

Role of Labour Administration Departments in Protecting Labour Rights: Bangladesh Perspective

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I. Introduction

For ensuring Labour rights as well as implementing the labour laws there are Labour Administration in Bangladesh. Under the Ministry of Labour and Expatriate Welfare, some particular departments are functioning in Bangladesh in implementing labour rights. Those departments have their structural and legal framework. To function within the framework those departments have to face lot of difficulties. Due to legal loopholes those departments don't have sufficient manpower to achieve their goals. On the other hand, most of the marginal labourers cannot reach to any departments for getting aids due to their ignorance, illiteracy and reluctance also. At this juncture, the working class people of Bangladesh are remaining in dark till to date. This Article examines the structural and legal weakness of the labour departments and suggests something new which can change the fate of the labourers in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh Constitution provided for a unitary form of Government and so the then Ministry of Labour and Manpower of the Government of Bangladesh is vested with the responsibility for labour administration.² Now the Ministry is known as Ministry of Labour, Employment and Expatriate Welfare. Under the direct supervision of the said Ministry there are some departments, institutes and associations for administering the labour related matters and labour rights in Bangladesh. The functions of these departments, institutes and associations are to control and monitor over the labourers and employer's co-relations & interactions.³ In Bangladesh the said Ministry is responsible for administering the departments and offices under it. As per schedule -1 of the Rules of business, 1975 [Rules 3(III)], the Ministry has the following implementing agencies namely-

- 1) Department of Labour. (DL)
- 2) Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments. (DIFE)
- 3) Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET)
- 4) Minimum Wages Board. (MWB)

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² Khan Nurunnabi, Labour Administration profile on Bangladesh International Labour Organisation Area Office Dhaka, p. 2

³ *Ibid*, p. 4.

- 5) Labour Appellate Tribunal. (LAT)
- 6) Labour Attache Offices Attached to the Bangladesh Embassies (LAOABE)
- 7) Plantation Employees Provident Fund (PEPF)

The Ministry of Labour, Employment and Expatriate welfare, headed by the concerned minister is run along with its officials. Secretary is the chief official of the Ministry. The Ministry consists of one secretary, one private secretary to the secretary, two joint secretaries, seven deputy secretaries, twenty assistant secretaries, one account officer, eight public relations officers and one librarian. This chapter makes an effort to show how the administrative authorities ensure labour rights all over the country.

II. Department of Labour

The department of labour is one of the most important implementing agencies of the Ministry of Labour and Expatriate Welfare and is based at Dhaka. Headed by the Director of Labour, the Department of Labour has one additional Director of Labour and total 655 officers over the country.

The department of labour has its six separate branches namely:

- 1) Trade union section.
- 2) Conciliation section.
- 3) Education and training section.
- 4) Administration section.
- 5) Population and family welfare unit.
- 6) Administration of inland water transport workers section.

II.I. Trade Union Section

Trade union section runs with its two wings I) Labour welfare section and II) Statistical section. An assistant director heads both the wings respectively. With this two wings trade union section tries to keep labour welfare standard as well as labour statistics.

II.II. Conciliation Section

Conciliation section is composed of a director, two-deputy director and two assistant directors. The function of this section is to conciliate over any labour dispute among the parties. The author of the present Article came to know by interviewing the director of this section that in 2010, almost 150 labour unrest are conciliated by this section. About 250 labour unrest are pending till to- date for conciliation.

II.III. Education and Training section

Under this section there are four-research institute (IRI) each at Tongi, Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi. This section is composed of one principal, one project director, eight lecturers, two research officers, one assistant officer, two artists, one librarian and one research assistant. By giving proper education and training this section is trying to produce skilled manpower. Industrial Relations Institute (IRI) is also trying to produce skilled manpower.

II.IV. Administration Section

Through this section the department of labour keeps co-ordination among the different sections of labour administration. This section has one deputy director and one administrative officer.

