

## **The Coordination of Power and Authority between the UZP Chairman and the Local MP: Strategies and Policies for Success**

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**Abstract:** *The present Upazila is a substitute to the earlier 'Thana' or the Police Station rendered by the then President H.M. Ershad in 1983-84 to establish it as an elected organ of local self-government in Bangladesh. Subsequently an election was held in 1985 to elect a Chairman for the 'Upazila Parishad' (UZP) what was working up to 1991. From 1991 to 2009, the UZP had no functioning existence. Through an election, on 22 January, 2009, the UZP once again came into a functioning existence along with a Chairman and two Vice-Chairmen one of whom was female from a reserved seat for female. On this second phase of functioning, the UZP is facing a severe crisis of exercising authority over the UZP activities because of a conflicting position of the UZP Chairmen- Vice Chairmen and the local MPs. This paper has worked to find out the probable alternatives through which the public representatives of a locality at an Upazila (namely, the UZP Chairman, the UZP Vice-Chairman and the local MP) would become happy and pleased with their status and authority over the UZP to perform their best for the betterment of the local people and of the UZP.*

### **Introduction:**

There is no alternative for an effective UZP without the coordination of power and authority between the UZP Chairman and the local MP. This coordination is needed not only for an effective UZP but also for a peaceful local life. Because the lack of coordination or absence of coordination between these two authorities creates multi-dimensional problems and those problems has been setting up the back ground of multi-dimensional and peculiar conflict in local areas. The socio-economic and political developments at the local areas have been hampered due to this problem in the mean time. So, how to surmount this problem is being considered as an important issue. It is believed that proper and effective strategies and policies can terminate these severe problems of the UZP and the UZP can play an effective role for the local socio-economic and political developments. The strategies and policies that are derived from the suggestions and observations of concerned quarters i.e. the experts on the local self-governments and development, elected representatives of the UZP, the MPs, and the bureaucrats and from the experience of the research staff gathered through the field work are presented below.

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### Goals of the Study

- a) To examine the present and previous structure and executive powers of the Upazilla for making development plan and implementation at the root level.
- b) To find out the previous and latest picture of the conflict regarding power and authority between the UZP Chairmen and the MPs.
- c) To know and examine the attitude of the Civil Society, the Media, the Social Workers, the Bureaucrats and the Representatives.
- d) To point out the possible reactions of maladjustment on the legal power and authority between the UZP Chairmen and local MPs and
- e) To point out the possible reactions of maladjustment on the legal power and authority between the UZP Chairmen and the UNOs.

### Objectives of the Study

- a) To point out and to offer probable techniques and mechanism for the coordination of mutual legal power and authority between the UZP Chairmen and the local MPs and
- b) To point out and to offer probable legal techniques and mechanism for the coordination of mutual power and authority between the UZP Chairmen and the UNOs.

### Research Methodology

To collect necessary data and information of the research following techniques were followed:

#### 1. Collecting data and information

- a) Primary sources of data and information: the Civil Society, the Media, the Social Workers, the Bureaucrats and the Representatives.
- b) Secondary sources of data and information: Published books, Articles, unpublished research works, media reports and government documents.
- c) Techniques to collect data and information:

- I. Fixed questionnaire along with probable alternative answers.
- II. Undeclared communication system to collect personal and official information of the MPs, the UZP Chairmen and the UNOs.
- III. In case of necessity some speech were recorded.

## 2. Analyzing the data and information

Collected primary and secondary data and information were classified and presented in the table using average and percentage in the light of research works conducted in the Social Sciences.

## 3. Area of research

Two main figures, the MPs and the elected UZP Chairmen were selected basing the primary observations considering their cold and warm relations form different Upazillas of six administrative Divisions of the country along with the UNOs. The number of interviews of the UNOs, the UP Chairmen, Development Workers, Media persons and the Civil Society would be near about 300.

## The Conceptual Framework

The terminologies like Local Government, Local Self-government, Upazilla Parishad (UZP), the UZP Chairman, the Member of the Parliament (MP), Power and Authority etc. would be used frequently and significantly in this research work, This research will mainly give the concentration on the classical definition and implementation of power and authority.

The terms Local Government and Local Self-government are old enough and these have been defined elaborately. These two terminologies and ideas are used as synonymous by many Academics and Experts and by the Government even in different State documents. This is simply a wrong use and application of significantly different terminologies.

