Zamindars also had some share in setting up schools in the rural areas. With the abolition of the Zamindari system in 1950, the Collector alone was the agency to whom the rural people looked up for leadership and assistance.

In the management and administration of non-government schools and colleges, the Collector and his staff were associated under the existing procedure. SDOs, COs and other influential rural notables interested in education would preside over the meetings of the managing Committees as nominees of the Collector. This procedure is provided in the Bengal Education Code and all subsequent legislations dealing with the management and administration of non-government educational institutions.⁸ They were thus

8. The Board regulation, under section 4(a), provides for appointment of the Collector as Chairman of Governing Body at the District headquarters. As for colleges outside the District town, the Collector may nominate an ADC or SDO. He can also nominate a distinguished person of the locality, where the college is situated, to act as Chairman. We have referred to this in Chapter III, Citation 64.

better situated in influencing the opinion of the secondary educational institutions in the country in favour of voluntary mobilization. Yet this administrative and social reality was totally ignored by the farmers of the FFYPB. The pious faith in the political leadership and the students was totally falsified when it came to the actual task of implementing the ideal of Swanirvar.

Swanirvar Phase II: The District Programmes

If the localised and isolated programmes under Phase I failed to generate popular consciousness on a massive scale with regard to the need for voluntary labour utilisation strategy, the involvement of the Collectors in Phase II, since the middle of 1974, proved beyond doubt the efficacy of the Collectoral pattern in influencing and mobilizing rural public opinion for application of the principle of self-reliance. The immediate impetus for the District programmes appears to have come in the wake of the devastating floods which hit most of the Districts of Bangladesh in July-August 1974.⁹ The flood affected 30,000 square miles out of 55,598 square miles. More than twenty million people were affected. The production of rice, the staple food of the nation, fell by 1.5 million tons as a result of the flood.¹⁰ The spectre of famine haunted the door of the people.

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9. Swanirvar Karmashibir (in Bengali, meaning Swanirvar work camps), BARD, Comilla, June, 1976. This is an evaluation report on eleven work camps held in five Districts under Chittagong Division. The reference to flood of 1974 is at p.1.
 10. Comilla Zilla Sabuj Karmashuchi (in Bengali, meaning Comilla District Programme under the title Sabuj (Green), BARD, Comilla, June, 1976, p.1.

The nation as a whole was faced with the challenge of meeting the loss of crops in addition to providing immediate food and shelter to the homeless and the hungry. As in the past, the entire task of organising relief and rehabilitation measures fell on the shoulders of the Collectors of flood affected Districts.¹¹ The challenge to meet the deficit in food production was even greater.

It is generally agreed that attempts to augment food production started first in Chittagong District on the initiative of the Federation of Thana Central Co-operative Association. This programme later spread throughout the District when the Collectoral pattern got involved. The District programme came to be known as "Sonali Shaw" (Golden Hundred). Comilla followed the same line at the initiative of BARD. A programme was designed by BARD to boost up agricultural production in two out of eight flood affected Thanas of the District. The plan drawn up in August 1974 came to be known as "Action Programme For Flood Recovery Operation" (APFRO).¹²

At about the same time, the Collector of Comilla, in association with the District agricultural authorities and BARD, worked out a draft plan for the recovery of crop losses for the whole District. This plan is known as "Comilla Agricultural Recovery Plan" (CARP), 1974. APFRO and CARP combined under the common title of "Comilla Sabuj" (Comilla Green) to cover the whole District.¹³ The

11. As discussed in Chapter I, one of the major functions of the Collector is to organise relief and rehabilitation work at times of natural calamity.

12. Comilla Zilla Sabuj Karamshuchi, Op.cit., pp.1-4, also based on the interview with the Collector of Comilla.

13. Ibid., p.2.

initiative taken in Chittagong and Comilla quickly spread to other Districts. All the Districts of Bangladesh, under the leadership of their respective Collectors, started development programmes for food self-sufficiency. This was done under different titles or slogans. The basic strategy has been to increase food production by small labour-intensive schemes based on participation by the local people. The different titles or slogans which the Districts adopted are shown in Figure 4.1.

Examples of both Chittagong and Comilla Districts show that while localised programmes can only be limited in their area of operation, the involvement of the Collectorial pattern in the same district broadens the area of operation which is indispensable for any meaningful contribution to the field of agricultural productivity. This is more so in a country like Bangladesh having an economy which is predominantly agricultural. Of the total population of 76.4 million as of the last census on 1st March, 1974, 91.2% live in the rural areas. Of these, over 75% are engaged in agriculture.¹⁴ The basic thrust of Swanirvar District Programmes was on increased food productivity in terms of rice which accounts for 78% of the total cropped area of nearly 23 million acres.¹⁵ The figures for all Districts in this effort are not available except for the Districts of Noakhali, Chittagong, Comilla, Dacca and Sylhet. As against the government target of 'Boro' cultivation of 1.36 lakh acres, Noakhali

14. Based on BBS, 1979, p.4; the FFYPB, p.83 and the United Nations Demographic Year Book, 1974, pp.140-143. The figures are according to the last census of Bangladesh held in 1974.

15. The FFYPB, Op.cit., p.83.

uncultivated waste land to the extent of 9384 acres were brought under cultivation with an additional production of rice amounting to 10,685 tons.¹⁷

It is outside the scope of our study to quantify the economic benefits of Swanirvar District Programmes. Admittedly, the success varied from District to District. It is our contention that the success story of these programmes must be judged in the context of the relationship of the programmes with the respective Collectors. In some Districts, the Collectors helped in organising the programme and then left it to be developed through popular initiative which was fully in accord with the Swanirvar principle. In others, the Collectors were more actively involved depending on the nature of urgency of food problem in the District. Sylhet is a case in point. As on April 30, 1975, out of a total number of 2,479 labour-intensive projects, as many as 1760 were completed within a short span of six months. This has been confirmed by an independent evaluation report conducted by the Department of Economics, University of Chittagong.¹⁸

The extent of political involvement, either from the top or locally, has not been evaluated in clear terms by different

17. Swanirvar Dacca, a booklet published in Bengali by the Dacca Collectorate, September, 1975, p.9.

18. Muhammed Yunus and Muinul Islam, A Report on Shah Jalaler Shyamal Sylhet, Rural Studies Project, Department of Economics, Chittagong University, June, 1975, p.9. Shah Jalal is the patron saint of Sylhet while Shyamal is the slogan of the District Development programme organised by the Collector.

independent agencies such as the Universities and BARD. The latter does mention vaguely the extent of political involvement of MPs and Ministers of the District who were associated in the organisational set up of 'Comilla Sabuj' programme.¹⁹ The general trend appears to be that there was not much active political support to the programmes in terms of enthusing local people for voluntary work.

In 'Urbara Mymensingh' programme, for instance, all the MPs and political leaders "were proposed to work as advisers to the Urbara committees at different levels" but "there was hardly any participation of these people in the programme". It was the Collector who initiated and organised the programme.²⁰

This impression is confirmed by the evaluation report on 'Shah Jalaler Shyamal Sylhet', conducted by the same agency, the Department of Economics, University of Chittagong.²¹

In case of Mymensingh, the lack of involvement of the political elements and others are not analysed. This is in sharp contrast to the analysis made in case of Sylhet. Factionalism in local politics, skepticism on the part of leading people and indifference of the intelligensia, are all mentioned as positive impediments to the District programme and at the same time the Collector's role as an influencer and mobilizer of public opinion in favour of voluntary labour utilization strategy is clearly mentioned: "Through his patient process of persuasion, the Deputy Commissioner

19. Comilla Zilla Sabuj Karmashuchi, Op.cit., p.5 and 9.

20. Md. Sharif, A Report on Urbara Mymensingh, Rural Studies Project Department of Economics, Chittagong University, November, 1975, p.4.

21. Yunus and Islam, Shah Jalaler Shyamal Sylhet, Op.cit., pp.4-5.

was gradually gaining some support from important personalities and the people in general".²² If the evaluation report on Mymensingh programme or for that matter, other Districts, was done with same care and caution, it is likely that the factors responsible for what the critics of Swanirvar term paper work or lesser degree of success could have been identified.

The situation during the second phase of Swanirvar activity was that each District devised programmes suited to its own needs and circumstances. Everywhere it was the Collector who led the programme. Increase in food productivity was the principal aim. This was to be achieved by mobilization of local resources, human and material. Implicit in this objective was the affirmation of the principle of self-help. People had to be motivated to act upon this principle. The success of the programmes has to be judged in terms of their ability to motivate and enthuse people.

The Swanirvar activity as reflected in the development programmes of the Districts in Bangladesh under different slogans or titles underscores the importance of associating the Collectorial pattern in implementing the strategy for voluntary utilisation of labour in the rural areas. The leadership role of the Collector in the process of popular participation in development without grandiose plans based on cash inputs and imposed from the top was clearly established.²³ All that was needed was to harness the potentialities of the Collectorial pattern in a more organised and

22. Ibid., p.5.

23. M.A. Chasi, Special Secretary Swanirvar Division, Tour Reports Nos. 9 and 10. In these tour reports, M.A. Chasi reviews the progress of work done in Districts under Dacca Division.

co-ordinated manner than was possible during the aftermath of the devastating flood of 1974. In those days there was no room for sophisticated preparation and analysis of feasibility studies. The Collectors could not wait for policy decisions from the top. Evidently, no decision was made by the political authority despite the organisational outline given in the FFYPB for implementing the plan for voluntary utilisation of labour in the rural areas. The FFYPB recommended the setting up of a Labour Mobilisation Committee headed by the Prime Minister and an autonomous body "to organise and programme student labour".²⁴ The FFYPB further postulated that voluntary labour utilisation would only be possible "if our elite groups participate in the nation-building activities in their areas". It further recommended obligatory labour for rural development which implied that specific laws were to be promulgated to enforce this recommendation.²⁵

The trend of Swanirvar activity during phase II showed that those in political authority had neither the willingness nor the ability even to start the implementation process. The only cadre which could start the process and did, was the cadre of the Collectors. Collectors identified themselves with the people in a bid to motivate them with the ideology of mass participation in rural development. They were the only connecting link between the urban elite consisting of the political elements, including the socialist planners, and the rural poor.

The political authority represented by Awami League took no steps to create the "Labour Mobilisation Committee" at the

24. The FFYPB, Op.cit., pp.69-70.

25. Ibid., p.69.

national level as the planners had recommended. But the Collectors, who spearheaded the District programmes in 1974, created such Committees at all levels of administration. These Committees held the name of the slogan which a particular District has adopted for itself. Provision for representation in these Committees from outside the bureaucracy was made although active participation was lacking.²⁶ Whatever be the quantum of success, the steps taken by the Collectors served to create greater political awareness of the need to link the traditional pattern with the voluntary labour utilisation strategy despite the desire of the planners to keep the two apart. The future expansion of the programme, the width of its scope and intensity of operation depended wholly on the extent of involvement of the Collectorial pattern. This is the lesson which emerged from phase II of the Swanirvar movement.

Swanirvar Phase III: Swanirvar Bangladesh Programme

The sponsors of Swanirvar ideal were quick to realise the possibility of expanding the programme on a nation-wide scale in a more organised manner under one name instead of 19 different names for the 19 different Districts:

"All the projects were functioning more or less in an isolated manner. In view of their success and the enthusiasm which they had generated, it was felt that all these programmes should be co-ordinated and integrated under a well-knit national umbrella."²⁷

26. Yunus and Islam, Shah Jalaler Shyamal Sylhet, Op.cit., p.7.

27. M.A. Chasi, 'Self-Reliant Rural Bangladesh: Problems and Prospects', a paper read at the Second Annual Conference, Bangladesh Economic Association, March 15-18, 1976, (Mimeo), p.4.

The umbrella was provided following the first national conference on Swanirvar on September 24-25, 1975. In this conference held at Dacca, a decision was taken to adopt "Swanirvar" as the slogan of the movement for the whole of Bangladesh. Incidentally, this slogan, as we have seen, was the slogan or the title of the Dacca District development programme based on self-reliant strategy. The District development programmes thus preceded, did not follow, the national programme. A six-tier organisational structure was formed:

"The apex of the structure is the National Committee of Swanirvar Bangladesh, which is responsible for devising ways and means of co-ordinating and accelerating the pace of the Programme. The other tiers are located at village, Union, Thana, Sub-division and District levels. Each has a Committee of its own and each aims at self-sufficiency in its areas. Areas which have already become self-sufficient are to attempt increasing the yield further and achieve surplus."²⁸

What has been left unsaid is that, in view of the leadership provided by the Collector and his staff, the Committees from the District to Thana levels are all to be headed by the officers of the colonial pattern of field administration. The Collector is the Chairman of the District Swanirvar Committee, the SDO, of the Subdivisional Committee, the CO, of the Thana Committee. The members in these Committees were chosen from both officials and non-officials representing cross-section of people interested in development. At and below the Union level, the Committees were

28. Ibid., p.5.

headed by either a leading Swanirvar worker or the Chairman or Member of Union Parishad interested in Swanirvar work. The task of forming these Committees were left to the SDO and the CO. As in all Districts these Committees were already functioning under the different names which the Districts had adopted as the slogan for their development programmes in 1974, formation of Committees at different levels presented no difficulty. The foundation of the organisational structure was already there except for the national Committee.²⁹

GOVERNMENTAL RESPONSE TO SWANIRVAR AND THE COLLECTORAL PATTERN

In discussing this new mode of rural development, we have used the words "movement" and "programme" almost in the same breath. It would perhaps be appropriate to describe Swanirvar, at least during the first two phases of its activity, more as a movement than as a distinct programme for rural development. The programmatic content was no doubt inherent in the very slogan of the movement. But as things stood then, the primary stress was more in the direction of generating enthusiasm and arousing consciousness amongst the villagers for solving their own problems without outside help. Initially, the emphasis was on increased food production which was dictated by the circumstances of the time.³⁰

29. Based on the evaluation of reports of Swanirvar District Programmes. The details of organisational structure are dealt with in Comilla Zilla Sabuj Karmashuchi and the Chittagong University evaluation reports already referred to in citation 10 and 19 of this Chapter.

30. Based on evaluation reports of BARD and Chittagong University. See citation 10 and 19 of this Chapter.

The District development programmes taken up by different Collectors focussed on the multi-dimensional nature of the problems facing the rural society. In many Districts such as Sylhet and Dacca, stress was laid on family planning activity as part of the District programme although the slogan for self-sufficiency in food remained a constant factor. The subsequent attempt at forging the slowly expanding movement under the unified title of Swanirvar, followed by creation of Committees at different tiers of field administration, was done with the object of propagating its basic principles. This was sought to be achieved by organising work camps at least in one village in each Thana. The Collectoral pattern, specially the CO, had to bear the brunt of organising these camps under the overall supervision of the Collector. The holding of work camps beginning from October 1975 must be seen in the context of political change in the country. M.A. Chasi, one of the main sponsors of Swanirvar, was appointed Principal Secretary to the President following the end of Awami League rule in August, 1975. He quickly seized this opportunity to throw the full weight of the political executive behind the movement.

This gave Swanirvar "official" recognition in the later part of 1975.³¹ The Collectors and their staff were asked to organise

31. M.A. Chasi, 'A Case Study of Shawnirvar (Self-Reliance) Movement in Bangladesh', p.3, (Mimeo). This is a paper consisting of 8 pages only, prepared for presentation at the Fourth Commonwealth Conference on Human Ecology and Development, Dacca, December 15, 1976. The paper contained a note to the effect that the views expressed in the paper "are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of the Government of Bangladesh".

work camps under a circular from the Secretary to President bearing No. Rash-(Econ) 76-75 dated October 8, 1975. They were made responsible for organising work camps within their respective jurisdictions. Participants in the work camp usually included Swanirvar workers, villagers and officers working at Thana, Subdivision and District levels.³²

This was followed by a steady stream of other circulars from the Principal Secretary to the President:

Memorandum No. Rash/Econ-1/6(1)/75-489(200) dated December 10, 1975.

This circular deals with the holding of Swanirvar work camps and draws attention to the earlier circular dated 8th October 1975. It is addressed to all Commissioners of Divisions, Collectors and SDOs. It sets forth the objectives of holding work camps as follows:

- * To facilitate village planning through programmes of action drawn up by the Swanirvar organisation;
- * To emphasize the concept of dignity of labour and create a sense of oneness between officials and rural leaders;
- * To enable the senior officers of the government to obtain first hand knowledge about rural problems.³³

It further lays down a number of guidelines for holding work camps in the light of the complaints received and puts

32. Based on official circulars and files of Collector's office.

33. At times, the senior officers working at the Divisional levels and the Secretariat also attended the work camps. Reference to the attendance is recorded in BARD evaluation reports on work camps.

stress on the fact that the camps should be organised in an unostentatious manner. The long list of guidelines then concludes with the hope that the Collector will pay particular attention to the instructions given in the circular and communicate the same to the Swanirvar workers and make efforts in implementing the basic objectives of the programme of action of the work camps.

Memorandum No. Rash/81/75-496(100) dated 15th December, 1975

This deals with the role of Swanirvar in augmenting food production. To facilitate the achievement of this objective, the Collectors are advised to ensure (a) purchase of food grains at a fair price from growers and (b) availability of agricultural inputs in time to the farmers. It calls upon the Collectors to utilise the Swanirvar committees for the purpose.³⁴

Memorandum No. Rash/82/75-General-497(100) dated 15th December, 1975

This circular, addressed to the Collector, deals with the role of Swanirvar committees in proper utilisation of funds under FFW.³⁵ The circular calls for utilisation of

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34. Purchase of food grains during winter months is an annual activity of the Ministry of Food which vests responsibility of purchase on the Collector. This is known as "Food Procurement Drive". Based on official circulars of the Ministry of Food maintained by the Collector's office.
 35. The physical achievements of FFW programme during 1976-77 included 1174 miles of re-excavated canals, 1078 miles of rural

(continued)

District Swanirvar Committee for looking after the work under FFW in the District on the ground that the ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation in its circular bearing No. 2-M-5/5/75/105(508) D.S., US AID dated 22nd November did not envisage formation of any Implementation Committee at the District level.³⁶ Although Relief ministry did lay down guide-lines for constituting Project Implementation Committees at Subdivisional, Thana and Union levels, this circular further laid down that every level, Swanirvar Committees would review the progress of work under FFW in their respective jurisdictions and extend all possible help for the speedy implementation of the projects. The Collector is called upon to specially supervise the implementation of schemes under RWP and FFW. He is required to record observations regarding the implementation of the schemes in the tour-diaries, Fortnightly Confidential Reports (FCR) and other reports sent to government from time to time.

The involvement of the government, as revealed from these circulars, shows the gradual but steady bureaucratization of rural development efforts under the name of Swanirvar. The major

35. roads and 1908 miles of embankments. For details see, Bangladesh Economic Survey, 1977-78, ministry of Finance, Government of Bangladesh, p.235. The overall responsibility for utilisation of food aid under the programme is that of the Collector.

36. Explained in Chapter III, pp.176-177.

element in this effort at bureaucratization is the reliance on the traditional apparatus. The Collector remains the king-pin of the whole gamut of activities, governmental or otherwise, designed to improve the conditions of rural life. This reliance was natural when seen against the background of the trend of Swanirvar movement which we have thus far discussed. The organised efforts of the Collectors in the Districts to combat food deficit in the wake of 1974 flood helped in awakening consciousness of the rural people to respond to their own problems. This response was the result of their perception of the fact that the Collector was the symbol of government. To them, involvement of the Collector meant the involvement of the government because they are unable to distinguish the various lines of departmental authority in isolated parts.

The government, on the other hand, just could not say that the involvement of the Collector and his machinery would be a negation of the principle of Swanirvar if abstractly conceived. The beginning of Swanirvar was not the result of government policy. The government recognised that during 1974 flood, it was the Collector who organised food production programmes locally even in the absence of any directive from the President's Secretariat or any other ministry. The results achieved in one District worked as an inspiration and challenge to another District which immediately took steps to organise programmes on similar lines with such variations as were considered desirable from the stand-point of local conditions. The sponsors of Swanirvar ideal knew it as well as the government that any romantic view of the Swanirvar being organised independently of the Collectorial pattern would not carry the programme very far.³⁷

37. Based on interview with Swanirvar workers, elected members of

Work Camps, The Collectoral Pattern and the Villagers' Response to Swanirvar

According to the guide-lines issued by the President's Secretariat, initially one village in each of the 19 Districts was selected for holding work camps. The intention was to cover one village in each Thana in phases. By the end of April 1976, as many as 11 villages were covered in five Districts of Chittagong Division. BARD was entrusted with the task of preparing evaluation reports on these 11 work camps. The report, prepared in Bengali, was published in June, 1976.³⁸ It contains separate reports on the work camps with general observations relating to the Committees at the village level, meetings thereof, organisation and management of work camps, co-ordination, village co-operatives, popular participation in project implementation and other ancillary matters.

The report stated that the work camps were organised by the local administration in association with the local people. The degree of participation by the officials in organising the camps appears to be greater than that of the local people or Swanirvar workers. In some cases, officials of the Collectoral pattern had to spend two to three days on the preparatory work relating to the holding of the camps and played commendable role in organising the camps.³⁹

The report contains the response of the villagers with regard to the:

37. Union Parishad and senior government officials including

Collectors involved in the programme in 1974.

38. Swanirvar Karmashibir, Op.cit., Preface to the evaluation report.

39. Ibid., p.7, 23,38,51,56,61.

- * idea of Swanirvar;
- * decisions taken in the camps;
- * way of implementing the decisions;
- * persons involved in preparing the agenda of the work camps;
- * way in which the villagers were benefitted by the presence of officials.

The response recorded in the evaluation report of BARD shows that 60% of the respondents felt that the decisions taken in the camps were to be implemented through the collective efforts of the villagers while 75% of the respondents felt that the SDO, the CO and the Chairmen of Union Parishads implemented the programme of action of the work camps. The villagers viewed the presence of officers as a contributory factor in the achievement of the goals of Swanirvar. 65% of the respondents felt that the officers, by their presence, had encouraged them to be self-reliant, 25% felt that their presence had fostered friendly spirit between the officers and the villagers while 10% felt that the officers had helped them by their advice.⁴⁰

In February 1976, Dr. Mustafizur Rahman, Mymensingh Agricultural University, prepared an evaluation report on 8 out of 43 Swanirvar villages in Mymensingh District and the work camps held therein. The summary of the report, in Bengali, made by the evaluator, was circulated to all Collectors by the ministry of Agriculture on April 30, 1976. The evaluation report is based on the personal interview of its author with the various officers working at the District level as well as the Swanirvar workers and villagers of the 8 villages representing different parts of the

40. Ibid., pp.9-10.

District.⁴¹ As regards the role of the Collectoral pattern in organising and strengthening the movement for self-reliance, the evaluator comes to the following finding:

"I am of the view that except the Collector and his staff, the Subdivisional Agricultural Officer (SDAO) and the Thana Family Planning Officer (TFPO), there is need for adequate motivation of officers of other departments and for their active participation in the programme."⁴²

The responses of the villagers on different aspects of Swanirvar and its relationship with the Collectoral pattern are shown in Tables 4.1 to 4.5. *

TABLE 4.1

MEANING OF SWANIRVAR

<u>OPINION</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS</u>
TO BE SELF-RELIANT WITHOUT DEPENDING ON ANYBODY, SEEKING GOVERNMENT HELP IF NECESSARY	80.66
NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT BY DOING EVERYTHING ON SELF-HELP BASIS	14.58
SELF-RELIANCE	<u>4.76</u>
	100.00

41. Mustafizur Rahman, 'Mulayan-Mymensingh District; Urbara Mymensingh Karmashuchi', (in Bengali, meaning Evaluation Report On Urban Mymensingh Programme), (Mimeo). Urbara is the title of the District Development Programme. Urbara means Fertile.

42. Mustafizur Rahman, Ibid., p.1.

* Tables 4.1 to 4.5 are based on Mustafizur Rahman.

TABLE 4.2

BEHAVIOUR OF THE OFFICERS IN WORK CAMPS
TOWARDS THE VILLAGERS

<u>OPINION</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS</u>
BEHAVED WELL	65.51
GAVE VALUABLE ADVICE, ENCOURAGEMENT, CO-OPERATION AND WORKED SINCERELY	<u>34.49</u>
	100.00

TABLE 4.3

THE WAYS IN WHICH OFFICIAL PRESENCE HELPED THE VILLAGERS

<u>OPINION</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>
OFFICIALS HELPED IN DOING THINGS WELL, IN COLLECTING MATERIALS, IN SUPERVISION, AND IN PROVIDING INSPIRATION	71.42
HELPED IN DISSEMINATING KNOWLEDGE, ADVISING AND COUNSELLING AND GUIDANCE	<u>28.58</u>
	100.00

TABLE 4.4

THE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PREPARING PROGRAMME IN WORK CAMPS

<u>OPINION</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS</u>
COLLECTOR AND HIS STAFF AND UP CHAIRMEN TOOK THE INITIATIVE	72.85
COMBINED EFFORTS OF OFFICIALS AND PEOPLE	14.28
NOT RESPONDED/NOT KNOWN	<u>12.87</u>
	100.00

TABLE 4.5

THE PERSONS WHO PRESIDED OVER WORK CAMP MEETINGS

<u>OPINION</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS</u>
COLLECTOR AND HIS STAFF AND OTHER OFFICERS	68.18
LOCAL VILLAGE LEADERS	18.18
NOT RESPONDED/NOT KNOWN	<u>13.64</u>
	100.00

It is important to fully comprehend the villagers' response to the process of rural development based on the slogan of Swanirvar. This is essential to an unbiased understanding of the role of the Collector and the societal context in which he operates. The presence of officials is looked upon with favour by the villagers. Their attendance leads to encouragement, help, in better rapport between the villagers and officials. This is established by the evaluation report of BARD as well as that of Mymensingh Agricultural University. Apart from organisation and management of work camps, the officers of the Collectoral pattern and the Chairmen of Union Parishads played a key role in drawing up plan of action for village development.

This is in sharp contrast with the commonplace view that the bureaucracy is alienated from the people and hence a retarding factor in development. The sweeping generalisation regarding alienation of the field administrative system merely on the ground that it is a product of colonial times may suit a political demagogue but it is least expected from national planners. The

question is whether the villagers look on the field administrative system as an impediment to participatory development. Also whether it is practicable to organise and enthuse people without bureaucratic involvement in the societal context of Bangladesh.

The trend of Swanirvar movement in Bangladesh has provided answers which are significantly different from the assumptions that are found in the existing literature of field administration. If planning is essentially a political document for induced change in the socio-economic system, its implementation is largely dependent on the administrative system. This dependence, in case of Bangladesh, is accentuated by the societal context of scarce resources, absence of stable political process for organising the task of development and cultural barriers to development.⁴³ This implies that it is imperative to expand the capabilities of the administrative system rather than summarily reject it as out of date and incapable of meeting the requirement of development.

