

UNION PARISHAD IN BANGLADESH: EVOLUTION AND REVENUE MOBILIZATION

Salma Mobarek

Deputy Director, Rural Development Academy (RDA), Bogura-5842, Bangladesh. E-mail: neepasalma@gmail.com

Article History

Received : 13 September 2021

Revised : 26 September 2021

Accepted : 4 October 2021

Published : 30 December 2021

Keywords

Evolution, Revenue Mobilization, Panchayat, Chowkidari Panchayat, Sustainable Development, Legal provisions.

Abstract: Domestic resource mobilization is considered a milestone for sustainable development in many countries. A country can reduce its poverty and foreign dependency by increasing domestic resources, and, thus, can achieve sustainable development in the long run. Presently, the role of domestic resource mobilization has been recognized globally for sustainable development. The local government needs to enhance local revenue mobilization under their jurisdiction to ensure sustainable development because local revenue is a vital part of the domestic resource. Bearing in mind the state it is essential to know the history of local government especially the Union Parishad and its connection with revenue mobilization. The Union Parishad is very nearby to the local people and because of that, the Union Parishad functionaries can inspire more the local people to pay revenue for their development. Union Parishad in Bangladesh is the lowermost level of local government. The main objective of the paper is to explore the evolution of the Union Parishad and its connection to local revenue mobilization. It is significant to know how the Union Parishad was connected with revenue mobilization from the very beginning and up to now. The paper is made based on secondary sources of data. The secondary sources of literature were collected from various local government-related books, scholarly journals, magazine articles, dissertations, national and international local development reports, working papers and many annual reports for exploring revenue mobilization at UPs.

Introduction

Domestic resource mobilization is regarded as a landmark for sustainable development in many nations. A state can decrease its poverty and overseas reliance by increasing native

To cite this article

Salma Mobarek (2021). Union Parishad in Bangladesh: Evolution and Revenue Mobilization. *Man, Environment and Society*, Vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 221-235.

resources, and, thus, can attain sustainable development in the long run. Presently, the role of domestic resource mobilization has been recognized globally for sustainable development (Gorina, 2013:5). Being a member of the UN to achieve all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Bangladesh has already integrated domestic resource mobilization with its 7th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020). Peaceful and inclusive societies are required to achieve SDG goal 16. Local resource mobilization is essential for having such types of societies in Bangladesh at the local level. The local government needs to enhance local revenue mobilization under their jurisdiction to ensure sustainable development because local revenue is a vital part of the domestic resource (Morgan, and Trinh, 2017:1 4).

Local Government Institutions (LGIs) have the legal mandate to mobilize local tax, rates and fees to pursue their developmental agenda. Based on laid down legal provisions and non-written traditions, Bangladesh has had long practices of local government for more than a century, comprising of three tiers of the framework. The Union Parishad (UP) is the bottommost stage of local government. The UPs could play a key role to fulfil the demands of community people and being a fundamental part of their development process. Low local resource mobilization has been acknowledged as a serious constraint for development at the local level (Russel, Nakama and Solaiman, 2015:7). Moreover, Bangladesh has been identified as one of the most centralized local revenue management systems among other Asian countries (Russel, Nakama and Solaiman, 2015: 7). Considering the situation, it is essential to know the history of local government, especially the Union Parishad. The Union Parishad is very close to the local people and because of that, the Union Parishad functionaries can encourage more the local people to pay revenue for their development. The main objective of this paper is to explore the evolution of the Union Parishad and its connection to local revenue mobilization. It is significant to know how the Union Parishad was connected with revenue mobilization from the very beginning and up to now. The article is made based on secondary sources of data.

The history of Union Parishad is more than 200 years old and presently is the lowermost level of rural local government structure in Bangladesh. The researcher attempted to have a little bit of discussion about the foundation of local government in Bangladesh along with the history of the Union Parishad. The history of Union Parishad cannot be clear without having discussion on the birth and growth of the local government system of Bangladesh. There are 4,562 UPs in Bangladesh, each of which is divided into nine wards composed of around 15 to 18 villages (Aminuzzaman, 2013: 201-221). The researcher in this section has discussed the foundation of local government in Bangladesh, along with the history of the UP. The origin of the UP cannot be proceeded without discussing the history of the local government system in Bangladesh.

