



**Office of the Deputy Commissioner in Bangladesh:  
Overview of the Shift in Development Paradigm**

**By**

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**Public Policy & Governance Program  
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**Dedicated to**

**my parents**

## **Declaration**

I declare that the dissertation entitled “Office of the Deputy Commissioner in Bangladesh: Overview of the Shift in Development Paradigm” submitted to the PPG Program of North South University, Bangladesh for the Degree of Master in Public Policy and Governance (MPPG) is an original work of mine. No part of it, in any form, has been copied from other sources without acknowledgement or submitted to any other university or institute for any degree or diploma. Views and expressions of the thesis bear the responsibility of mine with the exclusion of PPG for any errors and omissions to it.

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## **Abstract**

This study attempts to explore the extent of transformation of functions of the Office of the Deputy Commissioner from conventional regulatory public administration system to a new form of Public Administration with specific aim to tap and understand the factors that induced and or influenced the transformation process. The researcher has also ascertained whether the transformation of functional areas of the Office of the Deputy Commissioner resemble the features of changing paradigm of public administration (TPA-NPA-NPM). This study is based on qualitative method of research. It has used historical method in which data have been collected from content analysis, archive documents and secondary sources. Two case studies have been conducted in two districts in Bangladesh in order to gather required data and information. More importantly, the researcher has conducted several in depth interviews and consultation with the key informants, former and incumbent civil servants, historians, academics, civil society members, media personalities, former staff of DC office and some citizens. Both primary and secondary sources of data have been used for further analysis and inferences.

In Bangladesh, Office of the Deputy Commissioner is the key role player in the district with a big number of traditional functions right from the time of East India Company. But the pattern of district administration is changing over time. This study aims at the evolution of the role and function of the Office of the Deputy Commissioner first. Historically Office of the Deputy Commissioner (Collector) started its journey during East India Company with the Hastings plan in 1772 with a view to collecting land tax revenue. Its role and functions had been changed several times for the better control of revenue collection as well as administration at different regimes of Governor Generals during company rule. After the 'Sepoy Mutiny' (Indian Rebellion) 1857, British Crown took over the governance from the company and started Indian Civil Service (ICS), known as "Imperial Civil Service" or "Steel Frame of British Raj" and continued up to 1947. In British India, Collector was a regulatory authoritative ruler. After partition in 1947 during Pakistan period, the

role of collector expanded to social welfare, service to the citizen and different development oriented activities. After independence in 1971, the role of Deputy Commissioner was changed in both civil government and martial law regime for their interventions. This study has found that the original pattern of the collector remains more or less unchanged but there appears to be gradual transformation of the conventional character of district administration.

In the final analysis, the study has observed that starting from the East India Company up to present day district administration, various reforms/interventions as well as other factors have influenced the role of Deputy Commissioner institutionally which resulted in the transformation of the role of Deputy Commissioner. These factors are identified as Election Manifesto, Various Administrative Reforms, Separation of Judiciary, Decentralization, Socio-economic Change, Five Year Plan, Innovation & Technology, Education & Training, Citizen Charter and RTI, Media & Social Media Pressure, Annual Performance Agreement (APA) and Recognition or Reward System. The present features indicate that TPA, NPA & NPM co-exist in an uneasy manner in the Office of the Deputy Commissioner in Bangladesh. It has significantly moved from TPA towards a mixed approach of NPA & NPM. It is also likely true that there has been a transformation of mind set of the 'bureaucracy' & 'citizen' due to changes in cultural and political factors.

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## List of abbreviation

AC	Assistant Commissioner
ADC	Additional Deputy Commissioner
ADM	Additional District Magistrate
CC	Citizen Charter
DC	Deputy Commissioner
DDLG	Deputy Director Local Government
DM	District Magistrate
DO	District Officer
DS	Deputy Secretary
GCO	General Certificate Officer
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
JS	Joint Secretary
LAO	Land Acquisition Officer
MOLGRD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
MOPA	Ministry of Public Administration
NDC	Nezarat Deputy Collector
NPA	New Public Administration
NPM	New Public Management
PA	Public Administration
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
RDC	Revenue Deputy Collector
RTI	Right To Information
SAC	Senior Assistant Commissioner
SAE	Sub Assistant Engineer
SAS	Sub Assistant Secretary
TPA	Traditional Public Administration
UNO	Upazila Nirbahi Officer

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

This chapter starts with the general background of the study together with specific research problem. It elaborates the significance and objective of the study. Then it highlights the research questions of the research. Moreover, this chapter goes for the review of literature regarding office of the Deputy Commissioner and paradigm shift in public administration. This chapter also identifies the scope and the limitations of the study. Finally, the chapter comes to an end with the explanation of the structure of the study.

### 1.1 Background

The Office of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) in Bangladesh is said to be the eye, ear and hand of the Government in the district. According to the “Ma-Bap” concept of Government as put forward by Hans Anderson, the concentration of powers in the hands of the Deputy Commissioner was so great and his sharing of these powers so rare and minimal that he would have been called the ‘Ma-Bap’ (mother and father)<sup>1</sup> of his area (Abedin, 1973). Starting its journey in 1772 with the Hastings Plan, the pattern of Office of DC has gone through many ups and downs (Ali, Rahman & Das, 1983). It was originated as Collector in British India in order to gear towards collection of revenue. Then he was empowered as District Magistrate for ensuring security and criminal justice. Another important function is coordination/relationship with other departments. Later on, Collector got more and more involved in local developmental and managerial activities (Ali, 1982). At present, Judicial separation and government principal agenda “Digital Bangladesh Vision 2021” have opened the scope for providing better service and playing the role of public manager. Besides maintaining bureaucratic approach of public administration, collectors are now more and more engaged in public management, development and innovative activities, and service to the people.

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<sup>1</sup> “Ma-Bap” is a Bengali word consists of two words ‘Ma’ and ‘Bap’. ‘Ma’ means mother and ‘Bap’ means Father. In Bangladesh, ‘Ma-Bap’ indicates a person who can exercise enormous power in the society.

In the British period, a lot of experiments had been done on the role and functions of the collector. Governor General Warren Hastings (1772) created the post of Collector but it was abolished in 1773 (Ali, 1995). Then in 1786, Governor General Macpherson revived the post of Collector and empowered him with magisterial, judicial and police power. But the concentration of power in the collector proved to be harmful to Governor General Lord Cornwallis. In 1793, he separated the judicial and magisterial power from the Collector and he had also withdrawn the police power. Thus the Collector became less powerful and engaged himself only with the collection of land revenue. Later on, in 1831, the designation District Collector was changed to District Magistrate and Collector. In 1838, the magisterial power of the Collector was withdrawn because of pressure of revenue work. In 1859, the magisterial and the revenue functions were again combined as the magisterial powers of the collector were considered essential for collection of revenue.

After the creation of Pakistan in 1947, District Magistrate had to work with a new reality of changing atmosphere with post partition impetus. Besides maintaining land management, he had to work for the social welfare and citizen service. He had to work with both civil and military administration in different circumstances. The District Magistrate was found to be the most suitable officer to carry the job of coordination at district level. The post of District Magistrate was newly designated as Deputy Commissioner in 1959 to bring uniformity between East and West Pakistan. The objectives and functions of district administration were changed after the posting of local officers as Deputy Commissioners. During British period, there was practically no development programme for implementation by the Deputy Commissioner. Rather he was engaged in some social welfare programs and institutions. But in Pakistan period, Deputy Commissioner was assigned with a huge number of economic development programs. He was the coordinator of all the offices for the effective implementation of those programs and projects. So, there appeared some changes (both cosmetic and substantive) in the role and functions of Deputy Commissioner.

After the liberation in December 1971, the district administration had to work with government with a new challenge and new reality. The rehabilitation of the

shattered economy from 1972 to 1974, collection of unauthorized arms from freedom fighters and restoration of rule laws –all created a different challenge for the district administration. But, the district administration performed well to meet the challenge. The amendment of the Constitution in 1975 (introduction of District Governorship) created a new challenge for the Deputy Commissioner. Later on, the political situation got changed and the district administration had to work with military government. In Bangladesh, the field administration had to work twice with the military government. In 1982, huge administrative reorganization was done as per the recommendations of NICAR (National Implementation Committee on Administrative Reorganization/Reforms). In 1984, 42 new districts of different category were created and district administration was expanded in those districts. The noticeable thing is that the field administration is always going through different types of changing process. At present, Deputy Commissioner is engaged with different types of innovative and service oriented activities besides maintaining their revenue, administrative and law & order functions. Deputy Commissioner is the pivot of District Development Coordination Committee and a large number of other committees. He is the person who maintains direct communication with Prime Minister’s Office (PMO), Cabinet Division, Ministry of Public Administration and other strategic ministries. Although, the judiciary is separated from the executive in 2007, but the innovative and development activities of Deputy Commissioner are increasing day by day. DC is becoming more and more committed to ensure service to the doorsteps of the citizens.

The traditional functions of Deputy Commissioners are seen incompatible with development functions; the technical or innovative nature necessary for development is not expected from rule and law based field administration (Ali, 1995). In the late 1980s and 1990s, a new form of Public Administration theories began to displace the last called “New Public Management (NPM)” (Kalimullah and Nur, 2012). The western countries specifically the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) imposed the adaptation of the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) and also prescribed some other economic policies for the developing nations. Political government imposed new challenge upon ministries

and field administration for reform and come out of traditional rule based administration for innovation. As a result, functionally collectoral pattern is needed to go under many changes in order to survive in the new reality.

The international donor agencies pressurized Bangladesh to go for public administration reforms and incorporate NPM for better performance of public administration. In first phase the government was not agreed to introduce the donor's prescription. But later on, political government of Bangladesh has accepted the prescription of donor agencies and gone through a series of reforms over the public administration as well as district administration. As a result, the Office of the Deputy Commissioner has gradually given up some of its traditional colonial approach of public administration. Day by day, it is becoming more and more innovative to adapt with the essence of New Public Management (NPM).

## **1.2 Statement of Problem**

The evolution of public administration development has been divided into four overlapping paradigm (Henry 1975). However, Public administration has been going through a new paradigm, paradigm 5, from 1970 to present date. Paradigm 5 refers to public administration's successful autonomous academic field and practice. Public administration is emerging in a world of globalization, devolution and the redefining of government. This paradigm led to the ideas of (a) New Public Management (NPM), (b) Re-inventing Government and (c) New Public Administration. So, Public Administration never had and perhaps will never have a steady state (Kettl, 2000).

The Office of the Deputy Commissioner has a long historical evolution. The 'Ma-Bap' concept of Government as put forward by Hans Anderson long ago has been symbolized in the Office of the Deputy Commissioner who is regarded to be the 'pivot' of district administration (Ali et al. 1983). Beginning with the position of supervisor in 1769 during East India Company, the position has evolved through Collector of Revenue, District Magistrate and finally the Deputy Commissioner. With the passage of time, the Office of the Deputy Commissioner is not only a functional office; rather it has evolved as an institution by itself. At the same time, the powers

and authority of Deputy Commissioner has been changed many times for the effective and efficient implementation of the district administration. Historically this office became the key role player in the district and the DC had to perform a large number of traditional functions right from the time of East India Company. Thus for decades he continued to be the District Magistrate and Collector combining in him the magisterial, administrative and revenue functions. According to Rowland Committee in 1944-45, District Officer (DO) had civil supplies, development and services activities besides the above functions. Later on, other functions like Local Government, Rural Development, Residuary government functions, protocol, treasury functions were included in the responsibilities and duties. The coordination functions of DC through Coordination Committees or Managing Committees overburdened him. The Deputy Commissioner is assisted by Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC). During early Pakistan period there was only one Additional District Magistrate (ADM) to help DM. During the late Pakistan days and early Bangladesh period there were three ADCs in an average district viz. ADC (General), ADC (Revenue) and ADC (Development). But in some districts like Dhaka and Khulna, there were ADC (City), ADC (Industrial Area), ADC (Projects) and ADC (Literacy). At present, there are the posts of ADC (Education) and ADC (Information and Communication Technology). In the year 2007 during Caretaker Government in Bangladesh, the separation of judiciary from the executive created a new challenge for the district administration. Now the question is how much these functional changes of the Deputy Commissioner have affected the pattern of the collector and brought about a shift from regulatory approach to a new paradigm.

Modern district administration in Bangladesh and Pakistan had its origin in the first hundred years of British administration in South Asia (Abedin, 1973). The style of administration has undergone considerable changes, although the formal structure of administration has remained almost completely unchanged. With the increasing modernization of administration and with an increase in the number and importance of other functions, and in the incomes from other and new sources, the land revenue function (the oldest and most important functions of district administration), has naturally become relatively unimportant and receives very little

attention from the DC. On the other hand, with the increasing importance of community development, the development function (former miscellaneous functions) has become one of the two (other is law and order) most important functions of district administration. Now, it has become incumbent on the DC to spend a good deal of time and energy in order to further the cause of development. Thus, district administration which was formerly a revenue and law & order oriented administration is increasingly becoming a development oriented administration.

International donor agencies gave emphasis on the public administration reforms in Bangladesh since 1980s. In the form of the reform package or the economic and the development agenda such as NPM model had been imposed on the developing countries like Bangladesh without considering the socio-economic conditions of the country. Some developing countries like Singapore have got the successful result in the reform of the public sectors. But, other countries have experienced the poor result or the negative consequences (Sarker, 2006). According to those reforms prescription, government of Bangladesh took many initiatives in order to bring the desired outcomes in the administration. But administrative culture, outdated regulatory framework, inadequate professional standards and procedures both at the field level as well as at policy level hinder the pace and process of development in Bangladesh (Aminuzzaman & Winter, 2009). Although Bangladesh could not achieve that much development in the process, the district administration as well as public administration has undergone a lot of structural and functional changes though the original structure of district administration remained unchanged.

Finally, it can be said that with the changing reality, the role and functions of the Deputy Commissioner have been changed or transformed remarkably from time to time. This change has been taken place in accordance with the need of time and environment. So, the centrality of the research concern is the transformation or diffusion of the role and functions of the Office of the Deputy Commissioner. There are various types of factors behind this changing pattern. This study will be focused on the current role and functions of the Deputy Commissioner starting from its evolution whether it has been shifted into fully development paradigm or NPA or

NPM or in between the traditional approach and NPA or NPM. The study is also aiming at specifying the factors and or conditions that are accelerating or contributing to the transformation process.

### **1.3 Literature Review**

#### **1.3.1 Literature Review on District Administration**

There are lot of research works, articles and publication on public administration. But very few research works have been conducted so far regarding the Office of the Deputy Commissioner in Bangladesh. As discussed earlier, the origin of district administration was in the British East India Company period. During British India, several ICS (Indian Civil Service) Officers wrote about their experiences and the collector's functions in British India. Some of them wrote their own biography and memories. Later on, in Bangladesh, some authors wrote about the district administration in relation with rural development or decentralization. All these works have hardly touched the issue of shifting of the functions and role diversification of Office of Deputy Commissioner. However, some of the previous literatures focused on the overview, evolution and narrative role of the Office of the DC. So, the literature review will help to address the research gap and handle this research study.

O'Malley (1931) focused on the Indian Civil Service particularly the land revenue collection during East India Company and the evolution of collector and district administration. He elaborated his experiences about the collector's role under company. He described about the revenue, judicial and police functions of the collector. He elaborated the Indian Civil Service under British Crown. The appointment, training and posting of District Magistrate was also described elaborately in his writing. The writer showed how the role and functions of the Collector and District Magistrate were changed with the change of time and Governor. Finally, the writer described the 'Indianization' of the Imperial Civil Service and the changing circumstances after First World War.

Philip Mason (1953) illustrated the features of the ICS officers who played their role as a District Magistrate and Collector in British India during British Crown. The ICS officers were imperial agents with a dominant foreign component. They would follow a set of norms that emphasized honesty, independence of mind and capacity for decision-making qualities. The writer stated that the ICS adopted the role of the remote, harsh, and punitive father towards Indian subordinates, because the British feared the Indians might act contrary to the interests of the bureaucracy, in other words, contrary to the British interests. The writer mentioned that the elite ruling ICS held in their hands not only real executive power, but a substantial part of the legislature and judiciary. This hierarchical service finds its origins in the rights to collect land revenue which the British squeezed out of the Moghul Emperor in 1765, after their victory at Plassey. Hence the office of the Collector brought together executive and magisterial functions and kept general control over all the governmental functions in the district, including over the police. The writer further added that as District Magistrate, the Collector was head of criminal law administration. Almost till the end of British rule, under special Section 30 powers he could even award the death penalty, and during earlier times, he could take charge of any military units in his district if necessity demanded.

Nazmul Abedin (1973) in his study focused on the evolution of district administration and discussed elaborately politico-social environment and transfer of role, function and power of administration. He argued that the style of district administration has undergone considerable changes due to different factors and conditions but the formal structure remained almost unchanged. The writer showed that during British period, the role of collector was a classical authoritative ruler; but during Pakistan period, a collector became gradually involved and engaged in social welfare and rural development activities.

Dr. A.M.M. Shawkat Ali (1982) has specifically pointed out about the Collectorial pattern in Bangladesh and evolution of Collector from the Colonial Heritage in his study regarding field administration and rural development. He argued that the function of district administration was mainly law & order and revenue collection,

but in the next few decades Collector came into the mainstream of development process. In Bangladesh, the Collectoral pattern remains the same, but now marked by a huge degree of involvement in development and other activities.

Ali, Rahman and Das (1983) focused on the administrative decentralization and people's participation in the development process in Bangladesh. They explored that historically Office of the Deputy Commissioner is the key role player in the district. Beginning with the position of Supervisor in 1769 during East India Company, the position has evolved through Collector of Revenue, District Magistrate and finally the Deputy Commissioner. But the whole administration had gone through a number of administrative reforms and decentralization process by a large number of Reform Committees and Commissions in the past right from the British Rule through Pakistan as well as Bangladesh. In the context, the study came to an argument that district administration has gone through many changes due the decentralization and reform process and brought into the focus of participative and rural oriented administration.

Quazi Azher Ali (1995) in his study regarding decentralized administration in Bangladesh has focused on the evolution of the Deputy Commissioner's Office, transformation and modification of role and functions of Deputy Commissioner through decentralization and reforms. He argued that for better coordination and performance, district administration has undergone many changes and decentralization process getting involved in many developmental activities in the district.

Khalid Shams (2011) as an editor, focused on the Stephen Hatch-Barnwell's (1909-1989) Tour of Duty as ICS (Indian Civil Service) in Bengal (1933-1947) and as CSP (Civil Service of Pakistan) in East Pakistan (1949-1966) in the book "The Last Guardian: Memoirs of Hatch-Barnwell, ICS of Bengal" By Stephen Hatch-Barnwell". In the book, the author showed what life was for a young ICS officer in the very last days of the British Raj. India, the crown jewel of the British Empire, during 1930s & 40s, was in the throes of a turbulent movement for national independence. In this period of fire

and fury, Stephen Hatch-Barnwell decided reluctantly to join the Bengal cadre of the Indian Civil Service, the steel frame that held the empire together. He witnessed the collapse of the steel frame, as the nationalist movement gathered momentum. He provides very candid, insider's perspectives, laced with typical English humor, of the government and administration of the colonial regime that was in a constant flux. He was trained to perform not only the traditional magisterial and revenue functions, but was also required to cope with the Second World War and the tragedy of 1943 famine. He was amongst the handful of British ICS officers who opted for Pakistan. So, the writer has visualized the role and functions of a District Magistrate and Collector at the end of British India and in the beginning of Pakistan period.

**Table1: Summary of Literature Review on District Administration**

<b>Authors</b>	<b>Key Findings</b>
O'Malley (1931)	The position of Collector was created in British India under the rule of East India Company. British Crown took over the governance of India and started Indian Civil Service. During Company rule and British Raj, the power of Collector was modified several times in order to control revenue collection and law and order.
Philip Mason (1953)	The ICS Collector was so powerful ruler in British India. They were also the part of legislature and judiciary. As a member of imperial & elite civil service, they would remain isolated. They were harsh but honest.
Nazmul Abedin (1973)	The style of district administration has undergone considerable changes but formal structure remained almost unchanged.
A.M.M. Shawkat Ali (1982)	Besides law & order and revenue collection, the district administration is now marked by a huge degree of involvement in development and other activities.
Ali, Rahman & Das (1983)	The district administration has gone through many changes due the decentralization and reform process and brought into the focus of participative and rural oriented administration.
Quazi Azher Ali (1995)	For better coordination and performance, district administration has undergone many changes and decentralization process getting involved in many developmental activities in the district.
Khalid Shams (2011)	Stephen Hatch-Barnwell's (1909-1989) Tour of Duty as ICS (Indian Civil Service) in Bengal (1933-1947) and as CSP (Civil Service of Pakistan) in East Pakistan (1949-1966). His diversified role as a Collector and District Magistrate in a turbulent situation was well elaborated.

**Research Gap:**

From the above discussion, the researcher found that the district administration is the continuation of the former Indian Civil Service (ICS) what is known as the "British

Steel Frame”. The position of Collector is the creation of British East India Company. In course of time, it is still the basic structure of the district administration in Bangladesh. But no study has yet been fully conducted which reflected the transformation or shift of the role and function of the Deputy Commissioner or Collector. So it is evident that there is inadequate assessment of “transformation of function of Office of the Deputy Commissioner (DC).”

### **1.3.2 Literature Review on Paradigm Shift in Administration**

Nicolas Henry (1975) focused on the paradigms in public administration. He explained that starting from the beginning, public administration has gone through five overlapping paradigms. Paradigm 5 (1970- present) deals with NPA, Re-inventing government and NPM. He argued that public administration was never in a static condition and is always going through a transformation or changing process.

G. S. Cheema (2004) has discussed about the effect of globalization and modernization on the public administration. He argued that traditional public administration has gone through a series of change in order to face the challenge of globalization and modernization.

A. E. Sarkar (2006) has observed that developing countries like Bangladesh have embraced the NPM formula under pressure from donor agencies but their success in implementing measures has been limited.

Aminuzzaman & Winter (2009) focused on the elements and obstacles of administrative system on the way of development process in Bangladesh. Upon review of the structure and function of the Public Administration system (in the study “Public Administration in 21<sup>st</sup> Century”), they noted that –administrative culture, outdated regulatory framework, inadequate professional standards and procedures both at the field level as well as at policy level hinder the pace and process of development in Bangladesh.

M. M. Khan (2013) has assessed the influence of different factors on the development of public administration in Bangladesh. He argued that developments of public administration in Bangladesh have been influenced by an amalgamation of factors including foreign innovations within the concept of local socio-political culture.

Ferdousi & Qiu (2013) analyzed whether there is any reflection or effect of the administrative reforms as prescribed by the donor agencies. They found that some administrative reforms in Bangladesh, specially provided by the World Bank and Public Administration Reform Commission, have the reflection of NPM.

O. E. Hughes (1998) in his study discussed elaborately about the theoretical and practical application of 'Managerialism (NPM)'. He argued that Managerialism (NPM) has not yet taken over completely in public administration. It contains elements of both modes in an uneasy coexistence.

O'Flynn (2007) explained that at the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century, a post bureaucratic model of public management was embedded to enact a break from the traditional model of public administration. The new paradigm is a reaction to perceived weaknesses of traditional bureaucratic paradigm.

M. Shamsul Haque (2007) mentioned that in the current age, there has emerged a major paradigm shift in the theory and practice of public administration worldwide. The recent trend represents a significant shift/move away from the earlier state-centric colonial bureaucracy.

Mark Robinson (2015) in his UNDP study- from old public administration to new public service- has discussed thoroughly about challenge and prospects of new public service in the developing countries. He argued that public administration in 21<sup>st</sup> century has undergone dramatic change due to globalization and pluralisation.

Sameer Pandey (2010) focused on the emergence of new public administration in 1967-68 in USA. In 1960s, the discipline and practice of public administration gradually underwent a transformation. The goals of administration should have been responsive to the needs of clients and ensuring social equity in service delivery. This thinking led to the emergence of New Public Administration (NPA). The five major goals that new public administration stimulates to take cognizance are relevance, values, social equity, change and client orientation.

**Table 2: Summary of Literature Review on Paradigm Shift in Administration**

<b>Authors</b>	<b>Key Findings</b>
Nicolas Henry (1975)	Five paradigms of public administration. Paradigm 5 (1970-present) deals with NPA, re-inventing government and NPM.
G. S. Cheema (2004)	Traditional public administration has gone through a series of change in order to face the challenge of globalization and modernization.
A. E. Sarkar (2006)	Developing countries like Bangladesh have embraced the NPM formula under pressure from donor agencies but their success in implementing measures has been limited.
Aminuzzaman & Winter (2009)	Administrative culture, outdated regulatory framework, inadequate professional standards and procedures both at the field level as well as at policy level hinder the pace and process of development in Bangladesh.
M. M. Khan (2013)	Developments of public administration in Bangladesh have been influenced by an amalgamation of factors including foreign innovations within the concept of local socio-political culture.
Ferdousi & Qiu (2013)	Some administrative reforms in Bangladesh, specially provided by the World Bank and Public Administration Reform Commission, have the reflection of NPM.
O. E. Hughes (1998)	Managerialism (NPM) has not yet taken over completely in public administration. It contains elements of both modes in an uneasy coexistence.
O'Flynn (2007)	At the end of 20 <sup>th</sup> century, a post bureaucratic model of public management was embedded to enact a break from the traditional model of public administration. The new paradigm is a reaction to perceived weaknesses of traditional bureaucratic paradigm.
M. Shamsul Haque (2007)	Emergence of a major paradigm shift in the theory and practice of public administration represents a significant shift/move away from the earlier state-centric colonial bureaucracy.
Sameer Pandey (2010)	In 1960s, the discipline and practice of public administration gradually underwent a transformation or paradigm shift that led to the emergence of New Public Administration (NPA). The five major goals that new public administration stimulates to take cognizance are relevance, values, social equity, change and client orientation.
Mark Robinson (2015)	From old public administration to new public service - Public administration in 21 <sup>st</sup> century has undergone dramatic change due to globalization and pluralisation.

From the above discussion, the researcher found that traditional public administration has undergone a series of transformation all over the world. New Public Management (NPM) and New Public Administration (NPA) played a major role in this paradigm shift. As a developing country, Bangladesh is not out of it. Emergence of major paradigm shift indicates a significant move from the earlier state-centric colonial bureaucracy.

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

There are many research works on the public administration, theories, approaches and paradigm shift of public administration, New Public Management (NPM), New Public Administration (NPA), decentralization in public administration, performance management in civil service, improvement of public service delivery system. Even there are available research works regarding public administration of Bangladesh also. But the previous works have hardly touched the issue of transformation of the functions of the district administration particularly functions of the Office of the Deputy Commissioner in Bangladesh. In fact, there are a few literatures regarding the role and functions of the Deputy Commissioner and the shifts of those functions over passage of time. This study has tried to assess or examine whether there is any shift or transformation or diffusion in the function of the Office of the Deputy Commissioner. More specifically, it is an attempt to explore the transformation process of the function of the Office of the Deputy Commissioner from the traditional public administration to New Public Administration (NPA) or New Public Management (NPM). So, it is a modest attempt to address the research gap.

District is the focal point in the administrative system of Bangladesh and historically the Office of the Deputy Commissioner became the key role player in the district (Ali et al. 1983). Bangladesh started with the integrated type of field administration, but as development activities assumed importance and larger number of district offices were created, the control of the Deputy Commissioner over other departments gradually decreased and the pattern of functions began to change (Ali, 1995). In fact, with the change of time, collector becomes more and more involved in the rural

development process due to political, social, cultural and global variables (Ali, 1982). So, this study gives an opportunity for understanding an important institutional arrangement of governance i.e., Office of the Deputy Commissioner.