BUREAUCRATIZATION OF SWANIRVAR AND THE COLLECTOR'S ROLE IN
MANAGEMENT OF CONFLICT IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The involvement of the President's Secretariat in strengthening Swanirvar movement was an attempt at bureaucratization of what was abstractly conceived to be a spontaneous popular movement. This attempt was the natural and logical outcome of the leadership

43. The FFYPB envisaged a total plan outlay of TK.44,500 million of which TK.18000 million, nearly 40% of the Plan outlay, was to be from external capital inflow. 75% of the population is below poverty line and per capita income is around US\$90. Based on BBS, 1979, pp.7-8. The principal cultural barrier is

(continued)

role of the Collector in the process of rural development based on the slogan of Swanirvar rather than an attempt at thwarting popular initiative. It was a step towards fostering further popular involvement and sustaining it. There was basically no conflict between popular enthusiasm for development and the leadership role of the Collector. The national initiative followed after sufficient popular enthusiasm has been generated by the involvement of the Collectorial pattern. This implies that "development from below", however attractive as a theory, was something which had to be achieved in the context of socio-political and economic realities of Bangladesh. While the sponsors of Swanirvar movement, in their speeches and writings, tenaciously clung to the principle that Swanirvar implies the spirit of self-reliance without any dependence of outside help, the actual process of implementation showed how nebulous was this idea and that it was absurd to pursue this with rigidity.⁴⁴

Apart from the fact that District development programmes organised by the Collectors were themselves a negation of the idea of

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43. fatalism which is part of the villagers' value-system. This is responsible for creating an attitude of dependence on government for all help and relief. For details see, S.M. Hafeez Zaidi, The Village Culture in Transition: A Study of East Pakistan Rural Society, East-West Centre Press, Honolulu, 1970. Swanirvar is basically an attempt to break this cultural barrier.
44. Given the fact that 75% of the population lives below poverty line with a psychological dependence on government aid, it would be impossible to motivate them to work without some element of material incentive.

not depending on outside help, the holding of work camps also needed financial help from the Collector and his staff.⁴⁵ When we speak of Swanirvar Bangladesh, we must bear this reality in mind. Similarly, increased food production could not have occurred in a vacuum. It depended primarily on the government's ability to ensure timely supply of agricultural inputs and extension services.

The range of governmental effectiveness in terms of meeting the needs of the peasant society in Bangladesh was limited and vitiated further by time-consuming processes of planning, feasibility studies, approval and allocation of funds. It was imperative for the Collector to organise popular initiative locally rather than get delayed in lengthy bureaucratic correspondence. The District development programme of 1974 organised by the Collectors was a manifestation of their spirited response to meet local emergencies by generating popular enthusiasm and initiative through organisational links which combined popular participation and bureaucratic guidance and help. The organisational links through Committees from village to District level provided the basis for the future organisation of Swanirvar as a national movement.

Swanirvar Local Programmes which preceded the District development programmes in a few isolated pockets failed to generate adequate enthusiasm because they lacked sound organisational base. There were also cases of misuse of funds and lack of social trust between and among the organisers.⁴⁶ The Collector's leadership in the subsequent phase acted as a stabilising factor as regards organisation, social trust and timely availability of inputs. The

45. Swanirvar Karmashibir, Op.cit., p.84.

46. Hamid, Political Economy, Op.cit., p.207.

involvement of the President's Secretariat helped in giving further momentum to the process of achieving the ideal of Swanirvar whose chief sponsor, M.A. Chasi, was the one to bring in the support of the national government. It is idle to speculate what would have been the fate of Swanirvar had the national government not got involved. The position of the Collector as the agent of change was clearly established and recognised. This was a recognition of his role as a mobilizer of rural public opinion in favour of a process of development based on the combined efforts of the Collectoral pattern and the local people. The stability-supporting role of the Collector, political role in Fesler's terms, thus gets an altogether different dimension.⁴⁷

The recognition of the Collector's political role in evocating popular enthusiasm for development left many questions unresolved not the least of which was the fundamental question of conflicts in rural institutions. The circulars from the President's Secretariat were in the nature of expectations by the government that the Collectors would provide leadership to disseminate the idea of Swanirvar within their respective jurisdictions. This was so because Swanirvar, theoretically at least, was a voluntary movement despite the fact that its continuation depended on the drive and initiative of the Collectors. This somewhat ambiguous nature of Swanirvar ended when it was merged with the national administrative system by the end of 1975. This occurred in September, 1975 and the consequent transfer of M.A. Chasi to the ministry of Agriculture as Special Secretary in charge of Swanirvar Division which was newly

47. Reference is to Fesler's views in the introductory part of the dissertation.

created for the purpose.⁴⁸ The circulars and directives henceforth came to be issued from the Swanirvar Division.

At issue was not whether the Swanirvar Division as part of a regular government department would be more effective, but its relationship with other development ministries, their affiliated agencies and the National Swanirvar Committee. The primary purpose behind the creation of this Committee was to co-ordinate a nationwide programme and formulate basic objectives in the light of the experiences gained during the past years. With the steady flow of circulars and directives from the President's Secretariat and the consequent creation of a separate Division in the ministry of Agriculture, the "non-official" character was totally lost however much the sponsors of Swanirvar might claim it to be "non-official", "non-partisan" and "non-political".⁴⁹ Initially it was "non-official" to the extent that the top political executive was not involved in it. It was at the same time "official" to the extent that the chief representative of the government, the Collector, was involved in it. This involvement was not the result of a conscious government policy. It was a response to meet local emergency. This implies that the Collector's position as a field administrator transcended normal bureaucratic procedures, acting merely as an agency for implementing government policy. He has a large share in shaping governmental policies with regard to rural development.

48. Chasi was appointed Special Secretary under Establishment Division Notification No. ED1AI-5/75-972 dated 18th September, 1975.

49. M.A. Chasi, 'Self-Reliant Rural Bangladesh: Problems and Prospects', Op.cit., p.5.

The bureaucratization of Swanirvar through its merger with the national administrative system at the top did not strengthen the Collector's role. However it added to his personal responsibility in securing the services of officers at various levels for Swanirvar activity. He was placed in the delicate position of persuading the officials of diverse departments to pay attention to the propagation of Swanirvar ideal in addition to their normal duties. This was not easy to achieve. Ministerial lines of control in Bangladesh create rigid adherence to departmental instructions. The official instructions of the Swanirvar Division in the ministry of Agriculture would have little effect on the officers working under a different ministry. This meant reappearance of the old issue of narrow departmentalism of V-AID days. The only difference was that the Collector was more directly involved in Swanirvar than in V-AID.⁵⁰

Of more fundamental significance than this was the fact that there was (a) ambiguity in the relationship between the elected local councils at Thana and Union levels and the Swanirvar Committees and (b) inherent conflict between the programme-objectives of development ministries and the ideal of Swanirvar. The important question involved in (a) was whether the Swanirvar Committees at Thana and Union levels were to supersede the elected local councils in so far as their co-ordinative role in development was concerned.

The circulars issued by the President's Secretariat calling upon the Swanirvar Committees to oversee the performance of programmes under RWP and FFW, to which we have referred, implied that they were to take over the co-ordinative functions of Thana and

50. This has been discussed in Chapter II.

Union Parishads. Without a clear definition of the role of local councils and Swanirvar Committees with regard to the programmes of rural development and rural administration, there were bound to be clashes and conflicts. These did not assume severe forms due mainly to the fact that the overall responsibility of co-ordination of development programmes was still with the Collector.⁵¹

Simultaneously with this, the question of reconciling and/or integrating the programme-objectives of development ministries with those of Swanirvar had also to be resolved.

This latter aspect assumed greater importance in view of the fact that, with some of the programmes of individual ministries such as the RWP and the FFW, the basic philosophy of Swanirvar clashed. The proponents of Swanirvar would argue that since both these regular programmes provided for payment in cash and in kind, the spirit of the Swanirvar programme would be negated. The concerned ministries could argue that many of their programmes could not be implemented due to the impression created amongst the rural labour-force that they were expected to work gratis to help achieve the ideal of Swanirvar. Without a clear decision from the government, the Collector did face difficulty in resolving the question. The Collector just could not go to one village and exhort the people to complete a project by voluntary labour and then to another village to take up a project under the RWP or FFW. As in the past, the inertia of the Centre was compensated by the local initiative of the

51. Collector's role as a co-ordinator of development programmes in the District has been discussed in Chapter II. The same system continued after the emergence of Bangladesh as shown in Chapter III, pp.153-177.

Collector. The precedent in this regard was already there.

The District development programmes of 1974 involved pooling of resources from diverse sources to supplement voluntary labour in a particular project. The Collector worked on the same principle. Decisions were taken locally that major part of the earth work would be done under voluntary labour and the rest under funds or wheat from the RWP or FFW allocations. But the process was not easy. Besides the fact that it could lead to possible misuse of funds and corruption, it could and did lead to conflicting claims/counter claims between Swanirvar Division and other ministries.⁵² Some of the Collectors impressed upon the government of the need to lay down specific policy on this issue as well as on the issue of the role of the local government vis a vis the Swanirvar Committees. This is noticed in Tour Report No. 10 of the Special Secretary of Swanirvar Division.

The Report is entitled "Impressions on Swanirvar Activities". It contains suggestions of different Collectors on these problems:

"The conflict between modern and indigenous technology needs to be resolved at the national policy planning level if mass mobilisation and use of indigenous resources is to be made on a large scale. The conflict

52. Based on interviews with the Collectors. A typical case in Dacca District is the construction of Munshiganj-Narayanganj Road. This is a Zilla Board Road. The earthwork of the road was paid for by wheat received under FWP in 1976-77 and also by voluntary labour. The bridges on the road was constructed by RWP grants.

between the relief and grant approach and self-help approach should also be resolved at the national planning level for providing a strong basis for self-reliant efforts throughout the nation."⁵³

This suggestion came from the Collector of Mymensingh. Similarly, suggestion from the Collector of Dacca emphasized the need for increasing the powers and authority of Union Parishads. It was suggested that the Union level government functionaries should be required to report on their activities to the Union Parishad and further that the Union Parishads should be empowered to inspect primary shcools within their respective jurisdiction.⁵⁴ Tour Report No. 10 concludes with as many as eight suggestions from the Special Secretary to the Collectors as well as to different ministries and the Planning Commission. None of his suggestions contain anything with regard to the removal of conflict between the objectives of development ministries and those of Swanirvar. The suggestions call for increasing involvement of the Collectoral pattern in Swanirvar work. It calls upon the Collector and his staff to exhort people to use "What we have and not what we want" and to limit the discussion in Swanirvar forums to "What we can do ourselves and not what others can do for us".⁵⁵ The Report also suggests that to "ensure follow-up accountability, each District/Subdivisional official should be

53. Tour Report No. 10 of Special Secretary, Swanirvar Division, p.9. The report was circulated to all Collectors under Swanirvar Division's Memorandum No. 37(217) dated 24th October, 1976.

54. Ibid., p.10.

55. Ibid., p.11.

assigned only one Shownirvar village which he should visit, on a fixed day, once a month during the course of his normal departmental duties. He should report on his village in the District/Subdivision Shownirvar meetings to be held, on fixed day, once a month."⁵⁶

In respect of Thana, it suggests that "each Thana official should be given charge of a Union and a village in that Union. He should attend his Union Parishad meetings on the date fixed for it and visit the village the same day. He should take appropriate action to solve their problems in co-operation with his colleagues and report on them to the Thana Co-ordination Committee and later to Thana Parishad."⁵⁷

This indicates that the roles of the existing village and Thana level Shownirvar Committees are to be relegated to a position of minor importance as far as co-ordination is concerned. The burden of deploying the District and Thana level officials fell, as in the past, on the Collector.⁵⁸

The inability to work out a cohesive and co-ordinated plan of action at the policy planning level during the years 1975-76 meant that the integration of various programmes and resolution of conflict were left entirely at the hands of the Collector. This was bound to be so in a system where the only agency to ensure popular participation, animate the rural people to organise and mobilize local resources was that of the Collector. It was for the Collector to point out conflict in programme-objectives, duplication and overlapping of functions. It was left to the Collector again to

56. Ibid., p.11.

57. Ibid., p.11.

58. Ibid., p.12.

reduce duplication and resolve conflicts.

The only positive consequence of this confusion was that it led to a more pragmatic approach with regard to the formulation of objectives of Swanirvar. These objectives, although only enunciated privately by M.A. Chasi, reflect the actual implementation process of Swanirvar in the Districts, for example two out of the twelve objectives listed by M.A. Chasi are:

- * Introduction of a matching principle in development financing between the people and the government;
- * Emphasis on the role of officials as partners in development and "their additional role as 'committed' citizens of the country."⁵⁹

This "unofficial" statement on the system of "matching principle of development financing between the people and the government" merely indicated what was already decided locally by the Collectors. Similarly, the way to the concept of partnership between the people and officials was already shown by the leadership role of the Collector in Swanirvar programme. There was nothing innovative about them. The question of relationship between Thana and Union Parishads and Swanirvar Committees at these levels did not find any mention in the list of objectives "unofficially" formulated in 1976. There was only a vague reference that Swanirvar would aim at developing "in due course, a model of decentralised and democratic administration through full participation of all groups of people in their own development".⁶⁰

The concept of "a decentralised and democratic

59. M.A. Chasi, 'A Case Study of Swanirvar (Self-Reliance) Movement in Bangladesh', Op.cit., p.5.

60. Ibid., p.5.

administration" is linked to elected local councils at all levels, from village to District and to a clear definition of their role in the administration of rural development programmes. Paradoxically, this question was never openly admitted by the proponents of Swanirvar ideal. This was so despite the fact that elected Chairmen and Members of Union Parishads in all Districts were associated by the Collectors in Swanirvar activity.⁶¹

At the national level, no attempt was made to emphasize the role of elected local government institutions in the process of realizing the objectives of Swanirvar although they were associated, in actual process of implementation. This association has been due, as has been shown in Chapter III, to the close and intimate relationship between the Collectorial pattern and the elected local councils. There was thus a big gap between what was perceived to be the objective of Swanirvar at the top end of the hierarchy and what was actually being done at the bottom end.

This gap is hard to explain. The proponents of Swanirvar did realise the indispensability of the Collector's involvement in activating the Swanirvar programme but consciously or unconsciously, they avoided recognition of the importance of the role of elected councils in Swanirvar.⁶² One explanation offered is that Swanirvar was a movement rather than a concrete programme of action. Its principal aim was to bring about an attitudinal change in the value-

61. Based on the discussion with the Collectors and Swanirvar workers including Chairmen and Members of Union Parishads.

62. Based on the discussion in one of the meetings of National Swanirvar Committee which the author attended as a Member in 1976.

system of the peasant society, generate self-confidence in their own abilities to do things for themselves without dependence on outside help. This view loses much of its force because Swanirvar in 1976 came to include objectives which envisioned restructuring of planning, co-ordinative and implementative mechanism with regard to rural development programmes at and below the District level.⁶³

SWANIRVAR TO MASS PARTICIPATION: THE INTEGRATION OF UNION PARISHAD WITH SWANIRVAR PROGRAMME

This gap could only be bridged by political will at the national level. Apart from the growing capability of the Collectoral pattern to enthuse the rural society for voluntary participation in rural development work during the year 1977, two events helped to focus national policy on the role of the elected councils in Swanirvar. One of these was the election to Union Parishad in December 1976 and the other was the assumption of the office of CMLA by General Ziaur Rahman. Zia later assumed the office of President on April 21, 1977. Zia made public statements to the effect that the government was determined to strengthen the Union Parishads so as to make them effective units of local government and local administration.

Soon after Zia became CMLA, a National Conference of the newly elected Chairmen of Union Parishads was held at Dacca extending over a period of ten days. Zia addressed the inaugural session of the Conference:

[He] said that the Union Parishad was going to be the

63. M.A. Chasi, 'A Case Study of Shawmirvar (Self-Reliance)

Movement in Bangladesh', Op.cit., pp.4-5.

centre of all-out economic activities and development efforts. The Government have decided that the future economic and administrative system of the country will be developed, taking the village as the base.... In the agricultural sector, our aim should be to make every village and union self-sufficient in food.... If we come forward with real sympathy, the people will heartily respond. They have already proved this through their participation in different labour-intensive projects..."⁶⁴

The reference made to people's participation in development implied the Swanirvar activities that were being organised in different Districts under the leadership of the Collectors. While retaining the initial slogan of self-reliance as propagated by the Swanirvar programme and its emphasis on increased food production, Zia sought formally to integrate the Union Parishad with Swanirvar by highlighting the role of Union Parishad Members and Chairmen in the process of rural development based on voluntary mobilisation of local resources. In his address to the first National Conference and also in his subsequent address to the nation on April 30, 1977, he stressed the need for self-help as a strategy to accelerate the process of rural development in Bangladesh.⁶⁵ At the same time, he never failed to mention the role

64. Proceedings of the National Conference of the Newly Elected Chairmen of the Union Parishads, Ministry of Land Administration, Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives, pp.1-3.

65. Zia's address to the nation on April 30, 1977, is his first ever policy announcement on rural development. It is known as 19-point programme as it contains 19 points covering almost all

of the local government institutions as an agency for the implementation of the strategy. His emphasis on village-based organisations was a continuation of the Swanirvar slogan. Yet it was not the existing Swanirvar village Committees that he appealed to and placed reliance on for attaining the objective of food production.

This impression is confirmed by his appeal, to Union Parishad Chairmen, to constitute village food production Committees. The existing village Swanirvar Committees were already there in those villages taken up under Swanirvar programme with the future programme of further expansion for attaining self-sufficiency in food. Yet the village food production Committees were separately constituted by the Agriculture Division of the ministry of Agriculture and not by the Swanirvar Division.⁶⁶ Similarly, Zia called for organising village defence Committees at village and unions levels. This was done under instructions from the ministry of Home Affairs although the "unofficial" list of objectives of Swanirvar as advocated by M.A. Chasi included introduction of a local security system through village defence

65. aspects of rural life. The English version of the speech was officially issued to the news media by the Press Information Department of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting as a handout bearing no. 719.

66. The Agriculture Division of the Ministry of Agriculture took initiative in constituting village production Committees. The Secretary Agriculture Division wrote a D.O. letter to all the Collectors bearing No. Agri./XVII/Food-1/77/1 dated 31st March 1977. The Collectors were requested to form village food production Committees within their respective jurisdiction.

and justice Committees.⁶⁷ The departmental compartmentalisation at the top was compensated by the involvement of the Collector at the bottom. The individual ministries found a common point of contact in the office of the Collector to implement its own policies in the light of Presidential directive.

The Presidential directive to utilise the elected Union Parishads in rural development based on Swanirvar strategy implied that their active participation was now a matter of policy decided by the top political executive. As a result of this, M.A. Chasi now openly came out calling for support from the elected Chairmen for the first time. In his own address to the elected Chairmen at the First National Conference, M.A. Chasi appealed to them to come forward in fulfilling their "historic" role in nation-building efforts.⁶⁸ He called their attention to chapter 9 of the Union

67. M.A. Chasi, 'A Case Study of Shannirvar (Self-reliance) Movement in Bangladesh', Op.cit., p.5. In actual implementation of the concept of a local security system, the ministry of Home Affairs sent down instructions to the Collectors to form Village Defence Committees.

68. M.A. Chasi, 'Jatiyo Swadhinata O Sarbovoumetter Prekheete Swanirvar Andolan O Union Parishader Bhumika' (a speech in Bengali meaning Swanirvar movement in the Perspective of National Independence and Sovereignty and the Role of Union Parishad), pp.1-3. This printed speech was read out by M.A. Chasi in the first National Conference of the Newly Elected Chairmen of Union Parishads. The author was present at the Conference. It is significant that none of Chasi's earlier writings make any reference to this aspect.

Parishad Training Manual, prepared in April, 1977 by the ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, which lays down the procedure for constitution of village Swanirvar Committees.⁶⁹ The problem of integration was thus "officially" solved at the national level. This was fully in consonance with the actual conditions in the Districts.

It may be argued whether this was necessary when in the implementation of projects, the Chairmen and Members of Union Parishads were already involved. This argument is likely to be made by an outsider not familiar with the rural society of Bangladesh, its value-system and culture. It was necessary in a society which, being totally dependent on governmental intervention to improve its quality of life, views government as superior to individuals, accepts control and direction as necessary for the social system.⁷⁰ It was also necessary psychologically, to prepare the elected village leaders on a nation-wide scale to act with full team-spirit for fostering the spirit of self-help. The emphasis on their role in the participatory process of development combining governmental help and guidance with voluntary labour was necessary. It created greater awareness in rural society as a whole of their own responsibility. It was necessary to institutionalise the effervescence of the spirit of self-help generated by bureaucratic

69. Government of Bangladesh, Union Parishad Prashikhan Manual (in Bengali meaning Union Parishad Training Manual), 1977, ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, pp.120-147.

70. Based on interview with the villagers. This is also supported by Zaidi's study to which we have referred in citation 43 of this Chapter.

response to development and ensure its diffusion to the social order on a much wider scale than could be done in phases by the Swanirvar villages.⁷¹

The immediate impetus to this integration was the successful completion of Ulashi-Jadunathpur project in Jessore District in April, 1977.⁷² The completion of this project, under the leadership of the Collector, led to a firm affirmation, by the President, of the principle of mass mobilization strategy:

"I had the opportunity to participate in the concluding ceremony today of the Ulashi-Jadunathpur-Betna river excavation project in the district of Jessore. This splendid example of voluntary labour has opened up vistas of new possibilities in our national development. In recognition of this great endeavour of the people, we have declared this locality as the first large self-reliant area of the country. Such voluntary programmes will be our main basis in the field of agriculture and rural development."⁷³

71. Circular No.S-1/IU-4/78/73(83) dated February 17, 1978 issued by the ministry of Local Government, Rural Development to all Collectors. This circular claims that as of February 1978, there were "nearly 4000 such Swanirvar Villages in the Country" as against the total number of 64,000 villages.

72. This is based on the repeated emphasis by Zia on the need to organise mass participation schemes on the lines of Ulashi-Jadunathpur project. Chapter V contains a case study of this project.

73. Zia's address to the nation on April 30, 1977.

With the successful completion of Ulashi-Jadunathpur project, the rural development process based on voluntary labour mobilization strategy received greater momentum and strength.

Instead of giving the task of formulating policies, co-ordination and direction of the nation-wide programme to the existing Swanirvar Division or the ministry of Rural Development, Zia decided that the Cabinet Division, which works directly under the President, should create a special unit to undertake the task of organising the nation-wide programme. This was more in line with Zia's personal commitment to the strategy and was probably a means of resolving the problem of inter-ministerial co-ordination arising out of rigid adherence to departmental instructions. The responsibility for preparation and execution of the projects under what came to be known as mass participation programme was given to the Collector. He was also asked to give necessary leadership and organize the whole work. This view of the President was communicated to all Collectors by the Cabinet Division under its Circular No. Ex-Cell-2/77-C.S. 69(1000) dated 25th May, 1977. The circular is given at Appendix 'A'.

The Collectors all over Bangladesh responded to this task for mobilization of voluntary labour which was, for the first time, formally assigned to them by the government. The daily newspapers carried the news of mass participation schemes in various Districts. Bangladesh Observer reported:

"Ulashi type schemes ---- at least one in each of the 442 police stations in the country ---- have generated unprecedented enthusiasm among the people to develop their respective areas by themselves, reports BSS.

In each of the schemes, people ---- students, teachers,

peasants, government and non-government officials, traders, doctors, housewives, educationists ---- volunteer their labour, if not more, at least one-third of the total man-days required for its timely completion"....⁷⁴

The same report contained news of as many as five Districts undertaking similar schemes.

(i) FARIDPUR

"According to report, 28 Ulashi-type schemes under thana irrigation programmes based primarily on the voluntary service and donation from local beneficiaries are being executed in Faridpur.... The schemes, eight in sadar subdivision, five in Madaripur, seven in Shariatpur, three in Goalundo and five in Gopalganj subdivision include excavation and reexcavation of canal and rivers, construction of embankment and road and reformation of tanks."

(ii) BOGRA

"Twenty eight schemes are being executed in Bogra with government allocation of about 8000 maunds of wheat and the voluntary participation of the people Two thousand people participated in the work on Korear Jan Khal under Chapinagar Union Parishad on its inaugural day on Monday. The Additional Deputy Commissioner (Dev) performed the spade work. Over 1000 people from all walks of life joined the Subdivisional Officer when he

74. Bangladesh Observer, January 30, 1978.

formally inaugurated the reexcavation work of the four-mile long Rampur-Gholagari canal recently. The canal will provide irrigational facilities for land in Rampur, Ananthazar, Bhatojali, Boronamari and Malighacha villages in the Subdivision."

(iii) SYLHET

"Of the schemes, the work for the reexcavation of Shemarkhal-cum Gopat was inaugurated by the Additional Deputy Commissioner (Dev) recently. This one-mile long canal scheme in Golapganj police station involves 6,33,000 cft of earthwork. About 500 acres of land will be benefitted by the scheme. Five thousand people worked for the construction of embankment on the Sarker Bazar Khal in Nabiganj police station. The embankment will save crops in the area from the overflow of the river Manu and Kushiara."

(iv) MYMENSINGH

"The work on the reexcavation of Banarer Khal in Shripur Union under Jamalpur thana was formally inaugurated by the Additional Deputy Commissioner yesterday. The allocation for the scheme is Taka 51,000 of which Taka 17,000 have been sanctioned by the government and the rest will be borne by the direct beneficiaries and by general public in terms of their labour. The scheme will provide irrigation facilities to 400 acres of land."

(v) DACCA

"The Aricha-Ichamati irrigation project under Manikganj

subdivision in Dacca is being implemented with the voluntary participation of the people. According to official source, 2000 acres of land will be getting irrigation facilities from the scheme. On the inaugural day, students, teachers, peasants and officials participated in the work with the Deputy Commissioner of Dacca. An additional one lakh maunds of food grains will be produced in the command area of the scheme. Forty five power pumps will be installed in the area for irrigation purposes."

The repeated reference to Ulashi-type schemes by the news media and the new terminology of mass participation used by the government in the circular of the Cabinet Division, signify a totally new dimension to the Swanirvar strategy. Simultaneously with this nation-wide efforts at developing the rural areas through the execution of voluntary labour-intensive projects, the Collectoral pattern was engaged in developing model villages and village governments. The question of developing village governments as part of the existing machinery of local government attracted the attention of the Collectoral pattern in a number of Districts.

The first initiative to develop a village government came from the Collector of Kushtia during the second half of 1977. This came to be known as "Kushtia Model". The second initiative was taken in Gaibandha Subdivision of Rangpur District in January, 1978. This came to be known as "Sadullahour Model" after the name of the experimental village. These were followed in few other Districts such as Tangail and Mymensingh. An outline of these models, based respectively on the views of the Collector of Kustia and SDO, Gaibandha, were circulated to all Collectors by the ministry of Local

Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives under its Memorandum No. S-1/IV-4/78/75(83), dated February 17, 1978. It is not necessary to go into the details of these models as these are still in experimental stage. In essence, the model sought to be developed is more or less similar to the village panchayats of India although it is yet to take definite shape. This village-based government has come to be known as "Gram Sarker", while the one at the Union level has come to be known as "Union Sarker".⁷⁵ The experimental stage of these developments including the participatory process of development as shown by the Ulashi-Jadunathpur project, is clearly recognised by the two-year hard-core plan of Bangladesh:

"Several models of rural development such as works programme, self-help projects, Gram Sarker, Swanirvar, mass participation with voluntary labour, etc., are being tried in search of a particular institutional arrangements suitable for Bangladesh. These experiments may not yield a unique model for rural development, but one or two workable models and tentative hypotheses for co-ordinated rural development may emerge soon, which might be used to provide a 'big push' for rural development in the Second Five Year Plan..... Institutional arrangements would be increasingly geared to the requirement of using local resources and mass mobilisation. The re-vitalised local government bodies with the wide power and

75. Union O Gram Sarker (in Bengali meaning Union and Village Government), Swainirvar Bangladesh, January, 1978. Swanirvar Bangladesh is the central office of Swanirvar located at Dacca.

responsibilities would greatly contribute to this end.