Evolution of Union Parishad (UP) in Bangladesh

The evolution of the local government in Bangladesh can be described in the following ways-

British-India Period (1757-1947)

The local government came structurally with Headman and Panchayat during the Hindu ruling period. The post of Headman was mainly based on hereditary privileges and Panchayat was comprised of some villagers. The problem was that it was not based on a legal framework; mainly it was based on customs and practices (Aminuzzaman, 2013:140). The local government was given its legal base in the British period. The history of local government is almost common in Bangladesh, Pakistan, and India because they had been under British settlements for centennials (Kamal and Uddin, 2014:10). Bangladesh bequest the colonial systems of local government because it was under British rule for 190 years and Pakistan for two eras. The local administration structure in the Indian subcontinent was important to the British ruler for various types of reasons. The main reason behind the creation of local government was to fulfil the British colonial interest. The British rulers after having majestic authority in India had more focus on the expansion of land revenue collection and maintenance of law and order. Basically, they did not have any interest in self-governing institutions (Kamal and Uddin, 2014:11).

Chowkidari Panchayat: Local government in the British-Bengal had its first legal instrument in the Bengal Village Chowkidari Panchayat Act of 1870 (Tinker, 1968:10). Under this act; several villages formed a union, which had Chowkidari Panchayat (an organization). The organizations were comprised of five government chosen members who served for three years (Siddiqui, 1992:17). However, over time, since its beginning, the local government system has experienced modifications through various reform efforts (Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Planning commission, General Economics Division, 2015: 379). The Chowkidari Panchayat memberships were measured by government representatives rather than councils of villagers. It was an important attempt for the decentralization of finance (Sharma, 2004:102). The magistrate of the district was responsible for selecting the Panchayat and they were accountable to the magistrates (Islam, 2009:6-7). To create an extra accountable government, the Bengal Local Self-Government Act, grounded on Lord Ripon's Resolution on local self-government was accepted in 1882 and passed in 1885. Historically, it was the basis of the local self-government in the Indian subcontinent. Under this Act, Union Committees, local government boards and districts boards were recognized for diverse stages (Siddiqui, 1992:18).

Union Committee (UC): Union Committees were composed of not less than five or further than nine members. Members of the Union Committee were elected from among the residents of the Union. Divisional Commissioner could appoint members if the full membership was not found elected. The total areas of this were 12 square miles of a village. In that Act, whether a chairman of the Union Committee will be elected or not, was not mentioned. In 1908, an amendment came into force by the Bengal government that the chairman would be voted by the members of the Union (Ahmed, 2012:121). The Union Committee had the authority to collect the revenues (Siddiqui, 2008:14).

Union Board (UB): After that, the Bengal Village Self- Government Act of 1919 was endorsed to eliminate the Chowkidari Panchayat and Union Committee. Union boards and district boards were introduced. In 1946 replacing Chowkidari Panchayat and Union Committee, the selection system was ended. Up to that period the Union Boards were formed of two-thirds of the voted memberships and one-third of selected memberships. The Union Boards were responsible for law and order care, roads and bridge construction, health care facility and primary school care. The Union Board system was continuing up to August 14, 1947, when the Indian subcontinent was separated into two independent states namely India and Pakistan. In the British period, the local government bodies were ruled either by the selected officials or by the British monarch representatives. The maximum number of people of the Indian subcontinent could not say about the activities of this Union Board (Khan, 200: 95). However, it was very important because the provisions for the voting of the chairman and vice-chairman among the voted representatives were started at that time.

Pakistan Period (1947 - 1971)

After the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947, there was a growth of representative government under the veil of dictatorship. The government of Pakistan sustained along with a similar local government structure until 1959, except for a few modifications in the configuration and building of the local government (Kamal and Uddin, 2014: 12).

However, at that time the system was abolished as the military ruler of Pakistan thought that this model of representative government was in favour of a directed democracy which was branded by the authoritarian government at the top and representative government at the local level. This new type of government was identified as “Basic Democracy”. The Basic Democracies Order (BDO) was promulgated in 1959. In 1959, altogether the local government forms were postponed due to the transmission of Martial Law by General Ayub Khan. Finally, a four-tier categorized local government structure was presented under the basic democracy (Siddiqui, 2008: 18).