The prescription of the foreign donor agencies also had a significant effect on the political government to go for further reforms especially in the service delivery to the citizens through field administration. These factors have a very significant effect over district administration to go for more innovative and citizen centric activities. Also, the separation of judiciary from the executive (2007) is driving the district administration to a newer chapter by diverting from the so called traditional colonial approach of public administration to NPA or NPM. At present, although the structure of the collectoral pattern is almost unchanged, but there might be significant shifts or transformation in the functions of the Deputy Commissioner. According to Nicolas Henry's five paradigms of public administration (1975), it is justified to explore the shifting of the function of district administration. Thus, this study creates an opportunity for relating theory and practice, for assessing the institutional transformation from the evolution of public administration. This study will significantly observe the functions of the Office of the Deputy Commissioner. The findings of the study will help to assess the transformation by identifying the relevant factors. This study will also help the policy makers in the national level to formulate the right policy in order to make such an important institution (Office of DC) more effective in future.

### **1.5 Objectives of the Study**

The study is undertaken with the following broad objectives:

- ✚ Overview of the evolution of the role and function of the Office of the Deputy Commissioner.
- ✚ Explore the transformation of the role of the Office of the Deputy Commissioner.
- ✚ Identify the factors and or conditions that might have influenced the transformation of the role of the Office of the Deputy Commissioner.

## **1.6 Research Questions**

In the above backdrop, the following research questions are developed in the present study:

1. What are the factors that induced and or influenced the transformation of the function of the Office of the Deputy Commissioner?
2. Does the transformation of functional areas of the Office of the Deputy Commissioner resemble the features of changing paradigm of public administration (TPA-NPA-NPM)?

## **1.7 Methodological Overview**

This research is a fully historical and exploratory study. So, the qualitative method of research has been used here to conduct the study. The Office of the Deputy Commissioner has a long historical evolution. Historical research examines what happened in the past and why. From that point of view, the process of historical method has been followed. The researcher has gone for content analysis and archive documents. Data has also been collected from secondary sources like books, texts, articles, internet sources, DC's conference meeting resolution from Cabinet Division, and official documents of DC Office etc. There have been two case studies conducted here in this research. Two districts (Office of the Deputy Commissioner) are selected for the purpose. One is Jessore and another is Gazipur. Jessore is an old and 'A' category district. On the other hand, Gazipur is a newly created and 'B' category district. In order to observe the distinctions, two different category districts are selected. Finally, interview has credited huge contribution in this study. So, this study has gone for in depth interviews and consultation with key informants like former Civil Servants, Historians and Academics. Interviews of incumbent secretaries of government, incumbent Additional/Joint Secretaries, incumbent Deputy Commissioners/former Deputy Commissioners and incumbent Additional Deputy Commissioners have also been conducted. The researcher has also conducted interviews with civil society members, media personalities, citizens and former staff of DC office.

**Table 3: Summary of Methodological Overview**

Method	Data Collection Process
Historical Method	Content analysis Archive documents Secondary documents
Case Study	Two DC Offices: Jessore and Gazipur
Interviews and consultation	In depth interviews and consultation with key informants, former and incumbent civil servants, historians, academics, field administration experts, civil society members, media personalities, former DC office staff and citizens.

Sample Size			
Respondents Group	Type of Respondents	Sample	Data Method
1	Key informants (Former Civil Servants)	04	Interviews
2	Historians	01	Interviews
3	Academics/ Public Administration Experts	01	Interviews
4	Incumbent Secretaries	01	Interviews
5	Incumbent Additional Secretaries/ Joint Secretaries	03	Interviews
6	Incumbent DCs/Formers DCs	08	Interviews
7	Incumbent ADCs	08	Interviews
8	Media personalities	02	Interviews
9	Civil Society members	03	Interviews
10	Citizens	03	Interviews
11	Former Staff of DC Office	01	Interviews
<b>Total Number of Respondents :</b>		<b>35</b>	

### 1.8 Scope of the Study

This study facilitates to create the scope of a close observation on the evolution and functions of the Office of the Deputy Commissioner in Bangladesh. The study focuses on the current role of the Deputy Commissioner in the field administration in two districts of Bangladesh and gives opportunity to compare those with the traditional role of Deputy Commissioner. It makes an attempt to understand, analyze and interpret factors of transformation of the function of DC Office from traditional colonial approach to NPA or NPM with a comparison between previous paradigms and present paradigm. This study does not assess the importance or the justification of the post of Deputy Commissioner; rather it attempts to find out some features of modern district administration that will provide an opportunity for the comparison

of the current paradigm with the past. The key point is that search for the functional shifts or transformation or diffusion of Office of the Deputy Commissioner is the main scope of the study. As the study considers varied sample of two different districts of different background, it is expected that the results may be taken as the representative in terms of all DC Offices in Bangladesh.

### **1.9 Limitations of the Study**

This study on overview of the shift of the function of the Office of the Deputy Commissioner in development paradigm is an exploratory and historical study. Traditionally and historically the office of the Deputy Commissioner is a royal institution. It is the direct representative of the central government in the district level. Usually, office of the Deputy Commissioner particularly, Deputy Commissioner remains very busy each and every day. It is really difficult having sufficient time and full support from such a big authority to conduct the research. The study is based on observations, interviews, content analysis, review of documents, and audiovisual materials. Biasness is built in and unavoidable. Moreover, the duration of the study did not allow in depth longitudinal study. In terms of construct validity this study also suffers from appropriate sample size which limits validity to a great extent. Only two district administration (out of 64) offices are selected for conducting the research study. Moreover, some distinguished key informants (Historians and Academics/Former Civil Servants) have been interviewed in the process. So, it is really challenging to address the total methodology particularly in filtering out the key factors and the features of the transformation from the collected data.

### **1.10 Structure of the Study**

This thesis consists of five chapters. In the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter, there are introductory aspects of the study. It describes about the general background of the study, discusses the research problem, focuses on the review of literature, defines the scope of the study and specified research objectives and research questions. It also gives us an overview of the methodology. Moreover, it focuses on the significance and limitation of the study and ends with the description of the structure of the study.

**2<sup>nd</sup>** chapter discusses about the overview of district administration and its evolution in Bangladesh. Primarily it focuses on the administrative structures of government in Bangladesh. Then it elaborates the historical evolution of the district administration. Later on, it focuses on the district administration and its functions in Bangladesh. Then it discusses the changing pattern of functions of district administration. Finally, it ends with an insight into the structure and personnel system in district administration.

**3<sup>rd</sup>** chapter explains the conceptual foundation of the paradigm shifts in public administration. It begins with the clarification of some important terms. Then it highlights the concept and features of Traditional Public Administration (TPA), New Public Administration (NPA) and New Public Management (NPM). Finally it attempts to make a comparison of the features of TPA, NPA and NPM. The chapter ends with some concluding remarks.

**4<sup>th</sup>** chapter deals with data presentation, analysis and interpretation. The chapter starts with an introduction to data collection method, sample size and data analysis plan. Then it elaborates about the changing paradigm of district administration. It provides the details of two case studies that have conducted in two districts. Later on, it discusses elaborately the empirical observations of key informants, historians, academics, former and incumbent civil servants, civil society members, media personalities, citizens and former staff of DC office. Then it goes for a review of the nature of the transformation. Finally it focuses on the key factors that affect the transformation of the role and function of DC. The chapter ends with some concluding remarks.

**5<sup>th</sup>** chapter winds up the study by giving the findings of this study. It provides a brief discussion on the findings and results of the study and finally assesses whether research questions have been answered and objectives of the study have been fulfilled.

## **Chapter 2**

### **District Administration in Bangladesh: Evolution and Overview**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

District administration is the most important functional unit of the central government in the district. It has a historical background upon which still it is functioning in the field administration. In fact, district administration always exists at the focal point of field administration. Its structure and personnel system is not as simple as that of other offices in the district. District administration is institutionally connected with all government offices, local government bodies and non government organizations in the district. So, a large number of officers and staff work under Deputy Commissioner in the district administration in order to assist him. This chapter discusses the background, evolution, structure, functions and personnel system of district administration in Bangladesh. It starts with an introduction to the administrative structures of the government in Bangladesh. Then it focuses on the historical evolution of the district administration in Bangladesh. It proceeds further describing the district administration and changing pattern of functions of district administration. Finally it concludes with a brief introduction to the structure and personnel system in district administration.

#### **2.2 Administrative structures of government in Bangladesh**

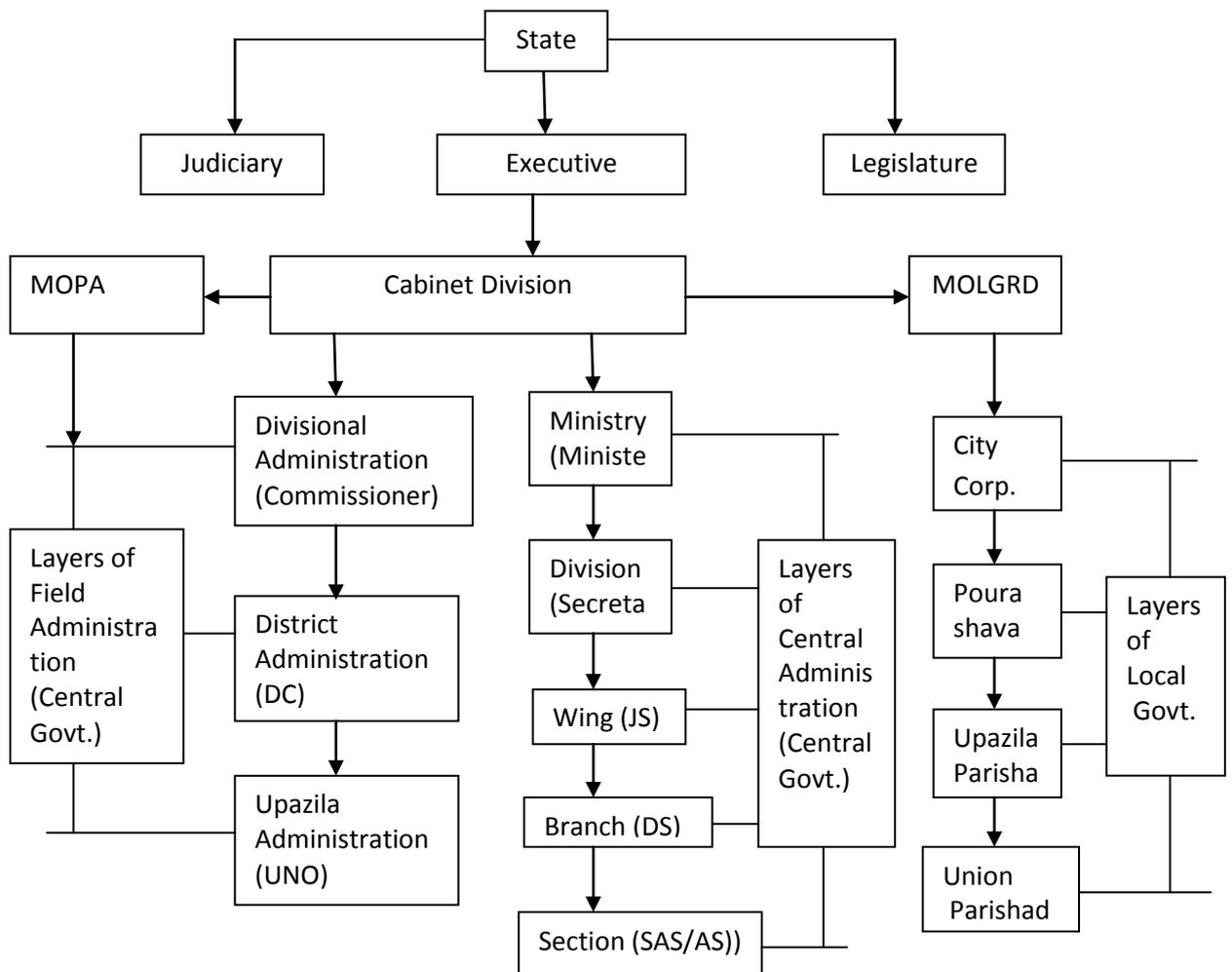
Bangladesh has a unitary form of government. The Cabinet is headed by Prime Minister which formulates policies and the concerned ministries, divisions, departments, attached departments implement the policies by their subordinate offices located in division, district or upazila<sup>2</sup> level. In Bangladesh, there are eight Administrative Divisions: Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, Rajshahi, Barisal, Sylhet, Rangpur and Mymensingh. Division consists of some districts and District consists of some upazilas. According to the recommendations of the Special Committee forms

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<sup>2</sup> 'Upazila' is a Bengali word which means sub-district in Bangladesh. A district consists of some upazilas. The chief executive officer or administrative head of an 'upazila' is called in Bengali 'Upazila Nirbahi Officer' or 'UNO'.

in 1982, there are 64 Districts in Bangladesh. Among those districts, 20 are very old popularly known as Greater Districts. The rest districts have been newly created by upgrading the Sub-divisions into districts. At present, there are 490 upazilas in Bangladesh. An upazila consists of some unions (4,554 in numbers) and below the union; there are Grams or Villages (more or less 80,000).

**Figure1: Administrative Structure in Bangladesh**



In Bangladesh there are local government bodies both in urban and rural areas. In urban areas there are City Corporation and Pourashavas or Municipalities. On the other hand, in rural areas there are Union Parishads or Union Councils, Upazila Parishads<sup>3</sup> and Zila Parishads.<sup>4</sup> There are 320 Pourashavas and 11 City Corporations

<sup>3</sup> Upazila Parishad means Sub-district Council, a local government body.

<sup>4</sup> Zila Parishad means District Council, a local government body.

in 2017 in Bangladesh (Source: [www.paurainfo.gov.bd](http://www.paurainfo.gov.bd)). Allocation of money, monitoring and supervision of the activities of all local government bodies are controlled by the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives.

### **2.3 Historical Evolution of District Administration in Bangladesh**

The foundation of modern district administration in Bangladesh was laid during the first hundred years of British administration in South Asia (Abedin, 1973). The East India Company (EIC), also known as the Honorable East India Company (HEIC) or the British East India Company and informally as John Company, was an English and later British joint-stock company, which was formed to pursue trade with the "East Indies", but ended up trading mainly with Qing China and seizing control of the Indian subcontinent. The company received a Royal Charter from Queen Elizabeth I on 31 December 1600, making it the oldest among several similarly formed European East India Companies. Wealthy merchants and aristocrats owned the company's shares. Initially the government owned no shares and had only indirect control. During its first century of operation, the focus of the company was trade, not the building of an empire in India. Company interests turned from trade to territory during the 18th century as the Mughal Empire declined in power. The Battle of Plassey and Battle of Buxar, in which the British, led by Robert Clive, defeated the Indian powers, left the company in control of Bengal and a major military and political power in India.

During the Mughal rules, the central government divided India into a number of 'Subas' (provinces). Each Suba was divided into a number of Sarkars and Parganas (present districts and mouzas respectively). Suba under the Subedar (Governor) was the most important unit of administration. The main objective was collection of revenue (Ali, 1995). In the remnant of the Mughal Empire revenue system existing in pre-1765 Bengal, zamindars, or "land holders," collected revenue on behalf of the Mughal emperor, whose representative, or diwan supervised their activities. In this system, the assortment of rights associated with land were not possessed by a "land owner," but rather shared by the several parties with stake in the land, including the

peasant cultivator, the zamindar, and the state. The zamindar served as an intermediary who procured economic rent from the cultivator, and after withholding a percentage for his own expenses, made available the rest, as revenue to the state. Under the Mughal system, the land itself belonged to the state and not to the zamindar, who could transfer only his right to collect rent. On being awarded the diwani or overlordship of Bengal following the Battle of Buxar in 1764, the East India Company found itself short of trained administrators, especially those familiar with local custom and law; tax collection was consequently farmed out.

The East India Company adopted the Mughal system of field administration and further developed it. Since mid 1760s towards the close of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, principles for the pattern of district administration were formulated. District administration was developed from the revenue administration. In 1765 the 'Diwani' of Bengal was assumed by the East India Company. In 1769 Supervisors of revenue collections were appointed, but they could not bring fruitful result in revenue collection.

In 1772, under Warren Hastings, the East India Company took over revenue collection directly in the Bengal Presidency (then Bengal and Bihar), establishing a Board of Revenue with offices in Calcutta and Patna, and moving the pre-existing Mughal revenue records from Murshidabad to Calcutta. He created the post of Collector and empowered him with magisterial power. A police Officer was posted by the government to assist the Collector in maintaining law and order. The province of Bengal was divided into 23 districts and one Collector was posted to each district. They were assisted by native Dewan. The Collector was also appointed to act as Judge of the local Dewani Adalat (Civil Court). Criminal Cases continued to be tried by Qazis and Muftis under the supervision of the Collector. For revenue work, Collector was responsible to the Board of Revenue comprising of the Governor General and Members of Council. The title, "collector," reflected "the centrality of land revenue collection to government in India: it was the government's primary function and it moulded the institutions and patterns of administration." But 1773

the post of Collector was abolished and responsibility was given to local officials under a Board of Revenue.

In 1786, the Board of Directors of East India Company decided that the Collector should be retained as a permanent feature of local administration and he would be Revenue Administrator, Civil Judge and District Magistrate. Governor General Macpherson revived the post of Collector in 1786. He empowered Collector by Civil & Criminal Courts & police power. Thus, Collector became the most powerful officer in the district.

In 1793, Governor General Lord Cornwallis started land reform activities (Zamindari System) by introducing "Permanent Settlement". The Offices of the Collector and Judge were separated. The new post of District Judge was created to preside over the Diwani Adalat (Civil Court). The Mal Adalat (Revenue Court) was abolished and District Court was empowered to try revenue cases. The Collector was also deprived of magisterial powers (including the power to supervise the police) which were vested in the hands of the District Judge. Thus the Collector became merely a collector of fixed revenue collection.

In 1831, Governor General Lord Bentinck held that the offices of Collector and District Magistrate should be united in the person of the Collector. Thus the Collector was given authority to try criminal cases and to control the police force in his district. He was also given summary jurisdiction to try revenue cases. The police, revenue and magisterial functions of the Collector led to the emergence of different administrative units in Bengal (Ali, 1982).

From 1858, after the demise of the East India Company's rule in India, the British civil service took on its administrative responsibilities. The Indian Civil Service (ICS) known as the Imperial Civil Service, was the elite higher civil service of the British Empire in British India during British rule in the period between 1858 and 1947. The change in governance came about due to the Indian Rebellion of 1857, which came close to toppling British rule in the country. Up to 1853, the Directors of the British East India

Company made appointments of covenanted civil servants by nominations. This nomination system was abolished in 1855 by the Parliament in England and it was decided that the induction would be through competitive examinations of all British subjects, without distinction of race. The British Crown designed ICS with the explicit goal of allowing a very small number of men to control a very large population. The office of Collector brought together executive and magisterial functions and kept general control over all the governmental functions in the district, including over the police.

After taking over the administration of India from the East India Company in 1858, the British Government passed Land Revenue and Tenancy Laws, Penal Code and Criminal Procedure Code which curtailed the executive and discretionary power of the Collector. But, in 1869, the Collector was made responsible for disposal of criminal cases as District Magistrate. The Governor of Bengal Sir George Campbell in 1872 strengthened the authority of district magistrate to make him more effective. The Magistrate-Collector was made the general controlling authority over all other departments in the district and thus became the Chief Executive and Administrator of the district.

The Royal Commission (1907-1909) recommended that the position of DC as an administrative head of the district should be recognized by officers of all special departments. In 1919, the Montague-Chelmsford reforms affected the positions of the Collector in several ways. The influence and initiative of the District Magistrate were greatly reduced, though he remained responsible for collection of revenue and maintenance of peace through his control over police and magistracy. The Simmons Commission (1930) recommended that the Collector should remain the head of the district administration over the heads of the technical departments and Superintendent of Police. The Rowland Committee in 1944-45 classified the functions of Deputy Commissioner into five groups: i) Law and Order, ii) Collector of Revenue and Government Dues, iii) Civil Supplies, iv) Development, v) Services.

After independence and partition of India in 1947, the objectives of government and administration radically changed. During Pakistan period, many divisional, district, subdivision and thana level officials were appointed in different stages of economic development programs and project implementation. So, the functions of district administration in East Pakistan were also changed after the posting of local officers as District Magistrates. District Magistrate was found to be the most suitable officer to carry the job of coordination at district level. The traditional office, status and image of DM found to be useful for the purpose. In 1959, Akhtar Hussain Commission recommended to change the designation of District Magistrate (DM) to Deputy Commissioner (DC). To strengthen the position of DC, the commission recommended the delegation of new powers in order to make him more effective for the implementation of development programs. He was made the coordinator for development work in the district who would preside over the coordination meetings of all district level officials to expedite the implementation of projects. In order to assist the Deputy Commissioner, three Additional Deputy Commissioners (ADCs) were appointed in every district in 1961. They are ADC (General), ADC (Development) and ADC (Revenue).

After liberation war in December 1971, one of the first tasks of the district administration in liberated Bangladesh was to collect the huge number of unauthorized arms. The district administration performed satisfactorily under the 1972 democratic system of government. They adjusted in changed circumstances following the introduction of one-party system of government after the amendment of the Constitution in 1975. Even peace was maintained among civilian population by district administration during martial law. The district administration not only shared powers with military but also worked directly under the district martial law administrator. No other country in the subcontinent has seen so many radical changes in the district administration system as Bangladesh within such a short period.

In 1982, NICAR (National Implementation Committee on Administrative Reorganization/Reforms) recommended the new structure of the existing civilian

administration. The government constituted a special committee in order to upgrade the subdivisions into new districts and formation of upazilas. The special committee recommended 64 districts considering the area, population and number of upazilas into four categories: i) Special Category- Districts of Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, Mymensingh and Rajshahi ii) Districts with 8 or more upazilas- A category iii) Districts with 5 to 7 upazilas- B categories and iv) Districts with 4 or less upazilas- C category. The committee proposed 183 officers and staff for A category district, 111 for B category and 89 for C category districts.

The journey of district administration started during British period and its shape was given borne during British rule. The name and the functions have been changed many times but the structure remained almost unchanged. Though the functions of Deputy Commissioner have evolved from that of the Collector of a district from about mid 18th century, the DC soon came to be entrusted with the responsibility of maintaining law and order in the district. Such functions and responsibilities have diversified and undergone modifications at various stages in the administrative history of Bangladesh. The DC continues to act as the representative of the central government in matters of collecting revenue, maintaining law and order and coordinating welfare and development activities (Abedin, 1973).

#### **2.4 District Administration in Bangladesh**

District is the focal point in the administrative system of Bangladesh. It has a long historical background. The Mughal emperor Akbar (1542-1605) divided the vast Mughal empire into 'Subas' (provinces) each of which was in turn split up into 'Sarkars'(districts) (Abedin, 1973). Today in Bangladesh, the whole country is divided in eight divisions, sixty four districts which are consisted of 490 upazilas. Below the upazila level, there are unions which are grass root level local government institutions. Office of the Deputy Commissioner is regarded as the 'pivot' of the field bureaucracy. Beginning with the position of Supervisor in 1769 during East India Company, the position has evolved through Collector of Revenue, District Magistrate and finally the Deputy Commissioner. In the passage of time, the Office of the Deputy Commissioner is not only a functional office; rather it has evolved as an

institution by itself. However, district administration is not only the administration run by the Deputy Commissioner; there are a number of other offices which are linked with their respective bigger echelon. Although by the term 'district administration' in a wider sense, it is meant the field administration of all functional departments at the district level, in narrower sense, it means the functions performed by the Office of the Deputy Commissioner (Ali et. al., 1983).

Historically Office of the Deputy Commissioner is the key role player in the district. In 1786, the Board of Directors of East India Company decided that Collector should be retained as a permanent feature of local administration. Accordingly, Governor General Macpherson divided the province of Bengal into 36 districts and appointed a Collector in each district. He was empowered with Revenue, Administrative and Magisterial power. But in 1793, Governor General Lord Cornwallis separated the judiciary from the executive and placed under a separate Judge. In 1861, British Crown also curtailed the executive and discretionary power of the collector. In 1869, the magisterial power of collector was regained. Thus for decades, he continued to be the District Magistrate and Collector combining in him the magisterial, administrative and revenue functions.

Even during Pakistan period in the Constitution of 1956, separation of judiciary from the executive was enunciated which could not be materialized. The Administrative Reforms Commission 1959 recommended that the designation of the District Magistrate should be changed to Deputy Commissioner to strengthen his power and position to make him more effective. In Bangladesh, the power and position of Deputy Commissioner remained almost unchanged. In 2007, although judiciary was separated from the executive due to some constitutional obligation, but still DC is continuing his role as District Magistrate with executive magistrates in function. At present, DC is becoming more and more engaged in various types of developmental and innovative activities, more and more service providing approach. The role of district coordination function is becoming more important day by day. Still DC is the chief communicating person who can directly communicate with the Prime Minister's Office, Cabinet Division and any other strategic ministries of the

government. Due to the changing reality everywhere, there appears to be some kind of transformation or diffusion in the role and function of the Deputy Commissioner, but the original bureaucratic model (field bureaucracy) more or less remained unchanged.

### **Functions of District Administration:**

Up to 1922, in every collectorate, 2-3 deputy magistrate, and 10-15 clerks and equal numbers of orderlies were worked. According to Chapman Committee Report there was an office superintendent to assist the personal affairs of District Magistrate and Collector. One additional district magistrate (ADM) was there as a subordinate to District Magistrate. In that time, each collectorate had six sections. Their name and functions are- 1. General section: election, rural development, library, forms and stationary, establishment, type and dispatch; 2. Judicial Munshikhna (JM) section: fire arms license, motor vehicle etc; 3. Nezarat section: protocol and others; 4. Record room management; 5. Treasury, stamp, accounts section; and 6. Revenue Munshikhana section: land acquisition, certificate case etc. Every activities of a section were supervised by a Deputy Magistrate and Collector. A head assistant in general section, a judicial peshkar in JM section, Nazir in nezarat, record keeper in record room, treasurer and accountant in treasury and accounts section and revenue peshkar in revenue munshikhana (RM) did their assigned jobs. Every section had one or more assistant staff and peons or orderlies. Besides, Civil Defense Officer, Customs Superintendent, Publicity Officer, and Sub Register were under direct control of District Magistrate (DM) and Collector. DM and Collector also supervised the works of Executive Engineer (roads and highways), Civil Surgeon, Superintendent of Police (SP), Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), and Inspector of school, Assistant Register of Cooperatives and district fire and civil defense office. The Rowland Committee in 1944-45 formally and specifically delineated the duties of DC as follows: 1. Maintaining law and order, 2. Collection of revenue, 3. civil supplies, 4. Development and 5. Other duties in the district on behalf of the Government.

In 1961, ADC (development) had two sections, one- basic democracy section and two-development planning section. An assistant director in basic democracy and a

planning officer assisted ADC (development). ADC (General) had four sections, one- nezarat, establishment, common service and dispatch, two- license and press, three- treasury, stamp and tax and four- forms, stationary and library. ADC (Revenue) had four sections under his control. They are land acquisition, customs, certificate case and record room sections. Every section was headed by a senior assistant commissioner or an assistant commissioner. The workforces in a section were one head assistant or Peshkar, several office assistants, typist, peon and orderly. The functions of Deputy Commissioners were related to political matters, matters of public interest, border dispute, emergency situation, coordination of relief and rehabilitation etc. Information office, Ansar and civil defense were direct control of DC.