Improvement and co-ordination among various rural institutions, the newly emerging village level organisation, Village Parishad/Assembly/Gram Sarker and the continued support of Thana and District level administration would also play an important role in mass mobilisation and use of local resources."⁷⁶

The trend of rural development process, which we have discussed thus far, leaves no room for doubt that the Collectoral pattern can and does play an important role in organising villagers for purposes of development. This role of the Collectoral pattern brings out the limitation of the political role approach and gives added strength to the view that in a developing country, field administration may be required to perform functions other than stability-supporting role. This is subject to the qualification that this role cannot be viewed absolutely in terms of post-colonial situation of meeting the urgent task of development. It has to be viewed in terms of its synaptic relationship with the rural development process. The failure to recognise this relationship has been one of the major deficiencies of development planning in the context of Bangladesh. This has adversely affected the achievement of community development goals of V-AID programme during the fifties. It is easy to remain emotionally attached to the principle of "spontaneous and voluntary participation" of people. This attachment must be tempered by realities involved in the process of development. One of the realities is the need to utilise the

76. The Two-Year Plan, Op.cit., p.25 and p.35.

traditional pattern of field administration.

The Collector's vital role in Swanirvar movement which later transformed into what has come to be known as mass participation schemes, must be seen as a revival of the populist tradition of rural development. This fact is admitted even by the proponents of Swanirvar movement. Thus M.A. Chasi, while tracing the background of the movement, expressly refers to the colonial tradition:

"Attempts at self-reliant development were made even during the period of British rule in what is now Bangladesh. The pioneer in this field was T.I.M. Nurunnabi Chowdhury, a member of the then Indian Civil Service. He made self-reliance a mission of his life and organised Pallimangal Samities (Village Welfare Societies) all over Bengal. But these did not survive as they were not properly institutionalised."⁷⁷

The reasons for not institutionalising village welfare societies are not mentioned, let alone analysed. At the same time, and this is important for purposes of our consideration, no attempt is made even to acknowledge the role of the Collectorial pattern in the revival of the populist tradition of rural development. This lack of acknowledgement arises out of the failure to assess the potentialities of the role of the Collector in the process of development. As an administrative structure too, the Collectorial

77. M.A. Chasi, 'Motto of Shawmirvar Movement', a talk delivered to the newly recruited public servants in Civil Servants' Training Academy, Dacca, February 8, 1977 (Mimeo), p.1. We have mentioned this in Chapter I, pp.50-51.

pattern was involved in organising rural people for development as has been made clear by our discussion on the experimental introduction of the Circle concept in Bengal province during British days. These two basic strands of rural development reappeared under different names but with greater strength and vigour in the post-colonial state of Bangladesh. The Circle concept reappeared as Thana Council and TTDC while the populist tradition found itself revived under Swanirvar programme. In both the cases, the Collectorial pattern remains a major variable and a constant factor. In the Chapter that follows, an attempt will be made to analyse the leadership role of the Collector in mobilizing village leadership for participatory development.

CHAPTER V

CASE STUDIES ON COLLECTOR'S ROLE IN MASS PARTICIPATION SCHEMES

In previous Chapters the Collectoral pattern has been discussed in general terms using a broad-based approach. This Chapter deals at the micro-level, providing evidence of the actual working of the Collectoral pattern in terms of its involvement in implementation of programmes based on mass participation. This micro-level analysis is intended to throw light on the inter-relationship of the three elements involved in the process of development. These are: the Collectoral pattern, the governing elite and the villagers.¹ It involves an understanding of the process in which the national policies and programmes for development, the field administration and the village culture interact to shape the development endeavour. Conversely, it delineates the process in which the Collector is required to respond to the challenges of rural welfare that are at times imposed by the exigencies of public service as well as by the expectations of both the government and the people.

The analysis is based on the Collector's relationship with programmes of mass participation in three different Districts: Sylhet, Jessore and Dacca. The case studies of mass participation schemes indicate that the expectations of both the government and the people combine to make the Collector assume his role as influencer and mobilizer of rural public opinion in favour of participatory development. The specific cases discussed are:

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1. Chapter VI provides a conceptual basis of the interrelationship among three elements: political leadership, field administration and the villagers.

Pandar Khal Cross Dam Project in Sylhet, Ulashi-Jadunathpur Project in Jessore, Nabagram Village Development Project and Aricha-Ichamati Irrigation Project in Dacca. The implementation process of these projects brings out the following features:

- a. The Collector may initiate programmes of local development entirely at his own initiative out of the need to maximize people's welfare which is threatened by natural calamities like flood;
- b. The Collector's initiative may also arise out of general policy announcement by the government;
- c. The Collector may be asked by the government to assume responsibility for planning and execution of a project.
- d. In all the three cases, both the government and the people place reliance on the leadership role of the Collector in implementation of the programmes.

CASE I: PANDAR KHAL CROSS DAM PROJECT

Pandar Khal cross dam project was part of the District development programme, initiated by the Collector of Sylhet, under the title of Shah Jalaler Shyamal Sylhet.² The development programme taken up with this slogan or title was basically production oriented. This is easy to understand if we keep in view the fact that Sylhet, along with most other Districts in Bangladesh, was hit by flood which was the worst in the last two decades.³ The immediate need of the

2. Refer to Chapter IV, p.194.

3. BBS, 1979, states in page 4:

"In the early part of monsoon in 1974 the country suffered from one of the worst floods in recent memory. This time about one-

community was recovery of the losses suffered in food production due to flood in 1974.

The case study of Pandar Khal is based on the author's interview with the Collector of Sylhet who was involved in the programme, the evaluation report of Yunus and Islam and the official files and correspondence available on the subject in Sylhet Collectorate.⁴

The Shyamal programme of Sylhet, of which this project was an important part, illustrates the Collector's response to rural problems at a time of crisis. The strategy behind the whole programme was to pool local resources to generate people's participation in development of agriculture. It was an attempt to get people to work instead of remaining idle and looking up to government for relief and help. To that extent, it was aimed at achieving a breakthrough in people's orientation from dependence to positive activity. The Collector's initiative did not spring from any directive from the government. The mobilization programme in terms of organisation, human and material resources, was designed locally under the initiative of the Collector. The Shyamal programme is indicative of the crucial role that the Collectoral

3. third of the country was badly devastated. Not only many people died and were washed away but the entire standing rice and jute crops, the cattle population and the houses in the affected areas were also destroyed. These were followed by the great famine in which thousands of people died."

4. Yunus and Islam report discusses 7 out of 22 major schemes implemented by the Collector of Sylhet during 1974-75.

Yunus and Islam, Shah Jalaler Shyamal Sylhet, Op.cit., p.4.

pattern can and does play in improving quality of life in the rural areas.

The stock-response of the government in times of flood and other natural calamities is to provide relief both in cash and kind. This is sometimes followed by circulars asking the District administration to prepare schemes and send them up for approval and allocation of funds. The entire process thus gets delayed in red-tape. The work done by the Collector of Sylhet in 1974-75 marked a departure from this conventional approach. The Report on Shyamal, while recognising this, states the role played by the Collector thus:

"The Deputy Commissioner toured the district extensively to assess the flood situation and flood-damage. He was convinced that the routine measures for easing the situation were no match for the extent of damage inflicted on the district. Within the limitation of his resources, he decided to convert the programme of reconstruction and rehabilitation into a high-speed development programme. With that decision, he went about mobilising support from all walks of life for his programmes. Politically the district was divided. It was not easy to find equal support from all groups. Some were critical and openly voiced their disapproval. The intelligensia were indifferent. Leading people from rural areas were skeptic.

Through his patient process of persuasion the Deputy Commissioner was gradually gaining some support from important personalities and the people in general. After a period of intense preparation a programme under

the title of "Shahjalaler Shyamal Sylhet" was formally launched on October 31, 1974."⁵

It was due to the persistent efforts of the Collector and his machinery and with them the local people that by the end of April 1975, the following projects, intended to augment food production, were completed:

SHYAMAL PROJECTS

TABLE 5.1

Type of projects	No. of projects undertaken	No. of projects completed
Cross Dams	884	697
Embankments, dykes and bunds	731	417
Excavation and Re-excavation of canals	309	198
Other types	555	448
Total	2479	1760

SOURCE: Yunus and Islam, Op.cit., p.9.

All these projects were planned, selected and executed locally. Committees were formed from the District to the village levels for this purpose. According to the plan of action, the Committees at the bottom were to identify and select the projects and send them up to higher body for approval. In practice something different happened:

5. Ibid., pp.4-5.

"But in practice, projects took the lead, committees followed..... Instead of waiting for the projects to be formulated by the social workers, UP members, social and political leaders, administration itself started taking initiative in this respect. District and sub-division level officers, C.O.(Dev) of all thanas were encouraged to identify and formulate projects at their own initiative. The Deputy Commissioner, who was always on the road, kept moving from one end of the district to the other to look at the potential projects, check their feasibility and people's commitment for promising projects. He would advise active social workers and appropriate officials to draw up the basic proposal without loss of any time. In some cases, he would include engineers, technical experts, appropriate district level officials in his entourage and settle the technical, engineering and administrative issues right on the spot. Most of the decisions were taken on the spot rather than at the headquarters."⁶

The conventional bureaucratic process of paper-work and lengthy correspondence was thus eschewed which made room for speedy selection and implementation of projects. The excerpts from the Report on Shyamal which we have quoted make it clear that the Collector had to move about constantly throughout the District to mobilize people's support for the programme of local development. This and the fact that the administration as a whole had to take the lead in the matter of selection and planning of projects perhaps need

6. Ibid., p.8.

some explanation. One of the explanations provided in the Report on Shyamal is that there was skepticism, apathy and even opposition to the programme. This possibly was the reason why the Collector's unqualified support for and direct involvement in the programme was necessary. It does not necessarily mean that the programme was imposed on the people by the Collector. The Collector's role was that of a mediator between different factions in particular and influencer and mobilizer of public opinion in general.⁷

Pandar Khal Cross Dam project was intended to save the 'boro' crops of a 'haor' known as 'Dekhar haor' situated in Chattak thana of Sunamganj sub-division. This 'haor', covering an area of 77,000 acres, is connected by two moribund courses of Surma river. These two abandoned courses are known as Pandar Khal and Manglar Khal. During monsoon, the excess water flows down these extinct courses and fills up the 'haor' with water. If two cross dams could be erected on these two courses, 'boro' harvests in the 'haor' could be saved from the ravages of flood caused by early monsoon. It was of vital importance as a measure of protecting crops in the 'haor' on which depended the lives of one hundred thousand people.⁸

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7. This aspect of the Collector's role is borne out by the evaluation report by Yunus and Islam on 'Bilash Chhara Shyamal Prakalpa', p.60. The Collector held two public meetings in the project area followed by three more by the SDO to secure consensus of the local people in support of the project in question.
 8. Zaidi Sattar, 'Pandar Khal Shyamal Prakalpa; a unique experience in organised nation-building', p.1. This is the 21-page cyclostyled official report on Pandar Khal project sent by the Sylhet Collectorate to the government. The report was prepared

(Continued)

Project Survey

If the dams were to be built, a project survey was the first step necessary to determine the project-specifications, items of work and the cost-benefit ratio. The second step necessary was to find out the source of finance and the administrative authority responsible for execution of the project. It was perhaps not possible to go through all the formalities which preparation and execution of a project would normally entail. The people were restive. They could no longer wait for things to move in a normal and routinized fashion. They had already lost their 'boro' crops of the last season due to floods. The Collector took the initiative and asked the Sylhet-based engineers of Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) to complete the project survey as soon as possible.⁹ The technical staff of BWDB made a quick survey and reported their findings to the Collector in early December 1974. Consequently they had no time to conduct topographical, geological and hydrological surveys and soil-tests. BWDB worked out an attractive cost-benefit ratio of 10.7: 1. The estimated total cost was to be TK 35.62 lacs while the net profit from the paddy, when saved from floods, was to be TK.385 lacs per year at minimum market prices.

-
8. by the ADC (General) Sylhet after the project was completed. A copy of the report was given to the author by Irshadul Huq, the Collector of Sylhet in 1974, who organised the Shyamal programme in Sylhet. The term 'haor' refers to low-lying marshy land.
 9. BWDB is a semi-autonomous public corporation which has the responsibility of sponsoring and implementing large irrigation and flood-control projects in Bangladesh.

The high economic return worked out by the BWDB was enough justification to implement the project. It was worked out as under.¹⁰

Benefits

Net cultivated area	= 55,000 acres
Per acre yield	= 40 mds
Total production - 55,000 x 40	= 22,00,000 mds
Price of paddy per md	= TK.70
Total value of produce 22,00,000 x 70	= TK.15,40,00,000
Deduct 50% for cost of production	= TK.7,70,00,000
Gross benefits accrued TK.15,40,00,000 - TK.7,70,00,000	= TK.7,70,00,000
Taking average yearly damage @ 50%	
The net incremental benefit	
$\frac{\text{TK.7,70,00,000}}{2}$	= TK.385,00,000

Costs

Cost of Pandarkhal Dam plus embankment	= TK.34.20 lacs
Cost of Manglarpur Dam	= TK.1.42 lacs
Capital cost of the project	= TK.35.62 lacs
Benefit/cost = $\frac{385}{35.62}$	= 10.7
The cost-benefit ratio	= 10.7:1

Project Specifications

Based on the survey conducted by the BWDB, two dams were to be erected; one on Pandar Khal at village Chandipur and another on

10. Zaidi Sattar, Report, Op.cit., pp.4-5.

Mangalpur Khal at village Bazitpur. In addition to this a link embankment, 2 miles in length, connecting the two dams, was also to be built. The dam on Pandar Khal was to be 840 feet in length and 45 feet in height while the one on Mangalpur Khal was to be 400 feet long and 20 feet high. In terms of earth-work, it would amount to nearly 100,00,000 cubic feet (cft) involving 4,56,00 man-days. The other items of work involved were:

Boulder-pitching -----	50,000 feet
Turfing -----	7,02,756 square feet
Bamboo piling -----	1200 running feet
Earth-filled sacks -----	20,000

Admittedly a project of this magnitude involving 3.5 million Taka could not have been started just like that. Mobilizing the resources needed to execute the project was itself a big problem not to speak of sorting out the organisational issues involved. Accepting that the BWDB was to be the administrative organisation responsible for executing the project, placement of funds, calling of tenders and scrutiny thereof would have caused delay. On the other hand, if the crops were to be saved during the year 1975, work on the proposed dams had to be completed by the end of March. Work on the project had, therefore, to be started immediately. But who would decide whether or not to start the work without waiting for funds from the government? For the Collector it was a challenging decision.

Collector's Response

The predicament in which the Collector, as head of the local administration responsible for the welfare of the people, was placed can perhaps better be imagined than described. Was he to sit idle

and let 100,000 people face starvation? Was he merely to respond to the situation in a routinized manner by drawing the attention of the concerned ministry to the problem? The Collector knew by experience that he could not have waited for any government agency, BWDB for instance, to take up the project.¹¹ He decided to respond to the challenge locally with the co-operation of the people.

To this end a public meeting was organised in the project area on December 8, 1974. Besides the Collector, MPs, public servants and the local people of the area attended the meeting. It was in this meeting that a formal decision was taken jointly by the local administration and the local people to go ahead with the construction of the two dams. The meeting over, the Collector took the initiative of forming a project implementation Committee. The Pandar Khal Shyamal Project Committee was constituted with the Collector as chairman and the local MP as the chief executive. In his absence, the Collector was to be represented by the ADC (General). It was a broad-based Committee in which were included political and social workers of the area, chairmen and members of the UPs and government functionaries. CO (Dev) Chattak was appointed as the full-time official project administrator with headquarters at the project site.

11. BWDB would not have agreed to start the project as implementing agency without detailed topographical, hydrological and soil tests. It was decided in the public meeting of December 8, 1974 that the project would be taken up under FWP. This is based on the author's interview with the Collector of Sylhet and Superintending Engineer, BWDB.

Implementation Process

The organisational aspect having been decided, the work on the project was started on January 11, 1975. The work was scheduled to be completed within 45 days so that the standing 'boro' crops could be saved. To achieve this, it was estimated that on an average a total of 5000 labourers would be needed per day. The immediate problem, therefore, was how to engage the required number of labourers and secondly, how to put the labour-force to work in an organised and disciplined manner. Daily payment in wheat to the labourers itself demanded a camp office and a number of personnel to work as pay-masters. To obviate these problems, a camp office was set up at project site for day to day management and supervision. Besides, 400 workers' camps and a field dispensary were also established by the District administration to facilitate work. Several sub-committees were also formed each charged with the management and supervision of particular aspects of work.¹²

The project-site was located at a distance of 30 miles from the District headquarters. One could reach Chattak thana headquarters from Sylhet town by road ---- a distance of 20 miles. To reach the project-site, one had to cover a further distance of 10 miles by river. Communication with the Collector was very important to sort out many administrative and other problems on a day to day basis. A direct telephone line was established connecting the project-site with the District headquarters:

"A telephone call from the organisers to the district administration quickly cleared up complicated problems.

Frequent calls from the organisers and more frequent

12. Yunus and Islam, Shah Jalaler Shyamal Sylhet, Op.cit., pp.22-26.

calls from the D.C. and the ADC (General) kept the work moving in an unbelievable speed (the dams were ready in about three months' time)."¹³

Voluntary Participation With A Difference

At the time of starting the project, the Collector found that he could mobilise only 14,000 maunds of wheat and a sum of TK.400,000 from Test Relief funds. This was too small an amount to complete the project. It was estimated that, to complete the project, 29000 maunds of wheat would be required minus the cash input of 400,000 TK which would be needed for boulder pitching.¹⁴ How would the gap be filled? The District Administration was convinced that it could be an ideal example of self-financing project with local labour:

"It was estimated that if the beneficiaries could be levied at the nominal rate of one maund per acre, the total leviable amount from the net cultivable land benefitted would be 55,00,000 maunds which would be enough to meet the cost in kind for the project. However, the project failed to set such an example. As work progressed it was apparent that the beneficiaries withdrew themselves to safety and many an attempt to mobilise resources by taxing them came to naught. Ultimately, all that could be gathered from them were 5000 pieces of bamboos and more than adequate enthusiasm for the completion of the project."¹⁵

13. Ibid., pp.24-25.

14. Zaidi Sattar Report, Op.cit., p.8.

15. Ibid., p.9.

The Zaidi Report thus laments over the fact that in actual execution of the project, the example of self-reliance could not be set. This observation is perhaps a bit unrealistic. The people of the area faced famine conditions, the 'boro' crop of 1974 having been destroyed by floods. It would have been less than human to expect the famished peasantry to work without any wage. This is not to say that those who had the ability to pay or otherwise contribute should have evaded their responsibility. It is possible that the political leadership at the local level did not favour the idea.¹⁶ Viewed against this background, it was correct for the Collector not to have pursued the idea of local taxation. Nor would it be entirely correct to say that the element of voluntary participation was altogether absent. One has to take into account the number of local volunteers who worked without any wage in the many sub-committees that were formed for day to day management and supervision. The evaluation Report on Shyamal makes special mention of the voluntary work done by local leaders and local people. The Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of local Union Parishads worked as pay-masters without any remuneration.¹⁷ Another aspect of the voluntary contribution is reflected in the land-owners' willingness to allow earth to be dug from their lands without any compensation.

Permanent acquisition and/or temporary requisition of private properties for public purposes are an indispensable requirement of development projects in Bangladesh because of scarcity of land. The affected land-owners are entitled to

16. This view was taken by the Collector of Sylhet during his interview with the author.

17. Yunus and Islam, Shah Jalaler Shyamal Sylhet, Op.cit., p.23.

compensation which is determined by the Collector under the provisions of East Bengal Requisition (Emergency) of Properties Act, 1948. The rate of compensation determined by the Collector is appealable and can also be challenged in the civil courts and the High Court. When this happens, project implementation is necessarily delayed. In the instant case no such proceedings took place as the owners were persuaded by the Collector to allow their lands to be used for the project. Besides saving money in terms of compensation costs, it helped in speedy implementation of the project.¹⁸

It would not, therefore, be entirely correct to say that Pandar Khal project was a failure from the point of view of voluntary participation of local people. If free labour could not be given on a mass scale, there was no lack of involvement of the local people in the project. The project must be viewed as an example of the Collector's response to people's aspiration. If the local administration headed by the Collector had not courageously responded to the demands of the local people, the project would have followed the same process. The official file would have moved from the Collector's desk to the Relief Ministry and then back and forth between other agencies such as Planning Commission, ministries

18. M.K. Anwar, 'Study of Land Acquisition Process', NIPA, Dacca, 1962, (Mimeo). This study analyses the lengthy and time-consuming procedure of land acquisition process in Bangladesh. The average time required to complete acquisition proceedings is three to six months. In case of civil suits, it extends up to six years.

of Agriculture, Flood Control and Water Resources, Rural Development and may be finally with the BWDB. The question of starting the project in January 1975 and completing it before the onset of monsoon would not have arisen at all.¹⁹

CASE II: ULASHI-JADUNATHPUR PROJECT

The case study of Ulashi-Jadunathpur project, commonly known as Ulashi project, is based on the author's interview with the Collector of Jessore in February-March 1979, the villagers of the project area including elected leaders of Union Parishads, Swanirvar workers, District and Thana level officials who were involved in implementation of the project. There are some published articles on the project including one written by the Collector who organised the project. A number of seminars and discussions had also taken place since the project was completed. The approach of the literature and seminars has been one of evaluating the project in economic terms and applicability of the project to other areas rather than in terms of the relationship between the Collectorial pattern and the process of rural development. Reference to these sources will be made in so far as they are relevant for the purposes of our study, however our approach will be to identify the leadership role of the Collector. This project has been nationally acclaimed, as the biggest self-reliant project and has, at least for the present, set the pattern of rural development in Bangladesh.

Its origin or initiation is different from Pandar Khal

19. Yunus and Islam, Shah Jalaler Shyamal Sylhet, Op.cit., p.27.

Approval of projects at ministerial level takes normally six months to two years.

project. There was no immediate challenge for the Collector of Jessore to save crops from an impending flood. It was basically an attempt to respond to the call given by General Zia for activating the rural people in attaining self-sufficiency in food.²⁰ To that extent, as explained in Chapter IV, Ulashi was a continuation of the voluntary labour mobilisation strategy which was already there.

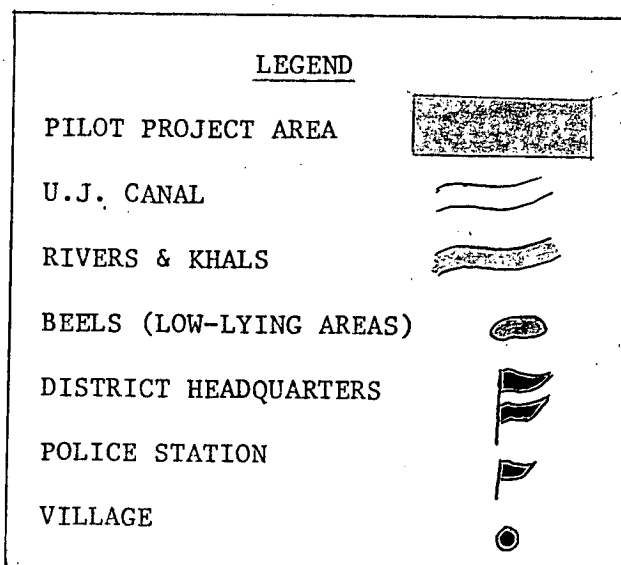
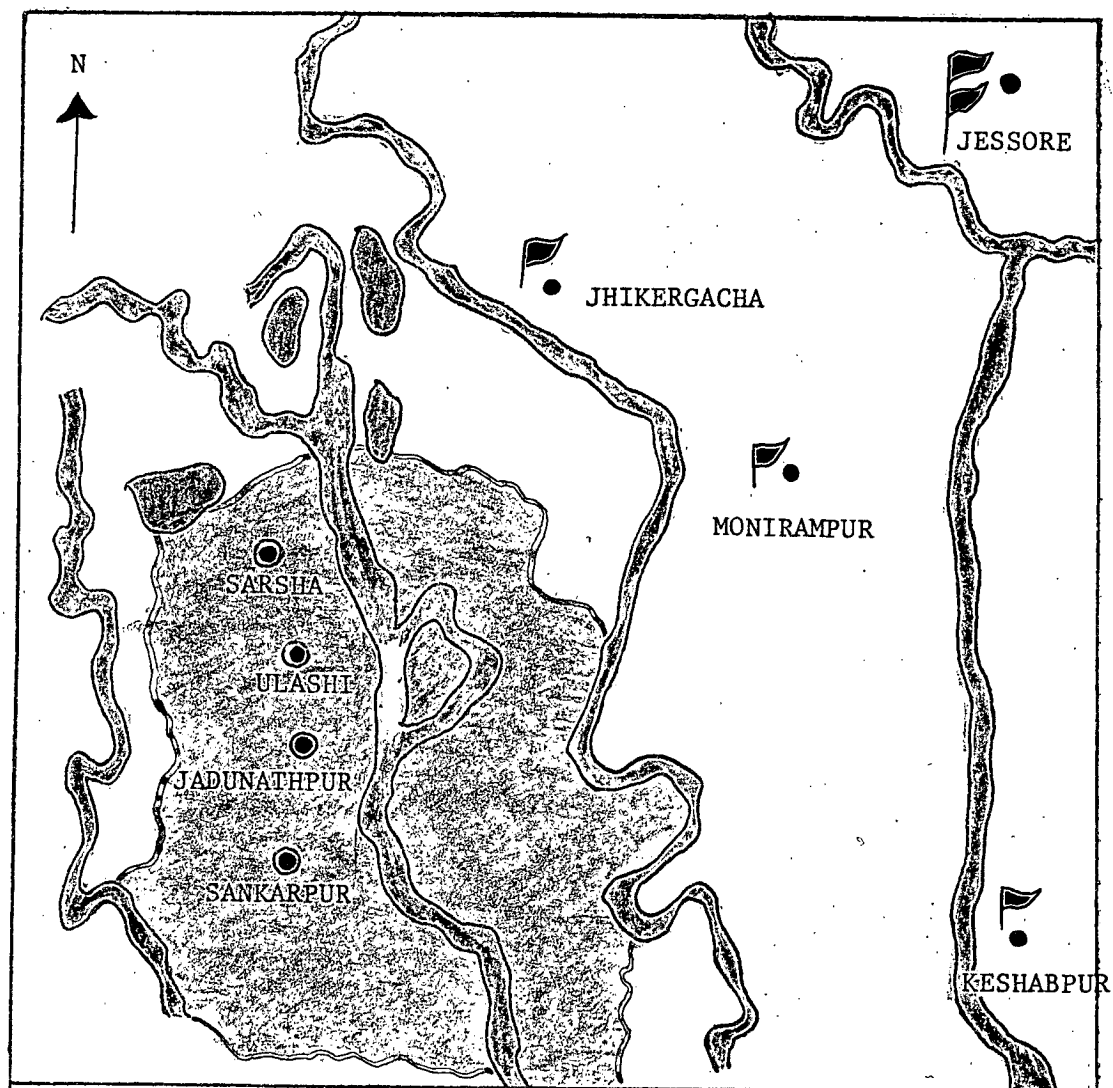
An undated office note, signed by the ADC (Development) of Jessore, gives the background of the selection of the project. It appears from the note that a meeting was held on 24th October, 1976, by the Collector with the Chief Engineer of BWDB and his other colleagues to undertake a project of canal digging on self-help basis. This was followed by joint visits which ultimately led to the selection of the project at the local level. There was no direction from the top either in the matter of selection or other details of implementation.²¹

20. During the year 1976, General Zia as DCMLA toured different Districts and Thana headquarters of Bangladesh and exhorted the people in public meetings to undertake schemes based on voluntary participation. The author, as Collector of Dacca, accompanied him in such tours in the District during November-December 1976.