Union Council (UC): The four tiers of the local government were (i) Divisional Council, (ii) District Council, (iii) Thana Council or Municipal Committee, and (iv) Union Council. At the lowest level of the local government, the system was the Union Council in the rural areas. On average, a union was enclosed of a part of ten thousand residents and the Union Council was comprised of 15 members. Out of them, two-thirds were voted by the common voter and one-third of the members were chosen by the government. Though, the selection method was eliminated in 1962. Both the chairman and vice-chairman of the council were voted by the members among themselves. The elected councils of the Union Council were called basic democrats. The complete figure of such council was 7372. The main responsibility of the Union council was to maintain law and order. They were given a total of 37 functions, including agricultural improvement, water resource, education, communication and public well-being. Additionally, they assumed the power to form a conciliation court. The members of the courts were assigned with legal control by the Muslim Family and Marriage Ordinance-1961 (Kamal and Uddin, 2014: 13). For a generation of its own fund, the right to enforce taxes on assets and other bases was commended to the Union Council (Kamal and Uddin, 2014: 13).

Bangladesh Period (1971-2020)

After the liberation of Bangladesh in 1971, the construction of the local Government organizations has experienced diverse modifications. Various modifications have been rarely made for the classification of levels of local government.

Union Panchayat: Basically, the construction of the local government structure has continued more or less similar, although there have been diverse initiatives to change the construction of the local government bodies. Closely, after the liberation, by presidential order No. 7 of 1972, the first government in Bangladesh eradicated the Pakistani local government system and made 'Union Panchayat' with selected members in place of the union councils. Union Panchayat formed Union Relief Committees' with the nominated members and these played a vibrant role in dispensing material benefits to the citizenry in the post-independence rebuilding and reintegration period. The nominated members of Union Panchayat and Union Relief Committees were selected almost by the local members of parliament and the local party leaders of the ruling Awami League (Ahmed, 2012:127).

Union Parishad: In 1973, the name of Union Panchayat was returned to Union Parishad. The more significant modification was carried by the Local Government Ordinance, 1976. This ordinance is delivered for each tier of local government. It made Union Parishad for the Union level, the Thana Parishad for the Thana level and Zila Parishad for the District level. The importance of the ordinance was that for the first time it was approved to carry all the local government foundations on an alone legal basis. The

Union Parishad involved one elected chairman, nine elected members, two selected women members and two peasant councils.

Swanirvar Gram Sarker: Throughout a revision to the Local Government Ordinance in 1978, Swanirvar Gram Sarker (Village self-government) was presented at the village level in 1980 (Ahmed, 2012:129). But it was eliminated under the Martial Law Order in July 1982. Later a few Local Government Acts were passed in 1982, 1983, and 1988 and 1989 (Huque, 1988:39).

Gram Parishad: In 1996, the Bangladesh Awami League (AL) came to the power (1996-2001), made a local government commission and different laws relating to local government were suggested by the commission which was passed in the legislature (Rahaman and Hasan, 2014: 144). In May 1997, the local government commission gave a report on Strengthening Local Government Bodies. The commission suggested a four-tier local government construction containing Gram (Village) Parishad/Union Parishad, Thana Union/Parishad and Zilla (District) Parishad. The commission suggested a four-tier local government construction containing Gram (Village) Parishad, Union Parishad, Thana Parishad and Zilla (District) Parishad. However, this system was not last long because the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) came back to power in 2001.

Gram Sarker (GS): The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) government (2001-2006), brought alterations once more after coming power in the local government system of Bangladesh. The new government introduced Gram Sarker (GS) in place of Gram Parishad at the ward levels. Then after coming to power on 11 January 2007, the caretaker government (CTG) headed by Dr. Fakruddin Ahmed and ended Gram Sarker on April 20, 2008. In addition to the elimination of the Gram Sarker, the caretaker government made a notable modification of the Upazila Parishad (UP) Act of 1998 over an Ordinance. Fundamentally, the caretaker government revised the debatable provision of the Act of 1998 that made it obligatory for the UPs to trail the guidelines of the local MPs as Advisors (Kamal and Uddin, 2014: 15).