After the liberation of Bangladesh, the supervisory powers and functions of the DCs over the district level offices of other departments, corporation and local bodies were reduced considerably. Cabinet Division as per the decision went through a detail examination deeply into the matter. Later on, according the suggestion of Enam Committee it was decided that the traditional functions and responsibilities of DC will have to be continued particularly for the effectiveness of the central government in the field administration specially in the changing atmosphere. Considering all the matters, the Cabinet Division in November 1983 published a charter of duties of DC.

<b>Functions of District Administration</b> (As per circulation of Cabinet Division in 1983)		
1. Revenue functions	13. Land acquisition	25. Protocol
2. Magisterial function	14. Press and publications	26. Transport and traffic
3. Public order and security	15. Election matters	27. Transport pool
4. Jail administration	16. Census	28. Education and conduct of public examination
5. Control of fire arms	17. Border related	29. Public amusement
6. State secret matters	18. Relief and rehabilitation	30. Inter agency matters
7. Political and confidential functions	19. Food	31. Training
8. Treasury and stamp	20. Ansar & VDP	32. DCs establishment
9. Anti corruption	21. Civil defence	33. Public complaints and enquiries
10. Mass mobilization	22. Labour	34. Functions relating to local government institutions and
11. License and certificates	23. Social welfare	35. Residual executive and development activities
12. Waqf, debotter and trusts	24. Family planning	

## **2.5 Changing Pattern of Functions of District Administration**

The traditional functions of Deputy Commissioners are seen incompatible with development functions; the technical or innovative nature necessary for development is not expected from rule and law based field administration (Ali, 1995). The journey of Office of the Deputy Commissioner started with the land revenue collection in the beginning of East India Company rule in the subcontinent. In 1769, Company appointed supervisors in every district for management and collection of revenue which did not bring satisfactory results. In 1772, the company got directly involved in the land administration by appointing nineteen Collectors. Governor Warren Hastings introduced changes by establishing Fauzdari Adalat (criminal courts) and Diwani Adalat (civil court). Collector was empowered to attend the court to ensure justice. Later in 1787, Collector was vested the powers of a Judge and Magistrate. But in 1793, Governor Lord Cornwallis separated the judicial and police power from Collector. But some of them again got back the power in 1831. At the end of the Company rule in 1858, the governance of India drew the Collector into mainstream of development through political, social and economic policies.

With the gradual increase in the number and importance of specialized departments, especially with the introduction of political and constitutional reforms under the 1919 and 1935 Acts, the influence and authority of the DC lessened in comparison with the past. But still he remained the most powerful and eminent figure in the district. Since partition in 1947, the district administration had to operate in changed political, administrative and social environment (Abedin, 1973). The local leaders as well as local people are much less overawed by the bureaucracy. In comparison with the past, the local leaders have much greater say in the affairs of their areas. The officials have become increasingly responsive to their demands and wishes. Political interference with administrative procedures has also increased to an extraordinary degree.

The DC is also facing a challenge to his authority from within the administration. The officers of other departments have become increasingly hostile to the preeminent position of the DC and try to bypass him or flout his authority. The result is that he finds it extremely difficult to perform effectively his role as the coordinator of the functions of the various departments. The style of administration has undergone considerable changes, although the formal structure of administration has remained almost completely unchanged. With the increasing modernization of administration and with an increase in the number and importance of other functions, and in the incomes from other and new sources, the land revenue function (the oldest and most important functions of district administration), has naturally become relatively unimportant and receives very little attention from the DC. On the other hand, with the increasing importance of community development, the development function (former miscellaneous functions) has become one of the two (other is law and order) most important functions of district administration. Now, it has become incumbent on the DC to spend a good deal of time and energy in order to further the cause of development. Thus, district administration which was formerly a revenue and law & order oriented administration is increasingly becoming a development oriented administration.

The increasing volume of work in almost every branch of district administration has also gradually caused and warranted some changes in it. Below the DC, the number of both high ranking as well as petty officials has considerably increased and some new functionaries have also been created with the result that DC, who once had very close contact with rural population, has gradually moved away from the people and now his contact with them is rather infrequent and impersonal. On the other hand, both Bangladesh and Pakistan have been passing through a period of considerable socio-political transformation. The process of such environmental change has also caused and warranted change in the actual working of district administration and its relation with political forces. As a result, the style and behavioral aspect of district administration have already undergone enormous change.

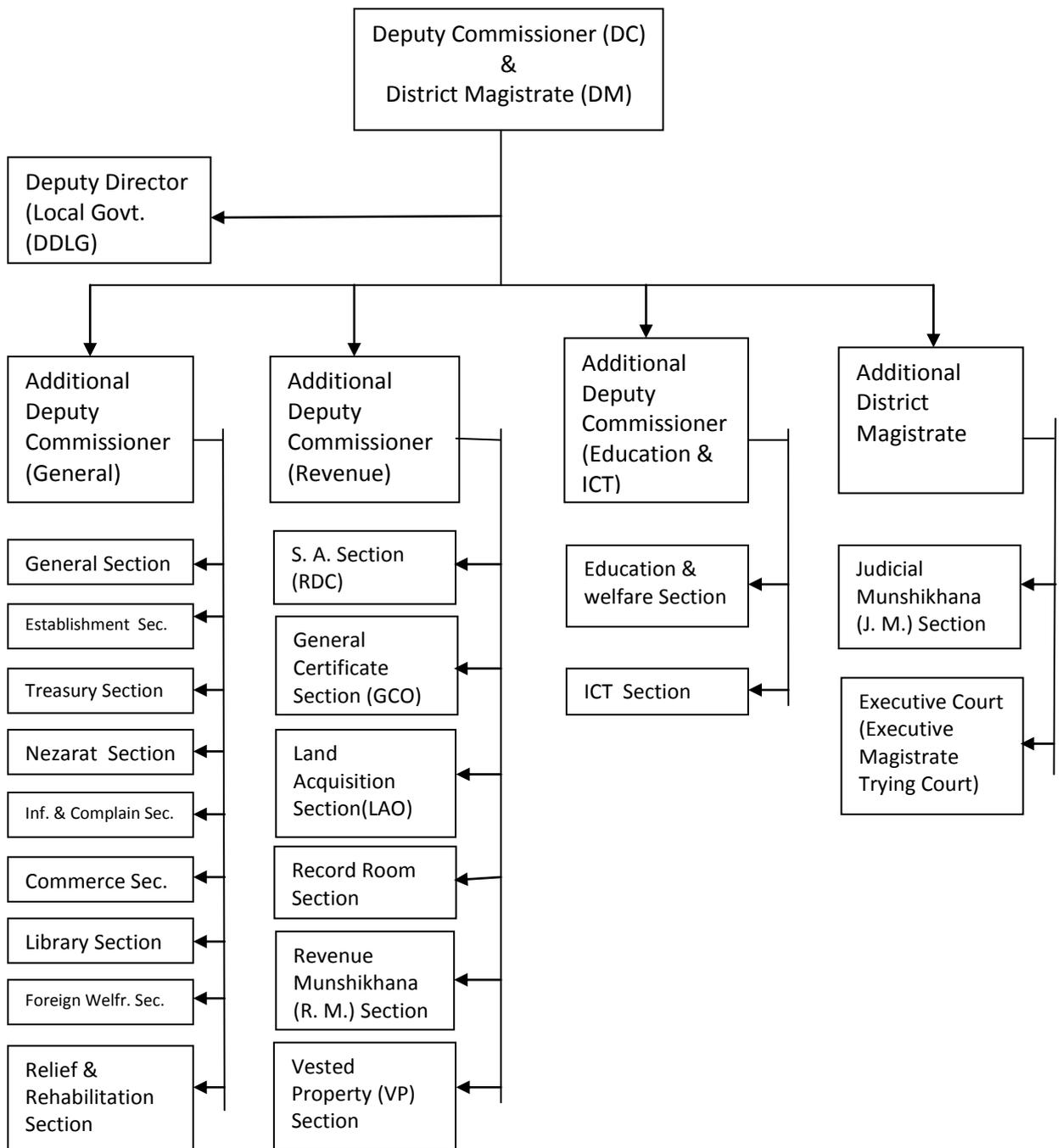
## **2.6 Structure and Personnel System in District Administration**

Mainly, the BCS (Administration) cadre officers administer the district administration. Besides them, there are first and second class officers and they work like a team in district administration. Officers are associated by class III employees and they are also assisted by class IV staff. The same class employee has different designations according to their nature of work. In district administration, class I and class II officers have 13 and 4 designations respectively whereas class III and class IV staffs have 19 and 10 designations respectively. For example, a first class BCS administration cadre officer can hold the position from Deputy Commissioner to Assistant Commissioner. But the custom of the service is that the most senior one enjoys the DC post and the most junior officer's work as Assistant Commissioner Post in district administration. An orderly, peon, MLSS, night guard or sweeper or cleaner all are class IV employees in district administration but their nature of job is different.

It is said before that district administration (DA) is entrusted with huge jobs and responsibilities. DA consists of 46 types of officers, staffs and labors. By this varied workforce it is not always easy and simple to conduct a district through coordination of different district offices, central government, divisional administration, local elites, political leaders, above all, the multi diverse demand and expectations of the people in the district.

Class I officers are DC, DDLG, ADM, ADC (General), ADC (Revenue), ADC (Education & Development), ADC (Land Acquisition), NDC, RDC, GCO, LAO, SAC, AC. Class II officers include additional LAO, AO, SAE, Kanoongo, Superintendent (Accounts). Class III employees are the driving and working force of district administration. According to their tasks, their designations are head assistant, office assistant, certificate assistant, stenographer, steno typist, draftsman, driver, accountant, surveyor, tracer etc. According to their job nature class IV staffs are known as orderly, peon, MLSS, Duplicating machine operator (DMO), Guard, Sweeper, Cleaner, Washer, Mohrar, Cook, Mosalchi, Farash, gardener etc.

**Figure 2: Structure of Office of the Deputy Commissioner (General District)**



## **Chapter 3**

### **Public Administration Paradigms: A Conceptual Overview**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses about different paradigms in public administration. It starts with the clarification of some important terms. It particularly elaborates the concept and features of Traditional Public Administration (TPA), New Public Administration (NPA) and New Public Management (NPM). It further attempts to make a comparison of the salient features of TPA, NPA and NPM. It ends with some concluding remarks regarding paradigm shift in public administration.

#### **3.2 Clarifying Terms**

According to Henry (1975), “paradigm”, no doubt is an overworked word; nevertheless, it is a useful one because there is no other term that conveys the concept of a field’s self-identity and the changing dynamics of that identity. Paradigmatic questions are of especial significance in public administration. As an intellectual enterprise, public administration has reached a point of radical departure from its own past. In his article on public administration, Henry (1975) traced the evolution of the field by identifying a number of paradigms that he organized around three themes: focus, or what to study; locus, or where to find it; and the place of values. For others still, paradigm and models are roughly equivalent (Doorgapersad, 2011).

A paradigm is a framework used in thinking about and organizing an understanding of natural or social phenomena. All societies, and the individuals within them, tend to have relatively fixed assumptions about how to understand and interpret the world, but there is great variation in these assumptions from place to place and from time to time. As sets of assumptions change over time, this process can be referred to as a paradigmatic shift: there emerges a new way of looking at the world (Online Dictionary of the Social Sciences 2006: 1).

Various schools of thought have emerged to discuss the relevance of paradigms in Public Administration. According to the classical empiricist (objective/ positivist) school of thought, it is needed “to determine whether Public Administration does have paradigmatic status, it must be determined whether universally accepted theories about Public Administration exist” (Freysen 1988: 162-163). In terms of the empiricist school of thought, it would appear that “Public Administration is not in a position to claim paradigmatic status in an objective sense” (Freysen 1988: 163). Regarding the existence of paradigms in Public Administration in a subjective sense, it can be commented that “the generic approach is universally accepted” (Freysen 1988: 163). New paradigms come into existence out of many incremental changes over a period of time and although they do not necessarily replace previous paradigms, they certainly provide grounds for improvement.

Modern public administration (NPM based) represents a “paradigmatic break from the traditional model of public administration” (O’Flynn 2007: 353). It is a reformed public sector transformation that breaks away from the repressive, autocratic and conservative paradigm of public administration that followed top down hierarchies “underpinned by Weber’s (1946) bureaucracy, Wilson’s (1887) policy administration divide, and Taylor’s (1911) scientific management model of work organization” (O’Flynn 2007: 354). It is thus seen as a body of managerial thought or as an ideological thought system based on ideas generated in the private sector and imported into the public sector (Hood 1991: 3–19, Hood 1995: 104–117). On the other hand, New Public Administration (NPA) in 1970s, also added some values in order to incorporate some changes by ensuring social equity, rationality and citizen centricity in the society (Frederickson, 1980); it also represents a paradigmatic break from the traditional model of public administration.

From the above discussion, “Development Paradigm” can be defined as a paradigmatic break from the traditional model of public administration that reflects a shift or transformation from the authoritative and conservative paradigm of public administration towards a technology dependent, development & service oriented,

citizen centric administration based on a particular set of activities. It is a paradigm where the features of NPA or NPM may coexist with TPA in order to bring positive changes in development and promote citizen satisfaction. The conventional character of the administration appears to be transformed gradually from the traditional model of public administration. In traditional public administration, the regulatory functions dominate over citizen with a very less or no attention regarding social welfare, development and citizen service. In fact, there had been no development activities observed during TPA. But in development paradigm, social welfare, citizen satisfaction and overall development activities dominate over the regulatory functions of the administration. Administrators play their role not as a ruler, but as an administrative manager. Development coordination, innovation, technology and social media or media play a significant role in this paradigm.

### **3.3 Paradigms in Public Administration**

Public administration has been developed as an academic field through a succession of five overlapping paradigms (Henry, 2009). These paradigms are sketched in order to indicate the notion of public administration as a relatively new, unique and institutionally independent field. Each paradigm has been characterized according to its “locus” and “focus”. Locus is the institutional “where” of the field and a recurring locus is the government bureaucracy. Focus is the specialized “what” of the field, its body of knowledge and experience.

#### **Paradigm 1: Politics Administration Dichotomy (1900-1926)<sup>5</sup>**

This is the paradigm of Traditional Public Administration (TPA). Public administration received its first serious attention from the scholars during this period as they provided the rationale for public administration to be a separate academic discipline and professional specialty. A major distinction or dichotomy between politics and public administration became the first identified theory of public administration. In the book ‘Politics and Administration’ (1900), two distinct functions of government

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<sup>5</sup> Leading proponents of Paradigm 1 includes Frank J. Goodnow and Leonard D. White. The publication of books written by them were “Politics and Administration (1900)” and “Introduction to the Study of Public Administration (1926)” respectively.

are identified by Frank J. Goodnow: Politics and Administration. Politics has to do with policies or the expressions of the state will; administration has to do with execution of these policies. Leonard D. White's 'Introduction to the Study of Public Administration' in 1926 reflected the general thrust of the field of administration.

The net result of Paradigm 1 was to strengthen the notion of distinct politics/administration dichotomy by relating it to a corresponding value/fact dichotomy. Everything that public administrationists scrutinized in the executive branch was imbued with the colorings and legitimacy of being somehow "factual" and "scientific", while the study of policy making and related matters was left to the political scientists. The paradigm was locus oriented and locus was on government's bureaucracy.

#### Paradigm-2: The Principles of Administration (1927-1937)<sup>6</sup>

This paradigm also belongs to Traditional Public Administration (TPA). During this paradigm, scholars were inclined to write the principles of public administration, but where those principles would be applied was not important. F. W. Willoughby (1927) indicated that certain scientific principles of administration existed and administrators would be an expert in their work if they learned how to apply these principles. The paradigm 2 was focus oriented but locus was everywhere. Focus was on managerial expertise in the form of administrative reforms. There was high demand for public administrators due to their managerial expertise in both public and private sectors. Public administration was flourishing both professionally and academically in this period.

Luther H. Gullick and Lyndall Urwick promoted seven principles of administration popular known as POSDCORB<sup>7</sup> in 1937. Taylor wrote the principles of scientific

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<sup>6</sup> Leading proponents of Paradigm 2 are F.W. Willoughby, Luther H. Gullick and Lyndall Urwick. Their written books/papers are "Principles of Public Administration (1927)", "Papers on the Science of Administration (1937)" respectively.

<sup>7</sup> POSDCORB is an abbreviated word what is generated from: P-Planning, O-Organizing, S-Staffing, D-Directing, CO-Coordinating, R-Reporting, B-Budgeting.

management and was considered as father of scientific management. Bureaucracy and literacy meant rule by the officials and the administrative machinery of the state; more broadly, a rationale and rule governed mode of organization. Characteristics of bureaucracy were impersonal, formalistic, rule bound, rigid and highly disciplined. Administrative responsibility was maintained externally by legislative or by external checks and balances. The role of bureaucrat was to define the public interest and the role of interest group in public policy formulation. Particularly, the concept of bounded rationality in decision making by Simon (1940) was the most significant landmark in this paradigm.

### Paradigm 3: Public Administration as Political Science 1950-1970<sup>8</sup>

Public Administration leaped back into political science due to political concerns and the icy intellectual critiques of the field. The paradigm was locus oriented (governmental bureaucracy) with loss of focus. An exercise in establishing linkages between public administration and political science was made. Public administration was considered as an emphasis, an area of interest and even a synonym of political science. The logical conceptual connection between public administration and political science was seen distinctly in public policy making process. Many writers discussed a developing bureaucracy that was at least implicitly holding up against the Weberian image of the efficient, rationale, functionally specialized, impersonal, non-political bureaucratic hierarchy, an image associated chiefly with the western industrialized nations.

### Paradigm 4: Public Administration as Management (Administrative Science) 1956-1970<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Leading proponents of Paradigm 3 includes Clifford Dwight Waldo and H. George Frederickson. Their written books were "The Study of Public Administration (1955)" and "Social Equity and Public Administration (1968)" respectively. See also Albert Somit and Joseph Tenenhaus, *American Political Science: A Profile of a Discipline* (New York: Atherton, 1964).

<sup>9</sup> Leading proponents of Paradigm 4 includes Keith M. Henderson and Lynton K. Caldwell. Their books are "Emerging Synthesis in American Public Administration" and "Methodology in the Theory of Public Administration." See also Larry Kirkhart and Neely Gardner, "Symposium on Organization Development", *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 34, (1974), pp. 97-140.

Paradigm 4 occurred roughly concurrently with Paradigm 3 in time when Administrative Science was found as a viable alternative to the political science. This paradigm provided a focus, management techniques, but undefined locus—in what the institutional setting that expertise should be applied was undefined. Administrative science includes Organization theory & behavior, planning, decision making and other management techniques. The dividing line between private and public administration had been a painful dilemma for a number of years. This paradigm pushed public administration into re-thinking what the public in PA really meant. The concept of determining and implementing the public interest constitutes a defining pillar of public administration.

In 1967, Golembieski suggested that decision making and problem solving responsibilities should be located as close to as possible to information sources and to make competition in order to meet work goals. Managers would work in increasing self control and self direction for people within organization. He urged to open problem solving climate, encourage trust among individuals and groups, supplement or replace authority or role or status with authority for knowledge and competence. Democratic values could be considered, normative concerns could be broached and intellectual rigors and scientific methodologies could be employed.

#### Paradigm 5: Public Administration as Public Administration 1970 to Present<sup>10</sup>

Paradigm 5 refers to public administration's successful autonomous academic field and practice. There is a return of its locus in government bureaucracy. Public administration is emerging in a world of globalization, devolution and the redefining of government. This paradigm highlighted the emergence of 'Techno-bureaucratic' dimensions -science, technology and public policy, relationship between knowledge

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<sup>10</sup> See H. George Frederickson, "The Repositioning of American Public Administration (1999)", Christopher Swope, "Ways to Sway an M.P.A. (2001)", Paul C. Light, "The New Public Service (1999)", D. Osborne and T. Gaebler, "Reinventing Government: How the entrepreneurial Spirit is Transforming the Public Sector?(1993)", Christopher Hood, "The New Public Management in the 1980: Variations on a Theme (1995)", Pwen E. Hughes, "New Public Management in Public Management & Administration (1998)", C. Pollit, "Justification by Works or by Faith?: Evaluating the New Public Management (1995)".

and power, bureaucracy and democracy, technology and management. This paradigm led to the ideas of:

1. New Public Administration (NPA)
2. Re-inventing Government
3. New Public Management (NPM)

Public Administration never had and perhaps will never have a steady state (Kettl, 2000). Public Administration's identity, that is, its scope, boundaries and methodologies, values and philosophy are mere responses and reactions to its socio-cultural, economic, political and academic sphere.

### **3.4 Concept and Features of Traditional Public Administration (TPA)**

The traditional model of public administration (TPA) remains the longest standing and most discussed and even debated theory of management in the public sector which pre-dominated for most of the 20th century. Paradigm 1 and paradigm 2 of models of public administration essentially reflect the concept of TPA. Its theoretical foundations were mainly derived from Max Weber, Woodrow Wilson, Frederick Taylor and the Northcote–Trevelyan Report (1854) in the United Kingdom.

The beginning of the traditional model is best seen in the mid-nineteenth century in Britain. In 1854, Northcote–Trevelyan Report recommended the abolition of patronage and the substitution of recruitment by open competitive examination under the supervision of a central examination board, particularly for the Indian Civil Service (ICS). In 1883, the Civil Service Act (the Pendleton Act) was passed which established a bipartisan Civil Service Commission for the holding of competitive examinations for all applicants to the classified service.

The traditional model of public administration rests in important ways on the articulation by Max Weber (1846-1920) of the nature of bureaucracy. Weber emphasized control from top to bottom in the form of monocratic hierarchy, that is, a system of control in which policy is set at the top and carried out through a series of offices, with each manager and worker reporting to one superior and held to

account by that person. The bureaucratic system is based on a set of rules and regulations flowing from public law; the system of control is rational and legal. The role of the bureaucrat is strictly subordinate to the political superior (Pfiffner, 2004).

Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924) contributed to the traditional model of public administration by arguing for the separation of administration from political policy making. According to Wilson, administration lies outside the proper sphere of politics. Administrative questions are not political questions. Although politics sets the tasks for administration, it should not be suffered to manipulate its offices. Wilson was one of the main proponents of the politics-administration dichotomy which allowed public administration to emerge as a self-conscious field of study, intellectually and institutionally differentiated from the politics.

Frederick Winslow Taylor (1856-1915) made a contribution to the classical model with his time and motion studies and careful analysis of the role of managers and workers. His techniques and managerial practices were adopted widely in the United States and throughout the world in the early 20th century. Taylor's *Principles of Scientific Management*, published in 1911, emphasized tight control of work processes and careful planning by managers. He pointed out that, management was a true science resting upon clearly fixed laws, rules and principles as foundation. He asserted that management asserted a number of principles that could be applicable in all types of organizations be it a home, a farm, a business, church, universities or government departments.

In traditional model, large bureaucracy creates formation of new elite class led to distortions in development & wide spread corruption. It is criticized due to low productivity, managerial inefficiency, lack of accountability, overstaffing, political interference and weak oversight by government. It served the elite class most. Bureaucracy becomes self-interest seekers. It creates the unresponsive but invasive state; inefficient but restrictive state. Traditional public administration was severely criticized for its characteristics and over the past few decades, it has gone through a

series of change in order to face the challenge of globalization and modernization (Cheema, 2004).

### **Salient Features of Traditional Public Administration (TPA):**

- *Formal control of political leadership:* Public administration is an activity serving the public, and public servants carry out policies derived from politicians (Hughes, 2003:6). Elected officials (politicians) control the decisions and actions of the appointed officials (civil servants) (Frederickson & Smith, 2003).
- *Rigid and rule bound:* The bureaucratic system is based on a set of rules and regulations flowing from public law; the system of control is rational and legal (Lutzker, 1982).
- *A formal hierarchical structure:* In TPA, each level controls the level below and is controlled by the level above. A formal hierarchy is the basis of central planning and centralized decision making. (Chakrabarty & Chand, 2012).
- *Emphasis on rationality in decision making:* Traditional model goes for rationalization of collective action in decision making in order to achieve the highest degree of efficiency (Kernaghan & Siegel, 1999).
- *Authoritative approach:* General trend of traditional administration is the dominant approach and authoritarian ruling (Lutzker, 1982).
- *Process oriented inward accountability:* The traditional model tilts toward accountability. Public administration focuses on processes and procedures subject to a unified control and disciplinary system (Pfiffner, 2004).
- *Secrecy and citizen avoiding in government business:* Traditional model is regulated by some particular norms and rules. Bureaucracy is not open to all; secrecy is maintained strictly in government activities. (Chakrabarty & Chand, 2012).
- *Adoption of centralized strategy:* Power and authority is centralized on the top level or head of the institution. The organizational structures rely on one individual to make decisions and provide directions (Lutzker, 1982; Pfiffner, 2004).

- *Resistance to change*: In TPA, authority is a vital and any change is like a challenge to the status quo of the authority; because change goes against the order and system of authority. That is why resistance is so high in TPA (Lutzker, 1982; Pfiffner, 2004).
- *Public-Private Distinction*: There is a traditional distinction between public and private sphere in the society. This dividing line between private and public had been a painful dilemma in TPA (Lutzker, 1982; Henry, 2009).
- *Politics –administration dichotomy*: Public administration lies in a self conscious separate field and it cannot lie in the same sphere of politics (Pfiffner, 2004). Bureaucracy will maintain only hierarchical loyalty and will be free from any political biasness (Lutzker, 1982; Haque, 2004).
- *Risk avoidance*: Administrators always try to eliminate hazards, activities or exposures that can negatively affect the institution or organization or administration (Haque, 2004).

### **3.5 Concept and Features of New Public Administration (NPA)**

NPA is an anti-positivist, anti-technical and anti-hierarchical reaction against traditional public administration. It focuses on the ever changing needs of the public and role of government how they can provide these services to the citizens.

The concept of New Public Administration (NPA) was emerged in 1960s in the USA from the demand of responsive governance and equity in service delivery (Pandey, 2010). At the end of overlapping Paradigm 3 and Paradigm 4 of the models of public administration, the base of NPA was established and it was emerged as a separate discipline at the beginning of Paradigm 5. The discipline and practice of traditional public administration which had all along emphasized principles and work procedures gradually underwent a transformation. Change was visible with the abandonment of politics–administration dichotomy and re-establishing a link between the two in the context of public policy making. Policy making was considered the essence of public administration. Actually different types of problems were faced by the Americans by 1960s and they were not satisfied at all. In that crisis period, the younger generation of intellectuals questioned the efficacy and speed of

the response of the political and administrative systems. Serious concerns were raised regarding the efficiency and economy in administration. Human and value-oriented administration was suggested by the experts. The scholars emphasized on five major goals that public administration needs to take cognizance of, namely relevance, values, social equity, change and client orientation. It was during 1966-68 that various efforts were initiated in the USA, with the aim of providing a multidisciplinary, public policy and social equity-oriented focus to public administration.<sup>11</sup> As a consequence of the initiatives, a new concept of Public Administration was emerged namely New Public Administration (NPA).

New Public Administration (NPA) adds social equity to the classic objectives and rationale (Frederickson, 1980). The conventional or classic public administration seeks more or better services with available resources (efficiency) and maintains the level of services while spending less money (economy). But in NPA, social equity is also enhanced during service delivery. Social equity includes activities designed to enhance the political power and economic well-being of the marginalized group (e.g. farm laborers). Decentralization, devolution, projects, contracts, sensitivity training, organization development, responsibility expansion, confrontation, and client involvement are the concepts of change in the New Public Administration that enhance good management, efficiency, economy, and social equity.