It is agreed that a Local government is a local administrative structure of the Central government and it follows, any way, the Central government.

A Local Self-government is an arrangement what is elected by the local voters and controlled by them.

The Upazilla means an administrative unit of Bangladesh introduced by



the then military ruler Mr HM Ershad replacing the then Thanas in 1984-85.

1. The Upazilla Parishad (UZP) means a rural local self-government unit of Bangladesh formed with the elected representatives (presently one Chairman, two Vice Chairmen and the elected Chairmen of Union Parishads-UPs) of that Upazilla .

The Upazilla Parishad (UZP) Chairman means the person elected by the people (voters) of that Upazilla area.

2. The Member of the Parliament-MP means a representative elected by the people of a constituency out of the 300 constituencies of Bangladesh for the Membership of the central legislature named Jatiyo Sangsad officially what is translated in English as the Parliament (to this author, this is another State-level wrong use-a misnomer as no Noun should be translated in a different language). There are some women elected from the 'reserved women seats' also called MP. They are elected in a different way.

Power and Authority are the two elaborately discussed and controversial terminologies in sociology. There is a close relation between the Power and Dominance. Sociologist Lasswell and Kaplan have distinguished Power and Dominance minutely. Regarding Power, they have said, it is nothing but comparatively committed deception and patronization for the change of others behaviors. According to their description, power is nothing but the rights under the specific branches of law.

In Sociology and in Political Philosophy the word Authority is used as power, dominance and leadership. According to Philosopher De Jouvenel Bertrand, 'the concept of authority is an older idea than the State and fundamental. Authority can be explained traditionally from the context of Law as the legal and just power, right of command and right to perform something.

The meaning of Authority in the administration and management is the right of command. The subordinates perform according to the command of the Boss to achieve the goals of the organization. The basis of responsibility is the authority. Sense of responsibility doesn't generate without the authority. According to the Sociologists, 'the authority is the capability to influence the decision.'



In this present research, all the legal and formal rights of the UZP Chairmen and the MPs are considered as the Authority. On the other hand, all the informal and undeclared abilities to be practiced personally due to their position by the UZP Chairmen and the MPs would be identified as the Power.

### **Limitations**

Firstly, the UZP has recently been reestablished through the election. So the evaluations and the observations-suggestions on the UZP might be risky in terms of fruitfulness due to an insufficient scope of observations and exercises.

Secondly, the study was conducted on a small scale. So the results or findings of this study might be considered insufficient to generalize.

#### **The Local MP as the Advisor to the UZP**

The local MPs were very much active and involved with the various local development activities from the British-Indian period. That was a usual practice and duty as well for them. So the involvement of the local MPs in the local development activities was not a matter of question at all. This very question came in the scenario after the introduction of the UZP replacing the earlier Thanas. The active and authoritative involvement of the local MPs in the local development activities became a matter of question when the provision of an elected authority responsible for the local developments is made. Because the authoritative involvement (as the Advisor having VETO and decisive authority) of the local MPs became an overlapping authority with the elected UZP, namely with the authority of the Chairmen and the Vice-Chairmen of the UZP. The very overlapping authority is creating and spreading conflicts among the local MPs and the elected Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the UZPs causing inactiveness of the UZPs and multi-dimensional problems at the grass-roots of the country.

The local MPs and the Chairmen of the UZPs commit during the election campaign to the local people to undertake few local development activities most of what are overlapping. To have and continue support of the local people the local MPs need to be involved in the local development activities and to undertake those development activities they need authority and power at the Upazilla or their constituency level. The local MPs fear, if they are seen detached from the local development

activities, they would be failing to attract their voters in the next or future elections. So all the MPs, the MPs of treasury bench and the opposition, are united or of the same opinion to have authority over the decision making process of the UZPs as all the governmental resources are allotted for the local developments through the UZPs only. The UZP Chairmen are mainly elected for the overall developments of their own Upazilla. It is their primary business. On the contrary, at least theoretically, main jobs of the MPs are to contribute in law making and ensuring the accountability of the Executive branch of the government. But, it is considered often, detachment of the MPs from the local development activities would cause their defeat in the following election. So the active or authoritative participation in the local development activities of the MPs is very much important for their political existence. The question is how to ensure an authoritative presence of the UZP Chairmen in their Upazilla-based development activities keeping the local MPs as the guardians upon the same. In simple words, what are the policy suggestions to ensure a sound and healthy coordination between the UZP Chairman and the local MP in terms of their authoritative and respectful participation in the development activities at the Upazilla level?