21. Based on the author's interview with the Collector of Jessore and the office files on Ulashi project maintained in Jessore Collectorate. This is subject to the qualification that the project was the outcome of the general policy statement by General Zia for canal-digging on voluntary labour.

The location of the project is given in the Figure below:

FIGURE 5.1



SCALE:1"=5 MILES

The Project Profile

The object was to connect village Ulashi with village Jadunathpur by a man-made canal having a length of 2.65 miles. The project was drawn by BWDB in association with the Jessore Collectorate. As can be seen from the map, the project area consists of low-lying land-formation called 'Beel' extending over 28.5 square miles. If excess water could be drained from the 'Beel' and minimum quantum retained for irrigation during dry season, an area of 13000 acres of land could be reclaimed for cultivation. This discharge of excess water could not be made through the existing river-bed and the original course of the river covering a distance of 9.75 miles between villages Ulashi and Shamta:

"The obvious alternative was to dig a linear canal, and given the paucity of funds and inoperability of the upstream reclamation facilities till the excess water could be carried down, dig the same on self-help basis. The physical requirements combined with economic constraints ushered in the self-help at UJ."²²

Apart from reclamation of 18000 acres of land for cultivation which could be settled with the landless of the project area, the other possibilities were:

- * use of excess water for cultivation during the dry season by water-control measures involving construction of sluicegates and

22. Muhiuddin Khan Alamgir, 'Participatory Development in Bangladesh: Ulashi-Jadunathpur', Deputy Commissariat, Jessore, October, 1978, p.11. This is a mimeographed version of Alamgir's article on Ulashi project. The term Deputy Commissariat refers to the office of the Collector.

power-operated low lift pumps, the operating cost of which is half of those run by diesel;

- * converting a mono-crop area to a triple crop area by adopting improved means of irrigation and seed-fertilizer technology;
- * fish cultivation and duckery in the old course of the river as well as in the newly dug canal for the benefit of those who are economically disadvantaged.²³

In economic terms, the benefit accruing from completion of the project on self-help basis has been calculated to be TK.16.30 million per year as against an expenditure of TK.0.849 million of which TK.0.629 million was to be paid as compensation for acquisition of land needed for the project.²⁴

The Magnitude of Voluntary Labour Mobilisation and its Management

The project was to be done by voluntary labour. The quantum of earth-work done, beginning from November 1, 1976 till May 1977, stood at 1,44,00,000 cft. In all 145 days were spent in digging.

The quantity of earth to be dug by volunteers drawn from all sections of the society, was fixed at 35 cft per capita per day.²⁵

The monthly progress of earth-work done is shown in Table 5.2. (p.257)

No figures as to a actual number of labourers involved in the project

23. The term economically disadvantaged refers to landless farmers. According to a recent survey 36.95% of the rural population do not own any land which 13.82% own 0.5 acres of land. For details, see BBS, 1979, p.145.

24. Alamgir, Op.cit., p.12 and p.15.

25. Ibid., p.19.

were kept but on the basis of the Table 5.2, the total number of labourers per month and daily required would appear to be as shown in Table 5.3.

From this, one can easily judge the magnitude of the task of management involved. The burden of this task fell on the Collector of Jessore and the officers working directly under him such as the ADCs and SDO. Equally important was the task of motivating the people to come and work for the project. Without effective motivational publicity, it would have been impossible to mobilise the number of labourers required as well as to keep accounts of the minimum work done by each volunteer. In a project done under voluntary labour, more intensive supervision is required to be exercised than in work where payment is made for the output of work done. This brings us to the organisational issues of project implementation and the role that the Collector played in it.

Organisation, Participating Groups and Management of the Project

A project Committee at the District level was constituted under the chairmanship of the Collector. All District and Thana level officers as well as Chairman of 27 Union Parishads falling within the project area were included as members. The work of motivation started on 20th October, 1976 under the co-ordinative and supervisory role of the Collector. The work of motivation continued till the project was completed. This was necessary to ensure participation in canal-digging on a sustained basis. Inherent in the voluntary nature of the work was the difficulty of (a) ensuring the required number of volunteers at the project-site and (b) ensuring the minimum output of work on the part of the participants. The fluctuation in the number of volunteers with corresponding variation in the daily/monthly output of work is seen in column 3 of Table 5.3.

TABLE 5.2
MONTHLY OUTPUT OF WORK

Month	Earth-work (in cft)	% of Total Work
November, 1976	4,42,347	3.07
December, 1976	13,77,207	9.56
January, 1977	20,73,225	14.40
February, 1977	31,74,288	22.04
March, 1977	42,10,215	29.24
April, 1977	22,22,718	15.44
May, 1977	9,00,000	6.25
	1,44,00,000	100.00

Source: Alamgir, Op.cit., p.22.

TABLE 5.3
MONTHLY AND PER DAY REQUIREMENT OF LABOURERS²⁶

Month	Number of Labourers	Number of Labourers Per Day
November	12,638	486
December	39,349	1513
January	59,235	2278
February	90,694	3488
March	120,292	4626
April	63,506	2442
May	25,714	989

Source: Alamgir, Ibid., p.22.

26. In working out the figures in Table 5.3 relating to labour-involvement, 26 days in a month has been taken as the basis.

The fluctuations are accounted for by the voluntary nature of participation which was envisioned. This meant severe strain on the Collector and his staff in day to day management and supervision of the output of work of different participating groups. The number of participating groups as documented by the Collector show that as many as 135 different local institutions/organisations contributed to the actual digging of the canal. The percentage contribution of various groups is given in Table 5.4.

PERCENTAGE CONTRIBUTION OF VARIOUS GROUPS IN CANAL-DIGGING

TABLE 5.4

SL. No.	Participating Groups	Contribution of total work
1.	Union Parishad	32.30
2.	License Holders, Businessmen, Bus & Truck Owners etc.	22.50
3.	Food For Works Programme	12.50
4.	Big Land Owners	10.50
5.	Irregular Volunteers	9.40
6.	Ansars	8.30
7.	Army	3.40
8.	Students	1.00
9.	Police	0.10
Total		<u>100</u>

Source: Alamgir, Op.cit., p.14.

Below the District Committee, Union Project Committees were formed in each of the 27 Unions to mobilize the people and organize them for participation in canal-digging. The work-load of the Unions was distributed among the villagers. In many Unions, village level Committees were also formed. "Special attention was given to set up and sustain links with the landless and the land poor in addition to their usual land rich representatives in the local bodies."²⁷

Since a large number of labourers were involved, it was imperative to ensure on-the-spot supervision of work on a day to day basis. This was also necessary to provide for an effective monitoring/feedback system with the District headquarters so that bottlenecks could be removed with utmost promptitude. Not all segments of the participating groups were self-sufficient in terms of logistics. As some of them had to come from outside the project area or from a distance of, say more than three miles, provision for transportation and food had to be made. As chief supervisor and co-ordinator of the project, these day to day problems had to be taken care of by the Collector and his staff.

To this end, a camp office was set up at Ulashi with an officer of the Collectorate in charge of day to day operations. "A number of officers, usually junior in rank, were deployed by turn, each for a period ranging from a week to fortnight".²⁸ The functions of the camp officer was to "look after welfare of the participants, distribute spade and baskets, arrange transportation for volunteers coming from far off places, prepare and distribute

27. Alamgir, Op.cit., p.18.

28. Ibid., p.18.

mid-day meals for them, take accurate measurement of work done by each group and record them in a systematic way, keep liaison with the local village leaders and the Deputy Commissariat."²⁹ In doing all these, the camp officer was assisted by the volunteers.

The other organisational issues included motivational publicity, strict vigilance over the daily output of work of different participating groups and distribution of work-load among potential beneficiaries. The motivational publicity was done on an extensive scale in the project area. This involved visits to the local villages and Unions by the Collector and his staff. By opening a dialogue with the villagers on a continuing basis with regard to the potential benefits of the project, an effort was made to secure their willing co-operation either by direct participation or otherwise. The existing machinery of the local government, i.e., the Chairmen and Members of Union Parishads including informal leaders of the villages were fully utilised as is clear from Table 5.4. Strict vigilance was exercised by the Collector and his staff to ensure that everyone attained his prescribed quota of earth which was fixed at 35 cft per day. Everyone, irrespective of status and wealth, worked for the project:

"Along with extensive motivational publicity about the potential benefits of UJ Canal and blessings of self-help, a strict vigilance was exercised in order to make everyone, irrespective of rank and wealth, in a still stratified society, work physically for the Project. Even visitors were not exempt and students not welcome if they were found short of the attainable minimum of 35 cft

29. Ibid., p.18.

per capita per day. The personnel of the Deputy Commissariat, in the course of their daily supervision, worked with almost each identifiable group."³⁰

This approach to make everyone contribute to the completion of the project was necessary to create a sense of confidence among the landless sections of the people who usually carry out the task of digging earth in the villages. The participation of the comparatively affluent sections was secured by assigning, on a progressive scale, a fixed quantity of earth that they were required to contribute. This was done in the following manner:

<u>OWNERSHIP OF LAND</u> (Area)	<u>EARTH TO BE DUG</u> (CFT)
5-7 Bighas	1000
8-10 Bighas	3000
11-15 Bighas	5000
16-20 Bighas	10000
20+ Bighas	15000

This operational aspect of the project implied imposition of some kind of a local tax on the surplus farmers. This imposition was informal and was done with full consensus of the elected leaders of Union Parishads with whom review meetings were held from time to time by the Collector in order to ensure timely completion of the project. The benefit, accruing from this arrangement, apart from creating favourable impression of neutrality of the Collectorial pattern in the matter of ensuring voluntary participation, was creation of gainful employment for the landless who were hired by

30. Ibid., pp.19-20.

the surplus farmers to do the digging for them on payment of usual wages.³¹ In the same way, owners of shot guns were called upon to contribute 2000 cft of earth per head as a token of their participation while the same quantity was fixed for members of the trading community holding various types of trade licenses from the government. The Union Parishad Chairmen were similarly enjoined to mobilise volunteers from each village in their respective jurisdictions in such a number as would be able to contribute 100,000 cft of earth-work per village. The educational institutions in the project area which received government grants for development were called upon to contribute 1000 cft of earth-work per TK.1000 received.³²

The Extent of Collector's Involvement in the Project

The Collector of Jessore and his staff played a key role in implementing the project. Without their direct and continued involvement, the project could not perhaps have been completed in this way. While the evaluators of the project have admitted this, the extent to which the Collector and his staff were involved in the project has not been properly analysed.³³ Nor has any study yet

31. Ibid., p.20.

32. Based on the minutes of the meeting held on 1/12/76 at Ulashi under the Chairmanship of the Collector. This meeting was attended by all Chairmen of the Union Parishads falling within the project area. In this meeting, distribution of work-load among local councils, businessmen, license holders and educational institutions was made.

33. This observation is based on seminar reports and review articles on Ulashi. For details see Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad

been made to identify the factors which makes the Collectoral pattern a key variable in the process of participatory development. The Collector of Jessore gives some idea of the extent to which he and his staff were involved in the execution of the project:

"Of the internal factors, supervisory ability and logistic support were the main. The supervisory ability was contingent on the time and attention that the senior officers of the Deputy Commissariat could give to the project every day and the qualities of head and heart of the camp officer deployed for the purpose and also the presence or absence of the union/village/group leaders at the work site. In other words, other things remaining the same, the daily/weekly/monthly pace of work almost entirely, was accounted for by the organising capacity of all those concerned with the project. In about total work-days of 150 (between 1st November, 1976 to 30th April, 1977, Sundays and holidays excluded), the senior officers of the Deputy Commissariat devoted 145 man-days (Sundays and holidays excluded) right on the project site/area."³⁴

A schedule of weekly visits by officers to the project-site was drawn up on 10th November, 1976. It reads as follows:

33. and Monowar Hossain (eds), Development through Self-help : Lessons from Ulashi : Proceedings of Two National Seminars, The Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, Dacca, April, 1978.

34. Alamgir, Op.cit., pp.22-23.

Wednesday	Morning	Deputy Commissioner, Jessore
Thursday	Morning	Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue), Jessore
Friday	Morning	Additional Deputy Commissioner (General), Jessore
Saturday	Morning	Additional Deputy Commissioner (Development), Jessore
Sunday	Morning	Deputy Commissioner, Jessore
Monday	Morning	SDO (Sadar), Jessore
Tuesday	Morning	Assistant Director, Rural Development, Jessore.

This schedule was issued with the approval of the Collector on 10th December, 1976 by the ADC (General) vide his Memorandum No.

Genl-3796(6).³⁵ The allocation of supervisory responsibility with regard to day to day administration of the project was followed which can be seen from the tour diaries of the Collector for the period from 1.11.76 to 30.4.77. The tour diaries throw light on the commitment of the Collectoral pattern in general, and that of the Collector in particular, to the implementation of the project.³⁶ The Table 5.5 gives adequate information on the involvement of the Collector in the project:

35. Office file on Ulashi.

36. The tour requirement of the Collector is laid down in the erstwhile government of East Pakistan Memorandum No. GA VI-59/65-598(24) dated 14th May, 1965 of the Services and General Administration Department. The minimum requirement prescribed is 60 days with 20 night halts over a period of six months. This requirement is still there and the Cabinet Division evaluates the tour diaries sent by the Collector every month. The table is based on the tour diaries of the Collector.

COLLECTOR'S INVOLVEMENT IN ULASHI

TABLE 5.5

MONTH	NATURE OF WORK DONE	HOURS SPENT	MILEAGE COVERED	REMARKS
NOVEMBER '76	SUPERVISION AND DIGGING INCLUDING MOTIVATIONAL WORK	59.5	566	MILEAGE AND HOURS SPENT AT PROJECT SITE NOT NOTED FOR 10TH & 11TH NOVEMBER '76.
DECEMBER '76	DO	44	422	MILEAGE FOR 10TH DECEMBER & HOURS SPENT NOT NOTED
JANUARY '77	DO	12.5	120	
FEBRUARY '77	DO	21	214	
MARCH '77	DO	10.5	128	
APRIL '77	DO	31.5	298	HOURS SPENT ON 11TH APRIL NOT NOTED
		179	1748	

Source: Figures collected from the tour diaries of relevant months.

Higher time-hours spent during the first two months are explained by the fact during initial days greater attention was called for to mobilize the people to work for the project. The low figures for the month of January is explained by the fact that in January, 1977, elections to the Union Parishads were held throughout the country which took away much of the Collector's time.³⁷ As regards March, an explanation is found in the fact that the Collectors had to attend as many as six meetings in Khulna Division and in Dacca in connection with the project as well as for his other duties. It was during this month also that the Collector visited other areas of the District to motivate people to undertake similar projects.³⁸ Considering the multifarious responsibilities which the Collector is called upon to discharge, the foregoing table does provide an impressive evidence of the Collector's involvement in the project.

To this must be added the fact that the District Committee met daily under the chairmanship of the Collector to review the progress of work on a day to day basis so as to remove bottlenecks and ensure co-ordination of different agencies involved in the project. The proceedings of the daily meetings are not available as recorded minutes were not always kept. On this issue the Collector observes:

"All decisions were taken and arrangements made by the Apex Committee headed by the Deputy Commissioner. The

37. The functions of the Collector during local government elections are set forth in Chapter II of Local Government Ordinance, 1976.

38. Based on the Tour Diaries of Collector, Jessore.

Committee met every evening to review the progress attained during the day and to decide the programme for the next day in the broad framework of the implementative scheme. Proceedings of the meetings of the Apex Committee most often than not were not recorded in as much as there was no time or personnel available for the purpose. Besides, the need was not felt. The Committee met every evening, the problem encountered during the day remained fresh in the minds of the participants so as to decide the programme to be pursued on the next day. The directives were given verbally instead of in writing."³⁹

POST-COMPLETION INVOLVEMENT OF THE COLLECTOR IN THE PROJECT

The initial objective of canal-digging was formally completed on 30th April, 1977. Once it was done, the project might well have been transferred to the BWDB which had already included this in their annual development programme (ADP).⁴⁰ The Collector did not stop at that. A comprehensive village development plan was drawn up as part of the second phase of Ulashi project which Alamgir discusses in detail in his paper.⁴¹ The tour diaries of the Collector show that ending with the month of April when the project was formally completed, the Collector had visited the area on as many as 41 occasions over a period of eight months. During the period from January 1978 to October 1978, the Collector paid as many as 54

39. Based on the author's interview with the Collector.

40. Based on the official records of BWDB and the correspondence between the Collector and the Planning Commission.

41. Alamgir, Op.cit., pp.28-34.

visits to the project area. A system of review meetings was introduced in the Unions falling within the project area. The meetings used to be presided over by the Collector in most cases. The Chairmen of Union Parishads, leading social workers, District and Thana level officers used to attend these meetings.⁴² The extensive tour made by the Collector, the number of review meetings held and villages visited can be seen from the tour diaries of 1977 (May to December) and 1978 (January to October). This is shown in the table below:

TABLE 5.6

COLLECTOR'S VISITS TO THE PROJECT AREA AFTER 30th APRIL, 1977

YEAR	NO. OF VISITS	NO. OF REVIEW MEETINGS HELD	NO. OF VILLAGES VISITED	TOTAL MILEAGE
1977	41	25	83	1922
1978	54	15	114	2409
Total	95	40	197	4331

Source: Tour diaries.

An examination of the tour diaries shows that besides holding formal meetings with the villagers, the Collector had held informal meetings and discussions with them, the elected Chairmen and Members of Union Parishads and government functionaries working

42. During his field trip to Ulashi project in April, 1979, the author attended one such meeting.

at Thana and Union levels. While the figures in Table 5.6 do reveal the involvement of the Collector in the expanded project of village development, the responses of the Collector to particular situations as they arose from time to time, reveal more than the figures would indicate.

Consider this response of the Collector as recorded in his tour diary for the month of April, 1978:

14.4.78: Started for Ulashi at 7-40 A.M. Reached Ulashi at 8-30 A.M. There was serious shortage of water along the canal. This was due to late rainfall. Alongwith Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) and the Executive Engineer, Power Pumps, B.A.D.C., arranged for fielding four electrified power pumps at Ulashi point so as to pump whatever water is available to save crops. Came back to Jessore at 11 A.M. and then to see whether everything was as per instructions, went to Ulashi once again at 4-00 P.M. Found the work continuing though it was lagging behind in pace. Gave necessary instructions to the personnel involved as well as to the people concerned. Came back to H.Q. at 7-00 P.M. The journey was performed by Govt. vehicle. Total mileage covered is 86 miles.

This was followed up by another visit on the next morning to ensure that the work on fielding of power pumps was going according to schedule.⁴³ These tour notes more than adequately reflect that the Collector can and does willingly respond to the

43. Based on the tour diary of the Collector for the month of April, 1978.

needs and problems of the villagers on a day to day basis. It also reveals what a field administrator in Bangladesh is required to do which is so different from the developed countries. He must share in the aspirations and fulfil as best he can, the expectations of the villagers, provide them with all possible assistance at a time when it is needed. It is no part of the Collector's direct formal responsibility to ensure adequate water supply so that the crops can be saved. Yet it is, in a real sense, his very personal responsibility.

CASE III: NABAGRAM VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

We come now to the case study of Nabagram village development project. The implementative process adopted in this case illustrates like Ulashi, governmental dependence on the Collector for local development. Like Ulashi, it was taken up under instructions from the President. Yet there is a difference. Ulashi was taken up in pursuance of the general policy announcement made by the President, then DCMLA, that re-excavation of canals throughout the country should be undertaken with active participation of the people. In the matter of selection of the project it was the District Administration headed by the Collector that played a key role. In case of Nabagram, the selection was made by the President after a brief discussion with the Collector of Dacca. It all happened like this.⁴⁴

Sometime in the first week of November 1977, the Collector received a telephone call from the personal secretary to

44. Based on the author's experience as Collector of Dacca during the period under discussion.

the President. The personal secretary advised the Collector to see the President with a map of the District. When the Collector was presented before the President, the latter expressed his desire to visit a village in the District. The Collector showed him the location of five villages in different parts of the District of which Nabagram was one. The President inquired if the Collector had visited Nabagram. The answer was in the affirmative. The President then briefly told the Collector that during his visit to Nabagram he would like to know from the villagers their problems. He would like the villagers to speak for themselves. He would like to know what the villagers could do to solve their problems and what they expect the government to do. The date of visit was fixed on 15th November, 1977. What happened during and after the Presidential visit brings into sharp relief the crucial role played by the Collector in village development.

Village Nabagram

The village is located in Nabagram Union Parishad under Manikganj Thana which is the headquarter Thana of Manikganj Subdivision. The Subdivisional headquarter, located at a distance of about 40 miles from Dacca city, is connected by a black-top road forming part of the main highway that links the capital with the northern and south-western Districts of Bangladesh. A Zilla Parishad road connects the village with the highway and thus with the Subdivisional and District headquarters. The profile of the village is as follows:⁴⁵

45. Based on the written report of Chairman, Nabagram Union Parishad read out in the meeting held on the date of the President's visit to the village.

Area	: 285 acres
Total Land	: 144 acres
Cultivable Land	: 133 acres
Uncultivable Land	: 11 acres
Total number of families	: 330
Farmers' families	: 79
Fishermen families	: 59
Landless Families	: 58
Potters' families	: 22
Masons/Craftsmen families	: 13
Others	: 99
Total Population	: 1812
Male	: 927
Female	: 885

Presidential Visit

On the morning of 15th November, 1977, the President arrived at the village by road. He went round the village and then sat for a meeting with the villagers. The President asked them to identify the problems and state clearly what they could do themselves to solve them and what they expected the government to do. The Chairman of the Union Parishad, himself a resident of the village, while welcoming the President, gave an account of what the Union Parishad had done so far in the field of development and then gave a long list of problems covering such areas as agriculture, health, family planning and communication. He was followed by three others in the village who recounted the same problems:

- * there was no electricity in the village;
- * there was no co-operative organisation;

- * there was no employment for the daily labourers and the landless;
- * there was no adult literacy center for removal of illiteracy;
- * there was no family planning clinic;
- * there was no provision for adequate loan for the farmers;
- * there was no arrangement for improvement of fisheries.

In reply, the President called upon them to first get to work all by themselves. Government, the President said, would do only that which the villagers could not do themselves. After discussion with the villagers, the President identified the following proposals for action.

- a. 4 to 6 poultry farms should be started in the village to raise poultry as a means of additional income;
- b. Derelict ponds/tanks should be excavated and fish cultivation started;
- c. Fruit-bearing trees should be planted along the village roads;
- d. The canal in the village should be re-excavated for preservation of water for winter crops;
- e. Wheat cultivation should be organised for the whole union;
- f. Electricity should be supplied to the village;
- g. Improvement of housing-facilities in the village should be effected and individuals helped in obtaining house-building loan;
- h. The playground in the village should be improved;
- i. Provision for birth-control for the whole Union should be made and maintenance of birth-registers should be arranged;
- j. Regular classes should be arranged for removal of illiteracy;
- k. A documentary film should be prepared on Nabagram and shown between 10th and 15th January, 1978 to project Nabagram as an ideal village.

This list by itself is not relevant. What is relevant is the responsibility thrust upon the Collector to get these things done. Except for item (f), everything else was to be the Collector's responsibility. It was further announced by the President that all these things were to be completed within a period of two months. The decision to complete the project within two months was formally communicated to the Collector by the Secretary to President in a Memorandum dated 18th November bearing No. PA/JS-1/76 which is given at Appendix 'B'. A copy of the Memorandum was endorsed to all concerned agencies but the Collector was held responsible for the entire project.⁴⁶ To an unfamiliar eye, it may seem redundant to involve the Collector when the relevant agencies have already been asked by the President's Secretariat to do what was needed.

The involvement of the Collector was principally for two reasons. First, the re-excavation of canal and ponds with voluntary labour could only be done by the Collector. On this depended much of the further work such as organisation of co-operatives. Secondly, most of other items of work such as adoption of birth-control measures and removal of illiteracy needed active co-operation from the villagers which could be better secured through the good office of the Collector than otherwise.⁴⁷ Finally, there was administrative need for co-ordination of the various services of multiple agencies. Effective co-ordination and timely supply of inputs were very important for completing the

46. Based on Collector's office records.

47. This observation is based on the villagers' perception of the Collector's role which is discussed in the next Chapter.

project according to schedule.

The Extent of Involvement of the Collector

Even before the receipt of the formal instruction from the President's Secretariat, the District administration took some preliminary steps towards implementing the village development project. Soon after the departure of the President from the village, the Collector held further discussions with the ADC (Development), SDO, Chairman and Members of Union Parishad and other concerned agencies to finalize an action-programme. It was decided that the SDO and the Circle Officer with the assistance of the village leaders would start motivating and mobilising the villagers to start work immediately on those items of work where voluntary labour is needed. Not more than ten days were given to complete all preparatory work. Supervisory responsibility was divided among the Collector, the ADC (Development), SDO and the Circle Officer. No exact time-table was worked out but it was informally agreed that visits should be so arranged that at least once a week visit to the village to review the progress of work done should be ensured. The tour diaries for the periods between November to the middle of January show the following number of visits:

TABLE 5.7

VISITS BY THE COLLECTOR AND HIS STAFF

Designation	Period	Number of Visits
Collector	November-January	11
ADC (Development)	November-January	12
SDO	November-January	12

Source: Tour Diaries.