### **Salient Features of New Public Administration (NPA):**

George Frederickson (1980) concluded his view of NPA by identifying some salient features of New Public Administration. These are:

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<sup>11</sup> Initiatives were taken through the following conference/report that led to the emergence of New Public Administration (NPA):

1. The Honey Report on Higher Education for Public Service (1966)
2. The Philadelphia Conference on the Theory and Practice of Public Administration (1967)
3. The Minnowbrook Conference – I (1968)
4. The Minnowbrook Conference - II (1988)

Among these, the First Minnowbrook Conference played major role of the changing platform because the New Public Administration (NPA) emerged out due to the discourses of this conference.

- *Responsive administration to the change:* The administration should bring about certain internal as well as external changes so that public administration could be made more relevant to the social, economic, political and technological environment. For this to happen, the administration has to be more flexible and adaptable to the various changes.
- *Client centrality:* The effectiveness of the administrator should be judged not only from the point of view of the government, but from that of the citizens. If the administrative actions do not improve the quality of life of citizens then those are not effective notwithstanding whatsoever rationality and efficiency those may have.
- *Flexible and comfortable structure:* The NPA approach calls for small, flexible and less hierarchical structures in administration so that the citizens' administration interface could become more flexible and comfortable. The organizational structure should be in with the socially relevant conditions.
- *Awareness regarding citizen:* Jobs of public administrators affect community and mass amounts of people. The importance of the job should be highlighted.
- *Rationality:* This calls for judging the efficacy of administrators' actions not only from the view point of the government, but also from the citizens' perspective.
- *Diversity of functional skill:* The best public administrators tend to be someone who has knowledge in politics and law, but also has a hand in community functions. This allows for a smooth transition from policy to implementation.
- *Multi-disciplinary Nature of Public Administration:* Knowledge from several disciplines and not just one dominating paradigm build the discipline of public administration. The political, social, economic, management and human relation approaches are needed to ensure the growth of discipline.
- *Social equity:* Social equity needs to be the primary aspect of administration. The deprivation of the minorities in the society should have to minimize in order to establish a balance and harmony among all classes of people.

- *Democratic citizenship*: NPA advocates for the democratic citizenship such that a citizen has the citizenship in a political democracy and is allowed to take part in the democratic process.

### **3.6 Concept and Features of New Public Management (NPM)**

The New Public Management (NPM) is a concept articulated by David Osborne and Ted Gaebler in the late 1980s in the book 'Reinventing Government.'<sup>12</sup> It applies the business customer service model to government. More elaborately, the new model advanced the use of private sector style models, organizational ideas & values to improve the efficiency and service of the public sector. Citizens are seen as customers and the administrative role is streamlined by converting policy alternatives into market choices. This approach focuses on results and promotes competition inside and outside government.

The traditional model of public administration, which predominated for most of the twentieth century, has changed since the mid-1980s to a flexible, market-based form of public management. By the beginning of the 1990s, a new model of public sector management had emerged in most advanced countries and some developing ones. Initially, the new model had several names, including: 'managerialism' (Pollitt, 1993); 'new public management' (Hood, 1991); 'market-based public administration'; the 'post-bureaucratic paradigm' (Barzelay, 2001) or 'entrepreneurial government' (Osborne and Gaebler, 1993).

The adoption of new forms of public management means the emergence of a new paradigm in the public sector and traditional public administration discredited theoretically and practically. NPM emerged in response to a number of environmental forces which governments have faced everywhere in the last twenty

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<sup>12</sup> For detail see David Osborne and Ted Gaebler (1993) "Reinventing Government: How the Entrepreneurial Spirit is Transforming the Public Sector? "

years (Sarker and Pathak, 2000:57). First, large and expensive public sector put pressure to cut programs and/or increase efficiency. Second, there have been massive technological innovations over the years, particularly the development of Information Technology. Third, globalization of economy with increasing competition has become order of the day. Forth, it has become inevitable to liberalize the economic sector following heavy burden imposed upon the national exchequer as a result of mismanagement, corruption, inefficiency in resource management, bureaucratic bungling, etc. More importantly, increasing efficiency in resource management is also expected as economic recession and competition simply demand it. Fifth, in the competitive world, people are demanding quality goods and services. They are now keen to compare services for all organizations (Hughes, 1998).

#### **Salient Features of New Public Management (NPM):**

The concept of New Public Management has been captured by different scholars and they have formulated the features of NPM from their own perspectives although the features are more or less similar. Osborne and Gaebler (1993) formulated ten principles of “entrepreneurial government” (reinventing public administration). Christopher Hood (1991) has formulated seven principles of NPM while Owen Hughes (1998), Pollitt (1994), Kickert and many other scholars have tried to formulate the features from their own point of view. By analyzing different principles of NPM as formulated by different scholars, the salient features of NPM can be generalized as:

- *Mission driven government- transforming rule-driven organization:* Mission-driven governments deregulate internally, eliminating many of their internal rules and radically simplifying their administrative systems such as budget, personnel, and procurement. (Gaebler & Osborne, 1993).
- *Competition in service delivery:* This refers to improving both the quality and cost-effectiveness of government services can be achieved through competition rather than regulation. Competition does not necessarily mean that a service will be turned over to the private sector; rather competition

will end government monopolies. (Gaebler & Osborne, 1993; Hood, 1991, Kickert, 2000)

- *Emphasis on Output/Result*: This refers to need to stress on results rather than procedures. It can shift accountability from inputs to outputs, or results. It measures the performance and provides reward (Gaebler & Osborne, 1993; Hood, 1991, Hughes, 1998; Pollitt, 1994).
- *Private sector style of management*: This refers to introduction of market principles and techniques in public sector (Gaebler & Osborne, 1993; Hood, 1991, Hughes, 1998; Pollitt, 1994).
- *Participation and team work*: It refers to the active participation of the top level management with his subordinates by leading from front and working like a team in order to achieve the goal. (Gaebler & Osborne, 1993; Hood, 1991, Hughes, 1998; Pollitt, 1994).
- *Market oriented practices*: It refers to grievance redresses mechanisms, imposition of user fee, outsourcing etc. Market-oriented governments utilize a market mechanism instead of an administrative program to provide goods and services to the public (Gaebler & Osborne, 1993; Hughes, 1998; Pollitt, 1994).
- *Contracting out*: It refers to outsourcing of manpower into public offices (Hughes, 1998; Pollitt, 1994).
- *Disaggregation of units in Public Sector*: This refers to breaking of larger entities into small corporatized units dealing with one another on a arms length basis. (Hood, 1991, Pollitt, 1994; Hughes, 1998).
- *Strengthening steering functions rather than rowing*: It refers to providing guidance and direction (steer) from producing goods and services (row). Example, contracts, vouchers, grants and tax incentives. (Gaebler & Osborne, 1993; Kickert, 2000).
- *Satisfying customer or client need*: It refers to make an effort to perceive the needs of customers and to give customers a choice of producers (Gaebler & Osborne, 1993; Pollitt, 1994).

- *Optimizing information technology*: It means capitalize information and communication technology in the office or organization and make best use of it by applying trained human resources (Hughes, 1998; Pollitt, 1994; Kickert, 2000).
- *Explicit standards and Measures of Performance*: This refers to setting targets and performance assessment (Hood, 1991; Hughes, 1998; Pollitt, 1994).
- *Empowering rather than serving*: It refers to improve government performance by including communities in the process of service delivery and giving them more control.(Gaebler & Osborne, 1993; Kickert, 2000).
- *Improving the management of human resources*: This refers to giving autonomy to the personnel and letting them use their own strategies to attain the goals (Hood, 1991; Hughes, 1998; Pollitt,1994).
- *Stress on greater discipline and parsimony in resource use*: This refers to miserably using the allocated funds and showing the value for the money people pay thru taxes. ((Gaebler & Osborne, 1993; Hood, 1991).

### **3.7 Comparison of features of TPA, NPA and NPM**

The features of TPA, NPA and NPM have been discussed simultaneously in order to generate a comparative data which will provide the scope to fulfill the purpose. Traditional Public Administration always focuses on the initial regime of administration by highlighting the harsh approach of bureaucracy. It basically ornamented the fundamental structure of administration. NPA acts as a bridge between TPA and NPM which, in other words, can be mentioned as the transition of two opposite regimes. On the contrary, NPM is a new look of administration enriched with technology and modernization. These three different types of features are shown in the table in order to capture a clear glance of those three paradigms.

**Table 4: Comparison of features of TPA, NPA and NPM**

TPA	NPA	NPM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal control of political leadership</li> <li>• Secrecy and Citizen avoiding in government business</li> <li>• Rigid and rule bound</li> <li>• A formal hierarchical structure</li> <li>• Public private distinction</li> <li>• Emphasis on rationality in decision making</li> <li>• Authoritative approach</li> <li>• Process oriented inward accountability</li> <li>• Adoption of centralized strategy</li> <li>• Resistance to change</li> <li>• Politics-administration dichotomy</li> <li>• Risk avoidance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsive administration to the change</li> <li>• Client centricity</li> <li>• Flexible and comfortable structure</li> <li>• Awareness regarding citizen</li> <li>• Diversity of functional skill</li> <li>• Social equity</li> <li>• Rationality</li> <li>• Multi-disciplinary nature of public administration</li> <li>• Democratic citizenship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mission driven government &amp; transforming rule driven organization</li> <li>• Competition in service delivery</li> <li>• Emphasis on output/result</li> <li>• Contracting out</li> <li>• Private sector style of management</li> <li>• Strengthening steering function rather than rowing</li> <li>• Empowering rather than serving</li> <li>• Satisfying customer or clients needs</li> <li>• Participation and team work.</li> <li>• Market oriented practice</li> <li>• Improving human resource management.</li> <li>• Optimizing information technology</li> <li>• Stress on better resource use</li> <li>• Explicit standards &amp; measures of performance</li> </ul>

### **3.8 Conclusion**

The features of public administration are not stable, these are changeable. With the socio political change, the characteristics are shifted to a different shape and indicate a new paradigm. Traditional public administration, with its own dominance, showed better control over the society and maintained proper communication with the politics at the same time. But at one stage, it could not continue due to the social transformation of the people and their necessities. The emergence of new public administration was nothing but a consequence of the dominance of traditional public administration. The earlier notion of public administrators was felt no longer valid. Responsive government, active and participative citizenry, values such as ethics, honesty and responsibility in the provision of public service holds good in the practice of public administration. With the passage of time, the expectation of the people raised higher from the public administration. They deserve more citizen centric open and innovative administration. The notion of new public management indicate that public organization should adapt private sector style of management in order to come out of the traditional hierarchical rigid and rule bound administration. They should empower the citizen by ensuring their rights, transparency, accountability and citizen satisfaction at the end. Finally, it can be said that administration is for the necessity of the citizen. So, more modernized concept may be necessary in future if the reality demands more than the existing features of public administration.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The main source of data in this study are the historical evolutionary information, secondary resources or research works as conducted by other scholars, official documents, media resources, in depth interviews and consultation with some distinguished persons and researcher's personal observations. This chapter presents details of data collection, content analysis, interview details and two case studies. It particularly focuses on the key points of secondary data from content analysis as well as researcher's observation in the relevant field both from interview and case study. Finally, it aims to go for the detailed analysis with interpretation of the content, interview feedback and field based observation.

#### **4.2 Data Collection Method**

This research is a fully historical and exploratory study. So, the qualitative method has been used here to conduct the study. The researcher has gone for content analysis and archive documents. Two case studies have been conducted here (DC Office Jessore and DC Office Gazipur). Most importantly in depth interviews and consultation have been conducted with key informants like former Civil Servants, Historians and Academics. Interviews of incumbent secretaries of government, incumbent Additional/Joint Secretaries, incumbent Deputy Commissioners/former Deputy Commissioners and incumbent Additional Deputy Commissioners have also been conducted. The researcher has also conducted interviews with civil society members, media personalities, general citizens and former staff of DC office.

#### **4.3 Sample Size**

A total 35 number of respondents have been interviewed in this research. Among them former Advisers of Caretaker Government (former civil servants) 2, former Chief Election Commissioner (former civil servants) 1, Historian 1, Academic 1,

former Civil Servants (Secretary) 1, incumbent Secretaries/Additional Secretaries of different ministries/divisions 4, incumbent Deputy Commissioners/former Deputy Commissioners 8, incumbent Additional Deputy Commissioners 8, media personalities 2, civil society members 3, citizens 3 and former staff of DC office 1.

#### **4.4 Data Analysis Method**

This study has not used any data scaling method or any other particular test like SPSS as is used in traditional quantitative or mixed method. This is totally exploratory study. The researcher has gone to thoroughly present the collected data from content/archive documents, case studies and empirical observations. However, the researcher has used textual presentation (narratives text) with coding, charts, figures and tables for easily understanding his arguments.

#### **4.5 Changing Paradigm of District Administration**

##### **4.5.1 British India**

##### **4.5.1.1 Company Rule in India (1757-1858)**

The rule or dominion of the British East India Company over parts of the Indian subcontinent is variously taken to have commenced in 1757, after the Battle of Plassey, when the Nawab of Bengal Sirajuddaulah surrendered his dominions to the Company. The post 'Collector' was originated in the Bengal during the company rule in India (1757-1857). The evolution of the office of the Deputy Commissioner was historically linked with the revenue collection and administration of revenue laws (Ali, 1995). The Mughal kings appointed the 'amils' for the collection of revenue. 'Qazi' was the judge and the 'fauzdar', as the head of the police force, was responsible for peace and security. The royal court used to appoint the 'subedar' and officers of the 'sarkar'. In most cases they were noblemen or the trusted people of the court. The judiciary was separated from the executive and the 'qazis' were well versed in Islamic laws. The collection of revenue was the job of the central treasury.

After the battle of Plassey in 23 June 1757, the officials of the East India Company became the real arbiter of affairs in Bengal. Local governors or subedars were

appointed under the authority of Lord Clive (Viceroy). In 1765, the grant of 'Diwani'- the right of civil and revenue administration of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa to East India Company, was provided for on condition of an annual payment of Rupees 26 lakhs (2.6 million) to the emperor of Delhi, which gave the company virtual possession of the three provinces. In 1769, British Supervisor in each 'Chakla' (Revenue division of the Mughal period) was appointed for the collection of revenue from the 'Zamindars' and 'Jaigirdars' (Land lords). The intention of appointing British Supervisors was to control the local revenue officials, the administration which was excellent in theory, but failed in practice.

In 1772, the Court of Directors of East India Company in England decided to take upon themselves the entire care and management of the revenue by the company servants. Governor General Warren Hastings took his seat as Dewan in a ceremony at Murshidabad which was the beginning of direct revenue control by the company officials. The Suba comprising Bengal, Bihar and Orissa was divided into 9 divisions and 42 districts. Governor General Warren Hastings created the post of Collector to head the revenue administration in each district in order to establish a better system of land revenue collection.

The post of Collector was abolished in 1773 and the responsibility of revenue collection was given to local officials of the company under a Board of Revenue stationed at Calcutta. It was soon found that the uncontrolled activities of the local officials under a corrupt and ineffective system produced an intolerable situation. The post of district collector was revived in 1786 by Governor General Macpherson to keep a watch over revenue administration as well as for administering justice- both civil and criminal. In 1777, Governor General Cornwallis reduced the number of districts. The revenue and judicial duties were combined when the collectors were asked to administer civil justice. Later on, all powers of criminal justice were also transferred to the Collector. The Collector was made responsible to different authorities for his different functions. For his revenue court, the appeal lay in a Maal Adalat and in the Board of Revenue at Calcutta. In 1790, the Collector was made a

Magistrate for trial of cases involving theft, robbery and murder. He could convict or acquit the accused in a jail after trial.

The concentration of power in the Collector proved to be harmful. In 1793, Governor-General, Lord Cornwallis, promulgated the permanent settlement of land revenues in the presidency, the first socio-economic regulation in colonial India. He established Diwani Adalat in each district and posted a covenanted officer as District Judge, who could decide the civil and revenue cases according to Muslim and Hindu customs. The reform of 1793 provided for the appointment of Indian Munsifs on honorary basis. Magistrate was assigned the duty of inspection of the Jail. The Collector became stripped of magisterial and judicial power. The collection of revenue became comparatively easier after the permanent settlement of land. Zamindars (Land lords) used to collect revenue from tenants who would deposit the government demand in the treasury. Touzinais would submit before the collector a list of zamindars who failed to deposit the government revenue. The collector would order auction of such estates on a fixed date under sunset law. This work did not take much time of the collector, as the collection from the tenants was not his responsibility. The collector was entrusted with maintenance of law and order and administration of criminal justice. Zamindars used to mediate and settle many disputes within their jurisdiction.

In 1831, Governor General Lord Bentinck introduced considerable changes in the Cornwallis system. The designation District Collector was changed to District Magistrate and Collector. The Collector was given the authority to try less important criminal cases and to control the police force in his district. He was also given summary jurisdiction to try revenue cases such as rent cases, boundary cases etc. In 1838, the magisterial power of the Collector was withdrawn because of the pressure of revenue work. By 1845, in only three districts of Orissa in the Bengal Presidency the offices of Collector and District Magistrate remained united. In other district of the Bengal Presidency, there were separate heads- the Collector, the District Magistrate and the District Judge.

In 1854, Governor General Dalhousie attributed the causes of the unsatisfactory administration in Bengal, mainly due to the separation of the offices of the collector and magistrate. Finally the Mutiny of 1857 (Indian Rebellion) played the most decisive role and went a long way in strengthening the position of the district administration. After the Mutiny, the government came to the conclusion that a close relationship should be developed between the executive arm of the government and the people. In 1859, during new Governor General Lord Canning, the offices of the Collector and Magistrate were united in the person of the former. The dignity of the office of the Magistrate commanded over the police force, powers to try criminal cases and revenue cases enormously contributed to the prestige and the status of the Collector and enabled him to occupy a position of pre-eminence in the district. Without any ambiguity he became the administrative and the executive head of the district (Abedin, 1973).

#### **4.5.1.2 British Raj (1858-1947): Indian Civil Service in British India**

The Indian Civil Service (ICS) for part of the 19th century officially known as the Imperial Civil Service, was the elite higher civil service of the British Empire in British India during British rule in the period between 1858 and 1947. Its members ruled more than 300 million people in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Burma (then comprising British Raj). They were ultimately responsible for overseeing all government activity in the 250 districts that comprised British India. They were appointed under Section XXXII of the Government of India Act 1858, enacted by the Parliament of the United Kingdom. The ICS was headed by the Secretary of State for India, a member of the British cabinet.

At first almost all the top thousand members of the ICS, known as "Civilians", were British, and had been educated in the best British schools. By 1905, five per cent were from Bengal. At the time of the partition of India and departure of the British, in 1947, the outgoing Government of India's ICS was divided between the new Dominions of India and Pakistan. The part which went to India was named the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), while the part that went to Pakistan was named the

Pakistan Administrative Service (PAS), later "Civil Service of Pakistan" (CSP). At the time of Partition, there were 980 ICS officers. 468 were Europeans, 352 Hindus, 101 Muslims, two depressed classes/Scheduled Castes, five domiciled Europeans and Anglo-Indians, 25 Indian Christians, 13 Parsis, 10 Sikhs and four other communities. Most European officers left India at partition, while many Hindus and Muslims went to India and Pakistan respectively. Although these are now organized differently, the contemporary Civil Services of India, the Central Superior Services of Pakistan, Bangladesh Civil Service and Myanmar Civil Service, which are all descended from the old Indian Civil Service.

From 1858, after the demise of the East India Company's rule in India, the British civil service took on its administrative responsibilities. The change in governance came about due to the Indian Rebellion of 1857, which came close to toppling British rule in the country. Up to 1853, the Directors of the British East India Company made appointments of covenanted civil servants by nominations. This nomination system was abolished in 1855 by the Parliament in England and it was decided that the induction would be through competitive examinations of all British subjects, without distinction of race. The examination for admission to the service was first held only in London in the month of August of each year. All candidates also had to pass a compulsory horse riding test.

The British, of course, designed ICS and the rest of the government machinery around it with the explicit goal of allowing a very small number of men to control a very large population. To this end, they concentrated all power and authority in the hands of these very few men with the rest of government acting as a support structure (Chattopadhyay, S. & Johnson, D., 2011). The office of 'Collector' brought together 'executive and magisterial functions,' and kept general control over all the governmental functions in the district, including over the police. As District Magistrate, the Collector was head of criminal law administration. Almost till the end of British rule, under special Section 30 powers he could even award the death penalty, and during earlier times, he could take charge of any military units in his district if necessity demanded (Mason, 1959).

The ICS followed a set of norms that emphasized honesty, independence of mind and capacity for decision-making qualities (Mason, 1959). The ICS adopted the role of ‘the remote, harsh, and punitive father’ towards Indian subordinates; because the British feared the Indians might act ‘contrary to the interests of the bureaucracy,’ in other words, contrary to British interests. The elite ruling clique, the ICS, separated by race, language, interest, and power from those over whom they enjoyed power, held in their hands, not only real executive power, but ‘a substantial part of the legislature and judiciary. The ICS gained universal respect; it was because the Indians of the period were relieved that the savageries of the turbulent past had ended.

*“If you take that steel frame out of the fabric, it would collapse. There is one institution we will not cripple, there is one institution we will not deprive of its functions or of its privileges; and that is the institution which built up the British Raj – the British Civil Service of India.”--- David Lloyd George, then Prime Minister of UK, on the Imperial Civil Service (1916-1922)*

By the end of the Second World War, the ICS was severely stretched. Its officers had worked fantastically hard but against impossible odds. Traditionally an elite band of generalists, capable of turning its hand to all tasks of government; the Service began to lose ground as those tasks became more complex and sophisticated. Specialists, subordinate services and more important, politicians, took over an ever increasing share of decision making. British officers clearly wanted to leave India. For Indian officers the picture was more confusing, for their loyalties were torn not only between their British employers and their new political masters, but also between the different groups into which their own society appeared to be fragmenting.

On August 15th, 1947, India gained her independence and the ICS as such ceased to exist. It is too strong to say that the state of the ICS - its exhaustion and its morale - brought about Indian independence but it did much to determine the pace and timing of that independence. The traditions of this elite service did not pass into obscurity. Of course, the new civil services set up in the newly created states of India

and Pakistan was not simply a reincarnation of their common forebear, but they owed much to its traditions and standards.

The Indian Civil Service was a fascinating institution. Evolving to meet a changing set of tasks in a shifting political milieu, its members managed to hang on to certain ideals and beliefs, principally the ideal of service, the respect for the work of the district officer and a genuine concern for India's well-being. These ideals transcended differences of province, post, age and race. Even in a story of change and challenges, some things remained the same.

During British period, there was practically no development programme for implementation by the district officer. The number of social welfare institutions in a district remained insignificant. A few officers used to take up social welfare projects by inspiring the local people to do voluntary work or by collecting subscription. The district officer could maintain an image of neutrality and straightforwardness, essentially because of his isolation from the society (Ali, 1995). Until the Second World War, the district magistrate had plenty of time in his daily routine for comfort, leisure and personal work and many of them wrote diaries, memories and books. During the war, the functions of price control, food supply and emergency work were added to the list of functions of the district magistrate.

The District Officer (DO) occupied a very important and prominent place in the district administration of the sub-continent. Sir William Hunter wrote, "Upon his energy and personal character depends ultimately the efficiency of our Indian Government." The ideal that was set for the DO was the "Platonic ideal" of public service. The nature of his functions was such that it was not unnatural for him to go beyond his legal responsibilities. Usually he looked after the people of his district, whose well being was his trust, with paternal care and sympathy. The happiness of rural life depended to a considerable extent on the interest that he took in different aspects of rural life. Macaulay said in the House of Commons: "In all that district there is not a single village-there is not a single hut- in which the difference between a good and a bad collector may not make the difference between happiness and

misery.” To rural people the government meant the DO from whom they expected justice, sympathy and protection (Abedin, 1973).

#### **4.5.2 The Pakistan period (1947–71)**

The officers of the Indian Civil Service (ICS) from the united-British India, who opted for Pakistan upon independence and partition in 1947, were inducted into the newly created Pakistan Administrative Service (PAS). However, due to the acute shortage in their numbers compared to the requirement in the new country, the Government of Pakistan decided to induct officers from other services including the Indian Political Service (IPS), Indian Accounts Service (IAS) and others into the PAS while the ICS officers automatically became part of it. The PAS had been limited to only those 89 officers of ICS and 12 of IPS who had opted for Pakistan. Just like ICS, was the “steel frame” of united India, the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) in post independence India, and Pakistan Administrative Service (PAS) became the steel frame of the new born nations. Later on, PAS was renamed as Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP), as a home grown service constituted under the 1949 agreement.

After the creation of Pakistan in 1947, the role of Collector extended as service to the people and welfare of the society in addition to revenue collection and land management. The migration of large –scale of population created an urgent demand on the limited transportation system (i.e. roads, railways, and waterways), accommodation, food supply etc. The district magistrates were entrusted with the task of maintenance of peace and arrange of relief and shelter for the migrants. A new tax for the refugee rehabilitation was introduced and district administration was made responsible for its collection. In 1950 the government launched development programmes on a large scale. The district officer was supposed to organize, supervise and coordinate the development activities.

In 1950, the government abolished the ‘Zamindari’ (land lord) system and began to acquire gradually the Zamindari estates (Abedin, 1973). This historical step multiplied the work of the collector many times. He was made responsible for the

assessment and payment of compensation to landlords and maintenance of land records. An additional collector was posted to assist the collector in revenue matters. The acquisition of Zamindari in East Bengal was completed in 1956. The second half of the 1950s witnessed a substantial addition to the burden and responsibility of the district officer following the large increase in and the specialization and diversification of government work. Several factors were responsible for such changes: The First Five Year Plan (1955/56-1959/60) and The Village AID First Five Year Plan (1955/56-1959/60) were being implemented during this period. In 1959, the post of the District Magistrate was newly designated as 'Deputy Commissioner' according to the recommendations of the Provincial Administration Commission known as Akhtar Hossain Commission for delegating him more powers in order to make him more effective for the implementation of development programmes. During early Pakistan period, there was only one Additional District Magistrate (ADM) to help the District Magistrate. As the pressure of the work of the Deputy Commissioner increased, new positions of ADCs were created like ADC (General), ADC (Revenue) and ADC (Development) in an average district.

The Basic Democracies Order of 1959 provided that the Deputy Commissioner would act as the ex-officio Chairman of the District Council (Ali, 1995). In the 1960s, cyclone, flood and tornado were regular annual features. District administration needed to nearer to the people during calamities and a large volume of relief materials used to be distributed followed by rehabilitation projects. So, ADC (Relief) post was created in order to assist DC. In some districts like Dhaka there are two more ADCs viz. ADC (City) and ADC (Industrial Area) and in the district of Khulna there is also one ADC (Land Acquisition) and in Noakhali district ADC (Colonization) posts were created. So, with the introduction of these posts in DC office, DC was relieved of many routine works and significant changes were introduced in the office framework of DC.

During the period between 1947 and 1960 DO was variously known in different places as the District Magistrate and Collector, or Collector, or Deputy Commissioner

or Political Agent (Abedin, 1973). Now his official designation is Deputy Commissioner in all the districts of Bangladesh and Pakistan. A. M. A. Muhite (NIPA, 1962) said “He is, in fact, a miniature governor and acts as the government’s principal representative in his area. The whole administration of the district revolves around him. He is frequently and variously called the pivot, the king pin, the key stone, the arch-stone, the backbone, the nerve centre of district administration.” “He is, in fact, responsible for the entire gamut of government activities in the district which means it can be anything..... Which our life can conceive of” --- said G. U. Malik (NIPA, 1963)

“Thus in view of the magnitude of the diverse activities that he is required to perform it must be appreciated that the deputy commissioner is not only a person but an institution. Because of his vast powers, he enjoys enormous influence and prestige within his jurisdiction”- said A. Qayyum (Lahore, 1962).