II.V. Population and Family Welfare Unit

Through this unit the department of labour tries to keep sight upon the family welfare of the labourers. This unit is composed of one joint director and one deputy director. Under this unit there are 29 Labour Welfare Centre all over the country. The centres are Tejgaon, Tongi, Chashara, Bandor, Narsingdhi, Ghorashal, Sharishabari, Ashugonj, Shaloshahar, Kalurghat, Chandpur, Rupsha, Khalishpur, Kushtia, Mongla, Barisal, Sapura, Bogra, Serajgonj, Syedpur, Gaibandha, Fushkuri, Shamsheernagar, Patrokhola, Chandichara, Kapnapahar, Lohauni, Tiknagul and Sreemongal. Headed by a doctor these welfare centres are activating for the betterment of the workers. In 2014, 2584 workers have taken temporary procedure of family planning under the welfare centre of Rajshahi.⁴

II.VI. Administration of Inland Water Transport Workers Section

Headquarter of this section is at 4 Rajuk Avenue, in Dhaka. Under the headquarter it has four regional offices each at Narayangonj, Chittagong, Barisal and Khulna. This section administers on the inland water transport workers. One Farida Khatun, the deputy director of the Department of Labour situated at 4 Rajuk Avenue, Dhaka told the researcher that now at this moment the administration of Inland Water Transport Workers Section is working under the Water Transport Ministry. But the wage structure of the water transport worker is still under the Department of Labour.

⁴ The Author came to know the information by interviewing one Manjura Khatun, in Charge, Labour Welfare centre of Rajshahi.

III. Department of Labour and Its Divisional Offices

Department of Labour has its divisional office at Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, Rajshahi, Barisal and Sylhet. Each of the divisional office has their distinct structure and composition like-

III.I. Dhaka Division

There are four regional offices under Dhaka division each at Narayangonj, Narsinghdi, Ghorashal and Chasara at Narayangonj. Besides regional offices there are five labour welfare centres each at Tongi, Tejgaon, Chasara, Bandar, Narasinghdi and Sarishabari. Dhaka division contains one joint director, two deputy directors, three assistant directors and three labour officers. Each of the regional office contains four assistant directors and two labour officers. Each of the labour welfare centres contains one medical officer and one population and family welfare officer.

III.II. Chittagong Division

There are two regional offices each at Comilla and Chandpur. There are also four labour welfare centres at Shaloshahor, Kalurghat, Ashugonj and Chandpur. Every regional office has three assistant directors and three labour officers. Every labour welfare center has one medical officer and one population and family welfare officer.

III.III. Khulna Division

Khulna division has two regional offices at Mongla and Kushtia. Besides regional offices there are four labour welfare centres at Rupsha, Khalishpur, Kushtia and Mongla. Khulna division has one joint director, two deputy directors, three assistant directors and three labour officers. Every regional office has two assistant directors. Every labour welfare centre has one medical officer and one population and family welfare officer.

III.IV. Rajshahi Division

Rajshahi division has two regional offices and five labour welfare centres. Regional offices are at Bogra and Rangpur. Labour welfare centres are at Rajshahi, Gaibandha, Bogra, Serajgong, & Syedpur. Rajshahi division contains one joint director, two deputy directors, three assistant directors and three labour officers. Each of the regional office contains four deputy directors, two assistant directors and three labour officers. Every labour welfare centre contains one medical officer and one population and family welfare officer.

III.V. Barisal Division

Barisal division has no regional offices at all. Regional offices established at Khulna division function over the Barisal division. There is one labour welfare centre at Barisal. This labour welfare centre has one medical officer and one population and family welfare officer.

III.VI. Sylhet Division

There is a labour welfare division for tea industry at Sreemongal under this division. Labour welfare division has one deputy director, two medical officers and two population and family welfare officers. There is one regional office at Sylhet. This regional office has a director and two assistant directors.

IV. Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments

The Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments is the second implementing agency of the Ministry of Labour and Employment which has zonal and regional offices for inspection of factories, shops, commercial establishments & industrial establishments for enforcement of labour laws relating to safety, health, hygiene, factory-layout and design, hours of works and rest, payment of wages and compensation etc. Specific functions allocated to this department are:

- 1) Inspection of factories, shops, commercial establishments & industrial establishments under labour laws for enforcement of the provisions relating to safety, health, hygiene, labour welfare, payment of wages, regulation, hours of work, conditions and terms of employment, social security of workers etc.
- 2) Protection against the violations of labour laws. In 2010 the Department of Inspection for factories and establishment instituted 777 suits for violating labour laws.
- 3) Approval of construction and extension of factories;
- 4) Approval of layout plans of factories. The Director of the Department of Factories and Establishment told the researcher that under layout plans 758 new factories got registration in 2010.
- 5) Issue of registration and licenses of factories.
- 6) Maintenance of liaison with different government departments, employer's organisations
- 7) Assistance to the Government in formulation of policies about enforcement of labour laws and framing labour laws including amendment of various acts and rules;