It would appear from the number of visits that once a week schedule was maintained. The visits by the Circle Officer have not been included. The Circle Officer and the Project Officer of IRDP visited the village everyday. The Circle Officer reported the daily progress to the SDO who in turn kept the Collector informed. Besides reviewing the progress on a day to day basis, the Collector held review meetings in the village every time he visited the village. In the review meetings, besides the villagers and the Chairman and Members of the Union Parishad, the District, Subdivisional and Thana level officers of development departments attended to facilitate co-ordination and on the spot decisions as problems arose.⁴⁸

The first review meeting on the progress of work done was held by the Collector at Nabagram on November 25, 1977. In this meeting, after discussion with the villagers and officers of different departments, specific allocation of duties were made for both the groups. This made things easier. Once the villagers could identify the type of assistance they needed from specific agencies, it could be ascertained without delay or paper correspondence as to whether such assistance could be provided and within which time. Time factor was very relevant in that the project was to be completed within a period of two months. It was no use asking the villagers to work without meeting the pre-conditions necessary to complete a particular item of work. Thus it was no use telling them to plant fruit-bearing trees without first making sure that saplings were available. It would be pointless to ask them to start poultry

48. Review meetings were held once a week under the chairmanship of the Collector.

farms without making arrangements, through the Livestock department, to sell chickens of improved variety. Similarly, improvement of housing-facilities was contingent on the availability of house-building loans from House Building Finance Corporation. It was necessary to explain to the villagers the terms and conditions of such a loan. In the first review meeting, all such details needed to be tied up and properly organised.⁴⁹

Organising Villagers

In organising the villagers, the method employed was that of constitution of co-operative societies based on identity of occupation. The pre-project conditions of the village revealed that not only such organisation was lacking but some of the occupational groups needed further income in addition to what their present occupation could give. By the end of December, 1977, six co-operative societies with different occupational groups were constituted in addition to one women's co-operative. Two centres with four sub-centres for adult education were opened as a step towards removing illiteracy.⁵⁰

Although the Presidential visit to the village was fixed on 15th January, 1978, the actual visit was on 5th February. By then the progress achieved in different sectors was as shown in Table 5.8.

The landless peasants, fishermen and the potters were given long-term lease of government-owned derelict tanks which, if

49. Based on the minutes of the first review meeting held on November 25, 1977.

50. Based on the review meeting held on December 22, 1977.

TABLE 5.8

CONSTITUTION OF CO-OPERATIVES FOR DIFFERENT OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS

Groups	Number	Membership
Farmers	2	43
Women	1	36
Landless Peasants	1	32
Fishermen	1	56
Potters	1	21

Source: IRDP Progress Report

re-excavated, could provide additional sources of income for these groups. The choice for the potters was dictated by pragmatic considerations in that they lived as a group near a derelict tank which they had been using for washing purposes. It was ascertained from discussion with them that for more than three months a year they remain idle. They cannot engage in making earthen-ware, mostly pots and pans, during monsoon. They need bright sunny days to dry the earthen-ware first before putting them into the oven for final processing. The re-excavated tank could give them an additional source of income from raising fish. Unless the tank was settled with them as a co-operative group, they would not feel a sense of ownership without which it would not be possible to get them involved in re-excavation work for raising fish. These groups were motivated to start re-excavation of these tanks by voluntary labour. The quantum of work that they had put in is shown in Table 5.9.

TABLE 5.9
OUTPUT OF VOLUNTARY LABOUR IN TERMS OF EARTH-WORK

Description	Area in acres	Total digging needed	Total work done
Tank for the Landless	1.10	1,65,000 cft	15,829 cft
Tank for the Fishermen	0.91	1,70,000 cft	59,500 cft
Tank for the Potters	0.35	35,000 cft	35,000 cft

Source: Project Officer IRDP and Sub-overseer
 Thana Council

The co-operative for the potters achieved 100% work. One reason for this was that they were a more cohesive group. They had all their dwelling huts in one area and the tank was located in that area. The area of the tank was small enough to be managed easily. As regards the fishermen, they could not work for the whole day. They had to go out for fishing in the river at a distance of 10 miles. The landless group was scattered all over the village. Mostly they worked as labourers in the fields of the land-owning groups. Like the fishermen, they had first to think of earning their daily bread and then work gratis for the tank allotted to them. Additional assistance for these two groups had to be provided to complete the digging work. This was done first by motivating the students of the local high school to work on the tanks in their leisure hours and secondly, by mobilising the Ansars of the Union to complete the unfinished work. The members of the women's co-operative received training in tailoring, sewing and related work to enable them to

earn some income or otherwise save household expenditure on children's clothes.⁵¹

Substantial progress was made in planting fruit-bearing trees, re-excavation of privately owned tanks and family planning. Thus in the minutes of the meeting held on December 14, 1977, it was noted that as many as 2000 fruit-bearing trees were planted along the village roads. Three villagers re-excavated their own tanks with loans received from the Agricultural bank. A family planning clinic was opened and 47 out of 245 eligible couples having more than two children accepted measures for family planning.

At the time of the President's visit on 5th February, 1978, the Chairman of Nabagram Union Parishad gave the following account:

Poultry Farms

Six poultry farms have been opened and put into operation while 260 chickens of improved variety have been distributed to the villagers.⁵²

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51. Organising women's co-operatives is one of the special action programmes of IRDP. There are 180 women's co-operatives in 19 selected Thanas of Bangladesh. The objective is to involve women in economic activities in a society which considers women's role being limited to household activities. For details see, Renee Gerard and others, Training for Women in Bangladesh, UNICEF, Dacca, 1977.
 52. Distribution of improved variety of chickens to the villagers is part of government policy. These are not given free but are exchanged with the local breed.

Re-excavation of derelict tanks for pisciculture

Out of the sixteen derelict tanks, four have been made fit for cultivation. Work on five more have been completed while work on the rest is in progress. Those made fit for raising fish include the three government-owned tanks given to the co-operatives.

Re-excavation of Canal

The villagers have decided to re-excavate the canal next year as this year time would not permit to complete the work.

Wheat Cultivation

The farmers of the village are not used to wheat cultivation. They have been motivated to grow wheat in an area of 40 acres in this village while for the whole Union the area covered is 250 acres.

Electrification

Steps have been taken by the Power Development Board to provide electricity to the village.⁵³

House-Building

Three farmers have taken loan from the banks for house-building while twelve more have applied for the same.

53. Power Development Board (PDB) is a semi-autonomous public corporation and is responsible for generation, transmission and distribution of power supply in Bangladesh.

Improvement of Playground

The students of local high school voluntarily worked for improvement of the playground. The work is now complete.

Plantation of fruit-bearing trees

A total number of 6843 plants of fruit-bearing trees have been planted.

Family Planning

Each of the 245 eligible couples in the village has been registered and each has been given a card for visits to the family planning centre established for the purpose. So far 21 married women have accepted IUD as a form of control while 36 males have accepted vasectomy as a permanent measure. Motivation work is going on as a result of which 56% of the eligible couples have indicated willingness to adopt family planning measures.

Adult Education

The percentage of literacy in this village is twenty five. Two centres with four sub-centres have been opened to impart elementary education to the villagers. The present roll-strength of these centres is 280 males and 344 females.

The village development project of Nabagram is essentially a tale of the corporate efforts of the villagers and the governmental machinery at the local level headed by the Collector. It is not a comprehensive village development project. It was not meant to be so given the short time of two months within which some aspects of village development were to be completed. Officially, the responsibility for development was entrusted to the Collector by the

President. The villagers were mobilised to achieve what was intended in the joint-meeting of the villagers and the President. The task was made easier because the President was in the picture. It is an exceptional case of Presidential involvement in village development. The important thing to note is the expectation of the President that the Collector's leadership is essential to such an effort at village development even though specific function of the various ministries was clearly allocated by Presidential order to which we have referred.

The joint efforts of the government and the people did yield results as Bangladesh Observer reported on June 21, 1978:

"Statistically speaking, this village had a food deficit of 7630 maunds. But now within a short time of eight months it has been turned into a surplus area by growing three crops on 40 acres out of 133 acres of land and two crops on the remaining land. This village is Nabagram literally meaning a New Village. It had to wait for many decades to justify this name and change its character of a drowsy and insipid village to one where the re-excavated ponds are now alive with fish, the wind is whispering in hundreds of planted trees, co-operative and saving programmes are animating the people to economic rejuvenation and adoption of family planning methods by 60 percent of the couples has enabled it to become a zero population area."⁵⁴

CASE IV: ARICHA-ICHAMATI IRRIGATION PROJECT

Aricha-Ichamati irrigation project represents an union of the efforts

54. Bangladesh Observer, June 21, 1978.

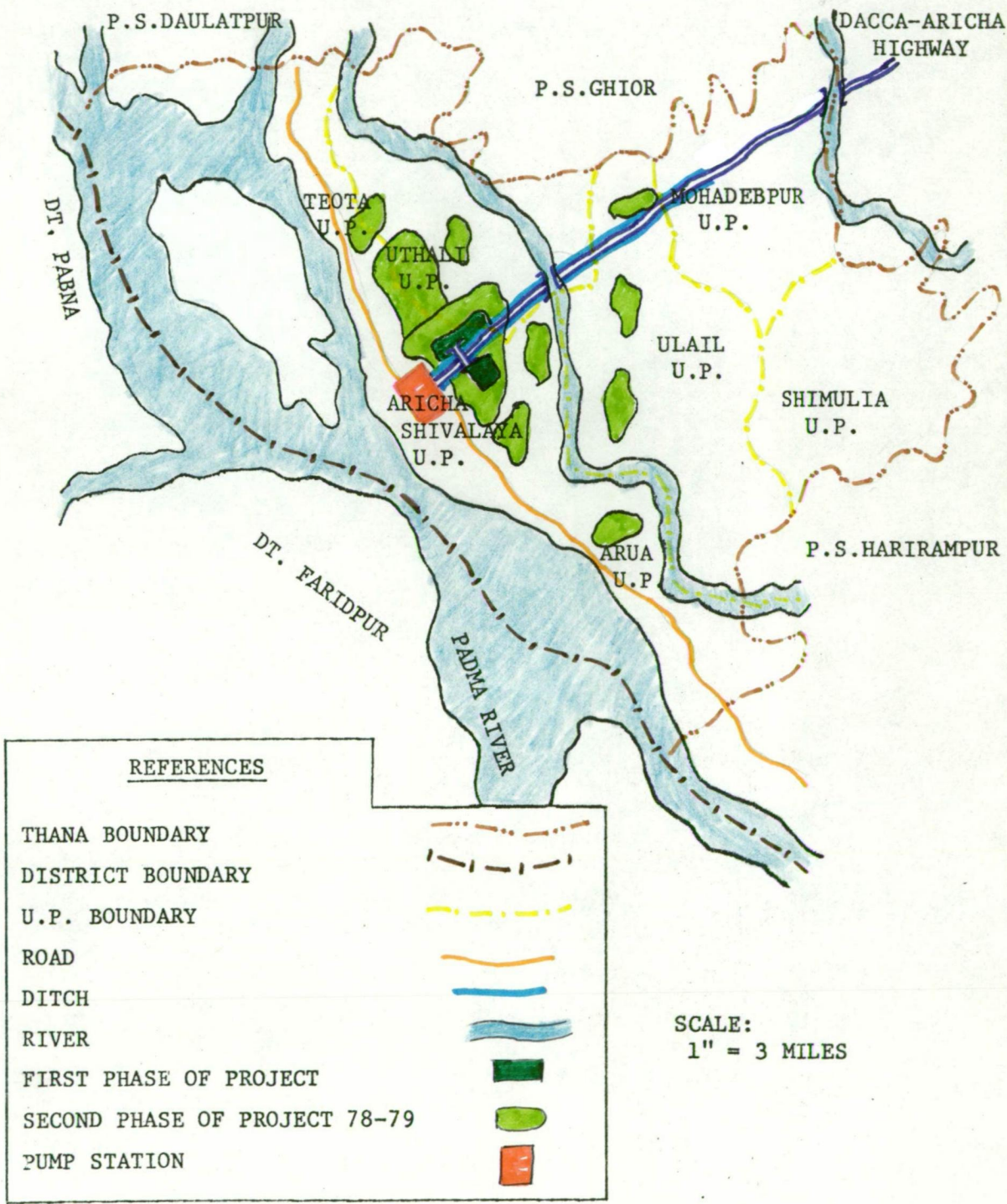
of the Collectoral pattern and the local people. It is different from Nabagram or Ulashi in that there was no Presidential involvement in the project. It was conceived by the local people who approached the Collector for such assistance as could not be met from their own resources. The case-study of this project is based on the author's experience as Collector of Dacca between the period from February 1976 to February 1978, interviews with the Chairmen and Members of relevant Union Parishads, farmers, Thana level officers and the written records maintained by Shivalaya Thana Council in which the project is located.

Location

Aricha is the name of a small river port in Shivalaya Thana of Manikganj Subdivision. It is the farthest point of the north-west portion of Dacca District connected by a metalled road known as Dacca-Aricha highway which is part of the connecting link between the capital and the northern and south-western Districts of Bangladesh. Aricha is better known as the point for providing ferry services for the vehicles running between Dacca and the Districts falling in the northern and south-western parts of Bangladesh. Along the highway reaching upto Aricha, one can see ditches running parallel to the highway because the highway itself was built by excavating earth from both sides contiguous to which lie tracts of agricultural lands. These lands, for lack of irrigation facilities, could grow only one variety of rice during monsoon and that too under constant threat of flood. The threat of flood comes from the fact that the highway is cut across east-west by two small rivers which branch off from the main river Padma. During monsoon, when the Padma overflows, the two small rivers called Ichamati and Khirai take

on the excess water which inundates the ditches thus causing damage to the crops grown in the fields adjacent to the same. Conversely during dry season, the lands cannot grow anything worthwhile for lack of water. The location of the project is given in the Figure below:

FIGURE 5.2



Project Objectives

The object of the project was two-fold. One was to deepen the ditch running parallel to the road so as to increase its capacity to contain excess water during monsoon and at the same time, with the earth made available by deepening the ditch, build embankments along the agricultural fields to prevent excess water from flooding the same. Secondly, arrangements were to be made to pump water into the ditch, during dry season, from the main water source at river Padma. This would facilitate irrigation during dry season and at the same time make pisciculture possible throughout the year. It was estimated that an additional crop from 1000 acres of land could be raised during winter months besides saving it from flood during monsoon.

Initiation From Below

The people of the project area first considered the possibility of digging the road-side ditch so as to give it the shape of a canal. This was in early January, 1977. As digging the canal itself was not sufficient to give them the desired result unless arrangements were made to ensure regular inflow of water during dry season, the Chairmen and Members of the adjoining Unions including Members of the farmer's co-operative discussed the issue with the Circle Officer who visited the area on 31st January, 1977. Both the Circle Officer and the local people were convinced that it was possible to dig the canal, about two miles in length, during the first phase, but arrangements had to be made simultaneously for water during the dry season.

It was at this stage that the issue was brought to the notice of the Collector on February 23, 1977 when he visited the area as part of his monthly tours. The project area was visited by the

Collector on the same day and discussions were held with the local people who agreed to provide free labour for the earth-work component of the project. The Collector, in turn, assured them of setting up electrically operated low-lift pumps at Aricha to bring in water during dry season. This, it was emphasized, was to be done in consultation with the engineers of WDB and the BADC.

The Circle Officer and other local officers held a meeting with the people to finalise arrangements for digging the canal. This meeting was held on March 11, 1977. In the meeting the farmers and the elected representatives expressed reservations about starting the work immediately as the sowing season for "Boro" rice was almost over. The Collector visited the area again on 19th March and held a meeting with the farmers and the Chairmen and Members of Union Parishads. The latter informed him of their decision to postpone the work till December. No pressure was put upon the farmers who had the complete freedom to choose their own time for implementation. Thus it was that the project which could be completed before the onset of monsoon was put off for execution during later part of the year. Dry season normally starts at the end of October. The Collector could have insisted on the first week of November for starting the work. This was not done. If the farmers were convinced of the benefit from the project, they would work for it as they promised to do, from December.

Co-ordinative Process

While the villagers decided to postpone work till December, the District administration could not sit idle. Many things were required to be done. The first step was to ascertain the technical feasibility and requirement of funds for those items of work which

could not be done by voluntary labour. More than one agency was involved directly or indirectly. First, the agreement of the Roads and Highways department was to be obtained before the work on digging the canal could be started. The local representatives of the department had already voiced their objection on the following counts:

- a. the road-side ditch was the property of the department which acquired the land and paid compensation at the time of building the road;
- b. permission from the Chief Engineer would be necessary to start work;
- c. deepening the canal and the consequent inflow of water might damage the highway.

The BADC, which is responsible for providing low-lift pumps, had to confirm the availability of the same in time. The BRTC had to agree to the inflow of water near Aricha because it had its terminal office over the far end of the ditch where the pumps were to be installed. This office was situated over a high wooden platform beneath which lay the ditch. The PDB had to agree that it would be able to provide power connection to the low-lift pumps when they were installed. Finally, the WDB had to agree that the scheme was technically and economically justified and that the flow of water would not cause damage to the highway. This opinion of the WDB was necessary to convince the Roads and Highways department and secure its agreement for the excavation of the canal. Thus as many as five agencies were involved who were to be consulted and their agreement obtained.

To secure consensus of the agencies, the method employed was one of informal consultations. This was done by the Collector

who requested the representatives of the relevant agencies to meet at Aricha on a fixed date during the month of March. Two meetings were held at the project site and these were in the nature of informal discussions rather than formal meetings. The elected representatives of the Union Parishads as well as the potential beneficiaries of the project attended. Consensus of all concerned was obtained.

The next stage was to work out the estimated costs. Every effort was made to ensure that it did not become a grandiose scheme involving funds which required ministerial approval. This was necessary to eliminate delay that was inevitable in the long drawn-out process of filling up prescribed forms, submission to the appropriate ministry with the equally lengthy process of inter-ministerial meetings, placement of funds, calling of tenders, scrutiny thereof and finally issue of work order.⁵⁵ A modest estimate of TK.1,75,000 was made with the assistance of the engineers of WDB. Part of the money was meant for payment of hire-charges for the low-lift pumps and power connections. Part was to be spent for erecting wooden platform on the bank of river Padma on which the pumps were to be installed.

Project Economics

It was estimated that by installing 12 electrically operated pumps,

55. Normally 6 months to 2 years time is needed to finalise tenders and award of contracts. For details see Mohammed Serajuddin, 'Monitoring, Implementation of Economic Development Project: The Bangladesh Experience' in Administrative Science Review, Vol. 9, No. 2, June, 1979, NIPA, Dacca, pp.27-41.

it would be possible to irrigate 1025 acres of land of the three Unions of Shivalaya, Uthali and Teota. These lands were previously used for "Kheshari" cultivation with an average yield of 10 maunds per acre. This used to give an income of TK.600 per acre to the farmers during dry season. The total number of farm families living in the project area during the first phase was 1108 which meant that on an average an individual family owned nearly an acre of land. Irrigation of lands covering an area of 1025 acres would yield 41,000 maunds of paddy at 40 maunds per acre. The income derived from this would be TK.3,28,0000 calculated at the prevailing market rate of TK.80 per maund. This was to be from one crop for one season only and does not include the income to be derived from cultivation of fish from the canal.⁵⁶ The replacement of "Kheshari" cultivation by rice cultivation would mean a rise in income from TK.6000 per acre to TK.3200 per acre.

As against this, the break-up of capital cost was as follows:

Construction of platform	TK. 15,968
RCC Pipes	TK. 1,14,000
Placing of RCC Pipes and Carrying cost	TK. 1032
Brick bats filling	TK. 6000
Electrical installation and allied works	<u>TK. 30,000</u>
Total	TK.1,67,000

56. The project economics is based on the calculation made by Thana Agricultural Officer of Shivalaya Thana Council. The figure represents gross income. Even if we deduct 50% as cost of cultivation, the net income amounts to 16,40,000 Taka. "Kheshari" is the local name for a low quality lentile.

The voluntary component of the project consisted of earth-work to the tune of 8,86,325 cft involving 17,730 mandays of labour at the rate of 50 cft per manday. 591 volunteers would have to work daily to complete the project in thirty days. In monetary terms, this means a cost of TK.88,632 calculated on the basis of TK.100 per 1000 cft of earth-work.⁵⁷

Implementation Process

In order to allow farmers to grow high-yielding variety of rice during dry season, it was necessary to complete the project by January at the latest. Left to beneficiaries themselves, this was not possible within the stipulated time. They could not be expected to work at a stretch for thirty days without doing any other work. The need for mobilisation on a broader basis was keenly felt. Students of local schools, elected representatives of adjoining Union Parishads, members of village defence and food production committees, Ansars and public servants were to be mobilised from both within and outside the project area. The active co-operation from various groups of people outside the project area covered by the first phase was not difficult to obtain because it was conveyed to them that during the second phase, the irrigation coverage would be extended to 7000 acres. The people of the contiguous areas readily responded to the call for voluntary labour.

The entire project area was divided into seven blocks each under the direct supervision of a Thana level officer. An effort was made to provide administrative leadership and support from without rather than from within. To this end, a central

57. Calculated on the basis of prevailing market rates.

Committee, headed by the Chairman of Shivalaya Union Parishad, was formed. Farmers designated as Managers of seven blocks and seven other leading farmers were included as members for inter-block co-ordination and supervision. The Thana level officers were there as liaison officers between the Managers and the District administration. Another Committee, consisting of the elected representatives and officials, supervised the construction of platform and installation of power pumps. The Subdivisional administration, under the overall guidance of the Collector, provided logistic and other administrative support for bringing in people from nearby areas so as to make the participation more broad-based for early completion of the project.

The motivational aspect of the work was shared by the Collector, ADC (Development), SDO and the Circle Officer. A total number of 23 meetings were held by them for mobilisation of voluntary labour at the local level including review of day to day progress of work done in the project. The Circle Officer worked whole-time for the project, visiting it daily to review progress of work and report to the SDO on any matter requiring intervention of the Collector. The work on the project was started on 12th December, 1977 and completed on 31st January, 1978.

An important element of voluntary participation was sharing of the work-load both by the potential beneficiaries and outside groups. No rigid formula in the distribution of workload was adhered to so as not to stifle the voluntary aspect of participation. Seven Thana level officers were deployed to take note of attendance of labourers, measurement of earth-work and supervision of various outside groups who came to work for the project.⁵⁸

58. Based on official file maintained by TTDC, Shivalaya. The

In a meeting held on December 25, 1977, a decision was taken to involve eleven high schools of Shivalaya Thana. In pursuance of this decision, the head masters of the schools were requested to send student volunteers the number of which was fixed in consultation with the head master, members of the project and managing committees of the schools. The volume of work to be done by the students as a group was also fixed.⁵⁹ The performance of various participating groups were kept under constant review which is apparent from the meeting held during the month of December, 1977.⁶⁰

The office records of TTDC Shivalaya shows that on 26th December, 1977, as many as 26 various local institutions with a volunteer labour-force of 1650 worked for digging the canal. These include local councils, high schools, colleges, Ansars, members of village defence and food production Committees. By mid-January, the number of participating groups rose to 50.

58. minutes of the meeting held on December 23, 1977 show the deployment of Thana level officers.

59. The volume of work was fixed in terms of the total number of students that each school was to send. This is seen in the proceedings of the meeting held on December 25, 1977 and the subsequent letter sent by the Circle Officer to headmasters of different schools.

60. The decisions taken in the review meetings were invariably followed by written requests to relevant institutions/groups. For the sake of convenience, all such correspondence was made by the Circle Officer on behalf of the Collector.

Volume of Work Done

The volume of work to be done on voluntary labour was estimated to be 8,86,325 cft of earth. This was to be used for raising embankment along the canal. Part of the total volume of earth was also to be obtained by digging field channels for irrigating blocks of agricultural lands by gravity flow. The relative share of work done by the participating groups was as follows:

TABLE 5.10
COMPARATIVE FIGURES OF VOLUNTARY EARTH-WORK
(UP TO JANUARY 31, 1978)

Participating Groups	Earth-Work (In cft)	% of Total Work
Local Councils	1,27,750	16.32%
Students	68,150	8.71
Beneficiaries	5,01,323	64.08
Others	85,050	10.89
Total	782,273	100.00

Source: Shivalaya Thana Council Records.

The local councils included seven Union Parishads falling within the project area and a municipality located in the Subdivisional headquarters. The municipality contributed only 1650 cft of earth-work and the rest was done by the Union Parishads. The short-fall of 1,04,052 cft of earth-work is explained in terms of

the deviation made by the beneficiaries from the prescribed height of embankment. The local farmers insisted that, according to their experience, a height of 2.5 to 3 feet would ensure protection from flood. This was accepted.⁶¹

The percentage contribution of various groups shows a feature which is different from that of Ulashi. In this case, the beneficiaries were directly involved in project-execution and had contributed 64.08% of the total earth-work. The next in order are the local councils. The greater contribution of the beneficiaries, consisting of 1108 farm families, is expalainable in terms of the benefits directly accruable to them as a result of the irrigation project. Unlike in Ulashi, the Army or the police as a group did not participate.⁶² The Ansars did. They are included in the "Others" group and they had contributed a total of 7900 cft of earth-work. The "Others" category include local socio-cultural organisations, public servants and the labourers working at Aricha river port. Contribution from conventional government sources for earth-work such as RWP or FWP was nil. The cash component of the project expenditure was met by funds from Dacca Zilla Parishad including TK.30,000 from the TIP funds allocated for the Thana. There was thus no extra expenditure involved.

CASE STUDIES : SOME REFLECTIONS

The case studies signify a distinctive feature of the Collectoral

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- 61. Due regard was paid to the opinion of local farmers with regard to project design and specification.
 - 62. Their participation was not envisaged in the implementative strategy adopted for the project.

pattern. This feature is characterised by the crucial role that the Collectoral pattern can and does play in the process of participatory development in Bangladesh. This role has hardly been acknowledged, let alone appreciated, in the existing literature on field administration. This participatory process is commonly credited to have been introduced with Ulashi project.⁶³

Our analysis of the concept and practice of rural development both during and after the end of the colonial rule shows that there is a continuity of the role of the Collectoral pattern in the process of rural development even outside the ambit of governmental programmes. Involvement of the Collectoral pattern in efforts aimed at improving rural conditions is no longer a heresy, the work of "crazy district officers".⁶⁴ It is a politically assigned responsibility of the Collector. This assignment flowed from the success achieved in the District development programmes since 1974 which led to the acceptance of Swanirvar concept on a nation-wide basis. Swanirvar concept in the late seventies led to mass participation concept after the success of Ulashi project.

The government officially assigned the responsibility of initiating and implementing mass participation schemes to the Collector in May, 1977. Although notes of concern centering on skepticism has been voiced by economists in Bangladesh with regard to the replicability of Ulashi type of projects, the subsequent

63. Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahamad, 'The Theme and Purpose of the Seminar: From Ulashi to New National Economic Order --- Some Comments' in Development through Self-help : Lessons from Ulashi, Op.cit., pp.3-5.

64. Abedin, Op.cit., p.275.

events proved otherwise.⁶⁵ During the year 1978-79, as many as 2675 projects were taken up by the Collectors. Of these, 2417 projects were implemented. The government allocation for the projects amounted to TK.1,49,48,846 of which TK.1,36,47,946 were spent. The total financial benefits derived in terms of increased food production amounted to TK.17,40,16,789. This has been confirmed by the official progress report prepared by the Cabinet Division in respect of voluntary mass participation schemes. The progress report is given at Appendix C.⁶⁶

The most significant development since the late seventies has been that of a growing awareness, on the part of the governing elite, of the need to involve the Collectorial pattern in the task of mobilising voluntary labour in an attempt to organise and implement small labour-intensive schemes for agricultural development. This awareness has led to national policy focus on participatory development. Whether or not this can provide an alternative development model for Bangladesh remains to be seen. Important questions such as institutional participation in the decision-making process in local level planning and implementation of schemes,

65. M. Ghulam Sattar, 'The Ulashi-Jadunathpur Self-Help Canal Digging Project: A Critical Analysis' in B.K. Jahangir (ed), The Journal of Social Studies, 3, January, 1979, Dacca, pp.77-96.