From 1947 to 1971 the civilian bureaucracy played the dominant role in Pakistan’s policymaking and as such was insufficiently controlled or influenced by elected politicians. During this period, there was limited scope for interference from politicians as the bureaucracy, particularly the elite Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP), maintained control over the selection, training and posting of its members and was therefore able to retain its institutional autonomy. The student demonstrations and political unrest that led to the collapse of General Ayub Khan’s regime in 1969, followed by the bloody civil war that resulted in the creation of Bangladesh in 1971, seriously undermined the political strength and legitimacy of both the civil and military bureaucracies.

#### **4.5.3 Liberation War Period (1971)**

A new phase of uncertainty and responsibility emerged after the liberation of Bangladesh in 1971. On 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1971, following a news broadcast that the meeting of the newly elected Parliament had been postponed by President Yahya Khan, all officials of the Secretariat in Dhaka left their offices and the government administration stopped functioning. The secretariat remained locked till 26 March

1971 paralysing the government. It was a unique incidence even during the struggle for independence of India against the British Raj in the 1940s. The division, district, subdivision, and thana administration during this period provided leadership. While the Pakistan military personnel were isolated in different cantonments, the deputy commissioners were with the people. They together with the people worked in close cooperation for maintaining discipline in the society and to press ahead the non-violent movement for liberating the country (Ali, 1995). The Pakistani military arrested some of the DCs, ADCs & SDOs for interrogation due to their sympathy for the liberation movement. During the so-called interrogation, Shamsul Haque (DC Comilla), Nurul Amin (DC Faridpur), Quader Elahi Chaudhury (ADC Rajshahi), Shamsuddin (SDO Sirajganj) and many other officers died. Some other officers survived after brutal assault and confinement by military intelligence services. Some DCs, ADCs and SDOs left their jobs and went to India to join the Mujibnagar government. The officers who could not escape devoted their energy to save the lives and properties of the people during the most helpless situation after the departure of the political leaders from the scene (Ali, 1995). The Pakistani government sent a number of officials to Dhaka and posted most of them in the Secretariat. One of them was posted as Deputy Commissioner of Dhaka district. Some secretaries of the Government of East Pakistan were transferred to West Pakistan on suspicion of their involvement with the liberation war. A few other officers went to Calcutta and joined Mujibnagar government.

#### **4.5.4 Bangladesh Period (1971- to Present)**

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 especially in the sphere of rehabilitation of nearly thirty million displaced persons and post-war reconstruction of the economy (Ali, 1982). The officers came forward to receive the freedom fighters, rehabilitated millions of refugees, provided relief and restored normalcy. In the initial period, a local leader of Awami League was designated as the district commander and coordinator. Subsequently he was withdrawn by the government, allowing full freedom to deputy commissioner to work according the local circumstances and laws (Ali, 1995). One of the first tasks of

district administration was to collect the huge number of unauthorized arms distributed freely during the liberation war, for which restoration of normalcy was not possible. As a neutral and legitimate agency of the government, the collectorial pattern steps into fill up the vacuum and thus acts as a stabilizing element in a chaotic situation flowing from the political elements in the orderly management of public services. The district administration performed well to meet the challenge of a new and serious situation though the tenure of government servants was made insecure by the President's Order No. 9 of 1972, providing for the dismissal of any official without notice and right of appeal in the interest of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

In 1975, the government introduced one party political system after amending the Constitution of 1972. The amendment also introduced a Presidential system of government replacing the Parliamentary system. The only legal political party was named Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League (BAKSAL). The post of the deputy commissioner was replaced by District Governor in the new system (Act No. VI of 1975, District Administration Act). The President of Bangladesh and Chairman of BAKSAL party Sheikh Mujibur Rahman announced the names of 61 Governors (replacing the post of Collector) in the newly created 61 districts who were scheduled to take over charge of district administration on September. The governor was declared to be the 'chief officer' in charge of the general and revenue administration of the district with all powers of superintendence and control over all officers and authorities except the courts. The Collector was made the Member-Secretary of the District Administration Council of which the Governor was the Chairman. After the military coup on 15 August, 1975, both the one party system and the new system of district administration were discarded by the government (Ordinance No. XLV of 1975). After that incidence, state of emergency was declared in the country and the administration again worked hard to maintain normalcy in the countrywide from August 1975 till the government stabilized in November 1975, when the Chief Martial Law Administrator General Ziaur Rahman was the de-facto leader from November '75 though he remained as one of the three deputy chief martial law administrators till 1977. In spite of sporadic and intermittent rebellions in

different cantonments, peace was maintained among the civilian population by the district administration. Civilian administration was again introduced after election in 1979. During Zia period, different types of development projects like canal digging, mass irrigation were implemented more or less in every district. Also, a total literacy movement program was also initiated in that period. Deputy Commissioner was the key person for the implementation of these two popular programs. So, ADC (Projects) and ADC (Literacy) posts were created in 1979.

In 1982, Chief Martial Law Administrator General H. M. Ershad, brought about tremendous changes in the field administration including creation of new districts and upazilas through an Administrative Reform Committee and with the approval in the National Implementation Committee on Administrative Reorganizational/Reforms (NICAR) (Ali, 1995). 42 new districts were created in 1984; among these 38 sub divisions were upgraded to full districts. So, district administration was expanded in a huge range of 42 new districts.

The politicization of the bureaucracy intensified after democracy was restored in the early 1990s. Both government parties – the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and the Awami League (AL) have capitalized on the intense bureaucratic factionalism along functional and political lines, to serve their political interests (Zafarullah, 2013). The upper echelons of the civil service are highly politicized. District administration was also guided in the same way. In the early 1990s, very few junior and mid-level officers in the civil service were aware of the changes of administration or New Public Management (NPM). The United Nations Development Program, World Bank and Public Administration Reform Commission initiatives had a little impact on the majority of civil servants in Bangladesh due to bureaucratic inertia accompanied by lack of political commitment. But during Caretaker Government in 2007, some major changes took place in the administration particularly in the district administration. Judiciary was separated from the executive during this period and DC lost magisterial power. Later on, DC was empowered with ‘Mobile Court Ordinance 2007’ (Mobile Court Act 2009).

According to election manifesto of 2008, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina declared to build up Digital Bangladesh by the year 2021 (Vision 2021). The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) is leading the "Digital Bangladesh - Vision 2021" agenda of the government facilitated by a2i project with technical assistance from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). In the field level, district administration is the key role player for the implementation of the program. In Deputy Commissioner's Conference (25-27 July, 2010) Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said, "There is no Pakistani or British colonial rule in Bangladesh now; Deputy Commissioners are now citizens of an independent country. The basic principle of the current government is to provide services to the door steps of the people. Although the name 'Zila Proshashok' (a Bengali word meaning district administrator) indicates district ruler, but in real sense, they are not ruler; rather they are civil servants. This truth they will have to keep in mind during their service delivery to the people. Deputy Commissioner will have to work as a Development Administrator by changing their traditional approach." In Deputy Commissioner's Conference (26-29 July, 2016) she again mentioned, "Deputy Commissioner will have to come out of traditional mentality. They will have to go to the people keeping in mind that 'administration is for the people, people are not for the administration.' They must keep a keen eye to the citizen such that nobody gets back their homes without having any remedy from DC office. Every day they will have to hear from the people, about their problems and give solutions accordingly."

Digital transformation began to take place in the DC Office after 2010 (Resolutions of Deputy Commissioner's Conference 2010-2017). Front Desk, One Stop Service, Use of Internet/email, District e-Service Centre, Computer Lab, e-Filing System, Web Portal, Face book and other social Media, Union Digital Centre, Video Conferencing, Digital Land Record Management, e-Mutation, e-Mobile Court, Citizen Charter, Innovative activities, special sitting arrangement and reception at DC Office- all these activities are introduced in this period. Annual Performance Agreement (APA) between DC Office and other ministries for output and accountability, special training for innovation within country and in foreign countries, introduction of

reward or recognition system are carrying the symbols of new era. The total scenario of present district administration indicates a technology based digital turn from so called paper based traditional administration.

#### 4.6 Case Studies of DC Office Jessore and DC Office Gazipur

In this research, the researcher has conducted two case studies. During that time, the researcher has gone through deep observation of the office activities, different sections, office procedure, innovative and technological insights, interaction with the office staff and service receivers, interviews of DC, ADC, and other office staff. Besides this, some secondary data have been collected from different sections. Two case studies have helped the researcher to understand the present scenario of the office of the Deputy Commissioner in Bangladesh. The important point is that it has given the opportunity to explore the factors and features of transformation more deeply. Another important point is that it creates the opportunity to understand the present features of DC Office.

##### 4.6.1 Administrative Profile of two Study Areas

**Jessore:**



Jessore is one of the oldest and 13<sup>th</sup> greatest districts in Bangladesh. It is under Khulna division. Its total land area is 6674 sq. km. Before 1765, Bagerhat, Satkhira, Khulna and part of 24 Pargana (India) was under the jurisdiction of Jessore district. In 1786, greater Jessore district was reconstructed by including Faridpur district and part 24 Pargana within it. Faridpur district was separated from it in 1814.

Governor General Warren Hastings appointed Mr. Samuel Charter as the experimental Collector of Jessore for the period 1772-74 for land revenue collection. Then Provincial Council was formed in the year 1774. In the year 1781, Tilman Henckill was appointed as the District Magistrate and District Judge of Jessore District. In 1786, Jessore Collectorate was established and Tilman Henckil became the first Collector of Jessore Collectorate (1781-1789).

At present Jessore district consists of 8 upazilas namely Abhaynagar, Bagherpara, Chougachha, Jhikargachha, Keshobpur, Manirampur, Sharsha and Jessore Sadar. There are 8 municipalities, 93 union parishads, 1036 mouzas and 1477 villages in Jessore. Since 1781 (British period) total 130 District Magistrates and Collectors (Deputy Commissioners) have been posted so far in Jessore Collectorate.

At present, there are four Additional Deputy Commissioners (ADCs) working in Jessore Collectorate. They are ADC (General), ADC (Revenue), ADC (Education & ICT) and Additional District Magistrate (ADM). There is the post of Deputy Director Local Government (DDLG) who is a Deputy Secretary to the Government of Bangladesh. There are 22 sections in the office which are headed by either Senior Assistant Commissioners or Assistant Commissioners. About 225 staffs are working under these sections. District Relief and Rehabilitation Officer (DRRO) is also working under direct control of Deputy Commissioner.

**(Source:** District Administration Web Portal, Jessore; accessed 10 September, 2017).

## Gazipur:



Gazipur is a newly created district under Dhaka Division. Gazipur district was established in 1984. Its total land area is 1770.54 sq. km. It consists of 5 upazilas, 46 union parishads, 710 mouzas, 2 municipalities and 1163 villages. The upazilas are Gazipur Sadar, Kaliakair, Kaliganj, Kapasia and Sreepur. 1<sup>st</sup> Deputy Commissioner was Mr. Md. Abdul Qayum Thakur (1984-1986). The name Gazipur comes after the name Vahwal Gazi who was a powerful “Zamindar” upto 1946 in that region. Vawal Garh name was also derived from the word Vahwal.

At present there are 1 City Corporation, 4 municipalities, 44 union parishads, 1814 mouzas and 1146 villages in Gazipur. Since 1984, total 17 Deputy Commissioners have been posted so far in Gazipur Collectorate. At present, there are four Additional Deputy Commissioners (ADCs) working in Gazipur Collectorate. They are ADC (General), ADC (Revenue), ADC (Education & ICT) and Additional District Magistrate

(ADM). There is the post of Deputy Director Local Government (DDLG) who is a Deputy Secretary to the Government of Bangladesh. There are 20 sections in the office which are headed by either Senior Assistant Commissioners or Assistant Commissioners. About 145 staffs are working under these sections. District Relief and Rehabilitation Officer (DRRO) is also working under direct control of Deputy Commissioner.

(Source: District Administration Web Portal, Gazipur; accessed 17 September, 2017).

#### **4.6.2 Operational Modalities of District Administration**

General Observations during two case studies in two different DC offices can be generalized as follows:

- Total digitized and technology dependent office, Updated Web Portal, District e-Service Center, Front Desk, Citizen Charter, e-filing, Digital Guard File, Online communication and notice, Meeting through Video Conferencing, Weekly Public Hearing Day, Online government forms, anyone from anywhere even abroad may get service from District Web Portal, Service Innovation Team & Fund, Annual Performance Agreement (APA) signing, Online application, sitting arrangements for citizens and refreshment, very friendly working environment, cordial reception at front desk, flexible mentality of both officers and staff.
- Land Record Management System: Fully Digital Online Service, People can apply for and collect records of land from Union Digital Centre (UDC). UDC gets the service from DC Office via online. Totally visible, accountable and in time service.
- All types of citizen applications are taken in the e-Service Centre of DC Office. Then these are scanned and sent to DC via online. DC sends these applications to the concerned ADCs, ADC sends to the concerned sections (SAC/AC). In the same way, these applications are put in the e-file from the sections and sent to DC via ADC for disposal online. After disposal, DC sent the e-file to the concerned ADC and then to the concerned section. Citizens collect the hard copy of disposed letter from the relevant section.

- Files that are concerned with financial issues are not put up in the e-file. Instead, these are maintained in the traditional hard file and disposed in the same traditional way. Land Acquisition Section is an example.
- Interaction with the senior staff of DC Office: They shared their experience about the approach of DC, his daily activities, control over police and other departments, concentration of powers in the hands of DC, judicial activities, land revenue related activities in previous time. According to their opinion, at present DCs are very liberal, people can easily meet with him; he has less control over police and other departments. DC is trying his best to satisfy people by his service. Their opinion is that the eliticism and dignity of DC office has been reduced. But this change is necessary as the time and situation have changed. Another important point is the introduction technology and ICT in the DC office. There is mandatory computer training for every officer and staff in the computer lab in order to develop their skill. It is changing the scenario of service delivery system.

As discussed in the previous chapter that the basic three functions of district administration are revenue functions, law & order functions and general administrative or coordination & development management functions. At present, district administration is still playing its role through these three basic functions; but the way and approach have been modernized over time. During conducting two case studies in DC Office of Jessore and Gazipur, the researcher has gone through the official procedures of functioning, file management system, service delivery system, citizen management, coordination with other departments, interaction with the officers and office staff, interview of some citizens and above all, the office environment. The researcher has visited all the sections and also collected some necessary data. If these are compared with the traditional approach of office functioning and relevant activities, it is found that many changes have taken place in DC Office at present in comparison with the past. Categorically these are presented in the table below.

## General Administrative Management:

Activities	Traditional system	Present system
District e-Service Center and Front Desk.	There was no such type of provision in the past.	Front Desk and District e-Service Centre is like a one stop service centre in order to provide easy and visible service to the citizen. It has been introduced in the DC Office in 2009.
Citizen Charter and Right to Information (RTI)	There was no such type of provision in the past.	Citizen charter was introduced in DC office in 2007 and Right to Information Act was introduced in 2009 in order to empower the citizen with information of office management and access to service delivery.
Public Hearing Day	There was no provision for public hearing in previous time; but many collectors in British period would personally like to hear from the people.	Institutionally DC has been assigned a fixed weekly day to hear from the people. Besides that day, DC generally also hears the complains and appeals of the people in every day whenever he gets free and tries to provide proper advice.
Updated Web Portal and Social Media	There was no such type of provision in the past.	District web portal has been introduced in DC office in 2012. Any person from anywhere of the world may get information/service of his district from the web portal. DC Office also introduced social media like face book. So, every citizen can express their opinions on DC office activities via face book.
e-Filing	There was no such type of provision in the past.	Most of the applications or letters are put up electronically and these files are also forwarded from one officer to other officer (from higher to lower and vice versa) in the same way. So, almost all the sections of DC office are maintaining soft ware based e-filing system. As a result, system is getting speedier and people are getting in time quicker service from the front desk.
Video Conferencing	There was no such type of provision in the past.	Meeting between DC office and higher offices like Divisional Commissioner, Ministry of Public Administration (MOPA), Cabinet Division or Prime Minister's Office are regularly taking place via Video Conferencing.
Annual Performance Agreement	There was no such type of provision in the past.	Annual Performance Agreement has been signed between DC Office and MOPA or Cabinet Division in order to make the DC office result oriented, accountable and more effective.
Citizen Reception	There was no such type of provision in the past.	Citizens are received very cordially at DC Office. They have very good sitting arrangement and other refreshment. They don't need go to the section for any letter or service; rather they can get it from District e-Service Centre or Front Desk.

### District Coordination:

Activities	Traditional system	Present system
District Development Coordination	During British period, there was practically no development programme for implementation by District Magistrate (Ali, 1995). He would mainly remain isolated from the society.	As the head of the District Development Coordination Committee, DC is the key person of all the development activities in the district. Present activities of DC are mostly associated with innovative and service oriented development activities.
District Innovative Activities	Collector was assigned totally with regulatory function and land revenue collection on behalf of company or British Crown.	DC is the head of District Innovation Committee. Officers of other departments are members. With the help of a2i project of Prime Minister's Office, DC is leading the service innovation of all the departments in the district.

### Law and Order:

Activities	Traditional system	Present system
General Law and Order	As District Magistrate (with judicial power), Collector would exercise enormous power and control over police (Mason, 1959). He would strictly maintain the law and order of the district.	DM still is the head of District Law and Order Committee; but due to judicial separation, he has less control over police. District Superintendent of Police mainly looks after the law and order of the district with a moderate communication with District Magistrate.
Executive Trial Court	Judicial trial court was exercised regularly. Also summary trial court and some preventive action would have been practiced under Criminal Procedure Act 1898.	Only executive trial court is exercised by executive magistrate for some preventive action under Criminal Procedure Act 1898.
Mobile Court and e-Mobile Court	There was no provision for mobile court; but District Magistrate could render instantaneous justice on the spot in the British period.	District Magistrate has been empowered by Mobile Court Ordinance 2007. Law enforcing agencies like Rapid Action Battalion provides huge support to the executive magistrate besides police for directing mobile court. Recently, District Magistrate has initiated e-Mobile Court system in order to make the mobile court more transparent and effective.

## Revenue Administration:

Activities	Traditional system	Present system
Land Record Management System	Paper based, no time bound, non transparent, non accountable system. Citizen had to apply manually to the record room section and wait for an uncertain period of time. Office staff sometimes would do mislead citizens with the help of some touts in an unethical manner and harassment.	Fully Digital Online Service, People can apply for and collect records of land from Union Digital Centre (UDC). UDC gets the service from DC Office via online. No harassment, no corruption, visible, accountable and in time service
Land Acquisition	Files were totally maintained manually and compensation used to be paid manually.	Files are maintained digitally with the help of computer, but compensation file is maintained manually due to some restriction (financial issue).
Mutation	On behalf of Collector, Assistant Commissioner (Land) would do mutation for updating land records. Process was time consuming.	Collector has taken initiative for e-Mutation for updating land records. The system is digital and accountable; it ensures timely service to the people.
Vested property	Traditional paper based renewal and allotment system to the recipient.	Modern technology based computerized data base of vested property but manual renewal system.

### 4.7 Empirical Observations

One of the most important parts of the study was to conduct in depth interviews and consultation with some Key Informants, former and incumbent Civil Servants, Academics, Historians, Media, Civil Society, former staff and citizens regarding the transformation of the role of the Deputy Commissioner. They have expressed their valuable experiences, ideas, feelings and opinions about this historical office. Categorically their valuable observations and opinions are discussed below.

#### 4.7.1 Key Informants' Perspectives

Former civil servants, who ornamented the post of public administration or field administration in Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP), had brilliant experiences and unparalleled knowledge regarding the district administration, its evolution and features of activities of that period. As key informant, an eminent former Adviser of Caretaker

Government, Bangladesh and former Cabinet Secretary shared his knowledge about the evolution of district administration. He mentioned that district administration concept came from the British Colonial system of land tax collection. British East India Company could not collect land tax themselves, so they created district administration system and the post of Collector. He further added that at present, the scenario has been changed. Land revenue collection is not a big issue now; rather land management is the main task of Deputy Commissioner. According to him, during British India and Pakistan period, collector was more independent in exercising their power. This independent existence collapsed just after the independence of Bangladesh. About the current role and functions of Deputy Commissioner, he said....

*“The Deputy Commissioner in Bangladesh cannot work independently now. DC always remains under political pressure. Political government always provides DC necessary instructions and guidelines. He can never come out of it. There are also local political influences in the district level. DC has to maintain a check and balance relations with them. So, he has to compromise with them at every step. As a result, DC is losing its independent existence day by day.”*

He also mentioned that decentralization and separation of judiciary from the executive have weakened the power and authority of Deputy Commissioner. As a result, Deputy Commissioner is institutionally facing severe problem for proper coordination in the district, particularly control over police. He raised some questions about the posting and integrity of the Deputy Commissioners in Bangladesh. His opinion is that DCs are posted on political choice, their integrity in question and work in close connection with the political leaders.

The origin of collectoral pattern and its transformation over time particularly the engagement of collector in social welfare and rural development activities was deeply studied by another reputable former Adviser of Caretaker Government, Bangladesh and former Secretary to the government of Bangladesh. He expressed his own experience regarding the V-AID (Village Agricultural Industrial Development) Programme and the active participation of collector in the programme during Pakistan period. As a key informant he mentioned that East India Company used to

follow the Mughal system in order to collect land tax revenue in the 1760s; but it could not bring fruitful result. Then they appointed supervisor for the purpose; but it also failed to fulfill the purpose. Then in 1772, the company appointed Collector in the district. So, the district administration concept came from collectoral pattern which was originated from the British Colonial Rule of land tax collection. They formed their own police force in order to arrest the defaulter tenants and put them in the court of Collector or District Magistrate. District Collector would rule the general people of this country on behalf of the British Crown. He further added that many collectors used to take part in development activities since British period. Besides maintaining their regulatory function, many would like to remain in close and intimate contact with the rural areas of their districts. But institutionally District Magistrate and Collector got engaged in developmental activities during Ayub period in Pakistan. As a former CSP officer he mentioned.....

*“District Magistrate could exercise power and enjoy prestige as an elite class officer even during Pakistan period. But now in Bangladesh, Deputy Commissioner cannot maintain their administrative individuality and bureaucratic eliticism. Administrative ingredient and unity of administration were predominant in previous time, now these have been diluted with the change of time. Power of DC has been reduced to a greater extent although DC is still District Magistrate. At present, Deputy Commissioner is no more a traditional public administrator; rather he is a public manager now.”*

According to his opinion, there are many reasons that are responsible for the reduction of power and authority of the Deputy Commissioner. Firstly, political ingredient is predominant now. All DCs are more or less politically biased and cannot go beyond the intention of local and central political leaders. It was very rare in the past. Secondly, decentralization reduced the authority of DC. DC was the chairman of District Council from 1921 to 1958. Now elected chairman has taken his position in the District Council. Thirdly, separation of judiciary has affected the role and function of DC more adversely. DC has become less powerful due to the separation. Mobile court ordinance has also been challenged in the higher court whether it would be practiced by the executive magistrate or not. So, as District Magistrate it has become difficult for DC to maintain law and order in the district. Fourthly, socio-economic change of the people is greatly affecting the official function of DC. People are more

conscious due the increase of literacy rate. The economic condition of the people has also developed. Their expectation is high from the district administration. Fifthly, diffusion of technology is a big factor for changing scenario of DC office. Use of computer, laptop, internet, email, video conferencing and other technology are introduced in DC office. These are influencing the office towards digitization. Sixthly, the commitment of the government and five year plan always direct the district administration with a view to work for achieving government goals. Moreover, globalization and development of non government organizations are pushing district administration for opening the door of administration more widely for the citizen. He raised question about the posting and integrity of the Deputy Commissioner in Bangladesh. He mentioned that the power of DC is not direct, it is indirect. The development role of DC will increase day by day; but the development coordination role of DC depends more on how much weight the central government is providing to DC.

Former Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) who was a renowned former Secretary to the Government of Bangladesh explained the changing role and function of the office of the Deputy Commissioner as a normal process of public administration paradigm. According to his opinion,

*“Bangladeshi bureaucrats inherited British ICS system, but the environment and reality are different. Change is a continuous process; with the passage of time collector will lose some powers and gain new ones. This is the reality. Separation of judiciary is an example. British steel frame will never come back again.”*

As a key informant, he illustrated his idea about district administration starting from the beginning of East India Company. Office of the Deputy Commissioner was first created when East India Company took over the power of India and the name of the post was ‘Collector.’ They created this post in order to profit maximization from land revenue. Then they empowered the post with the power of District Magistrate. Deputy Commissioner was the ‘Central Division’ of the British Raj-it was the concept then. The secretariat concept was not at that time, it came later. Divisional Commissioner Concept also started afterwards. The Collector had mainly two functions- revenue collection and maintaining law and order. Agriculture and

fisheries were the main occupation of the people, industries did not develop then. So, all the rules and regulations were formulated based on land. Basically, Company changed their strategy many times in order to maximize their land revenue collection. The Zamindari system was one of them. In the same way, British Raj also continued the process later on. So, the changes in the role and functions of the Collector began during Company rule and continued in the regime of British Raj. The nature of the changes depends on the nature of the change of the government. Many Deputy Commissioners cannot accept these changes due to their traditional mentality.

As a former CSP officer, he further added that after the independence of Bangladesh, most of the changes occurred due to the political government. But both in India and Pakistan, the ICS and CSP officers could play their role neutrally. Politicization of bureaucracy did not affect their activities. But in Bangladesh today, the bureaucrats are extremely biased by political affinity particularly party in power. During British Raj, they started some development activities particularly rural development and they engaged collector in these developmental activities as much as possible, because they were available, dependable and well known to the rural area. Canal digging, agriculture, fisheries, road and dam construction all these started at that time. After liberation in 1971, the political dimensions changed. With the changing reality, the bureaucrats also needed to adjust their approach and position. Traditionally, Bangladeshi bureaucrats inherited the British system, but the environment and reality was different. The purpose of the traditional administration was maintaining stability and order. The rising population, consciousness and literacy of the people, global connection created another demand. Political government began to think developmental activities more and more deeply. The base of the developmental works remained in the district. New departments and posts in the field administration were created. A lot of changes also began to take place in the district. So, the importance of Deputy Commissioner also increased because he was the only man in the district who could handle the coordination of these huge activities in the district.

#### 4.7.2 Institutional Memory and Review of Former Civil Servants

A renowned former Secretary to the Government of Bangladesh has had a different outlook into the role and functions of the Deputy Commissioner. As a key informant, he found a free and open minded approach of the collector in the beginning of British rule in the subcontinent. He mentioned that there was no evidence act, or penal code or criminal procedure code at that time. But the District Magistrate would do the administrative or judicial activities by applying their intellect, common sense and surrounding evidence. Collector or DM would exercise their huge power as per their mind and intention. Their activities were so vast that it can be described as horrible. He added that land revenue collection was the main function, no doubt, but he had to maintain all the function of his jurisdiction himself because there was no other department. Other departments were created as per necessity of the collector later on. At that time, no rules or acts were formulated. So, administrative or judicial activities they would do by hearing both the parties. But, reality is that they could successfully reward proper judgment to all.

As a former Deputy Commissioner he mentioned that traditionally, District Magistrate was rule bound, rigid and impartial. But, at present, it is very difficult to maintain his neutrality or rigidity even it is not also possible for an ICS or CSP officer to maintain it at present. On the other hand, DC is more and more engaged in diverted activities. About the current role of the Deputy Commissioner, he mentioned...