#### Proposals for the Coordination between the UZP Chairman and the local MP

Some suggestions for the coordination between the UZP Chairman and the local MP are offered by the UZP Chairmen to the researchers of this project during the field work. They want an effective UZP with the cooperation of the local MP. They consider that the UZP Chairmen are not only responsible for the local development; MPs are also responsible for this. Both of them will not only be defeated in the following election but also be hated by the public if they do not play a proper role in the local developments, they add. At the same time they observe that the MPs can not possess all the Upazilla matters leaving or ignoring the elected UZP body that are also empowered by the same voters of the Upazilla. They want cooperation from the local MPs and coordination with them in a formal and legal way to maintain their power and authority. How the power and authority of the UZP Chairman and the local MP can be coordinated between them are projected in the following table.

Table: 1

Distribution of the UZP Chairmen and the MPs according to their opinion about the coordination between the UZP Chairman and the MPs

Opinion of the UZP Chairmen & the MPs	Number of respondents		Percentage (%)	
	Chairman	MP	Chairman	MP
Yes	22	07	84.61	100
No	02	0	7.69	0
Not response	02	0	11.53	0
Total	26	07	100%	100%

Table 1 shows that 22 (84.61%) UZP Chairmen, out of 26, have given a positive response in this regard. They think that the coordination between the UZP Chairmen and the local MP is possible and desirable as well. But what would be the way of coordination is the burning issue till now. How to satisfy the parties concerned is the point of consideration or the real challenge. In spite of this challenge the UZP Chairmen want coordination with the local MPs. And for this, they have offered some proposals: 1. powers-authority and the development allotment for the Upazilla should be distributed between the UZP Chairman and the local MP, opine 09 UZP Chairmen (40.91%), 2. The limit of power and authority should be identified for the UZP Chairman and the local MP, opine 07 UZP Chairmen (31.81%), 3. the local MPs might be set as an ornamental Advisor on the UZP and they would participate in and motivate the local development activities, consider 04 UZP Chairmen (18.81%). 4. The local MPs should be given a certain amount of development fund and nothing else, opine 02 UZP Chairmen (9.09%).

On the other hand 02 UZP Chairmen (7.69%) are negative in this regard. They think, the coordination between the UZP Chairmen and the local MPs is neither possible nor desirable. They have also mentioned that the MPs should be involved more in active law making process.

This table also shows that 100% respondent MPs has given positive response in this context. They did not ignore the necessity of coordination between the UZP Chairmen and the local MPs. They have given some proposals as 1. there should be a long-term planning specifying the priorities of implementation along with an implementation schedule prepared jointly by them- the UZP Chairman and the local MP, 05 MPs (71.42%) suggest, 2. 01 MP (14.28%) has suggested that the UZP



Chairman should participate in the local developments under the leadership of the local MP. 3. 01 MP (14.28%) has suggested that the limit of power and authority should be identified between the UZP Chairman and the local MP for an effective UZP.

This table reveals that the MPs also want an effective UZP as like as the UZP Chairmen. But the MPs have a lot of interests to participate in the local development functions. For this reason they want power and authority at the UZP along with the UZP Chairmen.

Table: 2

Classification of three categories of respondents according to a proposal that all the decisions and functions of the UZP will be planned and implemented by the UZP Chairman and the local MP will taking care of those

Opinion of the respondents	Number of the respondents			Percentage (%)		
	Chairman	MP	UNO	Chairman	M.P	UNO
Yes, Do support	06	02	02	23.07	28.57	10.52
No, Do not support	09	03	09	34.61	42.85	47.36
Considerable as an experimental	09	02	05	34.61	28.57	19.23
No comment	01	0	03	3.84	0	15.78
No response	01	0	0	3.84	0	00
Total	26	07	19	100 %	100%	100%

Table 2 shows that the proposal (that all the decisions and functions of the UZP will be planned and implemented by the UZP Chairman and the local MP will taking care of those) has been supported by 06 (23.07%) UZP Chairmen, 02 (28.57%) MPs and 02 (10.52%) UNOs. They think that this formula may be able to remove present problems and crises of the UZP and make it effective. On the other hand this proposal has not been supported by 09 (34.61%) UZP Chairmen, 03 (42.85%) MPs and 09 (47.36%) UNOs. The UZP Chairmen view that only elected body of the UZP is the real authority for making decision, doing functions and taking care over Upazilla system. And they have a lot of capabilities, skills and public support for that. So, this proposal can not be supported. The MPs view that they have been elected with a lot of commitments to the local people and it is time to fulfill those commitments. But it will not be possible if they do not get power and authority at the UZP, they opine.