66. We have already mentioned that since May, 1977, a Special Cell was created in the Cabinet Division. This Cell is entrusted with the responsibility of co-ordinating the implementation of mass participation schemes and also is responsible for reviewing the progress of work done in the Districts.

distributive justice or growth with equity remain to be examined in the light of prevailing socio-economic structure. These are questions which fall outside the scope of our present study.

One thing is very clear from the experience of Bangladesh. It is that rural development with or without voluntary participation involves organisation and co-ordination of the needs of multiple agencies. Solution of the organisational issues and co-ordinative needs have been attempted by what is commonly described as a colonial structure of field administration. It would amount to arguing against the social, political and ideological forces of history to say that responsible local government in Bangladesh could not evolve merely on the ground of continuance of the Collectorial pattern. Conversely, it would amount to arguing against the mass of empirical evidence to say that the Collectorial pattern, as the product of colonial days attuned to maintenance administration in the regulatory sphere, is incompatible with the urgent needs of rural development. The rhetorical bias towards a description of the Collectorial pattern as a colonial legacy embedded in ethos of routinized and regulatory administration, needs to be tempered by an unbiased analysis and objective assessment of the social, economic, political and cultural factors involved in the process of rural involvement.

The case studies, drawn from real life situations in Bangladesh, throw light on the relationship between the Collectorial pattern and the process of rural development. This relationship arises out of and is influenced by political, social, economic and cultural factors of Bangladesh society. An understanding of this relationship demands a redefinition of the traditional political role of field administration. The political dimension of Bangladesh

field administration needs to be judged in the context of the urgent needs of rural development and the leadership role that it is expected to provide in the process. The expectation of the leadership role of the Collector is from both the governing elite and the rural society. The governmental reliance on the Collectorial pattern for implementation of programmes of rural development arises not only from its propensity to follow a tried system of administration but from its realisation of the growing capacity of the existing field administration to the changing needs.

The Comilla approach was the first major attempt to effect an union of the efforts of local councils and local administration to improve conditions of rural life. The District development programmes of 1974 can be seen as an attempt by the Collectors to pool local resources in a bid to meet food deficit caused by floods. This effort, organised outside the formal ambit of governmental programmes, was unified under the slogan of Swanirvar. The slogan of Swanirvar became the officially accepted strategy of rural development during the late seventies and assumed the name of mass participation schemes. In all these efforts, notwithstanding the change in names, the Collectorial pattern remains a constant factor. This underscores the need to look at development not purely in terms of village participation or governmental involvement as dependent or independent variables but in terms of interaction of three elements ---- villagers, the national government and the Collectorial pattern as part of the national administrative system undergoing a process of change.

The mass of empirical evidence that we have presented in Chapters IV and V indicates a completely new dimension of the role of field administration in a developing country. The distinguishing

feature of this role consists in evoking popular enthusiasm for rural development. This enables us to formulate the following proposition:

Proposition V : Field administration in a developing country may, with adequate political support, be an essential element in organising and sustaining the process of rural development based on the ideology of mass participation.

CHAPTER VI

THE COLLECTORAL PATTERN AND THE THEME OF INCOMPATIBILITY

The central theme of this Chapter is the relationship between the Collectoral pattern and rural society. The trend of Swanirvar movement and the case studies which we have analysed have shown the crucial role of the Collectoral pattern in the process of rural development based on voluntary participation. Excessive attention has been given in the literature of community development to facilitating community participation. Involvement of the so-called regulatory administration is often viewed as a negative factor inhibiting community participation.¹ This has led to the view that a field administrative system, attuned to maintenance of security and revenue extraction, is unsuitable for purposes of community development. The thematic perception of unsuitability is not corroborated by empirical evidence. This gap between the abstract view of community development based on voluntary and spontaneous participation and the actual practice of community development which emphasizes the need to establish linkages to the existing administrative system for stimulating popular enthusiasm for development, needs to be explained in other than political or administrative terms. This Chapter seeks to rectify this imbalance by focusing attention to the synaptic relationship between the Collectoral pattern and rural society. The object is not to deny the value of political involvement

1. Peter Du Sautoy, 'Some Administrative Aspects of Community Development' in Journal of Local Administration Overseas, Vol.1, No. 1, January, 1962, pp.39-46.

and administrative needs of co-ordination in a community development programme which is multi-dimensional and nation-wide in scope. Experiences of local Swanirvar programmes or the individual efforts of the colonial Collectors to which we have referred, suggest that replication of the programmes on a nation-wide and sustained basis demands political involvement and administrative leadership at the regional level. The object of exploring the relationship between the Collectorial pattern and rural society in other than administrative or political terms is to place the question of Collector's involvement in a perspective which can adequately explain the leadership role of the Collector in a participatory process of development.

The quest for a perspective is dictated by several considerations. First, our analysis shows that even during colonial days attempts were made by the Collectors, albeit in an isolated manner, to generate popular participation in development. Secondly, the rural society has not seen the Collector merely in the image of an enforcer of law and revenue gatherer. It has also seen him as one involved in the welfare of the rural people at times of distress caused by natural calamities. It has seen him making efforts to organise participatory institutions, such as local councils and through them generate popular participation in rural development.² Thirdly, in the post-colonial era, with increasing national policy focus on rural development, it has seen him more closely associated with rural development programmes such as the RWP and TIP. Fourthly, it has seen the Collector, following the emergence of Bangladesh,

2. The emergence of Circle as an administrative unit for development in the early part of this century is an indication of this. This has been discussed in Chapter I, pp.39-42.

involved in generating popular enthusiasm to fight food deficits caused by floods. Fifthly, it has seen the Collector in the vanguard of the Swanirvar movement in the late seventies following political commitment to mass participation schemes.

These facts, in terms of historical continuity, suggest more than political and administrative factors and underscore the need for examining the Collector's role in the context of the social system in which he operates. This is specially relevant if we keep in view the fact that (a) the political leadership with or without democratic values have placed reliance on the Collectoral pattern in efforts at rural development and (b) the rural society has shown a tendency to accept the leadership role of the Collector in such efforts even in the absence of political involvement.³ The UN reports, based on the inter-country experience of community development, that suggest the need to link the community development organisation to the existing regional administrative apparatus further underline the importance of the social perspective of field administration.⁴ This perspective, based on the relationship between the Collector and the rural society, is suggested by Henry C. Hart in his essay 'The Village and Development Administration!'⁵

3. The implementation of District Development Programmes under Swanirvar in 1974 and the efforts made by some Collectors during British rule in India illustrate that local development programmes may be organised even in the absence of specific involvement of the political authority.

4. This has already been referred to in Chapter II, p.63.

5. Henry C. Hart, 'Village and Development Administration', J.J. Heapey (ed.), Spatial Dimensions of Development Administration, Duke University Press (Durham), North Carolina, 1971, pp.32-90.

AN APPRECIATION OF HART'S VIEWS

Hart questions the sociological analysis of Carl Taylor and Douglas Ensminger who relate the failure of the community development programme in India to the prestige-ordered service, the ICS-IAS tradition.⁶ On the basis of his analysis of the experiences in community development programmes of India and Pakistan, Hart sustains the argument that reliance on the prestige-ordered service has led to better results in India than in case of Pakistan where such reliance was lacking:

"We have here strong evidence that the difficulties encountered by nation-wide community development in India are the products merely of the strategy of relying on the existing elite administrative service, rather than on new hierarchies within each state. Pakistan came nearer to the latter strategy with less satisfactory results."⁷

We may recall that in Chapter II, we have referred to the organisational issues of community development in both the countries to show that the relative success of the programme in India has been that of a proper integration of the state level hierarchy with the field administrative system followed simultaneously by a clear recognition of the Collector's responsibility in the process of implementation. In case of Pakistan, not only has this integration been lacking but there was positive distrust, on the part of the community development proponents, of the Collectorial pattern.⁸

6. Ibid., p.47.

7. Ibid., p.53.

8. Akhter Hameed Khan's views have been discussed in Chapter II, pp.75-76.

The question of prestige-ordered service is not a matter of our direct concern. The issue is nonetheless relevant in that Pakistan too inherited the same service structure. The personnel constituting this structure, called the CSPs, filled the majority of the posts of Collectors in the province of East Pakistan. The question of personnel acquires relevance in our context in view of the fact that the populist movement of rural development during colonial days was initiated by ICS officers while the Collectors who earned distinction of implementing schemes based on mass participation such as those in Sylhet and Jessore, were all CSP officers.⁹

The views expressed by Hart need further elaboration and analysis. Some of the concepts he uses and the propositions he makes relate to the Collectorial pattern of field administration. Basic to his theme are the facts that the Collectorial pattern has to be seen as one "enculturated in the peasant society" and a prestige-ordered service can serve purposes of development if there is necessary attitudinal change in the personnel constituting the service.¹⁰

The question asked by Hart is: "Can a prestige-ordered service be changed from the bottom up?" This question is raised in relation to the community development experience of India. The

9. Based on official gazettes and gradation lists of the services for the relevant period. The Chaudhuri Committee of 1973 affirms that 70% of the posts of Collectors in Bangladesh were drawn from CSP cadre in 1970. See Chaudhuri Committee Report, (1973), Op.cit., p.11.

10. Hart, Op.cit., p.72.

bottom up concept of reform of the bureaucracy is related to the new structure, the Block, separate from the old structure, the Taluka or Tahsil. The new community development cadre of the Village Level Workers (VLWs) are considered part of the concept.

The second question raised is: "Can a self-help programme be conveyed to governments of separate political responsibility?" This question, Hart admits, is peculiar to federal nations. He views the ICS-IAS tradition in India as "the most reliable bridge" between governments of separate political responsibility.¹¹

It is with the first question that we are principally concerned although, for purposes of our consideration, we may frame the second question in a different way in the context of Bangladesh experience. We may ask the question; Can the Collectorial pattern, designed for law and order and revenue collection, convey a self-help programme to the rural people?

The mass of empirical evidence which we have presented while discussing the trend of Swanirvar movement followed by the case studies leaves no room for doubt that it can. We have seen that exigencies of local situation may lead to initiation of local development projects by the Collector. We have also seen that given the necessary back-up support from the political leadership, development programmes based on mass participation strategy can be replicated on a nation-wide scale.

The concepts of top down, bottom up and lateral reform of bureaucratic behaviour together with the 'enculturation' concept as explicated in Hart's analysis, provide the social perspective of the

11. Ibid., p.47.

Collectoral pattern. It is against this perspective that the issue of incompatibility raised by Fesler has to be judged.

The Concept of Lateral Reform

Hart views development in peasant society as basically a pattern of interrelationship among national political leadership, the administrative system undergoing a process of change and the villagers. The first two belong to the urban culture. The national political leaders as representatives of urban culture consider it important to transmit values to the peasantry in an attempt to secure their participation in nation-building. The second element, the administrative system, acts as the transmission belt for diffusion of values among the villagers. A new element in the process of transmission is the bureaucrat called VLW. The creation of this new element is considered imperative on the premise that the existing law and order bureaucracy is not equipped to transmit the new values based on voluntary participation. This premise is based on the assumption that the existing bureaucracy is trained in and guided by considerations of the use of force or control of social behaviour through application of laws and regulations which are antithetical to the concept of voluntary participation. The question of incompatibility of the existing field administrative system is primarily based on this assumption.

The intention of the political leaders to transmit values of self-help and adoption of new technologies, represents the top down attempt to reform the existing bureaucracy. Creation of a new unit for development administration and a new cadre represent the bottom up concept of reform. It is contended by Hart that neither of these two processes of bureaucratic reform is likely to

be successful in achieving the programme objectives of community development. It is the lateral process of reform that is likely to lead to satisfactory results.

The concept of lateral reform is based on the assumption that the administrative system in South Asia is composed of persons representing multiple layers of culture. In such a situation top down or bottom up reform is not likely to bring about the attitudinal change required to facilitate village development. Reform must be introduced laterally to generate confidence in all layers of culture that all are changing. The emphasis is on free and frank exchange of information among different functional services including the elite administrative service. This exchange of communication must not be limited to the personnel constituting the administrative system. It must flow on to and back from the villagers. Lateral reform is seen as a direct consequence of the efforts of Comilla Academy:

"The Comilla approach is not bottom up, but lateral. The officers of the Civil Service of Pakistan are training there alongwith officers of the provincial service, specialized extension agents, and the village leaders with whom they work. The training is resident, continuing and actual. Men of different cultural layers, examining the same development situation, are asked to understand not only the reality of the situation, but the difference of their perspective."¹²

On the basis of the Comilla approach to training public servants and village leaders, Hart makes two propositions:

12. Ibid., pp.73-74.

1. "An extensive administrative system ordered by the prestige-ranking of culturally distinct careers and enculturated in peasant society cannot be reformed by eliminating prestige in the relation of ranks without the development of a specialized or program culture common to all ranks and to the peasantry.
2. Such a system resists reform from the top along or from the bottom alone. Reform may be instituted laterally, developing confidence in all layers that all are changing."¹³

AN ELABORATION OF THE CONCEPT OF LATERAL REFORM

We need to elaborate this concept with regard to the system of training for rural development of the culturally distinct careers constituting the administrative system as a whole. The lateral concept of administrative training for development acquires added relevance in view of the leadership role of the Collectoral pattern in the process of development based on self-help strategy. The community development methods of training for officers of the Collectoral pattern started much earlier than is usually acknowledged in the existing literature on rural development and rural administration. It is equally ignored in the study of field administration of South Asia. The result is the stock response based on the assumption of unsuitability or incompatibility of the Collectoral pattern being absolutely oriented to law and order or revenue collection.

As early as in 1936, the training content of the newly recruited ICS officers included a series of lectures on Indian social welfare. This was the result of Sir A.C. Chatterjee Committee report.

13. Ibid., p.74.

This was followed in 1937, by the appointment of another Committee dealing with the same subject. This Committee was headed by Sir Edward Blunt, K.C.I.E., O.B.E., a retired ICS officer. Sir Edward Blunt edited a book entitled "Social Service in India" for ICS officers under training. This book was made compulsory for them by the government. This book is a collection of essays dealing with various aspects of rural life in India. Chapters X, XI and XII, written by C.F. Strickland, C.I.E., a retired ICS officer, are specially important as they show an attempt at orienting the young ICS officers to the task of rural development. Taken together, they reveal a remarkable shift in emphasis from regulatory to social administration.¹⁴

The lateral concept of training was put into operation in the province of Bengal as early as in 1940 by the department of Rural Reconstruction. Although the training programme was organised mainly for the Circle Officers, it did include non-official workers from several Districts.¹⁵ Referring to the work of the department, Rowlands Committee noted: "We have ample evidence that many a young officer has been inspired by the contagion of his example with a new vision of service to the rural population of the Province."¹⁶

This is not to minimise the contribution of Comilla Academy but to provide a broader perspective of the process of

14. Sir Edward Blunt, K.C.I.E., O.B.E., I.C.S. (Retd), (ed.), Social Service in India, An Introduction to Some Social and Economic Problems of the Indian People, HMSO, 1939. See Preface.

15. Ishaque, Op.cit., p.13.

16. Rowlands Committee Report, Op.cit., p.22. Reference is to the work done by H.S.M. Ishaque.

administrative training for rural development in terms of the relationship between the colonial administrative system and rural development. Field administration had been involved in rural development three or four decades before the birth of the Academy at Comilla. Field administration in those days, as now, was perceived to be much more than regulatory administration. On the face it, this reference to historical antecedents of administrative training for development may seem irrelevant. It may be questioned on the ground that by 1960 none of the ICS officers were in field positions.¹⁷

It is, however, still relevant on two counts. First, the field administration, particularly the Collectorial pattern, is the result of the complex processes of history, shaped and influenced by the social system. Secondly, the historical evidence is important to show the limitations of looking at field administration merely as an instrument of maintenance of order and revenue collection.

Writing as early as in 1938, C.F. Strickland referred to the fact that the Collector devoted less time to trying cases or supervising revenue collection than to rural welfare.¹⁸ The end of the colonial era led to the culmination of this process when by the year 1962, as explained in Chapter II, the Collector's office

17. Ralph Braibanti, (ed.), Asian Bureaucratic Systems Emergent from the British Imperial Tradition, Op.cit., p.303. According to Braibanti not a single ICS officer held the post of the Collector in Pakistan in 1964.

18. C.F. Strickland, 'Local Government and Social Administration' in Sir Edward Blunt, K.C.I.E., O.B.E., I.C.S. (Retd), (ed.), Social Service in India, op.cit., p.397.

expanded to include additional officers to look after his original functions. The Comilla Academy, by introducing the concept of lateral reform on a wider scale, effected attitudinal changes not only in the bureaucracy but among village leaders. The Collector's historical ties both institutionally and in terms of administrative training further equipped him to provide leadership to the rural development process on a scale and to a degree demanded by the increasing involvement of the national political leadership in the task of improving rural conditions. Up to September 1964, the Academy had trained 7500 people of which 2500 were public servants and the rest village leaders and social workers. On an average, the Academy trained 550 officers and about 1200 village leaders per year.¹⁹

From 1964 onwards, training at the Academy for a period of four weeks for officers belonging to the CSP was made compulsory. Class room lectures on Rural Economics, Sociology, Rural Administration, Co-operatives and Education were supplemented by field visits. This training was given in the first year of their entry into service. Thus it was that even before they could get to know their regulatory functions, the future Collectors were exposed to the ideas of rural development in the field.²⁰

Hart's concept of lateral reform as the only effective way of bringing about attitudinal change in the status-ridden bureaucracy and thus gear it to the task of development needs to be qualified.

19. Syed Nuruzzaman, Survey of In-Service Training Institutions in East Pakistan, NIPA, Dacca, 1969, p.131.

20. Based on Annual Reports of Comilla Academy, specially Fifth, Sixth, Seventh and Eighth.

The qualification which we suggest is based on the deductions from Bangladesh experience in the process of rural development. For involving the bureaucracy effectively in the process of rural development, lateral reform needs to be strengthened by both top down and bottom up reform. Top down reform in the sense of political directions for attitudinal change in bureaucracy is a necessary condition for lateral reform. Without specific and firm political commitment to the process of administrative training for rural development, it would be futile to expect introduction, let alone effective operation, of the process of lateral reform. It was due to firm political direction for imparting administrative training for rural development that led the prestige-ranking officer of the bureaucracy to acquire training in Comilla Academy.

Similarly, the bottom up process of reform cannot altogether be discarded. The creation of a new cadre for a new unit of development administration is essential to incorporate developmental dimensions into the existing administrative apparatus. That apparatus is likely to be more amenable to change by lateral reform when such dimensions are already there. It is contended that the Collectorial pattern provides a distinctive example of a blending of all the three processes of reform occurring over time reinforced by social forces to which we shall turn later in this Chapter.

COLLECTOR AS PART OF THE RURAL SOCIETY

The three-fold concept of top, bottom and lateral reform however valid conceptually in explaining the attitudinal change in a bureaucracy which is hierarchically ordered with a pre-dominantly status-bias, does not fully explain the role of the Collector in rural development. One way to appreciate the role would be to view

the Collector as part of the rural society. He is as much influenced by the environmental conditions within which he lives and works as the rural society is influenced by his efforts to improve rural conditions. It is possible to view the administrative and the political elite as belonging to the westernized urban culture in sharp contrast to the villagers who are entirely rural. Within this divided structure of the social system, the Collector occupies a special place which is explained in terms of his interrelationship with the rural society. Hart views the Collector as one "enculturated in the peasant society":

"As in India, the prestige-ordered service of the traditional field administration is functional in peasant society in ways not comprehended by its critics. The district officer earned his prestige, in British times, by maintaining order in a vast area beyond the capacity of the force he is commanded to subdue. His prestige is still needed to keep the peace and deal with emergencies. Not only that. Peasant society accords a thoroughly traditional legitimacy to the power of the educated and urban man, the representative of the great culture who comes to govern, and who does not affront the traditional peasant notions of good life. The elite civil service of the sub-continent, unlike those of developing nations in the Middle East and Latin America grew in the country side. It is enculturated in peasant society."²¹

21. Hart, *Op.cit.*, p.72.

An Elaboration of the "Enculturation" Concept

The concept of "enculturation" fits very neatly into the argument we have sought to build up regarding the leadership role of the Collector in the process of development of rural areas with or without voluntary participation. There are two key elements in Hart's concept of "enculturation" which are validated by the evidence we have presented in the previous Chapters. One is the villager's perception of the educated urban man. The other relates to the Collectorial pattern of field administration as having grown in the countryside. The first explains the acceptance of the leadership role of the Collector in evoking popular enthusiasm for development. The second shows his interrelationship with the rural society. The second proposition is supported by the growth of the Collectorial pattern out of the land system of the country which we have explained in Chapter I.

It may appear that the concept has more relevance to the process of rural development based on self-help strategy than one which is not based on the same strategy. In the latter category falls the regular programmes of government such as the RWP, TIP and FWP. There is a mutually supportive relationship between the two. The relationship is explained by our reference to the principle of matching government grants with voluntary labour. The case studies we have presented do provide firm empirical evidence of this relationship. The concept of "enculturation" cannot be seen in isolation from the regular government programme and the self-help strategy, both of which must again be related to the process of attitudinal change in the bureaucracy effected by governmental policy for administrative training for rural development. This itself reflects political perception of the role of the Collector in the

process of rural development. Within the framework of "enculturation" concept, the leadership role of the Collector can be debated at two levels.

One is the acceptance at the level of the government and the other is at the level of the rural people. In the latter level one finds two aspects. One aspect is represented by the elected village leaders, the Chairmen and members of Union Parishads and the other aspect by the rural people in general. Our description of the relationship between the Collector and the field agencies of the development ministries like Agriculture, Family Planning, Relief and Rehabilitation and Education clearly shows political perception of the role of the Collector in the process of rural development. The reasons for this are as follows:

- a. The strength of law and the blessings of impartiality, neutrality and fairness which the Collectorial pattern is perceived to represent. These are attributes which are considered essential in a society with scarce resources and the consequent lack of social trust among the members;
- b. Co-ordinative capacity of the Collector ensures co-ordination of all development departments in the District;
- c. Collector's capacity to involve local bodies and to enthuse local people in package programmes pursued by Agriculture, Family Planning and the Relief and Rehabilitation departments as the case may be.

These reasons are apparent from the trend of governmental decisions with regard to the constitution of Committees at District and Thana levels for co-ordination of development functions involving allocation of resources and approval of development of schemes. We have discussed in Chapter III how, between the period from 1972 to

1975, development co-ordination Committees headed by the local MCAs at the Thana level ultimately gave way to Committees headed by the Circle Officer or the SDO. Similarly at the District level, the various Committees dealing with development of agriculture, family planning and relief came to be headed by the Collector with the local MPs acting as members/advisers. It is important to remember that this change occurred in a political context when Awami League as dominant mass party organisation managed the affairs of the country.²²

The relationship between the Collector and the elected representatives of Union Parishad shows that a system of inter-dependence exists between the two in so far as it relates to the process of rural development based on self-help strategy. The Collectorial pattern, in its effort to mobilise rural people, depends on the support and assistance of the elected village leaders as much as the latter depends upon the former for the same objective. The reliance of the elected village leaders on the Collector is explained as follows:

- i. Collector can give them guidance to co-ordinate the plan and programme of one local body with the other, link the programme with relevant government agency and mediate

22. In Chapter III, we have referred to the fact that the Thana Development Co-ordination Committees formed under the Chairmanship of the local MCAs in 1972 gave way to Committees headed by the Circle Officers. Similarly the District Co-ordination Committee on Relief was first constituted under the Chairmanship of MPs selected by the Prime Minister. The MPs were replaced by the Collector in 1973-74.

- between competing local claims;
- ii. Collector can co-ordinate the efforts of other development departments at various levels to focus their attention and activities at the level of local bodies concerned;
 - iii. Association with the Collector provides the local bodies with the image of strength of law and of the government behind them and of neutrality and fairness in the dispensation of development benefits.

It is appropriate to appreciate the image of strength of law which the association of the Collector provides in the process of rural development based on self-help strategy as well his ability to settle inter-council disputes. As regards the latter, legal authority to perform this function is vested in the Collector both in the old BDO of 1959 and the Local Government Ordinance of 1976. In both cases, the Collector is empowered to settle inter-council disputes falling within his administrative jurisdiction.²³ Of more fundamental significance is the legal provision dealing with community participation. This authority is vested in local councils and not the Collector. The model tax schedules contained in the statutory notification of Basic Democracies and Local Government department bearing No. L.G./S-VIII/4T-1/61-237 dated July 4, 1961 provide for imposition of a community tax for local development.

The notification provides for "special community tax on the adult male members for the construction of the public work of general utility for the inhabitants of the local area unless the local councils concerned exempts any person in lieu of doing

23. The relevant article in BDO is article 81. The analogous provision in the Local Government Ordinance is article 76.

voluntary work or having it done on his behalf."²⁴ The same provision is reproduced in the Fourth Schedule to the Local Government Ordinance, 1976.²⁵

We are not arguing in favour of legal cover for enforcement of the principle of voluntary participation in local development. Such a step would militate against the principle of voluntary participation. The socio-political realities, on the other hand, dictate the necessity of legal cover in a non-revolutionary situation that obtains in Bangladesh. This aspect is admitted by some Bangladesh economists:

"It is recognized that the project would not have been completed if the work load had not been distributed among the potential beneficiaries on a progressive scale. However, this was done by the Deputy Commissioner without legal backing, and may not be accepted by people everywhere. Legal provisions contained in the Local Government Ordinance 1976 for community taxation may be applied in all such cases by appropriate Local Government Authorities."²⁶

The provision of special community tax was not invoked in the process of participatory development in Bangladesh. In executing Pandar Khal project, the Collector did think of such a step but did

24. Government of East Pakistan, Rules under Basic Democracies Order (Those applicable to Union Councils), Basic Democracies and Local Government Department, East Pakistan Government Press, 1969, p.82.

25. Local Government Ordinance, 1976, p.43.

26. Kholiquzzaman, Lessons from Ulashi, Op.cit., p.76.

not pursue it due to local political opposition. Yet the project was implemented. Similarly in the case of Ulashi and other cases that we have discussed, legal provision was not invoked to ensure participation. The association of the Collector as bringing in the image of law must be understood in this perspective. His involvement obviates the necessity of formal application of the legal provision. Local political opposition to the application of community tax implies that left to themselves, the local councils would never invoke this provision. Such a step would affect them more than others and is likely to make them more unpopular.²⁷ The involvement of the Collector provides a way out of this dilemma and strengthens the process of participatory development without formal application of laws.