*“The role and function as well as mentality of Deputy Commissioner have been diverted with the change of time. Modern DC is too much engaged in innovative and development oriented activities because the system is not in favor of rules and regulations. Today, DC is doing everything by following the order of higher level political leaders. Political system is making the role and function of DC more and more critical and difficult. The role has been modernized no doubt but, the value of the DC has been deteriorated.”*

He further added that political government is a big factor for the transformation. The government is guiding DC to be more and more politically motivated. In the Pakistan period, DM would never pay so much attention for protocol of any political leader or other personality unless there was any government program. Election Manifesto

“Digital Bangladesh” declaration is influencing DC to be more and more technology based, judicial separation is directing DC to be pro people, crisis of democracy is directing total administration towards development oriented. Socio-economic change particularly literacy rate, use of technology by people is forcing DC to be citizen-centric. About current features, he mentioned that there will always be traditional features in the district administration. But DC is no more an administrator now to that sense; rather, he is a good manager now.

A renowned former Deputy Commissioner of Dhaka district (Retired Joint Secretary) expressed his opinion in favor of traditional approach regarding the functions of district administration at present. His personal feeling is that

*“District administration still could not come out of the traditional approach of public administration fully. In fact, there are many activities done by the district administration which carry the characteristics of colonial approach.”*

He uttered one example from his experience. At present, for having land acquisition recovery money from DC office, almost every client or land owner has to pay bribe money to some extent and the process is same as it was before. Another important point is centralization, because instead of decentralizing the government institution, government is becoming more and more centralized through the Deputy Commissioner. In fact, a bureaucrat will always behave like a bureaucrat all over the world at any circumstances; he will never come out of it. He will never treat citizen like a customer; it is not possible.

He added that DC basically has three types of functions. Regulatory functions are still working now besides other functions. Political leaders strongly influence in every field whenever they find their interest or financial benefit. Field administration is not out of it. The field administration and central bureaucracy are highly politicized. So, they cannot work independently. The ideal situation of field administration that is found in the text book does not prevail in the country at all. The bureaucrats exist most in traditional bureaucracy with highly constitutionalized or politicized at the upper level. But in this case there happened a strong paradigm shift. In Bangladesh, Political Party or government in power never asks a bureaucrat to join their party,

rather many bureaucrats intentionally show their party intimacy in order to have personal benefits. Mutually politicians and bureaucrats look for each other's interest and get themselves benefitted. Personal behavior and attitude of DC is another important factor to change the environment of the administration. At present, some DC Offices have started some innovative online service to the people which is a very good indication of district administration. These are basically personal initiatives of that DC. Administration as a whole still remains traditional mostly in the reality.

#### 4.7.3 Historians Review

*“At the end of nineteenth century, Mymensingh was the largest district in the whole subcontinent. District Magistrate was the only white man in the whole district; the whole district would run with the pointing of his finger. Nobody would dare to disobey him.”*

One of the eminent Historians of the country (Former Professor of History Department, Dhaka University; currently Chairman, Department of History and Philosophy, North South University, Dhaka) was speaking about the authoritative approach of a Collector, who was posted in the district of Mymensingh during British Raj. Enunciating the evolution of district administration in a chronological way he added that the British had a different mentality for ruling others; they would maintain peace being ruthless; their main objective was exploitation.

As a historian, he stated that British Collector would remain isolated from the people; they would write about Indian Civil Servants, biography, memories and other activities. They would think how to run the administration and extend it, how to establish relationship with the powerful man among the natives. The authoritarian approach continued up to 1857-58 when the Company regime ended and British Crown took over the power. Then district administration directly came under the control of British Parliament. The British then began to think about development works; such as school, college and roads construction, sharing power with the natives. It was history of the second half of the nineteenth century. They established District Board, City Corporation/Municipalities etc. in order to share power such that

no incident like 1857 revolt occurred again. In this way they started to mix up with the people of this country through elected representatives. He continued.....

*“The British formulated a lot of rules and regulations like Police Regulations, Land Rules, and Criminal Procedure etc. But the district administration and District Commissioner was the fundamental institution who would hold the whole district; they were given huge power while written or not. In some cases they would do excess exercise of powers. In order to keep them tough for running better administration in a colony. this enormous power was given to them.”*

He further added that after 1911, the recruitment of Indian Civil Servants started in a large number in India. The British made a group of people in India in order to support them e. g. Zamindar, Talukdar etc. For example, during “Sepoy Mutiny in 1857”, all Zamindars of India supported the British. The official staff of their office was locally employed and they were poorly paid. As a result, they started corruption. The British also would do corruption. Anyhow, they would do the control in the district, in the country. This was the British attitude; this is still continued now in our country.

At the end he explained his perception about the present scenario of the district administration in our country. He mentioned that the infrastructure has been changed now in our country. He concluded as.....

*“Deputy Commissioner is not responsible now for maintaining law and order now. Police is responsible for law and order. Coordination is not like that of previous time. But for the overall development of a district, the head of the district Deputy Commissioner is still responsible now. But the reality is different. The volume of work has been increased. It is not possible for DC to carry all these works at a time. That is why, there are a lot of changes in the civil service now, also change of attitude. But many complications have also started at the same time; these are diversification of power, distribution of power to beneath people, intervention of politics. Political leaders are very dominant now over the administration. Anyhow, a paradigm shift has been taken place, no doubt. There is a distinct transformation not only of the function of Deputy Commissioner but also of the whole public service.”*

#### **4.7.4 Academic’s Observations**

Public administration expert who studied district administration closely Professor of Department of Public Administration, Dhaka University has observed the recent changes of the role and functions of DC office during conducting two case studies in

two DC offices separately. According to him, there has been a silent paradigm shift taken place in the office of the Deputy Commissioner. From academic point of view, approach and attitude of traditional public administrator are totally absent in the mentality of field level administrator in Bangladesh. It seems that a mental revolution has been occurred that has changed the mindset of the district administrator. He has described his own experience from his observation as.....

*"I have some close observations regarding the role and functions of the office of the Deputy Commissioner. I think, a big paradigm shift has taken place in role of DC office although it is very difficult to show the shift theoretically. We observe a big change in attitude of DC and other officers. They would like to remain isolated from the citizen before; but now they want be very close with the citizen. In every DC office, there is a 'Citizen Charter' by which they are trying to provide service to the citizen or inform them about their services. It was imaginary before. Citizen charter itself is a big development.*

*I have conducted two case studies separately on DC office in Panchagarh and Barisal, particularly on the citizen charter and its result. I found the officers and staff entering into office with finger print (digital attendance). It's a new mentality. I found a new system of selecting 'man of the month' for recognition or reward among the officers and staff. This mentality is nothing but a paradigm shift. I found all DCs having their own face book page. They reply the questions raised by the people through face book. So, a virtual field has been created through which a DC and citizen communicate with each other. This is definitely a paradigm shift. Even many publicly problems have been solved through it. One example can be added in this context. In Barisal, there was a public canal known as "Jail Khal" in Barisal town which was valuable land. It was encroached by some local powerful muscle man. One citizen wrote in face book page of DC about it and asked him to take initiative to evict them. DC made public opinion in favor of eviction. Finally, with the active participation of general people, police and magistrate, illegal encroachment of those musclemen was evicted by the leadership of DC and government took possession of that valuable public canal. I think, this is a huge change in attitude of DC. As a result peoples' participation has increased and service has become better.*

*I found some other type of changes in the functions of DC from that of an ICS or CSP DC. In every DC office today, there is a 'Web Portal' which is open to all the people. This is a change in the mind set of DC. I found 'Front Desk' and 'District e-Service Centre'. This is like one stop service centre. People can submit their application to the front desk and have a date of his service delivery. A message is also sent to the citizen's mobile phone. On due date citizen can collect his service from the front desk. I found the 'Digital Land Record Management System' in DC office. People can collect their land records from front desk on due date without any harassment. I found people applying for their 'gun license' and 'trade license' and collecting those from the front desk on due date. These are enormous changes in DC office today which can never be thought of in Pakistan or British period. This is nothing but a huge change in the mentality of DC. "*

As an academic, he mentioned that as the core institution of the field administration, DC office must maintain strict rules and regulations of government but he found flexible application of those rules for better citizen mobilization. He found flexible hierarchy among the officers and cordial friendly relationship with the citizen. He continued.....

*“I found the system of getting feedback from the people. There is a ‘complain box’ or ‘feedback’ box or ‘advice box’ in DC office. Aggrieved people can inbox a complain about his service or any person can inbox his suggestion or advice about a service. This type of complain box in DC office was totally unthinkable in Pakistan or British period. These changes definitely indicate a paradigm shift in district administration.*

*I think as a part of public administration, district administration must be rule bound, no doubt. But I found that DC is applying these rules not in a rigid way. They are flexible and keeping an eye to the public interest. I found a hierarchy among the officers in DC office; but there is flexibility in that hierarchy. There are some permanent traditional functions like land management which cannot be transformed at this moment. I think, not only DC office but also total bureaucracy or public administration has been changed with the change of time.*

*I think the role of National Government, the awareness building among the civil servants, use of technology, peoples’ participation – all these are responsible for these changes. Judicial separation and decentralization of power might be other strong reasons for this transformation. I think District Magistrate should have the judicial power and he should be head of coordination all the functions in the district. There is no alternative to this for better performance.*

*I think, all the factors have been synthesized to lead towards a huge change in the district administration. The change of attitude and mind set has led towards a situation which I say ‘Mental Revolution.’ It can be realized from their attitude, interaction and activities. Overall, there has been a paradigm shift in the district administration.”*

#### **4.7.5 Incumbent Civil Servants’ Perspectives**

A renowned lady Secretary to the Government of Bangladesh expressed her positive view about the innovative and constructive role of current district administration in Bangladesh. According to her opinion,

*“In the British period, the role of Deputy Commissioner was regulatory basis, but at present it has become development oriented; now they are providing digital services to the people by applying innovative ideas. In the previous time, DC was rule bound, rigid, authoritative ruler, but now they are flexible, pro people, participative, innovative and service oriented public manager.”*

As a former first woman Deputy Commissioner in the history of Bangladesh she added that DC is doing various types of digital activities; they are conducting meeting via video conferencing; their office file management system is software based e – filing; and they have opened the door of district administration for online services. They are hearing from the people every day, particularly on the public hearing day. About the district coordination she further mentioned that DC is leading the coordination of all the departments in the district and they are working like a team now. Proper communication and coordination is the core function of DC at present. In British period, DC had the limitation to go in close contact with the mass people, but now they are totally open and people oriented. They are planning keeping an eye to the demand of people. About the causes of the transformation she continued.....

*“election manifesto, use of technology, socio-economic transformation, citizen charter, right to information, innovation, ICT, recognition/reward, judicial separation, Annual Performance Agreement ( APA), education & training, globalization, Public Private Partnership (PPP) and many other factors are jointly influencing to bring about the transformation of function in the office of the Deputy Commissioner.”*

About the changing features, she further mentioned that Office of the Deputy Commissioner is not dominating with traditional characteristics. But traditionally, there must be some functions that will carry the features of traditional administration. In fact, the scenario has been changed as a whole. The present activities of DC are leading them towards New Public Management.

One of the Additional Secretaries of Local Government Division who worked in the field administration long time illustrated the concept of district administration in British India and correlated it with the district administration in Pakistan period as well as in Bangladesh. He mentioned that in the very beginning Collector worked under the East India Company. Later on, he worked under British Governor. He

would look after the welfare of the tenants according to the instruction of the British Government. The name Deputy Commissioner was first used in the year 1961 during Ayub period in Pakistan. The same person played the role of Collector, District Magistrate and Deputy Commissioner. He would coordinate the activities all other departments and developmental works. He could never go against the instruction of government. He said.....

*“Starting right from British period through Pakistan regime and Bangladesh today, the role and functions of the Deputy Commissioner have been changed many times with the decision of the government in power in order to meet the demand of the people and government.”*

He added that in democracy, government won the mandate of the people and cannot go beyond their commitment to them. As change is the demand of the people, government is also directing district administration accordingly.

As a former Deputy Commissioner of Faridpur he enunciated that in Bangladesh, institutionally Deputy Commissioner has become weaker, because they cannot exercise the power that a District Magistrate would do in British India. They do not have that control over police. Up to 1978, DC would write the ACR (Annual Confidential Report) Of SP (Superintendent of Police). During Zia period, that power was withdrawn. Up to 1986, the tour diary of SP would have been approved by DC, but it was withdrawn later on.

Quoting the statement of a renowned former Cabinet Secretary, he mentioned.....

*“Traditional functions of district administration will continue no more; DC will have to find out new innovative ideas and activities in order to survive in coming days.”*

Another important thing he added is the mindset of the officers at present. In the first phase of Bangladesh or before Bangladesh, most of the officers would have maintained the traditional colonial mentality. But officers now are coming from different districts, different villages. They are very much conscious about the global environments, technology and citizen rights. They are studying in different foreign

countries and going for foreign training. So they are much more innovative and aware of providing services to the citizens.

He further stated that when DC played his role in the field of education, ADC (Education) post was created. At present, DC is working on the principal agenda of the government “Digital Bangladesh” which is totally ICT based. So, a new post ADC (ICT) is created in all the districts. In this way, role of DC changes and new role is generated on the necessity. DCs are working now from their own initiative that was observed in 1940s for digging canals. So they are playing more marginal role, they are diverting from power practice. Collectors are doing these innovative activities in order to change their role and survive in a changed environment. Collector becomes more and more involved with the people. Effect of technology is another big factor. Decentralization is also a reason for diverting the function. Finally he mentioned that government will have to rule the country through district administration. They will have to empower DC for the necessity of time.

One Joint Secretary of Ministry of Public Administration (MOPA) who has vast experiences in district administration enunciated elaborately about the changes and transformation of the district administration over time from his personal experiences. He has just worked as the Deputy Commissioner of Jessore district for about three years recently. He mentioned that DC himself has brought about many changes in the district administration with a bottom up approach. According to his observations

*“DC is no more a traditional administrator; rather he is a public manager now. He is innovative, flexible, proactive, pro people, participative and development oriented. He is providing services to the doorsteps of the citizen.”*

He added that separation of judiciary has reduced the power of DC, no doubt. It has created a challenge for DC to implement the activities of the government as well as district administration. On the other hand, it has opened the scope for the DC to be pro people, innovative and development oriented and closer to the citizen. It has created scope for providing more service and bringing about a change in true sense.

Moreover, he explained that the use of ICT and globalization has made more and more transformation in the role and function of DC. In fact, it is the one of the basic reason for the transformation. People have become more and more conscious due to the use of technology and effect of globalization. The entire citizens now know the information of every sphere that was not possible in the traditional period. Particularly, Right to Information (RTI), Citizen Charter, Web Portal, Use of Internet Service, Video Conference- all these things have made the role and functions of DC more and more visible to the people. He mentioned many factors behind the transformation process. First of all, Social and global change as well consciousness building among people due to increase in literacy rate. Consciousness building among the officers in DC Office is another important factor. Election manifesto and mission and vision of the political government plays important role. Innovative activity, reward and promotion are also responsible for the change.

A Joint Secretary (Monitoring & Evaluation) of Cabinet Division explained how the activities of the Deputy Commissioner are observed and controlled by the Ministry of Public Administration and Cabinet Division. He mentioned that DCs are encouraged to go for innovative and development oriented activities with his self initiatives in the district. He stated.....

*“After the posting of a DC in a district, everyone prepares a master plan in accordance with the demand and environment of that district that must be new, innovative and will bring change in that district. Then they send it to the Cabinet Division. Cabinet evaluates this master plan by a senior Joint Secretary or above rank officer who worked in that district in the past. Beyond that master plan, they are also encouraged to take initiatives in that district in order to do something new considering the condition and environment of that district which must be within the existing rules and regulations.”*

All DCs are doing innovative activities for providing better services to the citizens.

About the difference between current DC and previous time DC, his opinion is...

<sup>13</sup> *“In the past, Deputy Commissioner could do the only task which may be called in Bangla “Chhori Ghurano” (Turn the Stick). But at present, a DC even cannot close the door of his office. Door is always open now for the citizens. Besides this, there is a special weekly ‘Public Hearing Day’. DC must have to hear from the people. But, in the past, citizen had to wait hours after hours out of the door in order to meet the DC. Only a few numbers of people could have the chance to meet him.”*

<sup>13</sup> “Chhori Ghurano” is a Bengali word which means “Turn the Stick”.

About the transformed district administration, his evaluation is that administration is now friendly and people oriented. DC is just a public servant of the republic. He is trying his best to provide services to the door steps of the citizens. He further added that judicial separation has reduced the power of DC. Use of technology, internet, website, face book and other digital social media have provided a great opportunity for the Deputy Commissioner and they are making best utility of those weapon. Many DCs are responding via online now. For example, DC Barisal has done canal digging having information from social media.

About the elite service during Pakistan or British period, he mentioned that ICS or CSP officers used to rule the people; nobody could say anything against them. Even they could do many activities avoiding the advice of strong elected representative. But everything is open now. People are educated and conscious. Nothing can be hidden. Accountability and transparency is more now. Annual Performance Agreement has been signed between DC and Ministries. Performance evaluation and reward system are introduced now. So, many features are prevailing now in office of the deputy Commissioner that indicate a new system of management in the district administration.

#### **4.7.6 Incumbent Deputy Commissioners' & Additional Deputy Commissioners' Views**

Deputy Commissioner Jessore mentioned that remarkable changes have taken place in the office of the Deputy Commissioner. In the past, people could not go to or meet DC. Hardly one or two person somehow, waiting day after day, could meet DC and express their feelings or complain. DC also would not easily mix up with people. But now the door of DC is always open for the people. People can easily meet with DC and express their complain or appeal. There is a weekly "Public Hearing Day" for the citizen. On that day, DC hears from the people with special attention. On the other hand people now can contact or communicate with district administration with the help of mobile phone, face book or district web portal.

He further added that in the office of the Deputy Commissioner, there is special sitting arrangement for the people which was not thinkable in the past. That time people would wait in the DC Office hours after hours only to see their DC once. But now DCs are going to the doorsteps of the citizens in order to provide them service. Consciousness and communication system of the people have increased remarkably. Technology and literacy have helped people to be changed with globalization. About the office management he continued.....

*“The total volume of work has been increased, work environment is improved, mentality of the officers has been changed, communication has been developed, technology has taken its position, district administration is becoming more and more engaged in citizen service and development activities; soft copy work is increasing but hard copy manual work is decreasing.”*

He further illustrated the digital system that has been popularly working for citizen services. He said that people are getting direct services from digital land record management system. They don't have to come to the office; rather they are getting it from UDC (Union Digital Centre). They only need to apply for it from UDC. Front Desk and District e-Service Centre are receiving application from the people, scanning it to the computer and these are being disposed through e-filing system very quickly and delivered to the people. The new generation officers are more trained and educated from foreign countries. They are more aware of citizen right and services. Now, Right to Information (RTI) Act and Citizen Charter have also empowered citizens. Working environment has been improved a lot; Video Conferencing is a new addition for conducting distant meeting. Use of IT, laptops, computers and other digital devices have been remarkably added to the office system.

A dynamic civil servant who has introduced huge digitization in his office, Deputy Commissioner Gazipur, expressed that modern district administration has been boosted up with huge digital instruments. His opinion is.....

*“The Office of the Deputy Commissioner in Bangladesh now is passing through a new paradigm which may be called as “Paradigm VII- Digital Paradigm.” The total system is running now by software; hardware or paper based administration is diminishing day by day. District administration is providing services to the door steps of the citizens. Use of technology, globalization, consciousness of the citizens, social and global changes and mission/vision of the government are the key factors for introducing this new paradigm of public administration”.*

He added that government is formulating new rules and regulations to run the administration; at the same time government is encouraging DC to be innovative, introducing reward for innovation, providing budgets, empowering to be digitized and go for more citizen centric services. “The new theme” he said, “is that office will go to the doorstep of the citizens; they will not go to office.” In this way, paradigm is being out and out changed. The way a private sector organization is running, a public sector organization will also run in the same way.

He further mentioned that separation of judiciary has an impact on the district administration, but it has been strongly replaced by the mobile court ordinance. “The developmental activities”, he added, “have increased tremendously.” Recently, a new ADC post is going to be created named as ADC (Protocol). This is a new indication of changing paradigm. Role of media/press is playing a strong role in the transformation process. Right to Information and Citizen Charter has made district administration more visible and accountable. Corporate governance has a good role to influence the office to be service oriented. “Less hassle, less cost, less time”, he said, “is the real theme or slogan for providing services to the citizen.”

Deputy Commissioner, Munshiganj expressed her strong arguments in favor of the paradigm shift in district administration. “In fact, office of the Deputy Commissioner is now passing through a new paradigm”, she said. Her main argument is that government declaration of “Digital Bangladesh” is leading DC office to bring desired transformation in the role of DC. It is leading them to be more innovative, transparent and bring dynamism in service delivery system to the people. Client satisfaction is a major purpose of district administration now. She explained.....

*“DC office is now running digitally just like a private sector or corporate office where citizens are the customers or service receivers and DC Office is service provider. Government services are products and good will is profit. So, we are working in order to satisfy our customer for profit (good will) maximization and better survival.”*

She further stated that DC is still administrator now, but not like a traditional ruler; rather he is an innovative administrator. Government is directing DC to be the “Shebok”<sup>14</sup> of the people, not the “Shasok”<sup>15</sup>, because time and technology, consciousness and literacy of the people do not allow DC to be a classical administrator. Separation of judiciary and political influence has restricted the power of DC, no doubt, but personal and institutional tactfulness help to overcome the situation. The mentality of the officers has been changed and the office staff is also being changed in a positive way in order to prove his fitness for the new work environment. The regulatory functions are applied in order to ensure the digital service to the people. But still there are some traditional functions like land management, which is still not totally digitized.

Deputy Commissioner Pabna enunciated her experiences as Deputy Commissioner and mentioned that traditional and digital both functions are coexisting at office of the Deputy Commissioner at present. She added that DC Office is now is going through a changing process. DC cannot stay aloof from the people now. There is a special “Public Hearing Day” at DC Office. On that that day, DC personally hears from each and every citizen who comes to him. Besides this, any citizen any day may come to him and express his problems. Communication is very easy now. Not only that, there is very easy hierarchy existing now among the officers at DC Office. The relationship is very easy and flexible. She mentioned one example of providing motor vehicle license at union level instead of DC Office. Use of technology has brought about tremendous change in providing services and disposal of functions.

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<sup>14</sup> “Shebok” is a Bengali word means service provider.

<sup>15</sup> “Shasok” is a Bengali word means ruler.

Digital record management, e-filing, video conferencing, citizen charter, web portal, e mail, face book all these have brought DC Office into a new digital paradigm. Government particularly Prime Minister's Office is providing tremendous support for this new digital system. The mentality of the officers has also changed due to training, education, counseling etc. They have come out of traditional mentality.

About political issues, she stated that political influence is a big challenge for providing services. Particularly, their integrity is a big question now. Officers are gradually coming out of this tendency, but the political leaders are making the situation critical. In the DC Office, there are sitting arrangement and receptions for citizens. There are e- service centre and front desk. Land Management is totally digitized. E-mobile court, e-mutation, e-services all these have started functioning. Media and social media are helping DC office for the publicity of these services. District administration considers citizens as their clients as try to provide quick in order to satisfy them. For better existence and creating good will, DC office is trying its best. There might be some exceptions; but in most cases, DC office has been successful for bringing transparency and accountability in service delivery. But it will take time to shift totally into the New Public Management from traditional system.

National Medal winner as the best Deputy Commissioner of the country, Deputy Commissioner Faridpur illustrated her feelings as a Deputy Commissioner and stated that many changes have taken place over the last few years in the district administration in Bangladesh. First of all, separation of judiciary is a major change. Instead, executive magistracy and mobile court is there for maintaining law and order and other related issues. Public hearing is also an important transformation. People can easily come to DC and express their opinion. But a few years ago it was beyond imagination. According to her experience

*"People are very conscious and educated now. They are getting all the information from internet, face book and other social media. Electronic and print media is also very strong. So, district administration is also open to all. DC is getting mixed with the people without any hesitation. We are empowering people by ensuring their rights."*

She further added that DC office is running digitally now. Everybody can have information from the district web portal. Government has declared “Digital Bangladesh”. So, government wants to ensure digital services to the doorsteps of the people. District administration is doing the same thing. There is no difference between public and administration. This feeling is helping administration run smoothly. Traditional approach of district administration will not work at current district administration. Police and other departments are assisting district administration whenever necessary. Total field administration is working like a team. Innovation, e-filing, video conference all these have changed the scenario in the district administration. Every Officer is the “Shebok” (service provider) of the republic. Use of technology, citizen consciousness, globalization, role of media, mentality of the officers, decentralization, and government commitment are mainly responsible for this transformation in the office of the Deputy Commissioner.

Deputy Commissioner Natore stated that major paradigm has been shifted from traditional regulatory approach due to the introduction of innovation and digital service in the office of the Deputy Commissioner. The present government has brought about major changes for providing services to the doorsteps of the citizens. About citizen- district administration relation her opinion is

*“District administration considers citizens as their clients. For creating better image and good will, citizens are getting top priority and quality services from the district administration. DC Office is trying to bring changes in every possible service. The mentality of the officers has been changed and they are aware of citizen rights.”*

About the causes of changes, she explained that Cabinet Division, Prime Minister’s Office, Ministry of Public Administration and all other ministries are providing huge supports to the DC office. There is annual performance agreement and provision of reward system introduced in the administration now. There is fixed mission and vision. Media and social media is strong and making everything visible to the citizens.

She further explained that excessive rules and regulations, rigidity are not supporting the present situation. District administration is looking for more innovation and

flexibility. District development coordination is strong but some officers suffer from superior inferior complexity. District Law and Order is strongly maintained. Political influence is a challenge for the DC because integrity is much more influenced by the political issues. E filing, Video conferencing, citizen charter, web portal, front desk, e-service have changed the scenario in DC office. Technology is playing a big role for bringing all these changes. Judicial separation has reduced the power of DM but mobile court is providing necessary support in absence of judicial court. During flood or other calamities, food scarcity, the officers of district administration work twenty four hours a day. So, Office of the Deputy Commissioner is the first and last dependable office of the government, only hope of the people in the district. But this office is suffering from manpower and officers scarcity. Finally, she concluded that DC office is committed to work successfully in the transformed development and service oriented paradigm.

About the evolution of district administration one of the senior Administration Cadre (13<sup>th</sup> batch) officers illustrated that the concept of Deputy Commissioner has been generated from the British Colonial Rule, particularly, from the land tax collection. British East India Company could not collect land tax themselves, so they created district administration system (Land revenue collection by the Collector). They formed police force in order to arrest the defaulter tenants and put him in the court of Collector or District Magistrate. District administration would rule the general people of this country on behalf of the British Government. The Collector would rule the people as a traditional administrator. Primarily, white skin officers would have been posted as Collector.

He also added that Current role and functions of DC is totally participative and team work. Previous time, it was just like classical or traditional administrator. What DC told the citizens would do it accordingly. But, at present, DC hears from the people and undertakes plan and execute according to citizens demands. Basically, district administration coordinates all the development activities in the district. Function of DC is not to command or order any department or people, but simply act a role player through proper coordination in order to smooth and proper implementation

of those developmental activities. He facilitates to implement the plan of central government in the district. Due to judicial separation from the executive in 2007, there has been created one kind of vacuum for the time being in district administration. DC is feeling less powerful than before and he himself with his other set up, are feeling demoralized due to that change. With the passage of time, DC has been well adjusted with the situation.

He further mentioned that at present, district administration has been assigned with new and innovative type of activities, particularly after declaration of “Digital Bangladesh” by the government, many new and innovative activities are being provided by the government to the district administration. DC is providing various types of services to the citizens now. People can easily enter into the district administration and get his services. In previous time, it was not so easy to meet DC even any other officers of district administration, but now, it is a very common and regular practice in the district administration. DC and his officers are accountable, transparent and citizen centric now. They are carrying services to the citizens themselves at present. Service seekers are easily getting these services from district administration. It is the need of time. It is not possible to deliver services to the citizens from colonial mentality. It was an innocent demand from the citizens to DC to get diverted from the colonial mentality and become pro people. With the passage of time, it has been happened. DC is not considering himself to do any kind of “Matabbari” (unnecessary command) to any person or department, but together all the mission and vision of government need to be implemented – this is the purpose of district administration.