The UNOs View that the UZP and the UZP Chairman are not the same. One is the institution and another is an individual. It is a misconception that an effective UZP depends on an unlimited power to be exercised by the UZP Chairman. So, the decisions will have to be taken jointly by the local MP and the UZP Chairman and be activated according to the specific rules and regulations of the UZP.

This table also shows that 09 (34.61%) UZP Chairmen, 02 (28.57%) MPs and 05 (19.23%) UNOs have opined that it is considerable as an experimental proposal. Through an experiment the proposal would be proved as working or dysfunctional.

01 (3.84%) UZP Chairman and 03 (15.78%) UNOs has expressed that they have no comment in this context. 01 UZP Chairman (3.84%) did not give any response on this proposal.

Table: 3

Classification of three categories of respondents according to their proposal on coordination in local development functions between the UZP Chairman and the local MP

Proposal	Number of respondents			Percentage (%)		
	Chairman	MP	UNO	Chairman	MP	UNO
Joint initiatives for short-term	06	02	0	23.07	28.57	0
Joint initiatives for mid-term	03	02	03	11.53	28.57	15.78
Joint initiatives for long-term	09	02	05	34.61	28.57	26.31
Joint initiatives guided by the central government	06	01	07	23.07	14.28	36.84
Different function area for both	0	0	01	0	0	5.26
Coordination is possible when it maintains democratic spirit	0	0	01	0	0	5.26
MPs will have to be engaged only in law making process	0	0	01	0	0	5.26
No proposal	02	0	01	07.69	0	5.26
Total	26	07	19	100%	100%	100%

Table 3 shows that a proposal of joint initiatives for a short-term planning, implementing and monitoring has been supported by 06 (23.07%) UZP Chairman and 02 (28.57%) MPs. They think, it would ensure a proper coordination.

Joint initiatives for a mid-term planning, implementing and monitoring over the Upazilla development activities have been proposed by 03 (11.53%) UZP Chairmen, 02 (28.57%) MPs and 03 (15.78%) UNOs.

They consider, it would be better effective than a short-term arrangement.

Joint initiatives for long-term planning, implementing and monitoring over the Upazilla development activities have been proposed by 09 (34.61%) UZP Chairmen, 02 (28.57%) MPs and 05 (26.31%) UNOs. They argue that a long-term arrangement is more effective than a short-term or a mid-term arrangement for local development in developing countries.

Joint initiatives guided by the central government have been proposed by 06 (23.07%) UZP Chairmen, 01 MP (14.28%) and 07 (36.84%) UNOs. Every plan and implementation will have to be guided/controlled by the central government since the budget for the local development comes from the same, they argue.

Different function areas for the both (i.e. the UZP Chairman and the local MP) have been proposed by 01 UNO (5.26%) because, to him, coordination between the local MP and the UZP Chairman is never possible.

Coordination is possible when it maintains democratic spirit is the opinion of 01 (5.26%) UNO. Lack of democratic spirit is responsible for the absence of coordination between them, he mentions.

The MPs will have to be engaged only in law-making process, opines 01 (5.26%) UNO. The MPs have been elected by the people to make laws for the nation, not to interfere in local development activities, he argues.

02 UZP Chairmen (7.69%) and 01 MP (5.26%) did not respond on this item.

### **Relation**

Any kind of coordination depends on good relation. In spite of limitation of laws, a positive relation can make a positive step toward the development. So, for the sake of local development at the Upazilla level, development of relation among the UZP Chairman, the local MP and the respective UNO is very much important and expected. Such kind of relation may create a sense of responsibility in them to speed-up a rhythm in local socio-economic and political development. The reality is that the UZP could not be effective due to a lack of good relation among the UZP Chairman, the local MP and the respective UNO. Moreover the relation



has been affected again and again because of the newly introduced Act, rules and regulations in this context. The political or ideological similarity of the persons concerned can enhance a good and positive relation at the local level. But it is observed during the field work that the relation among the persons concerned is being deteriorated.