At the level of the villagers, the Collector's leadership is accepted because for generations they have seen the Collector as the agency responsible for their well-being. This agency, in their eye, has earned the reputation of being fair, impartial and effective in the dispensation of benefits and justice. The

27. This assertion is based on the pattern of rural leadership in Bangladesh. The FFYPB noted the authoritarian nature of rural power structure and domination of the rural society by vested interest groups (p.156). For empirical studies on rural power structure see; M.A. Mannan, Rural Leadership And Its Emerging Pattern in Bangladesh, BARD, Comilla, October 1972; Md. Manjur-ul-Alam, Characteristics Of Newly Elected Representatives (Chairman, Vice-Chairman And Members) of Union Parishads of Kotwali Thana, Comilla, BARD, Comilla, September, 1974.

villagers do not and cannot compartmentalise various components of their total need package. They view their life, aspirations and requirements as a whole rather than in motely shreds of parts and, therefore, naturally feel like relying on the Collector who can account for a co-ordinative approach to solve their problems.²⁸ This perception is further strengthened by the lack of adequate training of the officers of specialist services who have a greater tendency to promote narrow departmental goals than share in the total view which is likely to fulfil the villagers' needs and aspirations.²⁹

28. Based on the interview with politicians, senior bureaucrats and Collectors.

29. The NIPA study on In-Service Training Institutions by Syed Nuruzzaman which we have already cited, reveals the inadequacy of training facilities for officers of specialist departments. According to this study, out of 24 training institutions that existed in 1969, only one belonged to agriculture. Although officers of agriculture and other departments received their training at regional rural development training institutes called National Development Training Institutes set up during V-AID days as well as in the Comilla Academy, the computation made by Syed Nuruzzaman shows greater number of officers belonging to general administration trained per year than that of other development departments. The graphical representation at Appendix IV, p.179 of the study shows 2200 administrative personnel trained on average per year in different institutes as against 600 of the agriculture department and 350 of the co-operative departments. The situation during the eighties remains much the same.

Hart's view that the villagers in a peasant society accord traditional legitimacy to the power of the educated urban man does contribute to the acceptance of the leadership role of the Collector. The legitimacy accorded arises primarily out of factionalism in the villages. Existence of village factionalism is a fact of life which no observer can fail to notice however much the romantics may idealize the purity of village life:

"Observations by the Academy revealed that in East Pakistan villages were not the abode of harmony as envisaged by the theorists of village councils.... Divergent interests had undermined traditional amity. Whatever may have been the old relationship, the present relation was one of open or concealed hostility. This was the reason why most of the village councils laboriously collected by V-AID workers never got off the ground except on paper."³⁰

The villagers accord legitimacy to someone who, in their view, is neutral and fair. They genuinely believe that an outsider is more likely to be neutral and fair than one who is in the village.

30. Akhter Hameed Khan, Three Essays by Akhter Hameed Khan: Land Reform, Rural Works and The Food Problem In Pakistan, Asian Studies Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, May, 1973, (mimeo), p.22. Existence of village factionalism is noted in more recent studies. See Fouzul Kabir Khan, 'Disquiet Under Canopy (A Summary Report)', National Foundation for Research on Human Resources Development, Dacca, 1978. This study reveals authoritarian power structure and factionalism in three villages in Ulashi.

This is due to existence of village factionalism. Factionalism also leads to the element of distrust that they have of the elected leaders of local government. The corruption among village leaders and their propensity to live in towns and cities soon after election serve only to deepen the villagers' apathy to elected leaders.³¹

This element of distrust that exists between the villagers and the elected leaders has been admitted by the latter when an interview was conducted in five Districts selected on the basis of their relative success in implementing programmes based on self-help strategy.³²

The elected leaders ascribe this to the rival groups consisting mainly of those who lost in the local council elections. They spread rumours in the village and thus create a credibility gap between the villagers and the elected leaders. The elected leaders had this to say on the question of organising programmes based on voluntary labour:

"For big projects we need the assistance of the

31. While this observation is made on the basis of the interview conducted in Ulashi and four other Districts, further evidence in this regard is available in the ministry of Local Government and Rural Development Memorandum No. S-I/IUP-27/78/834(64) dated 27th December, 1978. This Memorandum takes note of the incidence of absentee Chairmen. It states that many of the Chairmen of Union Parishads live in cities and not in their respective Unions. SDOs were asked to ensure that the Chairmen live in their own Unions.

32. The Districts visited by the author were: Dacca, Jessore, Mymensingh, Jamalpur and Noakhali.

Collector. For smaller projects, our difficulty is that when we want to repair a road or excavate part of a canal, we have to motivate the villagers to work voluntarily for the project. The rival groups immediately start the rumour that adequate funds have been sanctioned for the project or there is enough allotment of wheat under FFW. It is rumoured that we want to misappropriate the funds or wheat and that is why we are asking others to work for the project without payment. This makes things difficult for us. It is at this point that we need the assistance of the Collector or at least the SDO/CO. Their presence helps to remove the credibility gap between us and the villagers."

As against this, the villagers' viewpoints were:

"The Collector is a very educated man. He knows what is good for us or else the government would not appoint him to such an important post. He wields enormous powers. Powers not only to finish criminals but to do good to people. He can sanction funds for schools, build roads, give agricultural loans and provide relief at times of natural calamities. He belongs to another District and, therefore, has no interest in village politics. When he comes to implement projects on voluntary labour, he does not give lip-service only order us around. He works with us in the fields. We consider it a great honour to work with the head of the District."

It will be seen from an analysis of the responses that if the villager accords legitimacy to the Collector's leadership role, it is not entirely due to his being a representative of the urban

culture or his education. The Collector is by no means the only representative in the bureaucratic sector in this regard. The heads of specialist services operating at and below the District level are equally the products of western education and to that extent they are the representatives of urban culture. It is true that the Collector stands out from the rest of them because he is, by convention and practice, the chief executive of the District. But this status alone is not adequate to explain his leadership role. It must be seen against the background of his welfare role which is inextricably intertwined with the experience of the villagers handed down from generation to generation. His ability to link the villagers' needs to programme objectives of other development departments further strengthens their perception of leadership role of the Collector. The local councils, as participatory institutions, find it convenient to fall back on the Collector's leadership not only to gain the advantage of various programme objectives but to gain support of the villagers as a whole.

"Enculturation" As Part Of The Social Forces and Their Impact On The Prestige-Ordered Service

In elaborating the concept of lateral reform it has been suggested that by 1960, none of the ICS officers were in field positions. This implies that a new set of bureaucrats had to be recruited and trained. Although the structure of services inherited from the colonial system was left undisturbed, induction of new members to the prestige-ordered service provided an important element in the process of strengthening Collector's leadership role in rural development. The concept of "enculturation" and the process of lateral reform need to be related to the social background of the new

members constituting the prestige-ordered service. It is necessary to identify the new element to complete our analysis of the social perspective of field administration in Bangladesh.

Our attempt to find this new element is dictated by the logic that perhaps too much emphasis has been given on the status-role of the Collector and his so-called colonial ethos. This seems at so great a variance with the image of the Collector presented in our case studies as to warrant further probing. Braibanti has dwelt at length on the insular attitude of the CSPs. He has seen this as a colonial vestige and at the same time has argued that it has a necessary function:

"This detachment (called 'aloofness' and 'snobbery' by detractors of the CSP) is an essential posture for whomever weilds power in Pakistan..... To be close to the people is to place oneself in a web of loyalty to kin and caste (biradri) from which there is no escape."³³

Hart quotes from Braibanti to argue that "the status-role, culture-strata system is enculturated in peasant society".³⁴ Our analysis of the Collector's role presented on the basis of empirical evidence of the case studies points to an opposite conclusion. It is not the aloofness that worked. It is the Collector's willingness and ability to identify himself with the people, his readiness to share manual work in the field with the participants that had the desired effect.

33. Ralph Braibanti, 'Public Bureaucracy And Judiciary In Pakistan', in La Palombara (ed.), Bureaucracy and Political Development, Prince University Press, 1963, pp.393-394.

34. Hart, Op.cit., p.73.

This is substantiated from the observations made by the Collector of Jessore in his tour diary for the month of November, 1976:

"Started for Ulashi-Jadunathpur at 6-30 A.M. Reached Ulashi at 7-15 A.M. On account of the death of Moulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani, Armed forces personnel were not working on the project. A number of volunteers specially those of the Navaron Athletic Club and others were coming from different villages. To sustain incentive of those who had come, I started digging at 7-30 A.M. Very soon I was joined by about 400 volunteers drawn from villages of Ulashi, Bahadurpur, Nizampur and Dehi Unions...."³⁵

This willing participation, the ability to mix freely with the villagers totally uninhibited by any status-consciousness, thus gives a different picture with regard to the concept of "enculturation" seen in the context of bureaucratic detachment or aloofness by Hart. This does not necessarily invalidate the view that bureaucratic detachment has a necessary function. Its validity is limited to the social context of Pakistan and not Bangladesh. This is clear from Braibanti's observation elsewhere with regard to the differences in the style of administration between the Punjab and Bengal:

"The spirit of Bengali independence compelled the development of vigorous local self-government and the early demise of large landholdings, while in the Punjab feudal conditions of serfdom prevailed and the zamindari

35. Tour, diary of Collector, Jessore. Bhasani was a peasant leader of national fame.

were not challenged until martial law land reforms in 1958. Such factors as these have given Bengali administration a different quality from that of the Punjab. It is more egalitarian in demeanor, more democratic in outlook, more informal, closer to the people in mood and attitude and less haughty."³⁶

These attributes of Bangladesh administration may be seen as the elements that have contributed to the success of mass participation projects. The attributes have further been enriched by the social background of the members of the prestige-ordered service. The background is overwhelmingly a middle class one in marked contrast to the ICS.

Braibanti's survey of the occupational background of the parents of the CSPs has shown that only 12% of the parents are landlords while about 52% of the parents have an income of Rs.800 or less.³⁷ This did have its impact on the value reorientation and outlook of the members of the CSPs from which bulk of the Collectors were appointed:

"This is in marked contrast to the pre-independence ICS officers who mostly came from rich landed aristocracy. The middle class has contributed to the decline of social stratification among the members of the service who have little inhibition now in mixing freely with the masses.

36. Braibanti, Research On The Bureaucracy of Pakistan, Op.cit., P.47.

Hart's argument with regard to bureaucratic aloofness is valid only in the context of Pakistan and not Bangladesh.

37. Braibanti (ed.), Asian Bureaucratic Systems Emergent from the British Imperial Tradition, Op.cit., p.272.

The cultural gap between the elite rulers and the non-elite ruled is no longer visible."³⁸

The social perspective of field administration in Bangladesh built around the concept of "enculturation" and lateral reform must necessarily encompass the broader spectrum of social forces that permeate the bureaucratic system and its values. The narrowing down of cultural gap subsisting between the rural and urban segments of the bifurcated culture does not fundamentally alter the perception of the villager about the representative of urban culture. It strengthens his belief in the power of the urban man along more intimate and personal lines. This is reflected in the villagers' perception of the role of the Collector to which we have referred.³⁹

The field administrative system as part of the social order felt the impact of change brought about by the social forces. The impact of this change is attitudinal rather than institutional. The absence of institutional change of a system which is apparently based on authoritarian values may not necessarily mean perpetuation of such values. Nor does it mean growing concern with the need to maintain stability that is cherished as a value in an underdeveloped political system. The continued relevance of the Collectorial pattern in South Asian context cannot adequately be explained in terms of

38. Ishrat Hussain, 'Emerging Pattern of the Civil Service of Pakistan', Administrative Science Review, Vol. 3, No. 2, June, 1969, NIPA, Dacca, pp.119-129.

39. The villagers' perception of the Collector's role, based on the interview with the villagers in five Districts, have already been referred to in this Chapter.

stability-supporting role. Similarly, absence of any institutional change need not necessarily mean that the pattern is prejudicial to political or economic development.

Braibanti does refer to this aspect in his "Concluding Observations" of the collection of essays dealing with Asian bureaucratic systems emerging from British imperial heritage. He admits that the western view of the bureaucratic systems based on British colonial tradition being anachronistic and an impediment to "political and economic development" is an oversimplification.⁴⁰ He mentions that in the six states of India, Pakistan, Burma, Ceylon, Malayasia and Nepal, rural development movement, with the possible exception of India, was never severed from the bureaucracy.⁴¹

Braibanti's perceptive analysis of the bureaucratic systems of the six Asian states is more related to the elite cadre concept, the extent of British influence on them, and the degree of politicization of the social order in relation to bureaucratic responsibility. The degree of politicization has been much higher in India than in any of the other five states. It is from this assumption that India has been singled out as a case where the

40. Braibanti (ed.), Asian Bureaucratic Systems Emergent from the British Imperial Tradition, Op.cit., p.695. This view finds support from Palombara and Riggs. See Joseph La Palombara 'An Overview of Bureaucracy And Political Development' in Joseph La Palombara (ed.), Bureaucracy and Political Development, p.13. Also see F.W. Riggs, 'Bureaucrats And Political Development' in the same book, p.167.

41. Braibanti (ed.), Asian Bureaucratic Systems Emergent from the British Imperial Tradition, Op.cit., p.671.

bureaucracy is seen outside the rural development movement. The exception that he makes of India is not supported by the independent studies on Indian local government system such as those of Maddick and other Indian scholars.⁴²

The complexity of the variables influencing the process of rural development in South Asia, specially Bangladesh, runs much deeper than that suggested by the views of Braibanti. The massive dependence on government flowing from scarcity of resources may itself dictate the pragmatic need to involve the bureaucracy at and below the District level. The question is not one of severance but one of identifying the dimensions of bureaucratic responsibility in the process of rural development. We cannot enter into speculative argument on whether politicization at the local level will lead to complete severance of field administration from rural development process. For, what we are dealing with is the actual role that field administration plays in the process of rural development. This role is not bound up with political and administrative factors alone. It is closely related to the nature of the social system and its prevailing values and norms.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT: A THREE-WAY INTERACTION INVOLVING POLITICAL LEADERSHIP, THE COLLECTORAL PATTERN AND THE VILLAGERS

This brings us to the three-way interaction model suggested by Hart in his analysis of the community development experiences of both India and Pakistan. As already stated, rural development in peasant society is viewed as a pattern of inter-relationship among three elements; the political leadership, the administrative system and

42. We have discussed this in Chapter II, pp.64-70.

the villagers. Rural development based on community participation is seen as the result of interaction of these three elements in the context of a particular type of society and culture:

"We did not take village participation to be simply the resultant (dependent variables) of government programmes (independent variables). We saw both interacting, but interacting as segments of a particular society and culture."⁴³

The evidence that we have gathered and analysed brings the leadership role of the Collector into sharp relief in this process of interaction. The Collector provides a convenient point of contact or interaction with the villagers not merely in relation to government programmes such as RWP, TIP and FWP but in relation to programmes outside the formal ambit of governmental operations. This implies that the Collectorial pattern as part of the rural society may itself interact with nation-building motives and policies of political leadership. The Collector is an essential link in the chain that connects the political leadership with the rural society and vice versa. It is not suggested that he is the only link in a democratic framework. The essential nature of his link-role stems from his involvement in rural development programmes. He is perceived both by the political leadership at the top and the villagers at the bottom to be an important link in the process of interaction. The Collector is not merely an agent of implementing government programmes of rural development that result in village participation. He may, depending on circumstances, be an initiator of programmes that lead to participatory process of

43. Hart, Op.cit., pp.89-90.

development based on the interaction of three elements.

This does not necessarily invalidate the three-way interaction model formulated by Hart. The basis of Hart's model was the evidence gathered from the community development experiences of the fifties. Both in India and Pakistan it was a government programme imposed from the top. Our basis rests on similar yet stronger foundation in that we have viewed rural development as part of the leadership role of the Collector over time and have sought to relate it to administrative behaviour both as a set of dependent and independent variables. In the formulation of policies and programmes of rural development, the Collectorial pattern did have a major influence on the motives and policies of political leadership as has been shown in the District Development Programmes under Swanirvar in 1974-75, till then a movement outside the ambit of specific government programmes.

In case of Ulashi, almost the same view can be taken if we keep in mind the circular from the Cabinet Division asking all Collectors to organise similar labour-intensive programmes in their respective Districts. This circular reflects the general policy and motive of the political leadership interacting with the villagers via the Collectorial pattern. It was issued only after the successful implementation of Ulashi project. The analytical framework of our discussion is thus much broader than is provided by the community development experience when viewed as a specific government programme. The broader framework is very closely woven into the historical experiences of rural development programmes under widely different political conditions. The record of these experiences shows the consistent relevance of the Collectorial pattern in the process of rural development thus sharply modifying the views of its critics

who look upon the system as anachronistic or unsuitable. This underlines the limitation of not only the political role approach, in Fesler's sense, but of fitting the Collectoral pattern into a typology that is relevant in a widely different context.

The Collectoral pattern provides an attractive ground for testing the exploratory hypothesis of Fesler that field administration in a developing country may be required to perform functions of development involving evocation of popular enthusiasm and co-ordination of specialized activities. The question of incompatibility that Fesler raises is based on the assumption of bifurcation of functions between positive and negative. Generating popular enthusiasm for development and co-ordination of specialist services is seen as poles apart from regulatory functions of stability and revenue collection. This bifurcation has no relevance to South Asia, especially Bangladesh. The nature of the social system does not accord with this polarized view of functions of field administration. The validity of the assumption is not supported by the dynamics of rural development process with or without voluntary participation by the community. Analysis of the rural development experience shows that there is more to it than political and administrative relationships with the field administrative system. Further, the assumption that functions are maintained in a static manner does not stand empirical validation in so far as the Collectoral pattern is concerned.

Maintenance and developmental administrations co-exist because the social system demands it. We have seen that this is by no means a post-colonial phenomenon. This implies that it has always been unrealistic to look at the Collectoral pattern as a regional administrative structure for regulatory functions alone.

It has been as much the focal point of development administration within the framework of regular government programmes as it has been one of the major sources of impetus for rural development programmes based on community participation. Attempts made during post-colonial days to ignore its relationship with the rural society were shown to have been the most retarding factor in the attempt to achieve community development goals in Pakistan. Involvement of the Collectors in rural development programmes of the sixties led to encouraging results.

Similarly, the denunciation, made by the national planning experts who framed the FFYPB, that the inherited apparatus of field administration is not suitable for rural development programmes based on mass participation strategy was clearly negated by the leadership role of the Collector in Swanirvar movement. The Swanirvar experience and its subsequent transformation to mass participation schemes indicate that participatory process of development, based on voluntary labour utilisation strategy, has to take due account of the issues that facilitate acceptance of participatory values in the villages. These issues need to be identified and analysed before questioning the relationship between field administration and rural development process. The analytical framework of village participation in rural development explored by Hart suggests that the issues are closely related to the social system, its prevailing norms, values and belief. In the context of rural development, the social system has three basic elements: the political leadership, the administrative system and the villagers.

In a social context where rural development is conditioned by the interactive processes of the three elements, the role of the Collector as an important part of the field administration cannot

but be substantial. The continued political reliance on the leadership role of the Collector in the process of rural development, both in terms of action programmes involving substantive output and direct services to the rural society such as RWP, TIP and FFW and in generating popular enthusiasm for development based on mass participation strategy, is indicative of the recognition of socio-political realities involved in the process of rural development. This is a situation that does not fit models and typologies which have relevance in a different social context. The Collectorial pattern, in the form it has assumed today in Bangladesh, is better understood by its role in the process of rural development than by its regulatory responsibilities.

As explicated in the introductory part of this study, the theme of incompatibility is based on assumptions of (a) the complexity of organisational needs for development with special skills and knowledge that are found wanting in a colonial pattern of field administration based on regulatory objectives and (b) evocation of popular enthusiasm for development is incompatible with functions of maintenance of security and revenue collection. The emphasis is on the aspect of colonial heritage of public service trained to perform the law-and-order and revenue functions which generally characterized colonial government.

This static assumption is not substantiated by the structural-functional analysis of the Collectorial pattern. Both in terms of structure and functions, the colonial administrative system, as it has operated in the area now constituting Bangladesh, combined development and regulatory functions. The colonial legacy of field administration does not validate the assumption of incompatibility that is based on a dichotomized view of development and regulatory

functions in which the former is seen as positive and the latter negative. It is important to assess the legacy from a perspective that recognizes this mix between development and regulatory functions. The continuation of this legacy is embedded in political, social and economic realities that impinge on the role of the administrative system in the process of development. This role strikes a discordant note when viewed from a prescriptive criterion based on holistic notions of an ideal form of popular participation in the rural development process. It fails to relate administrative structures and processes to the goals of development and the nature of the social system within which these goals are to be achieved.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Our study, based primarily on the relationship between the Collector and the process of rural development, gives rise to various conclusions that relate both to the South Asian pattern and to the broader aspects of comparative field administration. Bangladesh Collectorial pattern, as it stands today, is the product of a long administrative heritage with its roots in colonial rule. It is not the product of an uninterrupted evolution as is the case with the Prefectoral system which cannot be said to be the deliberate creation of a particular time.⁴⁴ The Collectorial pattern arose out of the need to introduce a system of field administration more in consonance with colonial ideals but tempered by British democratic thought to the extent that was consistent with the political ends of the colonial government. British democratic thought found expression in the experiments conducted, during the early phases of

44. Fried, Italian Prefects, Op.cit., p.296.

colonial rule, with regard to the separation of judicial and revenue functions and then in the introduction of local government institutions that recognised the principle of popular representation. It would be all too naive to assume that political control through appointed officials formed the only basis of the system. Such oversimplistic assumptions are negated by the continuation of the system even after the end of the colonial rule and its relationship with the process of rural development.

The most impressive nature of the pattern is its resilience, adaptability and continuity amid significant political changes, the magnitude of which is difficult to understand in purely descriptive terms. However, the revolution of the rising sentiments of nationalism and democracy have not led to any basic structural changes in the Collectorial pattern either in India or in Pakistan and Bangladesh.⁴⁵

It is easy to interpret this as the preference, on the part of the political elite, for the status quo dictated by the political necessity of securing national unity in a society with heterogenous cultural, religious and linguistic elements. This is not validated by the continuation of the colonial method of recruitment of the Collector from both the provincial (state) and the central services in India. The Collector acts more as an agent of the sub-national government than of the national government. It is true that bulk of the Collectors are drawn from the centrally organised elite cadre of the IAS in India. Yet the major functions which the Collector performs such as law and order, collection of

45. Braibanti (ed.), Asian Bureaucratic Systems Emergent from the British Imperial Tradition, Op.cit., p.675.

revenue and rural development are within the direct competence of the state government.⁴⁶ The continuity is then best explained by the capacity of the Collectorial pattern to adapt itself to the changing needs of development rather than in terms of the traditional responsibilities. Political control over dissident provinces through appointed officials has ceased to have validity as it is contrary to the accepted constitutional doctrine both in India and Pakistan.⁴⁷ In case of Bangladesh, while there is no accepted constitutional doctrine there is just no need for the exercise of political control. The emergence of Bangladesh as an independent state with unitary character eliminated the need for governments of separate responsibility at the sub-national level which implies corresponding absence of the need for such control.

Major Traits of Collectorial Pattern in Bangladesh

Bangladesh still retains the original Collectorial pattern which is now marked by the following major traits:

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46. Under 1962 Constitution of Pakistan, all these matters were within the direct jurisdiction of provincial governments. The same is true of India which accounts for variations in the nature and functions of the Collector in relation to Panchayati Raj Institutions in various states.
 47. In India, political control is exercised through the party machinery and constitutional provisions. The Constitution empowers the President, in emergency situations, to take over administration of a State. This is known as Presidential rule. A recent example is that of Assam which, owing to large scale disturbances, came under Presidential rule in early 1980.

1. a high degree of involvement in rural development with people's participation;
2. a pre-dominantly developmental rather than administrative (regulatory) Collector;
3. innovative role in matters affecting rural development;
4. a high degree of capacity to evocate popular enthusiasm for facilitating the process of participatory development;
5. a high degree of dependence on custom and conventions rather than laws/regulations which determine the relationship between the Collector and the specialists of other field agencies.

We have explained these constants in terms of the basic continuity of the field administrative system, its attitudinal rather than institutional change. There are other factors accounting for the high degree of involvement: the financial constraint of the national government which limits its capacity to accord a greater share of resources for the purposes of rural development; the widespread preference to use the existing administrative machinery rather than the local government system, which is more partial or factious; the poverty of the local government institutions and their conservative quality. In a society where the entire burden of socio-economic development falls on the government which is constantly plagued by the problem of providing even such basic needs to the community as food, clothes and shelter, the political response to problems tends to focus itself on the machinery of the Collector. It reflects the traditional mode of responsiveness on the part of the political authority to the public in terms of dependence on the Collectorial pattern's capacity to make impartial and swift decisions at a publicly convenient level, as, for example, has been found in the

sale and distribution of essential items through the Collector.⁴⁸

Types of Collectoral Pattern

In the introduction we have stated that diversity of local conditions, which include political social and cultural variables, necessitated differential patterns in the British Indian subcontinent. Broadly, two types have been distinguished on the basis of the division of regulated and non-regulated areas. While this distinction still remains in some of the provinces/states of both India and Pakistan, the distinction has ceased to have validity in case of Bangladesh except, to a minor degree in case of the District of Chittagong Hill Tracts.⁴⁹

As regards the relationship between the Collector and the local government system, it varies from state to state in India as has already been noted. The broader questions relating to different types of Collectoral pattern, their origin, structure and functions in a political framework of representative democracy remain to be investigated.

The following characteristics of Bangladesh Collectoral pattern can be identified. Some of these characteristics it may share with India and Pakistan:

- a. The national territory is divided into general administrative units called 'Division', 'District', 'Subdivision', 'Thana/ Circle'. While this is true of Bangladesh, the concept of 'Subdivision' as an administrative unit came much later in Pakistan which had only forty Subdivisions in 1960 in forty four

48. Refer to citation 39 in Chapter III.

49. We have discussed this in Introduction, p.12.

Districts. The unit below the District in Pakistan and most of the states in India is called 'Tahsil' or 'Taluqa'. Similar is the case with 'Circle' which is not present in Pakistan. In India, it is called 'Block' created under community development programme during the fifties.⁵⁰

- b. Of these units, the most important is the District. Although Division is composed of a group of Districts headed by the Commissioner, he has no direct executive responsibility in the sphere of law and order, revenue administration or development.⁵¹ His function is limited to supervision and guidance including inter-District co-ordination in matters of development. The Collector does not always communicate with the ministries or heads of Directorates at the national level via the Commissioner although it is his duty to keep the Commissioner informed. The units below the District are the direct and primary responsibility of the Collector. But the responsibility is exercised through the office of SDO who acts in the nature of a miniature Collector. Upto the Subdivisional level, regulatory and

50. Gable, Op.cit., p.36. Gable notes that in most parts of former West Pakistan, Subdivision as an unit did not exist.

51. It is only in 1977 that Commissioner as head of Divisional Development Board came to be involved in approval of schemes which are to be executed from funds allotted by the Board. The procedure adopted by the Board gives direct responsibility to the Collector for supervision and execution of schemes. The Board acts more or less as a fund-giving agency. Based on the author's experience as Member, Dacca Divisional Development Board.

development functions converge. Below it, the functions are separated. The development functions are the responsibility of the Circle Officer (Development), the revenue functions of Circle Officer (Revenue) and the law and order functions of the officer in charge of a police station commonly known as O.C.