About reason behind the changes he stated that people are conscious and more educated now. Communication has been increased. So, they have come to know about the role and function of DC. In the past, they did not know about DC. They considered him as powerful administrator. Also, there were many superstitions among the people. But with the development of education, consciousness, ICT, people are much more aware now. They know that DC is a public servant and his salary paid by their tax. There is less difference between DC and citizen from

entertainment point of view. Citizen demands have been increased. Role of NGO is another factor for citizen consciousness. Donor agency like WB, UNDP, EU is playing another role. Democratic government is making the district administrative citizen centric. Political commitment to the people by the political government is another reason. Local political leaders sometimes influence DC to be flexible and tactful in their service delivery. Higher authority advises to be tactful within rules and regulations. Population and development oriented activities are increasing day by day. Administrative Reforms and military rule might also affect the role and functions of DC although those did not come into effect later on totally. Innovative activities of DC are vital factor of transformation. The key point is the application of own charisma and team work, not command, order or undermine any other person and department. Change of mentality of the Deputy Commissioner, mission and vision, target oriented, output & result oriented, are other factors. He added that DC is carrying traditional features by birth, but they are becoming more and more development oriented, service oriented. So, they are adapting with the reality of New Public Management day by day.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (Education and ICT), Sylhet mentioned that Office of the Deputy Commissioner has tremendous shift from the traditional district administration. DC Office is now open for all citizens. DC is hearing from the people every day, citizens can express their appeal, complain direct to the DC. Traditional eliticism and so called bureaucratic mentality have been totally diverted. Whole district administration is flexible, pro people and working for citizen satisfaction. DC office must work within the jurisdiction of government rules and regulations but the way of applying these rules is positive and flexible.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (Education and ICT), Khulna, stated that Deputy Commissioner is very flexible and cordial for citizen services. The old shape district administration has been turned into a new shape and new paradigm. Now, DC is going to the people with services, people have open access to DC at any time. People are educated and conscious now. They can communicate with DC via mobile phone and face book. DC also responds to the citizens' application. It is not possible now to

survive for the DC with the old traditional administrative technique. That is why government has given instruction to adopt new and innovative measures to make the functioning easier. There is well sitting arrangement and refreshment system for citizen in DC office. Officers and staff welcome them and behave very humbly with them. As a whole, the total scenario has been changed and a new environment has been introduced in the district administration.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (General), Dinajpur, elaborated that a lot of changes have taken place in the office of the Deputy Commissioner. In the past, people even many officers of the district could not enter into the room of the DC. But now people have open access to the office of DC. Any time they can come to DC and get a solution of his problem. Besides this, there is a fixed weekly “Public Hearing Day” ( generally Wednesday); on that DC does not go to any other programs or activities; he only hears from the people. Use of technology has transformed the district administration.

He further added that mentality of the officers has been changed a lot. Every officer is now mentally prepared for rendering services. So, DC is not a classical public administrator now. A proper coordination is also there in the district among all the officers and DC is leading the whole team. There observed some political interference on DC in the district, but he handles the situation tactfully. District administration is now mainly development administration. Regulatory activities have been decreased a lot. Digital Bangladesh program has influenced the role and function of DC and brought into a new paradigm. DC is working now mainly for the citizen satisfaction and public management.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue), Pabna mentioned that in the age of globalization, people are educated, very conscious and technology dependent. That is why their expectation has gone high, because everything is transparent now. People can get information very easily. So government is also handling the situation in the same way. Office of the Deputy Commissioner is the representative of the

central government in the district. Peoples' expectations are more from DC office. So, the role and function of DC have been changed accordingly.

She further stated that old administration will not run in the digital age. DC will not survive in the new age with traditional mentality. It might create a lot of problems. Government has declared "Digital Bangladesh." So, technology, ICT, face book, mobile phone, and internet are available now. DC has become more and more pro people. He has to hear from the people every day and solve their problems. E- filing, digital land records management, e-mutation all these are newly introduced in the district administration. Volume of work has been increased largely. There might be some problems with political interference, coordination and law and order, but DC has to handle those issues cool headed.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (General), Munshiganj has identified technology as a major factor for the paradigm shift in the role and function of DC office. Every day people are coming to DC office and enjoying a good sitting arrangement together with refreshments. Officers and staff of DC office take care of them with friendly behavior. They submit their application to the front desk and get their feedback within due date. They don't have to go to the section of DC office for any service. It is just like a one stop service introduced in the DC office. Mentality of DC and his officers and staff has been changed totally. DC arranged weekly counseling meeting with his officers and staff. The traditional mentality of old administration has been reversed now into a new innovative administration.

Additional District Magistrate (ADM), Gazipur illustrated that current district administration is the administration of providing services to the doorsteps of the citizens on the basis of transparency and accountability. It could not be thought even ten years ago. There is citizen charter, Right to Information Act. All these have made citizen powerful. So, DC has become more and more pro people and public manager. There is district website from which people can get information and services from anywhere in the world. DC office is going to make every service online based. Totally it has not been possible yet now to make it online.

He further added that in the past, people would fear to talk with DC but now they can openly meet and talk with DC. Not only that, if people do not get any demanded service from DC office, DC has to show cause for that failure. Time and situation has changed now. So, DC also has to change its role and function accordingly. Digital automation and modernization is responsible for it. People deserve “One Stop Service” now all over the world. Declaration of “Digital Bangladesh” and “Vision 2021” is the main factor for the rapid change because district administration has to lead this mega plan of government for the implementation in the district. District administration is mainly working on the developmental and citizen centric activities. The features of traditional public administration have been gradually decreased and new managerial activities have been increased to a large extent.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (General), Jessore has identified judicial separation as a vital factor for paradigm shift in the district administration. He mentioned that after separation of judiciary, the judicial functions of DC have been decreased and developmental functions have been increased. He added that as Collector revenue collection is a very small function, but land management is a big challenge for the Collector still now. He said that Jessore is the first digital district in Bangladesh. Here people are getting services from the DC office very quickly and without any harassment. DC and other officers and staff are working together like a team in order to render this digital service to the people. The so called traditional image of Collector is not prevailing now, but still DC is the chief coordinator of all the concerned departments in the district. With the change of time, DC has also changed its style of providing services. In order to implement the mission and vision of the government, especially “Digital Bangladesh”, DC is leading in the district.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (Education and ICT), Rangpur mentioned that the importance of the post of Deputy Commissioner has increased more than ever before, because DC is not a traditional administrator now, but key person of the digital service in the district who is leading the district innovation team in order to provide digital services to the doorsteps of the people. Use of technology has made a big distinction between past and present scenario of district administration. DC is

out and out open to the citizen now. They can talk to him directly and solve their problems. The traditional mentality has been changed. The present approach and attitude is citizen centric.

#### **4.7.8 Media Assessment**

Media observes the activities of Deputy Commissioner very closely and goes for regular interaction with district administration in many programs, meetings and many other events. About current role and function of office of the Deputy Commissioner some media persons expressed very positive comments. From the view point of press, DC office, at present, is playing a constructive and transformative role regarding their institutional functions.

President of Jessore Press Club stated his feelings about the changes in the role and function of the office of the Deputy Commissioner very positively. According to his opinion, most of the functions of the DC office have been shifted with the introduction of digital technology in the office. He expressed his experiences as....

*“As a journalist, I have observed the activities of DC from very near to him. In the past, DC would like to maintain a distance between himself and other people of the district. People could not go close to them so easily. They could exercise huge power as they had the control over police and criminal court. At present, Deputy Commissioner cannot exercise enormous power. He cannot write the ACR (Annual Confidential Report) of SP (Superintendent of Police) which he could do before 1978. Judiciary has gone after 2007. As a result, he has lost his control over police. But his role of coordination is very important still today. Recently district administration has mobilized enormous innovative programs in order to provide digital services to the people. They have introduced lot of changes in the office and the working environment is citizen friendly. But many citizens are not aware of it. Most of the officers have come out of traditional approach of bureaucracy.”*

President of Naogaon Press Club mentioned that office of the Deputy Commissioner, at present, has come very close in touch with the ordinary people of the district. He shared his experiences as.....

*“Personally I have been in close touch with office of the Deputy Commissioner for about more than forty years. I think there has been created a vast difference between DC office now and DC office then. People could not go to the magistrates, ADCs and DC so easily in that time. But the scenario has been changed. At present, people can easily meet with the Deputy Commissioner and other officers in the district administration. People are getting real services from them now. Institutionally the office is totally transformed into a citizen friendly office. The office is open for all and the whole office is digitized. The distance between public and district administration has totally reduced. Government has brought about rapid changes in the district administration. New generation officers are also very innovative and pro people. As an institution, DC office has created new image in the district.”*

#### **4.7.9 Perspectives of Civil Society**

An active civil society member in Naogaon district, Human Rights worker and leader of Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Council, Naogaon, expressed his mixed realization about the role and functions of office of the Deputy Commissioner. His argument is that many DCs have done brilliant activities although they were tough administrator. On the contrary, there are some DCs who are very polite, innovative, citizen centric and open minded but their integrity is under question. He mentioned.....

*“In Naogaon, people can easily meet with the Deputy Commissioner, but due to his busy schedule, sometimes he is not available in the office. DC also looks after citizens’ problems. Record management is yet not fully digitized and there are some problems in records delivery in time. The mentality and attitude of the officers and staff have changed totally but they are busy with many other activities. Judicial separation has decreased the power of DC but many other activities have increased. DC has to conduct different types of meeting in a week. As a result, public hearing becomes hampered. Political leaders influence DC in appointment, posting and many other financial issues. He has to maintain a check and balance with the political leaders.”*

Another eminent civil society member in Naogaon district, educationalist, poet and social worker expressed his modest feelings about the changing environment in the office of the Deputy Commissioner recently. His opinion is that

*“DO and SDO in previous time would not come closely to the general people. At present, Deputy Commissioner frequently come close contact with the people. Everyone can go to him easily. The distance between DC and people has been reduced. DC likes to attend public gathering like meeting, fair and cultural program. They very often go for public mobilization.”*

His observation is that people are getting service easily from the DC office in comparison with previous time. DC is also learning from the people. Their approach and attitude towards the people has been totally changed. The authoritative and rigid approach of DO and SDO is not prevailing any more in the district administration. Present district administration is pro people and citizen friendly.

Another dynamic lady social activist and civil society member in Naogaon, Head of Bengali Department, Bangabandhu Government College and poet observed a remarkable change in the approach and attitude of Deputy Commissioner. She is well connected with DC office for many social welfare and education issues. So she has been a keen observer of the role and functions of the DC office for several. According to her opinion

*“DC cannot sit only on his chair in his office and do the file work like an ICS or CSP or EPCS District Officer. At present, DC is going practically in the field and getting close connection with the people. He has created an innovative mentality doing something for the citizen. The door of DC is open for all. He is the guardian of the district. His power might be reduced now, but still people seek last shelter to him. Present DCS are going to foreign countries for training and having lesson from globalization. Their mind set has been changed. Government is also creating support for them. That is why the role and function of district administration has been shifted to a new paradigm.”*

She further added that there are still some restrictions surrounding DC and they are creating some hindrances for the citizens for free and fair mixing with DC. AS a whole, the environment of the DC office is moving towards a gradual change

#### **4.7.10 Citizens’ Assessment & Observations**

Principal of Naogaon BIAM School and College mentioned that most of the officers in DC office are people oriented. Deputy Commissioner himself is very innovative and never hesitates to help any citizen. He added that all DCs have provided administrative and logistic supports to them whenever necessary. Institutionally DC has a very positive approach for the citizen service. Some officers and staff have personal problems regarding their approach towards people; but that is not the generalized picture as a whole. As a part of public administration, DC likes to maintain government rules and regulations; but the application of those rules is flexible. He further added that District Magistrate does not have enough control over

police. But the overall development coordination is good. Political interference sometimes hampers the function of DC. But, the overall citizen service is satisfactory.

One of the inhabitants in Sonapatti, Naogaon expressed his complex feelings regarding the role and service of the Deputy Commissioner. He said that the mindset of the Deputy Commissioner and other officers has been changed, no doubt, but there is an invisible wall surrounding DC; only a beneficiary group can go in close contact with DC and getting benefitted. He raised some questions about some land related functions of DC office. He mentioned that service depends mostly on the leadership of DC. It varies from person to person. But as a whole, the general mentality of all the officers has been changed. They are active, pro people, flexible and committed to provide citizens any way.

A renowned advocate of Judge Court, Naogaon mentioned that the power of the Deputy Commissioner has been reduced due to the judicial separation and he does not have enough control over police that he had in the past. At present, DC is mainly engaged in social and citizen mobilization related activities. The relation between DC and general citizens has developed, no doubt but some staff of DC office is still creating some barriers for free mixing with DC. Overall, people can easily meet with DC particularly on the weekly public hearing day. He further added that many things have changed in DC Office but many more things should be changed in future. The office environment and service system have been development satisfactorily.

#### **4.7.11 Observations of Retired Administrative Officer of DC office**

Former Administrative Officer (AO) of Office of the Deputy Commissioner Joypurhat illustrated his experiences very positively regarding the role and function of Deputy Commissioner. According to him, coordination and control was better in previous time. Day by day, other departments in the district began to show their independent attitude. But as a representative of central government, the importance of DC is vast. He is the guardian of the district. The success or the failure of the district totally depends on his role and functions. He stated his feelings as.....

*“I have worked in district administration since 1974 for about forty years. I found all the Deputy Commissioner mostly people oriented, but they were a little bit reserve. There was some coordination problem with SP, particularly after 1978, police would not like to obey District Magistrate as they would do it before. Judicial separation reduced the power of DC. Political leaders also interrupted the functions of DC. At present, there are many digital equipment like laptop, computer, video conference instruments which was not available in previous time. I found a gradual change in DC Office during my retirement.”*

#### **4.8 Review of the Nature of the Transformation of Role & Function of DC**

The present district administration is a continuation of the former Civil Service of Pakistan which was inherited from the Indian Civil Service in the British Raj (1858-1947). Before that it was run by the East India Company during Company rule (1765-1858). The pattern of district administration that was originated in the Company rule in British India during the period of Governor General Warren Hastings (1772) has gone through a series of changes during this long period of time and still is the core extension body of the National Government in the field administration. Office of the Deputy Commissioner started its journey when the administration would run totally with traditional approach. In course of time, some of those traditional features have become part of the district administration whether others indicate the features of different paradigms.

##### **4.8.1 Features indicating TPA at Present DC Office:**

Office of the Deputy Commissioner was originated from British East India Company. During British India; collector was traditional ruler in their respective periods. But in course of time, the scenario has been changed although the pattern of the DC office remains unchanged. But still this office possesses some strong features that were originated from the traditional administrative period.

Firstly, bureaucrats work according to the decision of the political leadership maintaining political neutrality. Deputy Commissioner also has to follow the instructions and guidance of the central government, more clearly, party in power. Former Adviser of Caretaker Government and former Cabinet Secretary mentioned, “Political government always provides necessary instructions and guidelines to DC. He cannot work independently.” Another Former Adviser of Caretaker Government and former secretary said, “All DCs are more or less politically biased. They cannot go beyond the intention of political government.” Another Former mentioned, “Today, DC is doing everything by following the order of higher level political leaders.” According the observations of these scholars, DCs are posted on political choice; they work in close connection with the political leaders.<sup>16</sup> Like all other bureaucrats, DC is regulated by the formal control of the political leadership.

Secondly, DC office is fairly guided and motivated by the upper level bureaucracy. In DC office, ADC and other junior officers also maintain a fairly hierarchic relationship with the Deputy Commissioner. One former Chief Election Commissioner and former Secretary mentioned that, official hierarchic structure of DC office will remain unchanged, no doubt, but the role and function will change over time. Another former secretary mentioned that the official hierarchic structure of Collector more or less remained unchanged. Example: official organogram by Ministry of Public Administration.

Thirdly, for any decision making, Deputy Commissioner considers the rationality regarding citizen or the situation. Recently, all DCs take decision according to the circumstances in his jurisdiction. One of the Joint Secretaries, Cabinet Division, mentioned that DCs are bound to follow the rules and regulations of the government, but during decision making, they have the discretion to take final decision. In many cases, they become ‘tactful’ for decision making, even in emergency. In the same way, they decide about the citizen service giving emphasis

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<sup>16</sup> For details, see Paragraph 4.7 Empirical Observations, e.g. key informants’ perspectives, historian’s review, former civil servant’s review.

on rationality. One example is the approval or sanction of relief to the people of different upazilas in the district during flood.

Fourthly, like central bureaucracy, officers in DC office are accountable to their senior and all are accountable to the Deputy Commissioner for every official process, procedure and other activities. Deputy Commissioner Jessore mentioned that, there exists very friendly relationship among the officers in the office. Junior officers obey their ADCs and ADCs are very process oriented and loyal to DC. One of the Joint Secretaries Cabinet Division said that there is no scope for the DC and other officers to go beyond the official process and decorum for any activity. Example: Annual Confidential Report (ACR).

Fifthly, the pattern of the power practice of DC office is still centralized. For every decision, junior officers or ADCs have to depend on or wait for the decision of DC. Power is not yet decentralized. The researcher found that every file of the section goes up to the Deputy Commissioner. All other cases are disposed in the same way. The strategy is still highly centralized.

Sixthly, it is a general trend of field administration as well bureaucracy is risk management. It may be natural hazard or any other type of hazard such as, political clash. One of the eminent historians mentioned that political leaders are very dominant now and DC has to maintain a check and balance relationship with them in order to avoid risk. In the same way, district administration plans and takes action for disaster management and other issue to avoid risk. One example is issuing order of 144 Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) of 1898 for preventing the hazard of political clash or public clash in the jurisdiction.

Finally, it can be said that the above discussed issues are the part of present district administration although these are the features of TPA. There are other issues like citizen avoiding, rigid and rule bound attitude, public-private distinction, authoritative approach, resistance to change which are not found to be existed in DC office at present. Current Deputy Commissioners are becoming more and more

citizen centric; they are hearing from the people every day. DC office is, no doubt, government rule bound, but the rigidity in applying those rules is reducing day by day. Present Deputy Commissioners are not as harsh and authoritative as they were in British period. But, the features that are discussed above indicate that present district administration also holds the tradition of classical administration.

<b>No.</b>	<b>Salient Features of TPA</b>	<b>TPA Features at Present DC Office</b>	<b>Example</b>
1	Formal control of political leadership	exist	Guidance of political government.
2	Secrecy and Citizen avoiding in government business	-	-
3	Rigid and rule bound	-	-
4	A formal hierarchical structure	exist	Official organogram (by MOPA).
5	Public private distinction	-	-
6	Emphasis on rationality in decision making	exist	Approval of relief during flood.
7	Authoritative approach	-	-
8	Process oriented inward accountability	exist	Annual Confidential Report (ACR).
9	Adoption of centralized strategy	exist	DC is the decision maker by law.
10	Resistance to change	-	-
11	Politics-administration dichotomy	-	-
12	Risk avoidance	exist	Issuing order of 144 CrPC 1898.

#### **4.8.2 Features indicating NPA at Present DC Office:**

As it has been discussed earlier that the New Public Administration (NPA) concept developed in 1970s when the traditional public administration could no longer continue with its natural way. In fact, people wanted to escape from the authoritative and ruler type appearance of public administration. NPA, however, provided some remedy to the citizen with its anti-positivist and anti-hierarchical reaction against traditional public administration. At present, the study has found some of the salient features of NPA that are prevailing in the Office of the Deputy Commissioner.

Firstly, district administration provides a good response to the citizens' change of demands. Deputy Commissioner of Jessore mentioned that DC office has taken some innovative actions for mitigating the demands of the people. The expectations of the people are changing with the change of time. For creating good will and better survival in the field administration, DC office is also responding in the same way. For example, Jessore DC office has taken initiatives for the introduction of e-mutation in all Assistant Commissioner (Land) offices in the district considering citizens' consecutive demands. Another example of the responsive administration is the new supply system of land records to the citizen through the Union Digital Centre (UDC) in the district.

Secondly, DC office considers citizens as their clients.<sup>17</sup> Present DC office is putting the citizen or client satisfaction to the top of its priorities. More elaborately, DC office is now functioning keeping the citizen in the central position of the administration. Accordingly, it is initiating some innovations in order to mitigate their demands. There is Front Desk or District e-Service Centre introduced in the DC office in order to provide one stop service to the citizens.

Thirdly, DC office has increased awareness building programs in order to create awareness among the people as well as empower them. DC Faridpur said, "DC is

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<sup>17</sup> For details see empirical observations in paragraph 4.7.

getting mixed with the people without any hesitation. We are empowering people by ensuring their rights.” One example of awareness building is attending the “Uthan Boithak”<sup>18</sup> (Yard Meeting) with the village people in their yard.

Fourthly, one of the most important functions of DC is the coordination of all the activities of different departments in the districts. He is the chairperson of different committees in the district in which he has to play major role for the decision in the meetings. On the other hand, he has to also coordinate and cooperate with the NGOs, politicians and all classes of people in the society. So, he has the diversity of functional skill in order to handle all the situations.

Fifthly, DC considers his functions, people expectations and overall performance rationally. One of the Civil Society members said that DC is the last hope of the people in the district. For that reason, DC has to consider everything rationally and put his decision accordingly. For example, DC takes rational decision while approving the compensation money for the land acquisition in his jurisdiction.

Finally, it can be said that the above discussed issues are the part of present district administration which are the features of NPA. There are other issues like flexible and adaptable structure, social equity, multi-disciplinary nature and democratic citizenship which do not resemble with the activities of present DC office. NPA is a transitional paradigm which emphasized on a strong social issue what is known as social equity. In fact, the question of social equity is not applicable in a democratic country like Bangladesh. The structure of DC office is also determined by the government which is not flexible. The issue of democratic citizenship was applicable in the 1970s in western countries like USA. DC office has a diversification of activities but the nature is not multi-disciplinary. In broader sense, it appears that some conventional features of DC office have been transformed into the features of NPA which exist at present DC office.

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<sup>18</sup> “Uthan Boithak” is a Bengali word consisting of Uthan and Boithak. “Uthan” means yard and “Boithak” means meeting. The full meaning is yard meeting.

No.	Salient Features of NPA	NPA Features at Present DC Office	Example
1	Responsive administration to the change	exist	Land Records delivery through Union Digital Centre.
2	Client centricity	exist	Front Desk, District e-Service Centre.
3	Flexible and adaptable structure	-	-
4	Awareness regarding citizen	exist	“Uthan Boithak” (Yard Meeting)
5	Diversity of functional skill	exist	DC as Chairperson of different committees of districts.
6	Social equity	-	-
7	Rationality	exist	Approval of land acquisition compensation money.
8	Multi-disciplinary nature of public administration	-	-
9	Democratic citizenship	-	-

#### 4.8.3 Features indicating NPM at Present DC Office:

In Bangladesh the government is steering its administration to be more development oriented, more innovative and service oriented to the people. In fact, government expects the field administration to be service provider, not to be ruler or administrator. So, being the government representative and chief executive in the district, office of the Deputy Commissioner is leading the government development activities and all other service oriented activities in the district. The mechanism of functions of district administration has been changed a lot. Recently, district administration has abruptly entered into the digitization with their day to day business with the citizen. In fact, modern administration may be termed as digital administration. Technology has taken a very wide space in the arena of field administration. Citizen charter, web portal, video conferencing, e-Service centre,

Front Desk etc. have changed the scenario of district administration rapidly. It is more visible, accountable and committed to provide service to the door steps of the citizen. So, it is evident from the data sources, observation, media source and government documents that many NPM characteristics have gradually entered into the district administration with the changing realities.

Firstly, office of the Deputy Commissioner is now result or output oriented. In order to achieve the desired result, government has started agreement signing between DC Office and relevant ministries of the government. Example: Annual Performance Agreement.

Secondly, Deputy Commissioner, at present, has started providing guidance and direction to other officers or staff in order to produce desired output or result. For example, DC as a chief coordinator of the district provides guidance and necessary instructions through various coordination meeting with line agencies in a participative manner in order to achieve government goal.

Thirdly, DC together with other officers and staff is working like a team in order to implement the agenda of the central government in the district such as “Digital Bangladesh.” One example is District Innovation Team. DC Gazipur said that the whole district is working like a team in order to achieve the goals of the government. DC is leading the team with active participation.

Fourthly, district administration has given stress on the human resource development in order to make them user friendly with digital equipments such as laptop, computer, internet, scanner etc. and also expertise development. For example, in every DC office there is computer lab, where all staff receives training regularly. Similarly, officers are sent to the Prime Minister’s Office, Cabinet Division and other training centre both inside and outside of the country; even DC himself goes for foreign training such as Mid-career Training in India.

Fifthly, in DC office, information and communication technology (ICT) is playing a vital role for service delivery and e-management system. For example, e-filing, digital land record management system, District e-Service Centre.

Sixthly, district administration has given more importance now on better resource management. For example, introduction of audit system for the use of local revenue fund. It was not before in the DC office. It has created a stress on DC for the better utilization of that fund.

Seventhly, recently DC office has provided digital services to the citizen through district e-Service Centre and Front Desk. DC Munshiganj said, "Citizens are our customers or service receivers and DC Office is service provider. Government services are products and good will is profit. So, we are working in order to satisfy our customer and profit maximization,"<sup>19</sup>

Finally, it can be said that the above discussed issues are the part of present district administration which are the features of NPM. There are other issues like, mission driven government, transforming rule driven organization, competition in service delivery, contracting out, private sector style of management, market oriented practice, explicit standards and measures of practice which are not observed in DC office during study. DC office is still a government rule bound organization. Its mission and vision is set by the central government. The provision of private sector style of management is not applicable in this office. The question of contracting out and market oriented practice is quite impractical here. But it is true that private-public distinction is reducing day by day. As a core government organization, DC office is not yet assessed on the basis of performance, but the provision has been initiated recently for bringing out some desired output/results of government. Another important point is the change in mentality. Many conventional activities of DC office have been converted now for different factors which carry the features of NPM.

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<sup>19</sup> For more details, see the empirical observations of the incumbent Deputy Commissioners/ Additional Deputy Commissioners in paragraph 4.7.

<b>No.</b>	<b>Salient Features of NPM</b>	<b>NPM Features at Present DC Office</b>	<b>Example</b>
1	Mission driven government & transforming rule driven organization.	-	-
2	Competition in service delivery	-	-
3	Emphasis on output/result	exist	Annual Performance Agreement
4	Contracting out	-	-
5	Private sector style of management	-	-
6	Strengthening steering function rather than rowing	exist	Instructions through various coordination meeting to line agencies
7	Empowering rather than serving.	-	-
8	Participation and team work.	exist	District Innovation Team.
9	Market oriented practice	-	-
10	Improving human resource management.	exist	Training at DC office computer lab.
11	Optimizing information technology	exist	e-Filing, District e-Service Centre.
12	Stress on better resource use	exist	Audit system for the use of local revenue fund.
13	Explicit standards & measures of performance	-	-
14	Satisfying customer or clients needs	exist	Front Desk.

#### 4.8.4 Present Features of the Office of the Deputy Commissioner

Traditionally the Office of the Deputy Commissioner inherited the British colonial system of district administration. More than two hundred years passed, but the original structure and official pattern are still surviving with the change of time. The British India, the Pakistan period and then Bangladesh regime- the scenario and environment are totally different. So, there are many reasons that the British steel frame of Collector cannot sustain after such a long period of time. It will, of course, change with the elements of its environment. As a result, like many other countries of the world, the office of DC also holds the features of a mixing paradigm.