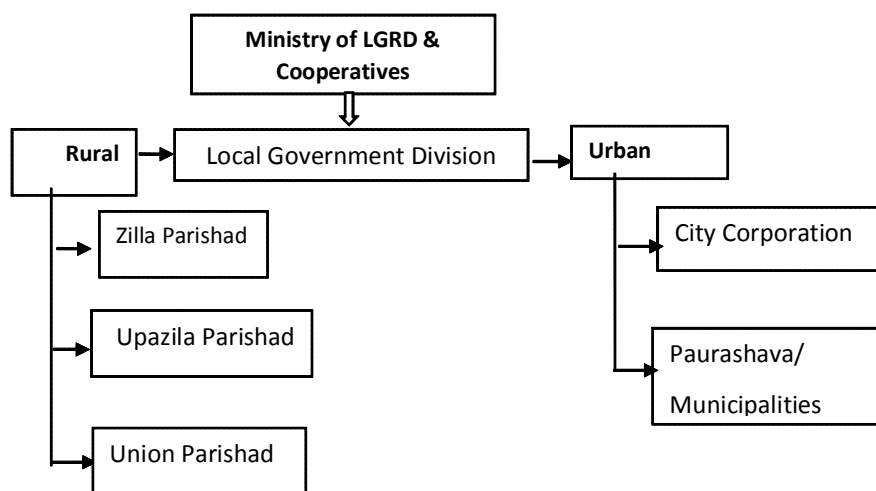
Union Parishad: After the caretaker government, Bangladesh Awami League formed the government on 6 January 2009 in the general election of December 29, 2008, they passed the Local Government (Union Parishad), Act 2009 unanimously in the parliament. The Act made the provision for the UPs to follow the suggestions of the local MPs. Article 25 in its clauses 1 and 2 deliver that the MPs shall be advisors of their own UPs and their advice shall be mandatory as shown in the original UP act of 1998. Additionally, the act also forbids the UPs to link straight with the government without notifying the particular MPs. Clause 27 (Kha) of the Act has made obligatory that the minutes of each session of the UP must be sent to their particular MPs within 14 functioning days. In that way, the government has reinforced the regulator of the MPs over their corresponding UP which

is conflicting with the basic value of democracy, decentralization and good governance (The Local Government-Union Parishad Act, 2009).

After the liberation of Bangladesh in 1971, the government of Bangladesh took different initiatives to change the basic construction and jobs of the Local Government bodies. In 1973, the name of Union Panchayat was changed to Union Parishad. After three years, the most important change was made through the Local Government Ordinance, 1976 which reverted for each tier of local government. It made Union Parishad for the Union level, the Thana Parishad for the Thana level (now Upazila Parishad for the Upazila level) and Zila Parishad for the District level. The Local Government (Union Parishad), (Amendment) Act, 1993 had increased the tenure of the UP to five years and divided the Union into nine wards. The Local Government-Union Parishad (Second Amendment Act), 1997 was a very good initiative for the UPs by the government in Bangladesh.

It has introduced the system of straight elections in three reserved seats for women and demarcated the territory of wards for women for the first time (Siddiqui, 2008:63). The Local Government (Union Parishad) Act-2009 has created the provisions ensuring people active share in the participatory planning and budgeting at the local level (Hossain, 2020: 24).

Present Construction of Local Government in Bangladesh: At present, there are three tiers of local government at the rural level and two tiers of local government at the urban level. At the countryside level, Union Parishad at the union level, Upazila Parishad at the Upazila level and Zilla Parishad at the District level; and in the urban areas City Corporation in megacities and Pourashava at city/ town level in Bangladesh.