Table: 4

Distribution of the UZP Chairmen and the MPs on getting any advantage from each other due to a member of same political party

Type of response	Number of respondents		Percentage (%)	
	Chairman	MP	Chairman	MP
Yes	03	01	11.53	14.28
No	10	05	38.47	71.44
Not mention	13	01	50	14.28
Total	26	07	100	100

Table 4 shows that 03 UZP Chairman (11.53%) and 01 MP (14.28%) has given positive response in this context. All of them are the members of ruling party Awami League. 03 (11.53%) UZP Chairmen have unofficially informed this research team that they enjoy a lot of advantages from the respective MPs though 13 UZP Chairmen out of 26 respondents are the members of Awami League. Rest 10 (38.46%) 'Awami Leaguer' UZP Chairmen did not admit to enjoy any extraordinary privilege. The allotments were provided to them according to the rules and regulations, they claim. This table also shows that 13 (50%) UZP Chairmen and 01 MP (14.28%) did not respond on this question.

Table: 5

Distribution of the UNOs about their relation with the UZP Chairman and the local MP

UNOs' Opinion	Number of respondents		Percentage (%)	
	Chairman	MP	Chairman	MP
Cooperative	15	16	78.96	84.22
Non cooperative	0	0	0	0
Competitive	0	0	0	0
Indifferent	01	0	5.26	0
Official	01	01	5.26	5.26
Working	01	01	5.26	5.26
No mention	01	01	5.26	5.26
Total	19	19	100%	100%

Table 5 shows that the relation with the UZP Chairman and the local MP have been identified as cooperative, respectively, by 15 (78.96%) and 16 (84.22%) UNOs. This good relation is very important for a working environment what is maintained by them with the local MP and the UZP Chairman. There is 01 (5.26%) UNO on each item to identify the relation with the UZP Chairman and the local MP as official and working while relation with 01 UZP Chairman was identified as indifferent by an UNO. 01 UNO did not respond on this item.

### **Proper Training**

Training is an important way to improve personal skill for administrative and development functions. In addition, it is much more important to develop a proper leadership to help progress of a positive change as a whole. The question of administrative capability of the UZP Chairmen has been raised. This question may be raised about the MPs lacking a direct experience of administration. Administrative skill can not be acquired in a short time. The jurisdiction and the concepts of power and authority, responsibilities and functional procedures are not clear enough to most of the UZP elected persons. The government would be responsible for the lacking of authentic and specific activities would be performed by the UZP authorities. So, the government should make training policies quickly for the leaders of local self-governments to inspire, encourage and dedicate them to their responsibilities as well as authorities. The ultimate goal of this training is to grow confidence and commitment to develop local areas.

Creative training methods and functions may be taken in this regard. So, use of information technology (IT) for training of local government leaders is considered as a good way for creative training.

### **Powerful Autonomous Commission for Local Self-government**

Forming a powerful local self-government commission can solve a lot of problems not only for the UZP but also for other local self-governments like Union Parishad, Pourosova, City Corporation. All the local self-governments of Bangladesh would be directed by the laws which will be framed by the Commission. The budget of local self-governments, the allotment policy and implementation framework as well as project observation would be approved by the Commission. In addition, any kind of objection against the local self-governments or its members will be reviewed and settled by the Commission. There would be no scope of

interference upon the local self-government bodies by the government or other authorities. Moreover dependency of the local self-governments might be reduced and transparency and accountability of the elected authorities would be ensured by the Commission. Though there is no debate about such a Commission but a strong national consensus is needed for that immediately. The debate should be raised in this regard introducing a Bill in the Parliament and participation of the Opposition Parties on this debate should be ensured. In addition government will have to collect opinion from all the groups of people through the website of the Parliament, if necessary. Needless to say that a lot of questions about the issue of empowerment of local self-government will be settled when a 'local government Commission' will be formed on the opinion of all quarters of people. So, the government should take a quick step in this regard.