Office of the Deputy Commissioner		
TPA	NPA	NPM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal control of political leadership</li> <li>• A formal hierarchical structure</li> <li>• Emphasis on rationality in decision making</li> <li>• Process oriented inward accountability</li> <li>• Adoption of centralized strategy</li> <li>• Risk avoidance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsive administration to the change</li> <li>• Flexible and adaptable structure</li> <li>• Awareness regarding citizen</li> <li>• Diversity of functional skill</li> <li>• Rationality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis on output/result</li> <li>• Strengthening steering function rather than rowing</li> <li>• Participation and team work.</li> <li>• Improving human resource management.</li> <li>• Optimizing information technology</li> <li>• Stress on better resource use</li> <li>• Satisfying customer or clients needs</li> </ul>

- TPA, NPA & NPM co-exist in an uneasy manner in the Office of the Deputy Commissioner in Bangladesh.
- A noticeable features of transformation resemble with New Public Management (NPM); some features still reflect the Traditional Public Administration (TPA). There are also examples of feature of New Public Administration (NPA). The transformation reflects a mixture of the features of TPA, NPA and NPM.

#### 4.9 Key Factors Affecting the Transformation of the Role and Function of DC

From the content analysis, secondary data, media sources, interviews and case studies, it is evident that there has been a gradual transformation in the role and function of the Deputy Commissioner. There are several factors that are contributing to this transformation of the conventional character of district administration. This study facilitates the scope of identifying those factors that are responsible for the transformation.

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Interpretive Summary</b>	<b>Example</b>
1.Election Manifesto	1. Political commitment of government to the people	1. Digital Bangladesh
2. Administrative Reforms	2. Administrative reforms by different Reform Commission/ Committees.	2. Administrative Reform Committee 1982 (M. A. Khan Committee)
3.Separation of Judiciary	3. Constitutional commitment	3. In 2007, DC lost magisterial power.
4.Socio-economic change	4. Increase in citizen awareness and demand due to change of literacy & economy over time	4. Demand for online service
5. Decentralization	5. Loss of authority over some institution.	5. District Council
6.Five Year Plan	6. Government expenditure and action plan	6. 7 <sup>th</sup> five year plan
7. Innovation & Technology	7. Small reform within office for better service delivery. Technology helps visible and in time easy service delivery.	7. District e-Service Centre, Front Desk, Reception. Laptop, Computer, Scanner
8.Education & Training	8. Higher education and foreign/domestic training for the officers and staff.	8. a2i Training, strengthening program, Mid career training in India.
9.Citizen Charter & RTI	9. Openness of official service delivery and access to information.	9. DC Office Citizen Charter. Focal Point Officer for information providing.
10. Annual Performance Agreement (APA)	10. Annual Performance Agreement between DC (ADC) and different ministries	10. Agreement between ADC (Rev.) and Land Reform Board.
11.Media/Social Media	11. Increases accountability, visibility and publicity of Office.	11. Electronic & print media, face book.
12. Recognition/ Reward System	12. Increases inspiration and efficiency for service delivery	12. Prime Minister Medal, MOPA Medal for best DC

#### **4.10 Conclusion**

District Administration is both politically and administratively important and significant. It is seen as the core extension body of the National Government. The study found that the importance of this office is increasing day by day particularly in development oriented activities. People still feel that there is only one office in the district that will stand beside them in their well and woe, that is, the Office of the Deputy Commissioner. But the demand and expectation of the people have increased high. People look for more easy, quick and transparent services now. Keeping an eye to the demand of the people, office of the Deputy Commissioner is gradually bringing changes in its strategy. The political government is also directing district administration keeping an eye to the popular demand of the citizen as well as fulfilling their election commitment to the people. In this study, it seems that transformation or shifting from traditional approach is necessary for the better existence and creating more good will or image among the people, particularly, in the changing reality.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Findings and Conclusion**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter summarizes the overall study and analyses the research findings in the light of the concept of changing paradigm. More elaborately, it goes for the explanation of all factors that have been identified in this study responsible for the transformation of the role and functions of office of the Deputy Commissioner. It draws broad conclusions to the research questions. Finally it focuses on the issue that raised the scope for future research.

#### **5.2 Interpretation of Factors Affecting the Process of Transformation**

From data presentation and thematic analysis it has been found that the role and functions of the Deputy Commissioner have been influenced by some specific factors that are responsible for the transformation process. These are identified as Election Manifesto, Various Administrative Reforms, Separation of Judiciary, Decentralization, Socio-economic Change, Five Year Plan, Innovation & Technology, Education & Training, Citizen Charter and RTI, Pressure of Media & Social Media, Annual Performance Agreement and Recognition or Reward System. With the passage of time and change of regime, the role and functions of Deputy Commissioner have been transformed from the traditional rules and regulations in order to handle the need of administration as well as people.

#### **Election Manifesto:**

It has been found that the role and function of the Deputy Commissioner has been changed according to the instructions and guidance of the government in power. Government is guided by the election manifesto that they set for the people and country during election. Almost all former civil servants and incumbent civil servants said that the role and functions of the Deputy Commissioner had been changed

many times with the decision of the government in power in order to meet the demand of the people and government, because elected government has to take mandate of the people during election with the commitment of their election manifesto. In fact, government in power reflects the majority of the citizens who are promising to them for the implementation of election manifesto. They need to think deeply about the welfare of the citizens and issue orders and instructions as per citizen's demands. For example, in the Parliament Election 2008, one of the main issues of the election manifesto of Bangladesh Awami League was "Vision 2021" – a charter for change. When they came in power in 2009, formally they declared "Digital Bangladesh and Vision 2021" in order to bring desired changes as mentioned in their election manifesto and issued necessary rules & regulations with proper guidance. In order to proper implementation in the field administration, Deputy Commissioner was made key person and Office of the Deputy Commissioner was assigned to play leading role for the implementation of that election commitment of the government. Deputy Commissioner has to come out of the traditional mentality and go through many new and changing environments for implementing "Digital Bangladesh" in district level. So, election manifesto of government in power has directly influenced office of the Deputy Commissioner for the transformation of role and function institutionally.

#### **Various Administrative Reforms:**

In Bangladesh, the idea of administrative reforms is not new. In fact, a number of Committees and Commissions in the past right from the British Rule through Pakistan period devoted some of their attention to the administrative reform process although the process of actual implementation of reform program continued to be slow and obscure. During Company Rule (1757-1858) in British India, the role and function of the Collector were determined by the Company's own institutional set up. After assuming the power by the British Crown from the Company in 1858, a number of administrative reforms commissions had been formed during their ruling period (1858-1947) in order to reorganize some important administrative structure and functions that are concerned with the role and functions of the Collector. A number of Commission and Committees report like Report of the Public Service

Commission, 1886-87, Montagu-Chelmsford Reform 1912, Royal Commission on the Superior Civil Services in India, 1924, and Rowland Committee 1944-45 focused some attention on administrative reform. But a major milestone in this context was Montagu-Chelmsford Report 1912 and Bengal District Administrative Committee Report 1913-14 and Rowland Committee 1944-45 (Ali, Rahman & Das, 1983).

During Pakistan period, several committees/commissions regarding administrative reforms and function of District Magistrate were formed. Some reports brought significant changes in the role and functions of Collector. Among them, Land Reform Commission (Akhter Hossain Commission) 1958, Administrative Reorganization Committee (G. Ahmed Committee) 1958 and Provincial Administration Commission (Akhter Hossain Commission) 1959 were very important in the study context. The Administrative Reform Commission 1959 recommended that the designation of District Magistrate should be changed to Deputy Commissioner (DC) to strengthen his position by giving him new powers in order to make him more effective for the implementation of development programmes. This recommendation was implemented later on by President Ayub Khan.

Since the emergence of Bangladesh as a sovereign state, different governments attempted to reorganize the administrative system to suit the needs of their respective policy declaration. All these endeavors have had very small effects to make the administrative system responsive and efficient (Sarker, 2004). Some of the important Administrative Reforms Commissions/Committees in Bangladesh are Administrative and Services Reorganization Committee, 1972, Committee for Administrative Reform and Reorganization, 1982, Administrative Reorganization Committee 1993 and Public Administration Reform Commission 2000, During martial law in 1982 (Ershad period), the Administrative Reform Committee 1982 (M. A. Khan Committee) recommendations were accepted by NICAR (National implementation Committee on Administrative Reorganization/Reforms). On the basis of the recommendations, 42 subdivisions were upgraded into new districts which were inaugurated in 1984 (Ali, 1995). So, the district administration was

expanded in new districts that indicated a huge transformation of the role of Deputy Commissioner.

**Decentralization:**

Administrative and Local Government decentralization started from the British period and it continued in Pakistan period up to Bangladesh. Governor General Lord Ripon in 1882, decided to introduce a democratic local government system in Bengal (Ali, 1995). It was implemented by the historic Local Self Government Act, 1885 which provided for the creation of a district board for each district. Initially the District Magistrate became the ex-officio chairman of the board. The government of Pakistan also retained the system of district board with all acts, rules and regulations. After independence in Bangladesh, the system was also running in the same way. But a present, in the Zila Parishad (District Council), there are elected chairman and members working. In the same way, municipalities and other local government bodies were separated from the central administration replaced by elected representatives. The Montague-Chelmsford reforms (1919) affected the position of the collector in several ways; because the influence and initiative of the District Magistrate were greatly reduced, although he remained responsible for collection of revenue and maintenance of peace through his control over police and magistracy. An eminent former Adviser of the Caretaker Government and former Cabinet Secretary said, "DC cannot control local government now. During Basic Democracy of Ayub Khan, DC was the chairman of District Council. Now, District Council has independent Chairman. In Upazila Parishad, there is elected Chairman. Decentralization made DC less powerful."

Another eminent former Adviser of the Caretaker Government and former Secretary said, "Decentralization is a big factor for reducing the power and authority of DC. DC was the chairman of District Council from 1921 to 1958. Now, District Council Chairman, Upazila Parishad Chairman all these decentralization has reduced the authority of DC. DC has to coordinate, cooperate or compromise with them in different activities in the district." In the British period, Collector had to do all the activities of his own. But in course of time, new specialized departments have been

created for the relevant activities. So, decentralization has decreased the authority as well as power of Collector institutionally.

### **Separation of Judiciary:**

Judicial function was a part and parcel of the post Collector from the beginning in British India. Afterwards, several times this function had been separated from the executive and collector regained it again. For example, Governor General Warren Hastings empowered collector with judicial and police power in 1772, but Governor General Lord Cornwallis separated the judiciary from collector in 1793. Collector became more powerful by judicial power while became less powerful losing judicial power. In fact, this power is essential in order to solve some land related problems and better maintenance of law and order. Recently, in 2007 during Caretaker Government in Bangladesh, judiciary has been separated from the executive due to some constitutional obligation. This study found that the role and function of the Deputy Commissioner has been greatly influenced due to this separation. Although, Deputy Commissioner still is the District Magistrate and head of the District Law and Order Committee, but the loss of power due judicial separation has lead him losing some sorts of control over police. An eminent former Adviser of the Caretaker Government and former Cabinet Secretary said, "Separation of judiciary has influenced the power of DC adversely. DC has become meaningless now without judicial power. As a result, they have lost their control over police." One of the Joint Secretaries, Ministry of Public Administration and former DC, Jessore said, "Separation of judiciary has reduced the power of DC indeed. It has created a challenge for DC to implement the activities of the government as well as district administration without the judicial power. Particularly, law enforcing agency is not abiding by DC in that sense as it was before separation." At present, District Magistrate has been empowered with a new ordinance known as "Mobile Court Ordinance 2007." With this mobile court district administration can take immediate quasi-judicial action and preventive measures against any offence harmful for the mass people. District administration has shown a positive approach towards this change and diverted its role and functions to a number of constructive innovative activities. The positive approach has helped the office to overcome the loss and

establish the image of the district administration through a lot of other developmental activities.

### **Socio-economic Change:**

Most of the people of our country were illiterate and ignorant. They were unconscious about themselves, their rights and rules and regulations. Particularly, in the British India, they were deprived and tortured by the rulers many times due to their ignorance. People could not come in touch of rules and regulations and citizen rights. The rulers did not let them know about their rights. They could hide everything and exploit them. But time has been changed; the literacy rate and awareness of the citizens have increased a lot with the passage of time. Particularly, in the age of digitalization, people come to know everything with the help of technology. They know about citizen charter, Right to Information (RTI) Act, web portal etc. that helped them to raise their voice about their demands. The government as well as administration have also been aware of the citizens and showed a very positive approach to this change of citizen's awareness. So, one kind of social movement has taken place in the society. The Human Development Index (HDI) in recent times in Bangladesh is high. Women empowerment is also increasing day by day. Due to the development of technology and globalization, rapid changes among the people in the society have been taken place. At the same time, the economic condition of the people is also improving day by day. Administration is also influenced by these socio-economic changes of the people. The study found that district administration has prepared itself in order to mitigate this change of the society. Deputy Commissioners are pro people and citizen centric. They are committed to provide their services to the door steps of the citizens.

### **Citizen Charter (CC) and Right to Information (RTI):**

According to the direction of both Cabinet Division and Ministry of Establishment all D.C offices, UNO offices and AC (land) offices implement Citizen charter on February' 2008 (Nayem, 2010). Later on, this initiative was more strengthened by the district administration in Bangladesh. Field administration expert, an eminent Professor of Department of Public Administration, Dhaka University mentioned, "In every DC

office, there is a 'Citizen Charter' by which they are trying to provide service to the citizen or inform them about their services. It was imaginary in the past. Citizen Charter itself is a big development to the paradigm shift".

Similarly, The Right to Information (RTI) Act was introduced in Bangladesh in 2009. The Act made provisions for ensuring free flow of information and people's right to information. President of Jessore Press Club said, "Nothing can be hidden in the office of the Deputy Commissioner now, because citizens have the right to every information. Right to Information Act 2009 has empowered the citizens and helped to change the scenario of DC office."

So, CC and RTI helped to bring about remarkable changes in DC Office from traditional approach to innovative approach. The accountability, transparency and service delivery system improved a lot and citizen began to get their proper rights from the government offices. In the district, DC office led to implement these two in every office in the district and in upazila.

#### **Five Year Plan:**

In Bangladesh, government is planning to transform its economy to achieve Bangladesh's ambitious vision of becoming a middle income country by 2021. Government is strengthening finance for 7<sup>th</sup> five year plan (2016-2020) and achieving SDGs in Bangladesh. In the recent past, government became successful in achieving Millennium Development Goal (MDG) with the implementation of 6<sup>th</sup> five year plan (2011-2015). In the field administration, DC Office has to play a leading role in order to achieving these goals including many other developmental as well strategic action plans as directed in the five year plan. Particularly, for the implementation of "Vision 2021 Digital Bangladesh" as directed in the 6<sup>th</sup> five year plan, Office of the Deputy Commissioner had to go for many innovative internal reforms within the office which result in one kind shift in the role and function of the Deputy Commissioner. The key argument is that the role of the DC Office institutionally has been influenced by the five year plan as set by the government. In the past, five year plan also influenced collector to be more and more development oriented in addition to its regulatory

function. In Pakistan period, The First Five Year Plan (1955/56-1959/60) and The Village AID First Five Year Plan (1955/56-1959/60) were being implemented during the second half of the 1950s. The DO became too much engaged in specialization and diversification of development oriented activities. In order to make him more fruitful and more powerful in the mainstream of development activities as directed in the five year plan, the post of the District Magistrate was redesignated as 'Deputy Commissioner' in 1959 (Abedin, 1973). Many other governance challenges and issues are faced in the field level by the Deputy Commissioner for the implementation of government plans. So, five year plan is a vital factor that does matter in the transformation process.

### **Innovation & Technology:**

In order to make the service visible, accountable, transparent and time bound huge initiatives have been taken for innovation within the existing rules and regulations. In the field administration, office of the Deputy Commissioner is leading the district innovation team and innovative activities. The purpose is to provide in time services to the door steps of the citizens. Government Innovation Unit (GIU) of the Prime Minister's Office is providing proper guidelines and support for the purpose. Cabinet Division, MOPA and other strategic ministries are also providing necessary support for the innovation. DC Office is coming out of the traditional approach by applying the innovative technique in different service clusters, such as land record management, improving office environment for the citizens, use of face book etc. As a result, easy communication has been established between DC Office and citizens. Innovation has helped DC Office to turn into a transforming rule driven institution. Innovation is leading Office of the Deputy Commissioner each and every day for finding new plans and ideas for developing services to the citizens. DC Office considers Citizens now as their customers whom they will provide services for the maximization of their good will and developing better image.

On the other hand, in the age of globalization; technology is playing a major role for easy communication among the people and bringing desired changes/outcomes. Government has provided huge supports of technology to the DC office through a2i

project and ICT ministries. Laptop, computer, printers, broad band and wifi connection, video conferencing equipments, supporting infra structures etc. have changed the office environment into a new and digital one. Here technology is facilitating e-functioning support in DC Office. Use of technology has helped a lot both officers and staff of the office to get rid of traditional mentality and be prepared for handling citizen in a digital environment. Web portal, face book, e-service centre, front desk, computer lab, digital conference room everything are the outcomes of technology. The only purpose is to satisfy the client (citizen) of DC Office. It has made the office management simple, speedy and visible. One of the Joint Secretaries, Ministry of Public Administration and former DC, Jessore said, “The use of ICT and globalization has made more and more transformation in the role and function of DC. In fact, it is the one of the basic reason for the transformation. People have become more and more conscious due to the use of technology and effect of globalization. The entire citizens now know the information of DC Office that was not possible in the traditional period.”

#### **Education and Training:**

Ministry of Public Administration (MOPA), Cabinet Division and Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) have designed and organized different types of training and higher education programs for the field level officers both within the country and in foreign country. For example, MOPA has designed a special project for the government officials for Masters, Post Graduate Diploma, and PhD in the foreign countries in order to strengthen their skill and ability. Many officers have achieved the degree from foreign country and they are coming out of traditional mentality and becoming more and more innovative and service oriented. In the same way, many domestic and foreign training have been designed for the Deputy Commissioner. For example, mid career training in India for DC. PMO also organized some special training on innovation, ICT, development and other issues. These training have helped the officers for setting their mind in a different way such that they can really help the people as a service provider, not as a ruler. DC Office also arranged this type of training in the district level both for the officers and the staff. So, all these training

and education programs have helped the officers and staff to properly work in a changing reality.

#### **Annual Performance Agreement:**

The new dimension that has been added in the field administration is the Annual Performance Agreement (APA) signing between DC Office and different ministries or division. The purpose of agreement signing is to be result or output oriented. It is one kind of obligation, accountability or visibility of the annual work of district administration that will be evaluated by the central government. On the basis of evaluation of annual performance or result, DC office will be rewarded. An eminent Senior Secretary to the Government of Bangladesh and first woman Deputy Commissioner (former) said, "It was imaginary in the past that DC Office is signing agreement (Annual Performance Agreement) with the government for their annual performance evaluation. The agreement will make DC Office more innovative, citizen centric, result or output oriented, accountable and transparent, effective and efficient." So, output or result at the end of the year is a big factor for the performance evaluation of Deputy Commissioner.

#### **Media & Social Media:**

Media is the mirror of the society. At present electronic and print media is so strong. In addition, social media has added a new dimension in the cyber world. Face book, tweeter, web sites, video conferencing, email etc. are actively working at every moment all over the world. Any incident at any corner of the world is publicized within a few seconds through social media. Everybody can express his personal opinion in live through social media. District administration is also using the opportunity of media and social media in order to extend their publicity to all. All DCs have face book account and web portal now. Through it, they can display their developmental and other activities of the district administration and also express the announcement and other relevant information publicly through social media. People can also put their comments on DC's activities through social media. Moreover, media is very strong now. DC has to face them regularly. So, nothing can be hidden at present. Every information, news and other activities are published in the media

within few moments. Deputy Commissioner, Faridpur said, “People are very conscious and educated now. They are getting all the information from internet, face book and other social media. Electronic and print media is also very strong. So, district administration is also open to all. DC is getting mixed with the people without any hesitation. We are empowering people by ensuring their rights.” So, the media and social media have brought DC Office in a new reality which was imaginary in the past.

#### **Recognition or Reward System:**

Government has introduced reward system in the field administration particularly in the district administration for their contribution in innovative and other significant role or service oriented activities. For example, Prime Minister Medal and MOPA Medal for best Deputy Commissioner in National level. Deputy Commissioner Gazipur said, “Government is formulating new rules and regulations to run the administration, at the same time government is encouraging DC to be innovative and citizen centric, declaring reward for significant innovation and citizen service from Prime Minister’s Office, providing budgets, encouraging to be digitized and go for more citizen centric services.” This type of recognition by the Prime Minister is inspiring the Deputy Commissioner for contributing more and more in the district. Recognition is also helping all the DCs to create a friendly competition among them. In previous time, this type of provision was not incorporated in the system by the government. It might not have that much financial value, but it has a big impact on creating moral value and it counts much more than anything. At the same time, it is creating a citizen friendly working environment in the district.

#### **5.3 Reexamining the Research Questions**

One of the major objectives of the study was to focus on the evolution of the role and function of the Office of the Deputy Commissioner in Bangladesh. From the content analysis it has been found that the official journey of office of the Deputy Commissioner started with the Hastings Plan in 1772 through the official appointment of “Collector” for land tax revenue. Earlier, East India Company appointed their first collector in the year 1700 before they assumed governance of

India. Mainly it was a sequential land management as inherited from the Mughal. Later on, Collector was empowered with magistracy and judgeship, withdrawn these powers several times and at last, during British Raj, Collector inherited these powers united in the same person. In the year 1959 during Pakistan period, District Magistrate and Collector was newly designated as “Deputy Commissioner” in order to bring him to the mainstream of development.

Two other objectives of the study are to explore and understand the transformation of the role of the Office of the Deputy Commissioner and to identify the factors and or conditions that might have influenced the transformation of the role of the Office of the Deputy Commissioner. These two objectives are very much related with two research questions of the study: 1. What are the factors that induced and or influenced the transformation of the function of the Office of the Deputy Commissioner? 2. Does the transformation of functional areas of the Office of the Deputy Commissioner resemble the features of transformation of public administration paradigm (TPA-NPA-NPM)?

The study found that NPM, NPA and TPA co-exist in an uneasy manner in the Office of the Deputy Commissioner. Traditional Public Administration began in the subcontinent during British East India Company. It flourished when British Crown took over the state power of India and started Indian Civil Service (ICS) (1858-1947). It was well known as “British Steel Frame”. Then Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Civil Service in Pakistan (CSP) and Bangladesh Civil Service (Administration) Cadre officers inherited that traditional system of bureaucracy. In course of time with the changing reality, Bangladesh Administrative Service officers have been shifted from their British traditional colonial approach and gone through a series of transformation. A noticeable features of transformation resemble with New Public Management (NPM); some features still reflect the Traditional Public Administration (TPA). There are also examples of feature of New Public Administration (NPA). The transformation reflects a mixture of the features of TPA, NPA and NPM. It is encouraging to state that there appears to be gradual transformation of the conventional character of district administration. It has significantly moved from TPA

towards a mixed approach of NPA & NPM. It is also likely true that there has been a transformation of mind set of the 'bureaucracy' & 'citizen' due to changes in cultural and political factors..

In the process of transformation of the role and the functions of office of the Deputy Commissioner, several factors have been identified through content analysis, case studies, media sources, observations and in-depth interviews with the formal and incumbent civil servants, academics, historians, civil society members, media personalities, DC office staff and citizens. The study found that Election Manifesto, Administrative Reforms, Separation of Judiciary, Decentralization, Socio-economic Change, Five Year Plan, Innovation & Technology, Education & Training, Citizen Charter and RTI, Media & Social Media, Annual Performance Agreement and Recognition or Reward System are the dominating factors that have influenced and or induced the role and functions of DC resulting a gradual transformation of the conventional character of district administration.

#### **5.4 Implication for Future Research**

One of the most important functions of the Deputy Commissioner is land management in the district. Land record is the root or base of the land management system. The study found that, the land management system today has not been modernized up to a standard level although many initiatives have been taken by the district administration. The researcher observed that "Digital Land Record Management System" has been introduced in the DC office but the land records preservation system is very poor. As a result, many records are destroyed due to lack of proper reservation. So, in need of time DC office will not be able to supply those records which are not available in the record room. From that context, a question naturally arises to what extent the digital land record management system is effective in the office of the Deputy Commissioner. A further study regarding digital land record management system may explore the internal weakness, strength and factors that might influence the effectiveness of the digital land record management system.

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## **ANNEXURE**

### **Annex I**

#### **Interview Checklist**

1. Will you please explain the evolution of district administration/Office of the Deputy Commissioner in Bangladesh?
2. From your observation, what are the changes or transformations (of the role and function of DC) that have taken place in DC office?
3. What are the factors or conditions that might have influenced or affected the transformation (of the role and function of DC)?
4. What is the present behavioral approach and attitude of DC?
5. Do you think that the present features or characteristics of DC office indicate a shift from the traditional features?

## Annex II

### List of Interviewees

1. Dr. Akbar Ali Khan, former Adviser, Caretaker Government, Bangladesh.
2. Dr. AMM Shawkat Ali, former Adviser, Caretaker Government, Bangladesh.
3. Dr. ATM Shamsul Huda, former Chief Election Commissioner (CEC), Bangladesh.
4. Professor Dr. Sharif Uddin Ahmed, Chairman, Department of History and Philosophy, NSU, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
5. Professor Dr. Mobassher Monem, Department of Public Administration, Dhaka University.
6. Dr. Sheikh Abdur Rashid, Former Secretary, Government of Bangladesh.
7. Begum Mushfeka Ikfat, Senior Secretary, Government of Bangladesh.
8. Jalal Ahmed, Additional Secretary, Local Government Division.
9. Dr. Humayun Kabir, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Public Administration.
10. Md. Habibur Rahman, Joint Secretary, Cabinet Division.
11. Dr. M. A. Momen, former DC, Dhaka.
12. Md. Asraf Uddin, DC Jessore
13. Dr. Dewan Muhammad Humayun Kabir, DC Gazipur
14. Rekha Rani Balo, DC Pabna.
15. Begum Umme Salma Tanzia, DC Faridpur
16. Begum Shayla Farzana, DC Munshiganj
17. Begum Shahina Khatun, DC Natore
18. Dr. Abu Bakar Siddique, 13 BCS (Administration).
19. Begum Maksuda Siddika, ADC, Pabna
20. Md. Gias Uddin, ADC, Khulna
21. Md. Motaleb Sarkar, ADC, Dinajpur
22. Md. Ruhul Amin Mia, ADC, Rangpur
23. Md. Harun-Ar-Rashid, ADC, Munshiganj.
24. Md. Rahenul Islam, ADM, Gazipur.
25. Md. Md. Hussain Shaokat, ADC, Jessore.

26. Syed Aminur Rahman, ADC, Sylhet.
27. Zahid Hasan Tokon, President of Jessore Press Club.
28. Md. Kaesh Uddin, President of Naogaon Press Club.
29. Sree Shankar Ranjan Saha, civil society member, Naogaon.
30. Professor Dr. Touhid Ahmed (retired), civil society member, Naogaon.
31. Dr. Falguni Rani Chakrabarti, civil society member, Naogaon.
32. Md. Sharifur Rahman, Principal BIAM School and College, Naogaon.
33. Ibnu Sabbir Ahmed, Sonapatti, Naogaon.
34. Advocate Mozahar Hossain, Judge Court, Naogaon.
35. Md. Mozaffor Hossain, former Administrative Officer, DC office, Joypurhat.