Source: Union Parishad Act, 2009

Connection with Revenue Mobilization at Union Parishad

The local government in British Bengal had its first legal institution in the Bengal Village Chowkidari Panchayat Act of 1870 (Tinker, 1968: 10). Under this Act; some villages made a union, which had Chowkidari Panchayat (an organization). Their key duty was to support the administration in preserving the law and order and the support in revenue collection (Sharma, 2004:102.). It was an important attempt for the decentralization of finance. The magistrate of the district was responsible for selecting the Panchayat and they were accountable to the magistrates (Islam, 2009: 6-7). To form an extra accountable government, the Bengal Local Self-Government Act, grounded on Lord Ripon's Resolution on local self-government was approved in 1882 and passed in 1885. Historically, it was the basis of the local self-government in the Indian subcontinent. By this Act, Union Committees, local government boards and districts boards were recognized for diverse stages (Siddiqui, 2008: 18). In 1908, an amendment came into force by the Bengal government that the chairman would be voted by the members of the Union. The Union Committee had the authority to collect the revenues (Ahmed, 2012:121). After that, the Bengal Village Self-Government Act of 1919 was enacted to eliminate the Chowkidari Panchayat and Union Committee. In place of these tiers, union boards and district boards were formed. The Union Boards were responsible for law and order care, roads and bridge construction, health care provision and primary school care. It was given the power to impose union taxes (Noor, 1986: 81). The Union Board system was continuing up to August 14, 1947, when the Indian subcontinent was divided between two free and sovereign states, India and Pakistan.

After the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947, The Basic Democracies Order (BDO) was promulgated in 1959. In 1959, altogether the local government bodies were postponed due to the broadcast of Martial Law by General Ayub Khan. Ultimately, a four-tier graded local government structure was announced in the name of basic democracy (Siddiqui, 2008:18). At the lowest level of local government, the structure was the Union Council in the rural areas. The main responsibility of the Union council was to maintain law and order. They were given a total of 37 functions, including agricultural growth, water resource, education, communication and public well-being. Additionally, they were provided with the power to form a conciliation court. The members of the courts were entrusted with trial power by the Muslim Family and Marriage Ordinance 1961 (Kamal and Uddin, 2014:13). For a generation of its own fund, the right to enforce taxes on property and other bases was assigned to the Union Council.

In 1973, the name of Union Panchayat was reverted to Union Parishad. It may be mentioned that the Ordinance of 1976 mentioned 28 sources of revenue from which the Unions functionaries could mobilize their revenue. However, the Ordinance of 1983 has

drastically reduced the scope of revenue by reducing it to only five items (Noor, 1994: 6). Further, after the creation of Upazila Parishad in 1982, two important sources of income taxes on profession and lease money from the UP to the Upazila Parishad. As a result, its revenue base was narrowed down to a great extent.

However, with the abolition of the Upazila Parishad, these two sources have been given back to the Union Parishad of Bangladesh. Presently, those sources are transferred to the Upazila Parishad and UPs got some revenue according to the rules of transferred revenue by the government of Bangladesh. The Guidelines on the Strategy for the UP-Tax Assessment and Collection- 2003 was formulated for the successful implementation of tax assessment and collection (The Guidelines on the Strategy for the UP-Tax Assessment and Collection-2003, The Ministry of the Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives, The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh).

It mentioned sources of local revenue income from eight sectors, one hundred and one subsectors and eighty-eight items. A tax collector may appoint in every ward on a commission basis. According to the Model Tax Schedule-2003, the amount of tax, rate and fee was fixed in such a way that was not possible for the UPs of Bangladesh to change. In the Local Government Union Parishad Act 2009 the number of local revenue sources are total 13. Lastly Model Tax Schedule 2013 was done according to section 66 of the Local Government Union Parishad Act 2009 (Hossain and Hasemi, 2015: 251). The Model Tax Schedule total 16 sources of local revenues. It has mentioned the highest amount of revenue. This has made the collection procedures easy because now the UPs functionaries can collect any lower amount of revenue from their local people. Here people can pay revenue according to their capital based on their business, occupation and types of industries (Hossain and Hasemi, 2015: 251). This is a great opportunity for the UPs to make them habituated to pay any amount of revenue for their local development. It was assessed that whatever may the number of sources, the UPs have been suffering from a long-lasting scarcity of funds. Their financial assets were never found satisfactory to accomplish the jobs assigned to them (Hossain and Hasemi, 2015: 251).

Present Legal Sources of Local Revenue Mobilization at Union Parishad: The legal provisions of the UPs which have been covered in the present research are mainly the Local Government (Union Parishad Act-2009 and Union Parishad Model Tax Schedule-2013). The UPs in Bangladesh are presently using the sources of revenues that have been mentioned in the Local Government (Union Parishad Act-2009 and Union Parishad Model Tax Schedule-2013). Total 13 sources of revenue income have been allowed to UPs to mobilize revenues from internal sources to meet up their expenditures in Schedule-IV in the Local Government (Union Parishad) Act- 2009.