It is the primary responsibility of the SDO to secure co-ordination of regulatory and development functions at and below the Subdivisional level subject to the general supervision, guidance and direction of the Collector. The routinized functions and matters of details both in the regulatory and development spheres are looked after by the ADCs.

- c. The Commissioner, Collector, ADCs and SDOs are appointed by the Establishment Division of the ministry of Cabinet Affairs. This Division is not nationally responsible for any of the major functions of the Collector. The functions such as maintenance of order, revenue administration and development are discharged by separate ministries. Nor is it nationally responsible for inter-ministerial co-ordination. Its functions are limited to recruitment, appointment, training and transfer of members of higher bureaucracy which is functionally organised into separate cadres. It is only recently that supervision of District administration has been made the responsibility of the Cabinet Division which is responsible for inter-ministerial co-ordination.⁵²

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52. List of Attached Departments and Sub-ordinate Offices under different Ministries/Divisions (As on January 1, 1978), Op.cit., p.2. This official booklet shows the Divisional Commissioners and Collectors as subordinate offices under the Cabinet Division. It also gives the list of regional development boards headed by the Commissioners.

- d. The Collector is responsible severally to different ministries.

In case of some ministries such as Local Government and Rural Development, Relief and Rehabilitation, he acts as the chief field agent. In case of others such as Home, Agriculture, Fisheries and Livestock, Health, Education and Family Planning which have their own field agencies, the Collector acts in his co-ordinative capacity including supervision and guidance. Even in these cases, there is diversity rather than uniformity regarding the extent of control that individual ministries delegate to the Collector. It is only in case of the ministry of Home Affairs which is nationally responsible for internal security that the Collector's relationship with the Superintendent of Police is codified. In case of development ministries it is not regulated by law but by executive instructions that varies from ministry to ministry. These ministries have no direct authority over the Collector except in the matter of transmitting their policies and programmes involving supervision and co-ordination. They may call for reports but have no direct authority to evaluate his performance in the field which is done by the Commissioner and vetted by the Establishment Secretary. They can bring to the notice of the Cabinet/ Establishment Division any negligence on the part of the Collector.

- e. In his regulatory functions, the Collector is subject to the direction and control of higher courts of law which have the authority to restrain him from doing an act or direct him to do an act which he is legally bound to do. He has no authority to operate independently of the judiciary.

- f. The Collector does not enjoy security of tenure and may be

transferred at the pleasure of the government. He may be dismissed, suspended or demoted on specific grounds in accordance with law. In this respect he enjoys the same protection as is available to any other public servant.

- g. He is not a resident of the area to which he is posted.
- h. He is invariably a career civil servant and not a 'political' appointee from outside the career service. Political affiliation of any kind or support to any political group renders him liable for disciplinary action under the existing law relating to efficiency and discipline of public servants.
- i. The Collector derives his authority in the sphere of regulatory functions from specific laws and regulations. His authority in the sphere of co-ordination of field agencies and administration of development programmes is not based on any legal provision but on executive instructions and conventions.

These characteristics show that typologies of Prefectoral systems are at best useful for transnational comparisons concerned with similarities and differences in structure. If the differences are accounted for by political, administrative and cultural variables, the similarities do not necessarily imply the same set of conditions. The Prefectoral system as a whole may be viewed as the product of overriding political considerations concerned to exert and maintain control over regions/provinces by centrally appointed officials responsible to sovereign authority. The same view cannot be taken with regard to the Collectorial pattern.

Conceptual Differences in Roles

Aside from the differences in origins to which reference is made in Chapter I, an important distinction between the two systems lies in

the conceptual differences about the role of the Prefect and the Collector. This can be related to the method of recruitment and juridical foundation of the two systems. These are vastly different and require further investigation so that more informed hypotheses can be made. We may venture to state the following tentative generalisations:

- a. The supremacy of the Prefect in his jurisdiction derives from the constitutional and legislative sources supplemented by the long-standing tradition of the office and a generally accepted political doctrine. Under the French Constitution, the Prefect is described as "the representative of national interest". This is the strongest source of Prefect's authority. The French Prefect has also legal cover that gives him sufficient powers to co-ordinate and control the activities of other agencies working in his area.⁵³ In case of the Collector, it is based primarily on long-standing convention. The legal source is limited in the regulatory field which is subject to intervention by the judiciary.
- b. The overt political consideration as reflected in the method of recruitment of the Prefect is in sharp contrast to that of the Collector where administrative ingredient may be said to be more dominant than in case of the former.
- c. The difference in the manner of recruitment necessarily implies differences in the nature of responsibility in the sphere of politics. The Collector is required by law and expected by the

53. Brian Chapman, The Prefects and Provincial France, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1955, pp.69-71.

community to be neutral and above politics.⁵⁴

These and other similar matters need further research but lead tentatively to the conclusion that the Collectoral pattern does not fit very satisfactorily into the existing typologies.

DEVELOPING POLITICAL SYSTEM AND THE COLLECTORAL PATTERN IN SOUTH ASIA

In commenting on the future of the Prefectoral system, Fried identified two major challenges to its stability or survival: Political and Technical. The latter implies functional independence from the Prefect by specialist services. It has been contended that with the rapid growth of technology requiring expertise and technical skills, the Prefect's generalist omnipotence may be challenged. This applies with equal force in case of the Bangladesh pattern. We have seen evidence of this in the report of the Rowlands Committee as well as during the sixties when attempts were made by Ayub government to strengthen the co-ordinative role of the Collector. During the late seventies, a large number of circulars were issued from the Cabinet Division which emphasized the authority of the Collector to co-ordinate the activities of the specialist services in the field.⁵⁵

54. This is in sharp contrast to the overt political role that the Prefects play both in France and in Italy. The Government Servant's Conduct Rules of 1960 as adopted in Bangladesh clearly debar any public servant to have link with political parties. Political neutrality in a Collector is looked upon as a virtue by the community.

55. Between the period from February 1976 to March 1979, as many as three circulars were issued by the Cabinet Division emphasizing

The absence of a constitutional or legal basis for the pre-eminence of the Collector in the sphere of development makes this pattern more vulnerable to such political challenges than the Prefectoral system in which the Prefect is constitutionally recognised as the national political representative in his area.⁵⁶ The political challenge in case of the Prefectoral system may arise from its overwhelmingly political character, its identification with a particular regime.

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55. the role of the Collector as co-ordinator of development activities in the District. The latest development during 1979 was the decision by the President that all officers of specialist services were to render necessary co-operation to the District Administration for proper co-ordination of development work in the District. This decision was taken in the Cabinet meeting held on 17th March, 1979 (Cabinet Meeting No. CM-7/79). The earlier circulars issued are: No. CD/DA/73/75-170(1000) dated 27th February, 1976; No. CD/DA/1(3)/76-86 dated 18th June, 1976 and No. CD/DA/1(3)/76-709(85) dated November 9, 1976.
56. The major source of Prefect's authority in France is the constitutional recognition of his position as "the representative of national interest". See Chapman, *Op.cit.*, p.69. No such authority is available to the Collector. The position of the Italian Prefect may be said to be similar to that of the Collector. But there is a difference. The political position of the Italian Prefect gives him "a degree of supremacy not revealed in the structure of the system". See Smith, *Op.cit.*, Field Administration, p.81.

In the countries emerging from British colonial tradition, in Africa and Asia, the political challenge has assumed different forms. In Ghana and Tanzania, radical changes in the field system have taken place involving replacement of appointed officials by political representatives against the framework of one-party politics.⁵⁷ While these countries illustrate the extinction of a District administrative system in a revolutionary situation, the South Asian case exhibits an evolutionary tinkering with the field administrative pattern in a developing political system. The failed attempt of one-party rule and the subsequent District Governor scheme in Bangladesh in early 1975 were exceptional situations that were short-lived.

The process of tinkering with the inherited field administrative pattern in such countries as Malaysia, Burma, Sri Lanka, India and Bangladesh reveals two principal forms. One is to democratise administration at the local level by an effective devolution of authority to locally elected councils. The other is to politicise the local administration and bring it partially under the control of elected members of legislature.

In Malaysia, despite sweeping reforms proposed by the Royal Commission during the late sixties, intended substantially to replace the District system by elected local councils, the government chose not to accept the proposed reforms. In Malaysian context, security and development are seen as inter-related goals. Consequently, the continuance of the law and order based District system is perceived by the political elite to be essential to nation-

57. William Tordoff, 'Regional Administration in Tanzania' in The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vo.13, No.I, 1965, pp.63-89.

building efforts.⁵⁸

The Burmese experiment during the fifties and sixties centered on rejuvenation of local government system. Under the local government law enacted in 1953, the Burmese Deputy commissioner was made the chief executive officer of the elected council at the District level. During the early sixties, the local government units were suspended. The experiment did not succeed.⁵⁹

In Sri Lanka, a more cautious attempt at politicisation of field administration has been under experiment since 1973. The Government Agent in Sri Lanka is the lineal descendant of the colonial District Officer. His institutional position as the co-ordinator of development activities was replaced in 1973 by the creation of District Political Authority System. Under this System, an attempt has been made to delegate decision-making powers in respect of development functions to one senior politician of the government party at the District level. He is chosen by the Prime Minister and acts as the head of a team consisting of parliamentary MPs, heads of specialist services and the Government Agent. The primary object was "to give leadership to the Food Drive and to mobilize popular support and co-operation."⁶⁰

The Sri Lankan experiment represents an attempt to confer

58. J.H. Beaglehole, 'The District: Some Aspects of Administration and Politics in Western Malaysia', Op.cit., p.188.

59. Smith, Field Administration, Op.cit., p.73.

60. Cyril Gamage and Martin Minogue, 'The District Political Authority System in Sri Lanka', in Journal of Administration Overseas, Vol. 17, 1978, pp.270-281.

political responsibility for local development on elected politicians at the District and constituency levels rather than on an elected local government system. The purpose is to co-ordinate and direct development programmes at these levels through development councils consisting of elected parliamentarians and government officials. The District development council is to be headed by a District minister of state not being a member of the cabinet.⁶¹ The council includes heads of local councils. This implies that the elected local councils will not be given any direct responsibility in respect of development programmes but will be linked to a new body acting under political control.

In India the stress is more on a refurbished local government system that is popularly elected than on institutional politicisation of the Sri Lankan type. Although the role of the Collector in relation to Panchayati Raj institutions varies from state to state, the available evidence indicates that his role in guiding the local government system in matters affecting rural development will continue to be a substantial one. The 1966 Report of the Administrative Reforms Commission on State Administration makes this abundantly clear. The Report of the Commission, completed on November 4, 1969, favoured the idea of separating regulatory functions from development functions. As the language of the Report makes it clear, the proposal for bifurcation of functions stemmed from the desire for fulfilling democratic ideal. It was stressed in the Report that Panchayati Raj institutions with popular representatives should have exclusive jurisdiction in the field of development and act independently of the Collector, but assisted by

61. Ibid., P.281.

a functionary called District Development Officer (DDO), holding equal rank as the Collector. This functionary would be designated as the Chief Executive Officer of Zila Parishad.

Three of the five members who constituted the Commission recorded notes of dissent and argued against this functional renovation. They argued in favour of according overall co-ordinative responsibility to the Collector in development matters. Even the Commission itself found it necessary to emphasize advisory and co-ordinative responsibility of the Collector. Recommendation 16(3) lays down in clear terms the necessity of meeting, at periodic intervals, between the Collector and the Chairman of Zila Parishad for co-ordination between regulatory and development administration. This implies that the need for such co-ordination between two apparently disparate functions exists in Indian context. Recommendation 22(1) stresses the need for adequate safeguards and empowers the Collector to obtain information from Panchayati Raj institutions, as to their working, so that he is able to give "timely and proper advice when necessary in the public interest."⁶²

The future role of the Collectorial pattern in Bangladesh will be determined by the willingness and ability of the political elite to create viable non-bureaucratic structures at the local level that can effectively make decisions affecting rural development. It appears likely that Bangladesh may not go in for either a completely decentralised system or a functional system.⁶³ The

62. Administrative Reforms Commission: Report on State Administration (K. Hanumanthaiya, Chairman), Op.cit., pp.40-50. The notes of dissent appear in pages 111-132.

63. The absence of elected local councils at the District and Thana levels coupled with the government's repeated emphasis on co-ordination through the Collector are indicative of this trend.

Constitution of 1972 did provide a basis for the creation of a decentralized system built around the elected local government institutions. The Chaudhuri Committee of 1973 made recommendations which were a compromise between a radical renovation of the traditional field administration and a decentralised system. This was never tried. The revolutionary situation leading to one-party rule in 1975 led to the introduction of District Governor scheme which, due to rapid political change, never got off the ground.

The trend of administrative reforms in the late seventies indicates lack of firm decisions, on the part of the political elite, to rely on the existing apparatus of local government institutions for decision-making in rural development. No date has yet been fixed to hold elections for Zila Parishad which is managed by the Collector as Administrator. Thana Councils have not been made elective but a new body named Thana Development Committee, consisting solely of elected Chairmen of Union Parishads, is functioning alongside the Thana Council.⁶⁴ The most recent reform represents an attempt at politicisation of institutional means of local decision-making in rural development. The appointment of District Development Co-ordinators from amongst the elected MPs of the ruling party, similar to the Sri Lankan experiment, has occurred. These politically appointed co-ordinators have been accorded rank and status of Deputy Ministers.⁶⁵

64. Thana Development Councils were constituted under Local Government ministry's Notification No. S-IV/2E-1/78/282 dated 24th May, 1978.

65. Establishment Division's Resolution No. ED/SAIV-57/80-112 dated 23rd April, 1980.

Although it is too early to assess the success of this innovative experiment, it does offer an alternative that seems to satisfy the need for institutional participation in the process of rural development through non-bureaucratic structure. To that extent it provides an answer that is significantly different from absolute reliance on conventional local government system or the traditional field administrative structure. This does not necessarily mean that reliance on the Collectoral pattern for achieving national goals of development is on the decline. The recent government announcement to fight illiteracy throughout the country, followed by creation of a post of Additional Deputy Commissioner (Literacy) for each District, is clearly indicative of further reliance on the Collectoral pattern for what is essentially a responsibility of the ministry of Education and its affiliated organs.⁶⁶ Similar reliance is also reflected in the recent government attempt to introduce village level popular institutions called Gram Sarker. The decision to introduce them was taken in a meeting, held by the President, with the Collectors and Commissioners.⁶⁷

Finally, the nation-wide canal-digging programme taken up by the government during 1979-80 shows the same trend of involving the Collector and his machinery in mobilisation of voluntary labour.⁶⁸ This is seen in an office Memorandum from President's Secretariat.

66. Twenty temporary posts of Additional Deputy Commissioner (Literacy) were created under Establishment Division's Notification No. ED/FA-4/80-21 dated 11th January, 1980.

67. Holiday, April 27, 1980.

68. New Nation, April 6, 1980.

The Memorandum is given as Appendix 'D'.

All these trends point out that radical reform of the Collectoral pattern may not take place in near future. Government is bent upon utilising all available resources for achieving national goals for development. It seems certain that till such time as mobilisation programme can effectively be taken over by the politically appointed District development co-ordinators and the party machinery, the Collector and his staff will continue to play a vital role in resource-mobilisation at the local level and in generating popular enthusiasm for development.

APPENDIX 'A'

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

CABINET SECRETARIAT

Cabinet Division

CIRCULAR

No. Ex-Cell-2/77-CS-69(1000), dated the 25th May, 1977.

To

The Deputy Commissioner

.....

SUBJECT - Identification of Projects for execution by voluntary mass participation during 1977-78.

Government is determined to bring about a radical change in the economic situation of the country at the shortest possible time. For this an all-out effort is being made in all the sectors of the national economy. But unfortunately the resources available at the disposal of the Government being limited, desired result in the economic front cannot be achieved by Governmental efforts alone. For this it has been decided to mobilize human resources in various nation-building works so that the pace of development can be accelerated. Such participation by people in various development projects, when organised in a systematic way will not only create tangible economic results but will also promote the spirit of self-reliance, which is considered essential for our national survival and progress.

2. The people, particularly our rural population, are traditionally imbued with the idea of voluntary participation in small-scale community development work in the villages. In the past their efforts did not receive much of Governmental assistance and support. As such they could not create any lasting impact on the national economy as a whole. Due to favourable development climate prevailing in the country in the recent past, and the Government decision to extend necessary assistance to boost up development work through voluntary efforts, the people in general have shown tremendous spontaneous enthusiasm for such voluntary participation in various nation-building works. One such example is the Ulashi Project in the District of Jessore. Hundreds and thousands of people voluntarily contributed their mite to divert the course of the Betna River. The

Project is estimated to increase annual yield of crop by one lakh maunds valued at about one crore taka. In addition, a Fishery and a Duckery will be developed which will contribute substantially to the economic well-being of the people of the locality. As a result of the laudable work done through voluntary efforts, the Government have decided to develop this locality as a model Swanirvar area. A number of similar projects have also been undertaken in the districts of Mymensingh, Comilla, Kushtia, Jessore and Khulna. It is hoped that if projects of this type can be organised all over the country, most of the single-crop areas can be turned into double-cropping and food production can be increased by 15 to 20 per cent. This alone will make the country self-sufficient in food.

3. One very important lesson learnt from the success of these voluntary mass participation projects is that given the necessary administrative support, assistance and encouragement, our people can create miracles. The main task is to organise them and to harness this latent force for all-round development. For this necessary guidelines have been laid down in the Minutes of the meeting held on 5th March 1977 presided over by the Hon'ble CMLA, a copy of which is enclosed herewith for the guidance of all concerned.

4. Encouraged by success at Ulashi and other places, it is felt that a time has now come when a country-wide programme to mobilize voluntary work-force in nation-building projects can be launched. In this connection, to avoid confusion and overlapping with other institutions and departments, it is necessary to initially confine the scope of voluntary mass participation projects to the following categories:-

- (i) Irrigation,
- (ii) Drainage,
- (iii) Flood Control,
- (iv) Embankment and Roads,
- (v) Navigation,
- (vi) Construction of small bridges with locally available resources,
- (vii) Fish reservoir,
- (viii) Plantation of trees along roads and embankments and any other project of similar nature.

There should be Family Planning and Population Control motivation centres and Adult education centres at each project site.

5. Some projects may be small in size serving only one Village or one Union and others may be big enough to serve one or several Police Stations, even Subdivisions and Districts. In other words, there is no limit to project-size, but preferably projects should be small in size so that these can be organised locally with locally available managerial skill. The only limiting factor is that the

project should not be of technically complicated nature, for which specialized agencies exist. However, in some cases some sort of technical work may be essential to protect and conserve the benefit of work done on voluntary basis. This had exactly happened in case of Puratan Brahmaputra Nad Khanan Prakalpa. Water Development Board was called in to attend the technical work to complete the project initiated on voluntary basis. Projects of this nature should also be considered for execution and specialised agency concerned would be detailed to attend the technical part of the work.

6. The projects should be in response to local needs, sponsored and implemented by local people themselves. This will give them an additional pride of working for themselves and for their own benefit. Of course, they may need some skilled or semi-skilled manpower from outside to assist them. They may also need small sums of money which they may be unable to arrange themselves, to buy implements or to mobilize work-force. The Government would readily extend such support, where needed. It is the policy of the Government to extend full support to any nation-building project initiated and implemented on voluntary basis. All the Government officials and officials of specialised agencies, located in the project-areas should participate in the project to make it a success. Government would not like any voluntarily initiated project to run into difficulties due to lack of Government support and participation.

7. Responsibility for preparation and execution of projects should rest with the concerned Deputy Commissioner. He should identify and prepare projects in consultation with local officials of the Water Development Board and where necessary, with other concerned departments and specialised agencies. The selected projects should be technically sound and feasible. He should give necessary leadership and organise the whole work. One project Administration cell should be organised for each project as per directive contained in the Minutes of the meeting held on 5th March 1977, referred to above. The Cell should prepare the necessary work-schedule and make all preparation to start the work as soon as monsoon is over.

8. Projects should be drawn in the enclosed proforma and submitted to the Central Co-ordination Cell, Voluntary Participation Projects of this Division, in duplicate by 31st July, 1977. The date for submission of project will not be extended. Additional copies of proforma, if needed, should be produced locally.

A. M. KHAN

Secretary,

Cabinet Division.

Enclosed: - As above.

APPENDIX 'B'

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

President's Secretariat

Bangabhaban, Dacca

During the President's visit to Nabagram village at Dacca on 15.11.77 the following directives were received:

	<u>Action by</u>
1. 4 to 6 poultry farms should be started.	M/o. Agriculture, Forest, Fisheries & Livestock Divn. & Deputy Commissioner, Dacca.
2. Ponds should be re-excavated and fish cultivation should be started.	-do-
3. Plantation of fruit-bearing trees along roads should be carried out.	Forest, Fisheries & Livestock Divn, Roads & Highways Division, LGRD & Co-operatives Divn. and D.C., Dacca
4. The canal in Nabagram village should be re-excavated for preservation of water for winter crops.	M/O Agriculture, LGRD & Cooperative Divn. M/O. Power, Water Resources & Flood Control and D.C., Dacca.
5. Wheat cultivation should be organized for the whole union	M/O. Agriculture & D.C. Dacca.
6. Electricity should be supplied to the village	M/O. Power, Water Resources & Flood Control.
7. Improvement of housing in the village should be carried out through proper planning and individuals be helped to obtain house building loan.	LGRD & Cooperative Divn. HBFC., Governor, Bangladesh Bank & D.C., Dacca.
8. The play ground in the Village should be improved.	LGRD & Cooperative Divn. & D.C., Dacca.
9. Provision for birth control and family planning for the whole union should be made and maintenance of birth registers should be arranged.	LGRD & Cooperative Divn. M/O. Health, Population Control & FP and D.C., Dacca.

10. Regular classes should be arranged for removal of illiteracy. M/O. Education, DPI and D.C., Dacca
11. A documentary film will be prepared on Nabagram between 10 and 15th Jan/78 to project Nabagram as an ideal model village. M/O. Information & Broadcasting and D.C., Dacca.

The Hon'ble President is expected to revisit Nabagram on 15.1.78.

Other Chairmen of Union Parishads of the Thana should be encouraged to take up similar projects in their respective areas.

D.C. is requested to submit a completion report by 10.1.78.

Sd/-A.H.F.K. Sadique,
Secretary to President.
18.11.77

APPENDIX 'C'

Progress Report on Voluntary Mass Participation Projects,
for financial year 1978-79.

Sl. No.	Name of Districts	Total No. of approved projects	Total Allocation of the year	No. of projects completed	No. of projects incomplete	Amount Spent	Financial benefit derived	% of over all progress	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.	Chittagong	144	13,65,163/-	127	8	13,65,309/-	2,30,94,609/-	92%	9 projects not started
2.	Ctg. Hill-Tracts	18	2,31,003/-	18	---	2,31,003/-	35,00,000/-	100%	
3.	Noakhali	173	7,41,842/-	117	56	4,44,987/-	30,40,159/-	85%	
4.	Sylhet	264	11,17,907/-	217	47	6,51,730/-	4,30,96,521/-	86%	
5.	Comilla	153	10,06,262/-	132	15	8,82,898/-	1,15,80,259/-	94%	
Divisional Total =		752	44,62,177/-	611	126	35,35,927/-	8,43,11,548/-		Progress on 6 project not Reported
6.	Dacca	55	8,96,908/-	42	9	8,96,908/-	15,85,509/-	89%	4 projects not taken up.
7.	Mymensingh	197	8,48,017/-	180	4	7,36,352/-	90,69,475/-	92%	13 projects not started.
8.	Jamalpur	47	2,60,953/-	38	9	2,39,038/-	16,00,000/-	90%	
9.	Faridpur	236	6,06,670/-	235	---	6,03,170/-	61,00,000/-	99.8%	1 project dropped due to duplication
10.	Tangail	82	8,46,637/-	81	---	8,26,419/-	65,15,682/-	99%	1 project dropped.
Divisional Total =		617	34,59,185/-	576	22	33,01,887/-	2,48,70,666/-		
11.	Rajshahi	197	9,61,003/-	191	6	9,61,003/-	56,88,326/-	99%	
12.	Rangpur	196	5,54,983/-	193	---	4,99,299/-	48,92,930/-	99%	3 projects not started.
13.	Dinajpur	54	3,78,425/-	54	---	3,78,425/-	60,00,000/-	100%	
14.	Pabna	155	5,39,232/-	155	---	5,39,232/-	63,80,407/-	100%	
15.	Bogra	137	2,08,650/-	137	---	2,05,650/-	31,93,490/-	100%	
Divisional Total =		739	26,42,293/-	730	6	25,83,609/-	2,71,55,153/-		
16.	Khulna	48	4,94,517/-	48	---	4,85,017/-	82,23,668/-	100%	
17.	Barisal	156	9,66,747/-	99	55	8,63,238/-	55,85,574/-	85%	2 projects not started.
18.	Patuakhali	101	12,87,122/-	98	---	12,44,922/-	88,63,691/-	97%	3 projects not started.
19.	Jessore	160	8,11,845/-	153	7	8,11,845/-	55,02,265/-	99%	
20.	Kushtia	101	7,81,960/-	101	---	7,81,960/-	95,04,228/-	100%	
Divisional Total =		566	43,42,191/-	499	62	41,86,982/-	3,76,79,422/-		
21.	Headquarter	1	43,000/-	1	---	39,541/-			Medal & Certificate
Grand Total =		2675	1,49,48,846/-	2417	216	1,36,47,946/-	17,40,16,789/-	96%	42 neither started nor Reported.

APPENDIX 'D'

MOST IMMEDIATE

PRESIDENT'S SECRETARIAT
PRESIDENT'S DIVISION(PUBLIC)
BANGABHABAN, DACCA.

No. Eco.2ADP(M)-23/79-1446(79)

November 5, 1979.

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

The Hon'ble President has directed that excavation of irrigation canals be undertaken immediately on a massive scale throughout the country through voluntary participation of the masses. Under this programme at least one such canal will be dug in each Sub-division. Special emphasis in this respect will be given to Rajshahi Division and the districts of Kushtia and Jessore. A portion (10-15 percent) of the work will be executed through Food for Works Programme. The Government has also decided to supply the pumps required for these projects free of cost.

Special Cells will be set up in the offices of the concerned Deputy Commissioners and Commissioners for proper execution of the projects and regular monitoring and reporting of the progress of work of digging canals. Control Cells will also be set up for this purpose in the Ministries of Agriculture, Food, Relief & Rehabilitation, Power, Water Resources and Flood Control, L.G., R.D. & Co-operatives and Planning. A Coordination & Control Cell will be set up in the President's Secretariat to monitor the over all progress of canal excavation work in each Sub-division.

(Habibur Rahman)
Joint Secretary,
Phone: 252280.

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- (v) Commerce;
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- C. Politicians: Ministers, MPs and Party Officials.
- D. Local Councils: Chairmen and Members of Union Parishads.
- E. District Officials: Collectors, ADCs, SDOs and heads of specialist services.
- F. Swanirvar Organization: Swanirvar workers at different levels.