Table: 6

Distribution of the UZP Chairmen and the UNOs according to their opinion to establish a powerful Local Self-government Commission

Type of answer	Number of respondents		Percentage (%)	
	Chairman	UNO	Chairman	UNO
Yes	25	11	96.15	57.89
No	0	05	0	26.32
Not mention	01	03	3.85	15.79
Total	26	19	100	100

Table 6 shows that the demand to establish a powerful Local Self-government Commission has been supported by 25 UZP Chairmen (96.15%). They want a strong and sustainable local self-government commission which will not frequently change its stands as per government wishes. The respondents in this category have mentioned arguments in their favor such as: 1. a powerful local self-government commission can play an active and effective role for the development of local self-governments in Bangladesh through which democracy will get a strong foundation by its proper nursing {12 UZP Chairmen (48%) out of 25}, 2. a local self-government commission can build a permanent, acceptable and strong structure for the local self-governments what is necessary for a sustainable and powerful local self-government {09 UZP Chairmen (36%) out of 25}. 3. the practice, development and foundation of democracy will be strong {03 UZP Chairmen (12%) out of 25}, 4. 01 UZP Chairman (4%) thinks that a local self rule will not be hampered due



to the change of the country rulers if the Commission is established. So, the Commission will have to be formed coping/picking-up the honest, dedicated, intellect and expert personalities for this reason.

On the other hand only 01 UZP Chairman (3.84%) has not given any response in this regard.

This table also shows that 11 UNOs (57.89%) out of 19 UNOs have given a positive response in this regard. They think that a powerful local self-government needs a powerful Commission. This Commission will play a significant role for making necessary rules and regulations and protecting interest of the local self-governments. On the other hand 05 (19.23%) UNOs out of 19 UNOs have given a negative response in this regard. They have mentioned arguments in their favor such as: powerful local self-governments need democratic spirit, values and patience to different views. The representatives of local self-government like the UZP Chairmen and Vice Chairmen have already failed to show such type of spirit, values and patience to the government. The government is being threatened by the UZP Chairmen and Vice Chairmen's unlimited and unexpected demands. So a Local Government Commission is an unnecessary institution.

#### Specific Areas of Power and Authority

The power and authority might be specified not only for the UZP Chairmen and the local MPs but also for the Vice Chairmen and UNOs through the rules and regulations. Generally an MP would play his/her role in the Parliament for local developments presenting project proposals, local problems and seeking adequate budget to meet those in the House and in other appropriate places. In addition, an MP can help the UZP for making and implementing short-term and long-term plan. Moreover, an MP can ensure the accountability of the UZP including its Chairman and Vice Chairman investigating the project or development activities.

All the people obviously and unanimously want development of their respective area. So, if any development takes place because of the positive steps of an MP, the local people would and must appreciate the MP and his/her efforts. Similarly the UZP Chairman would perform his responsibilities respecting necessary advices of the local MP. Obviously both of them are not only elected by the people but also committed to them for local developments. Like the UZP Chairman, the local MP has

right to participate in the local development activities. So, both of them should keep open the opportunity to take part in local development functions for each other. This is why both of them need coordination in exercise of power and authority. Needless to say that nothing is positive where conflict and clash is present what is a reality of the UZP in present time.

Power and authority of the UZP exercised by the UZP Chairman and supervised by the local MP

The UZP will take initiatives to implement and monitor all development activities in local level as the local self-government of respective Upazilla. All those functions must be lead by the UZP Chairman as elected head of the UZP. This character of the UZP is universal as a local self-government. At the same time, every system has its own nature and the UZP in Bangladesh has the same. The exercise of power by the local MPs over their constituencies/localities has a historical background. This practice is being exercised from the time immemorial. This is why it is complicated to stop this practice. It is time to settle a balanced relationship between the UZP Chairman and the local MP. For this reason there is no way except coordination between them- suggested by the policy makers, politicians and the civil societies.

The planning and implementation of all the decisions and functions of the UZP will be made by the UZP Chairman as the autonomous body. Role of the local MP is an important and significant matter in local socio-economic and political developments. Therefore coordination needed between them for solving the existing crisis at the UZP. The MPs might be happy if they get the power to supervise and monitor all kinds of UZP functions like planning, decision making and implementation what would pave the way to reach a mutual understanding.