Key Sources of Local Revenue: Vested tax on building and land-based on yearly value or union rate; Approval of building planning fee for *pucca* building on per square feet based its total area; Tax on professions, trades, and callings; Tax on cinemas, dramatic and theatrical show, others recreations; Fees for licenses and permits granted by the Parishad; Fees from selected hat-bazaars (local markets- daily and weekly), ferry *ghat* (ferry station) within Union Parishad (lease money); Government fixed portion income from transfer *jal-mahal* (water bodies) within the territory of UP; Government fixed portion income from *Pathormahal* (stones are gifts of nature for people). When stones lifting is done legally through permission from local administration is called, Pathormahal; Balumahal (extraction and lifting of sand from river banks are quite common in Bangladesh. When extraction and lifting of sand from river banks are done legally through permission from local administration is called, Balumahal) within the territory of UP; Part of immovable property transfer taxes (Revenue share 1 per cent from the sub-registry office); Marriage registration fees; Part of land development taxes; Taxes on advertisements; The UPs are given the power to collect any tax within their territory under the rules of this Act. The Model Tax Schedule- 2013 has empowered the UPs to assess and collect the taxes, rates, and fees based on the guidelines. According to the Union Parishad Model Tax Schedule-2013, there are 16 sources of revenue at the UP level (Union Parishad Model Tax Schedule-2013).

Sources of Local Revenue: Tax on Buildings and Land: The tax is levied on the value of buildings and the land on which they are located. Tax not over 7 per cent can be charged on the yearly value (in taka, Bangladesh currency) of any building and land located in any UP; Tax on building construction and reconstruction: The rate of tax on the temporary structure is 20 taka, except for those constructed for living or religious purposes. Tax on homestead land: Not over 3 per cent of the total value of the building and land. Tax on business, trade, or occupation: For warehouses that do not belong to any limited company, the tax varies from 500 takas to 2000 taka. For such cold-stores, it varies from 400 takas to 2000 taka. Taxes for SMEs range from 50 takas to 300 takas. Industries (Limited Companies) can be taxed 5,000 takas to 40,000 takas depending on the size of their paid-up capital. Tax on agro firms ranges from 50 takas to 1,000 takas. It is a maximum of 1,000 takas for rice mill, flour mill, oil mill, and sawmill. For the brickfields and ceramic industries, it varies from taka 5,000 to 50,000 taka; The rate for electrification facility: Maximum 2 per cent of the yearly value of buildings and land for the maintenance of electrification of roads and public places; The rate for entertainment parks and other facilities: Not over 2 per cent of the yearly value of buildings and land if entertainment parks, children's parks, public toilets are established by UP; The rate for water supply: Not over 2 per cent of the yearly value of buildings and land; The rate for drainage system: Not

over 12 per cent of the yearly value of buildings and land; Fees for animal slaughtering: Taka 10 for goat or sheep; Taka 20 for the cow, and 25 takas for buffalo; Registration fees for tutorial school, coaching centre: Taka 2000 for the tutorial, 2500 taka for coaching centre, and 3000 takas for private K.G school (Bengali/English Medium); Registration fees for a private hospital, clinic, paramedical institute, etc. The fee for the clinic and the paramedical institute is 1500 taka, and for the private hospital, it is 2500 taka. The Parishad can exempt the fee if such institutes perform non-profit activities; Tax for the honorarium of village police. Tax not over 2 per cent of the yearly value of buildings and land can be collected for providing an honorarium to the village police force; Market tax: It is 1 per cent of the tender value of the *haat-bazaar*; license and permit fee for business, trade, and occupation: For any license, permit, or renewal fee, the rate is a maximum 200 taka; Fee for permission of construction of the brick (*pucca*) building: Maximum 1 taka per square feet of an approved building plan.

LGIs in Bangladesh are obligated to mobilize revenues to generate revenue from various local sources to run the institutions and to finance local development expenditure as well (Barakat et al., 2015:37). Bangladesh government has been proactive in strengthening the local governance system, because the government has introduced some innovative guidelines and passed laws intending to decentralize financial power to the UPs, however, it has not increased to optimum level yet.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Union Parishad has a deep-rooted past. Its' history is old for more than 200 years. Currently, it is the bottommost level of rural local government institutes in Bangladesh. The history of Union Parishad indicates that it has a straight linking with local revenue collection from its' beginning. If the Union Parishad can collect local revenue as per the guidelines of the government then it would be financially independent. Bangladesh government has been proactive in strengthening the local governance system because the government has introduced innovative policies and passed laws intending to decentralize financial power to the UPs, nevertheless, it did not succeed until now. It may also provide some guidelines to improve planning for proper collection, utilization and management of revenue sources, which in turn may be helpful for UPs to play an important role in sustainable development at the UP level in Bangladesh.

Recommendations: After reviewing secondary sources of local government-related books, journals articles, magazine articles, dissertations, national and international reports, working papers and different acts & circulars on revenue mobilization, the following recommendations are given which can ensure better mobilization of revenue at the UP level in Bangladesh.

- (i) More developmental tasks at the UP level can encourage more people to pay their taxes, rates and fees. It is found that local revenue mobilization for development purposes can encourage them to pay more tax. Local people are not interested in paying revenue because they do not get regular service from UPs. They generally expect some regular services from them. The Union Parishad should provide regular services to them.
- (ii) The UPs as a focal point of development, people want to involve enjoy the power of monitoring and controlling their constituencies. People may not be interested in paying revenue unless they can have access to the revenue mobilization process because they have confused about how UP functionaries utilize and manage their collected revenue. The UPs can ensure accountability and transparency by involving local people in community development activities. Participation of community people can encourage them to pay taxes regularly, which may ultimately raise funds for the UPs.
- (iii) Policies and laws should be made in such a way that the citizens are bound to pay revenue on time. They should be used to paying revenue regularly whatever the amount is fixed. The UPs in Bangladesh can build awareness up among the community people through their ward shave meetings, standing committees meeting on regular basis, conduct open budget meetings considering people's expectations.
- (iv) Rewarding initiatives may encourage others to pay revenues on time. The open budget meeting might be the best place to announce the reward owners names. The number of reward owners might be fixed by the UP.
- (v) Smart leadership among the UP functionaries should be created by providing them with proper training, arranging workshops, seminars regularly and creating coordination & confidence among the local people.
- (vi) Importance should be given to people's demands and expectations. When people feel that the UP representatives give importance to their needs, they will be conscious of the revenue mobilization process and it may ultimately create peoples' interest in it.
- (vii) Social Capital could be an effective instrument for UP Tax collection. To address the issue of UP Tax collection, Imam Sahib (religious leader) in the mosque or similar person from a Temple, Church, etc. or a designated person from the UP (Chairman, Member, etc.) can do address the congregation for motivating the audience for regular UP Tax payment.

- (viii) The educational qualification and professional experience of the revenue collectors are not good. They have no professional training. They learnt tax collection-based work through learning by doing and sharing the experience with other collectors. The tax collectors should have the educational quality to create eagerness among the community people by approaching them about revenue collection and utilization issues appropriately.
- (ix) The Local Government Institutions (LGIs) should take initiatives to make citizens knowledgeable about the policies, laws and guidelines. Most of the UPs functionaries and local people do not have enough knowledge about the legal provisions. A separate revenue collection unit can be established to mobilize revenue at the local level successfully. Moreover, some developmental works by NGOs in these lines so that UPs could work teaming up with them.
- (x) At present, there exist 9 different basic acts and a few hundred rules for Local Government Institutions (LGIs) in Bangladesh. Under the existing system, there is no common and general legal framework to qualify the term “LG system” except separate LGI laws. A Local Government Legal Framework (LGLF) need to be created so that Bangladesh can create a strong enough LGI system (Bangladesh Planning Commission, 2015).
- (xi) It is required to make a database of their collected revenue. The citizens want to see their collected total amount of revenue and how the collected revenue is utilized. In fact, up-to-date data and information may be a great improvement in the performance of revenue mobilization at the UP level in Bangladesh.
- (xii) It was identified that local government institutions lose control over resources due to power dynamics among the MP, UNO, and UZP Chairman. The influence of the MP, UNO, and UZP on the distribution of social safety net provisions and utilization of local revenue is affecting revenue collection at UPs in many ways.