Joint consent and signature of the local MP and the UZP Chairman should be mandatory in social participation and development activities at the Upazilla

The option mentioned above (Joint consent and signature of the local MP and the UZP Chairman should be mandatory in social participation and development activities at the Upazilla) for the coordination between the UZP Chairman and the local MP might be considered as a significant policy to ease the existing crisis at the UZP. The local MPs want to ensure their participation in the local socio-economic and political activities and

developments and they desire the leadership. On the other hand, the UZP Chairman and the UZP may want unconditional right of power and authority as the legal elected leadership. In such a situation the option mentioned above may work satisfying both the desiring parties to enjoy power and authority over the UZP. In this arrangement each of them is supposed to give proper attention to local development activities with psychological peace. The idea was presented before the respondents of three categories and a mixed response was found.

Table: 7

Distribution of three categories of respondents on the option: 'Joint consent and signature of the local MP and the UZP Chairman should be mandatory in social participation and development activities at the Upazilla'

Type of response	Number of respondents			Percentage (%)		
	MP	Chairman	UNO	MP	Chairman	UNO
Do support	02	06	02	28.57	23.07	10.52
Do not support	02	09	06	28.57	34.62	31.58
Considerable for an experiment	02	09	06	28.57	34.62	31.58
No comment	01	02	05	14.29	7.69	26.32
Total	07	26	19	100%	100%	100%

The table 7 demonstrates that 02 (28.57%) MPs, 06 (23.07%) UZP Chairman and 02 (10.52%) UNOs have supported to this proposal for coordination between the local MP and the UZP Chairman. They expect that let the UZP become effective any way. Since this crisis is being threatened, some how coordination is essential.

It is found from the survey that 02 MPs (28.57%), 09 (34.61%) UZP Chairmen and 06 (31.57%) UNOs did not support this proposal. 01 MP of them thinks that neither the UZP Chairman nor the UNO only the local MP would get signing power and it should be mandatory. As they (MPs) form the central government and pass national budget, they have right to get that power. The rest one of them thinks that the 'local problems' may be addressed by the UZP Chairman and discuss with the local MP but 'functions' to be controlled by the local MP.

It has been mentioned that 09 UZP Chairman did not support this proposal for coordination. They want authority of the UZP Chairman over all the functions of socio-economic development in local area. Government should give adequate power and authority to the UZP for its effectiveness as an autonomous body. These respondents want power that



is free from any term and condition which would chain their authority. The local MP would provide logistic support to the UZP Chairman to perform everything as per rules and regulations.

It has been seen from the survey that 06 (31.57%) UNOs did not support to this proposal. They argue, the government has specific rules and regulations in this regard and those cannot depend on the consent and signature of the UZP Chairman and the MP. The expenditures of all the projects should be controlled by the UNO as the government representative, they add.

02 (28.57%) MPs, 09 (34.61%) UZP Chairmen and 06 UNOs think that this proposal may be accepted as a test case and may be materialized at some UZPs. If a positive result comes from that case studies, this practice can be implemented in rest of the UZPs of Bangladesh.

01 (14.28%) MP, 02 (7.69%) UZP Chairmen and 05 (26.32%) UNOs did not give any response on this question.

#### Net Amount Allotment

'Local mass people may not be satisfied to an MP with his role of only law-making process in the Parliament. People will evaluate the local MP on his role of new constructions like road, bridge, culvert, school, college, embankment, disaster management center and so on and want to see his capability to capture huge amount of allotment from the central government. A Member of the Parliament is evaluated on such kind of contributions all over the world. Even the role of MPs of America and Europe is important and significant in the development activities till now. No MP can hold continuously his/her popularity even in those countries only through the contribution in law-making process. If this is the condition and reality in the developed and politically sound countries, why and how Bangladesh, being a developing country, would remain apart from that? But some people do not want to accept this reality. Actually a necessary settlement is needed for an effective UZP'. Net amount allotment to the local MPs for local development may be such kind of settlement proposal what will be expended by concerned local MP for the local development activities on his own plan. There is no scope to ignore the developmental role of the MPs. At the same time their might be some instructions for the MPs to expend that allotment. The MPs will have to be controlled by themselves to be elected again. This concept is not new at all. This is a practice presently in India, Pakistan, and Nepal though being criticized.

### Formation of the Zila Parishad

The Zilla Parishad may be considered as a vital and significant local self-government organ to create an expected situation at the UZPs. The Zilla Parishad, elected and selected, can supervise all kinds of development activities at the grass roots.