References

- Ahmed, Tofail. (2012). *Decentralization and the Local State: Political Economy of Local Government in Bangladesh*. Dhaka: Agamee Prakashani.
- Aminuzzaman, Salahuddin M. (2013). Governance at Grass-Roots- Rhetoric, and Reality: A Study on Union Parishad in Bangladesh, In Ishtiaq Jamil, Steiner Askvik and Teknath Dhakal eds., *Search of Better Governance in South Asia and Beyond*, 201-221. London: Springer.
- Gorina, Evgenia. (2013). *Fiscal Sustainability of Local Governments: Effects of Government Structure, Revenue Diversity, and Local Economic Base*. Ph.D. Dissertation, Arizona State University, USA.

- Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Planning commission, General Economics Division. (2015). Seven Five Year Plan, FY2016-FY2020, Accelerating Growth, Empowering Citizens.
- Hossain, Jakir., ed. (2020). *Bangladesh Local Governance Practicalities, Participation and Priorities*. Rajshahi University: Institute of Bangladesh Studies.
- Hossain, Muhammad Motahar and Md. Abu Iktiyar Hashemi. (2015). *Local Resource Collection, Impose and Reality of Model Tax Schedule by UPs (A Study on Seven Union Parishad)*. Dhaka: National Institute of Local Government.
- Huque, Ahmed Shafiqul. (1988). *Problems of Participation: Politics and Administration in Bangladesh*. Dhaka: University Press Ltd.
- Islam, Talukdar M. R. (2009). *Rural Local government in Bangladesh, Conceptual Framework*. Dhaka: Osder Publication.
- Kamal, Masuda and Khandakar Farid Uddin. eds. (2014). *Local Government in Bangladesh: Essays on Issues and Problems*. Dhaka: Osder Publications.
- Khan, Niaz Ahmed. May (2001). The Political Economy of Decentralized Local Governance in Bangladesh: A Retrospect. *Indian Journal of Social Science*, 62(1) 90-105. <https://mdsatewu.files.wordpress.com/2012/06/decentralization.doc> (accessed on August 23, 2019).
- Morgan, Peter J and Long Q. Trinh. (2016). Frameworks for central-local government relations and fiscal sustainability. In Naoyuki Yoshino and Peter J. Morgan eds., *Central and Local Government Relations in Asia: Achieving Fiscal Sustainability*, 3-63. USA: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.
- Noor, Abdur. (1986). *Anatomy of Local Government in Bangladesh*. Bangladesh Political Science Association (Annual conference paper).
- Noor, Abdur. July-December (1994). Resource Mobilization by the Union Parishad in Bangladesh: Past Experience and Future Dimension. *The Journal of Local Government*, 23(2), NILG: Dhaka.
- Rahaman, Sheikh Ashrafur and Gazi Saiful Hasan. January (2014). Local Government in Bangladesh: Constitutional Provisions and Reality. *Metropolitan University Journal* 4(1): 136-147. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/264972755> (accessed April 21, 2021).
- Russel, Mohammed Ali Nause, Mizuki Nakama and Mohammad Solaiman. August (2015). A Comparative Analysis of Revenue Ecology and Decentralization of Service Delivery of the Local Government in Bangladesh on Asian Perspective. *International Journal of Accounting and Financial Management Research* 5(4):7-18. <http://www.tjprc.org> (accessed February 18, 2021).
- Sharma, Manoj. (2004). *Local Government: Rural and Urban*. New Delhi: Anmol Publisher.
- Siddiqui, Kamal. ed. (1992). *Local Government in South Asia: A Comparative Study*. Dhaka: University Press Limited.
- Siddiqui, Kamal. (2008). *Local Government in Bangladesh*. Dhaka: University Press Limited.
- The Guidelines on the Strategy for the UP-Tax Assessment and Collection. (2003). The Ministry of the Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives, The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

Union Parishad in Bangladesh: Evolution and Revenue Mobilization

- The Local Government-Union Parishad Act, (2009). Ministry of LGRD&C. The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.
- Tinker, Hugh. (1968). *The Foundation of Local Self- Government in India, Pakistan and Bhutan*. New York: Prager.