The central government would distribute proper development allotment as per demand of the Zilla Parishad. The Zilla Parishad, might be formed with an elected Chairman and an Advisory Board incorporating all the MPs of the District, would distribute development budget to the each UZP according to its demand and necessity. The respective local MPs would have an important role to play in approving the allotment for the concerned UZP. Therefore the UZP Chairmen will have to inform the local MPs about their development activities. As a result they (both) will have to prepare a good budget for the local area reflecting their commitment of development to the mass people. This formula may also help creating a congenial atmosphere at the grass roots.

### **Conclusion: Alternative Policy Suggestions**

The question of coordination of Power and Authority between the UZP Chairman and the local MP was the core matter to be addressed in this research. The problems experienced and conceived on the recently reinstated UZP system were searched to understand and to resolve carefully in this work through the prospective mitigating alternatives.

There are few serious misnomers existent in the State documents as well. The name of Bangladesh Legislature is Jatiyo Sangsad. This is a name and a unique name of the Legislature of Bangladesh not available in any country of the world. A name, as a Noun, can never be and should not be translated in a different language, what ever the language is. But unfortunately that has happened in the case of Jatiyo Sangsad of Bangladesh and had done by the advanced educated/learned people of this country. In the English version of the Constitution of Bangladesh, the Jatiyo Sangsad is written as the Parliament. In fact, the Parliament is the name few country's Legislature like of UK, of India and of some other countries. Japan (the Dayet), Israel (the Knesset), USA (the Congress) and some countries has own name of their Legislatures. It would have been in the case of Jatiyo Sangsad. Unfortunately it has embraced by a wrong nomenclature. So the documents and the people of Bangladesh usually say the Parliament to mean the Jatiyo Sangsad and the MP to mean a Member of the Jatiyo Sangsad.

The same thing has happened in the case of local self-government. Local government is uttered to mean local self-government by the responsible and authoritative persons and the State documents including the Constitution. The local governments practically, in Bangladesh, are the local level administrative units like the Districts and the Upazillas and these are usually controlled/looked after by the Ministry of Establishment (recently named as the Ministry of Public Administration). But the local self-governments are the authorities/governments elected by the local people/voters for the urban areas (like the City Corporations and the Pourashavas) or for the rural areas (like the Union Parishads-UPs and the UZPs). But, even in the Constitution, it is uttered as the local Governments to mean the local self-governments. And in naming the Ministry it is said 'the Ministry of LGRD' (Local Government and Rural Development). It is obvious that the local Government units of Bangladesh are the Districts and the Upazillas and those are looked after by the Ministry of Public Administration not by the Ministry of LGRD. The Ministry of LGRD has the concern about the local self-governments like the UPs, Pourashavas or the City Corporations including the very present research area of UZPs.

These misnomers should be and certainly be removed and corrected. In the very beginning of this research, this point is raised and the theoretical issues are addressed.

There are five alternative remedies raised and examined in this effort to ensure coordination of Power and Authority of the UZP Chairman and the local MP. The political dignity, dominance and delicacy of the local MPs were considered carefully in all the alternatives. At the same time the effectiveness and fruitfulness of introduction of the UZP and its elected authorities were taken well into notice. The alternative policy suggestions are:

1. Specific Areas of Power and Authority for the local MPs and the UZP Chairmen-Vive Chairmen;
2. Power and authority of the UZP exercised by the UZP Chairman and supervised by the local MP;
3. Joint consent and signature of the local MP and the UZP Chairman should be mandatory in social participation and development activities at the Upazilla;



#### 4. Net Amount Allotment and

#### 5. Formation of the Zilla Parishad.

Now it is the part of the Policy Makers to adopt a specific alternative as the remedy to surmount the present perplexities. They may consider combining two or more alternatives to overcome the crisis.

The Experts and the Media has the part to review the alternatives and, if they are satisfied, create a public opinion to resolve the crisis through the policies suggested.

The policy suggestions raised has claimed a keen perseverance of a research team led by its project director. The team has to follow for months the developments made and caused by the MPs, the UZP Chairmen and the Vice Chairmen, the Civil Society and the Media related to this research area. The team was very much concerned and aware about the steps and the decisions taken by the Authorities concerned in different times.

The policy suggestions are to be considered and developed, if necessary, by the Policy Makers to address the whole environment applicable.

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