- 8) Preparation of replies to the ILO questionnaires relating to adoption of ILO Conventions and Recommendations. The Director of the Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments told the researcher that the department gave opinion regarding ILO Convention Nos. 29 and 81 in 2009. But for the sake of secrecy what opinion has given that cannot be disclosed added the director.
- 9) Assistance to other international agencies in preparing survey reports relating to labour inspection, wages administration, working conditions and occupational health and safety;
- 10) Representing the Government in national and international seminars, meetings, forums on labour inspection, labour administration, productivity etc;
- 11) Approval of Service Rules of the workers as and when applied for by the management of different establishments;
- 12) Examination and checking of the certificates issued by the competent authority relating to safe operation of accessories of ports and ships ensuring safety.
- 13) Inspection of ships touching at Chittagong and Chalna ports for enforcement of safety and welfare provisions of law.⁵

Department of Inspection of Factories and Establishments are working through its three wings. They are-

- i) Engineering Wing
- ii) Medical Wing⁶
- iii) General Wing.⁷

The chief executive of these wings are treated as Deputy Chief Inspector (Engineering), Deputy Chief Inspector (Medical) and Deputy Chief Inspector respectively. Besides the above wings, this department has

⁵ www.mole.gov.bd accessed on 27/07/2014

⁶ Medical wing is under the Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishment headed by a doctor known as deputy chief inspector (Medical). His function is mainly to monitor over the washing and toilet facilities of the factories and establishment. The researcher came to know this by a dialogue with the deputy chief inspector (Medical) himself. There are also doctors to monitor industrial safety and hygiene of the workers concerned in each labour welfare centres under the Department of Labour. See for more details chapter 2.6.5 and chapter 4.2.5, 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.3, 4.3.4, 4.3.5, and 4.3.6.

⁷ General wing is under the Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishment. The executive chief of this wing is known as deputy chief Inspector (General). His function is to monitor the administration of the department of factories and establishment. Researcher came to know this information by a dialogue with the deputy chief inspector (General) himself.

four zonal offices at Khulna, Rajshahi, Dhaka and Chittagong. Each of the zonal offices has their regional office. Barisal, Barguna, Patuakhali, Pirojpur, Jhalokathi, Kusthia and Jessore offices are the regional office under Khulna zonal office. Serajgonj, Pabna, Naogaon, Natore, Kurigram, Nilphamary, Lalmonirhat, Dinajpur, Parbatipur, Gaibandha and Syedpur are the regional office under Rajshahi zonal office. Narayangonj, Faridpur, Rajbari, Mymensingh, Netrokona, Bhairab bazar, Kishoregonj, Jamalpur, Sherpur and Tangail are the regional office under Dhaka zonal office. Comilla, Sreemongal, Moulavibazar, Cox's Bazar, Feni, Maijadicut, Chowmohuni, Chandpur, Sylhet, Shyestagonj, Hobigonj and Brahmonbaria are the regional office under Chittagong zonal office.

V. Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET)

The Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) was established in 1976, which as an implementing agency of the Ministry of Labour and Manpower, has following responsibilities:

- 1) To promote employment opportunities at home and abroad.
- 2) To protect emigrants.
- 3) To ensures remittances of Bangladeshis serving abroad,
- 4) To provide vocational guidance and employment counselling,
- 5) To promote self-employment, both in rural and urban areas, through distribution of tool kits, organisation and preparation of investment schedule, etc;
- 6) To organise apprenticeship training programmes in industries and implement the provisions of the Apprenticeship Ordinance, 1962 and the apprenticeship rule, 1967;
- 7) To plan and formulate training policies and implementation thereof;
- 8) To maintain liaison with international agencies, like ILO, UNDP, World Bank, etc regarding training and employment;
- 9) To organise seminars, workshops, and training courses for staff, officers and teachers, both at the national and international levels;
- 10) To act as the secretariat for the National Council for Skill Development and Training (NCSDT); which has been created for formulating training policy at the National level.
- 11) To compile and publish reports on employment and to carry out research and studies on action oriented programmes.

Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) has given training 42000 trainees in 2008. Among them 22368 are in overseas employment, 9855 are in local employment, 5890 are in self-employment

and 3887 are in higher education.⁸ Under the auspices of BMET there are technical training centres for conducting vocational training and guidance. Besides, BMET has given training on Trade testing, Tailor made course, Korean, Japanese, Arabic and English Language Course in 2010 by the different TTC's of the country.⁹ Total number of trainees was unknown to the Director of Training of BMET.

VI. Minimum Wages Board (MWB)

Theoretically meaning of wages or definition of wages in Bangladesh is well specified but the amount of wages is not fixed within the definition. In 1957, the Minimum Wages Board (MWB) was constituted by an enactment for fixation of the minimum wages of the workers and for matters ancillary thereto, in certain industrial undertakings where no adequate machinery exist for effective regulation of wages. This Board was reconstituted by another enactment, namely, the Minimum Wages Ordinance, 1961. It is a tripartite body, consisting of a chairman, one independent member, one member to represent the employers, and one member to represent the workers. In addition to these members two more members, one from employers and one from workers concerned with the industry, are also added to the Board when it undertakes the task of fixation of minimum wages of a particular industry. In 2006, Minimum Wages Board (MWB) was again reconstituted for bringing something new in terms of changing pattern of socio-economic needs. The said Board was reconstituted with the chairman, one independent member, one member to represent the employers and one member to represent the workers.¹⁰

The Board recommends the minimum rates of wages for adult unskilled workers and juvenile workers employed in certain industrial undertaking besides recommending the minimum rates of wages for workers with respect to particular industries as referred to by the Government from time to time. It issues questionnaires, when necessary, to collect data from different units of the concerned industry, prepares statistics on the basis of the collected data, visits different units to assess the working conditions of the workers, interviews both workers and employers, and then hold meetings of the members for preparing recommendation of the Government. The reality is there is no national minimum wage in Bangladesh yet. Government

⁸ The Author got the information by talking with one Ahsan Habib Director (Training) of BMET.

⁹ The Author got the information by talking with Ahsan Habib, (Director Training) of BMET.

¹⁰ Section 138, Bangladesh Labour Act-2006.

takes initiatives to fix minimum rates of wages but for what reason that does not come to light is unknown to everybody.¹¹

VII. Labour Offices Abroad

International Labour Organization (ILO) dedicates a large part of its programmes to creating greater opportunities for women and men to secure decent employment and income. In this connection every country needs to devise its own policies to bring about full employment. The Ministry of Labour and Manpower of Bangladesh has 11 labour office attached to the Bangladesh mission -two in Saudi -Arabia and one each in Iraq, Libya, Kuwait, Qatar, UAE, Bahrain, Oman, Iran and Malaysia.¹² These offices collect information on employment opportunities, certify vacancies, offered by employers in those countries to Bangladeshi nationals, negotiate with employers and relevant governmental agencies for fixation of terms and conditions of employment, and look after the welfare of Bangladeshi nationals employed in those countries.

VIII. Tripartite Consultative Council (TCC)

TCC is a body composed of government's, employer's and worker's representative. Its objective is to look after the wage structure, legal provisions, and other matters concerning worker's interest in private sectors only.¹³ After Independence of Bangladesh, the Provincial Tripartite Advisory Board of Pakistan was reconstituted as the National Advisory Board, consisting of 10 members from the Government and 5 each from organizations of workers and employers i.e. trade unions and employers associations.¹⁴

The TCC, in its meetings, discusses various issues of national importance such as formulation of labour policy, amendment of the existing labour laws, adoption of ILO Conventions and Recommendations by the Government, and improvement of industrial relations etc. TCC examined the texts of ILO Conventions and Recommendations vis-a vis existing laws and practices prevailing in Bangladesh and recommended to the Government the ratification of some Conventions. Based on its recommendation, the

¹¹ A comment made by a member of existing wage Board who is unwilling to disclose his name.

¹² Annual Report-2005, Ministry of Labour and Manpower, Government of Bangladesh, p.11

¹³ Director of the Inspection of Labour for Factories and Establishment (DIFE) told the researcher while talking with him about TCC.

¹⁴ *Ibid*

Bangladesh Government ratified ILO Conventions No 144 and 149 relating to Tripartite Consultation and Nursing Personnel.

Besides, tripartite conferences in matters of labour, tripartite consultations were held in formulating the development policies of the Government through the formulation of Advisory panels with participation inter-alia by organizations of employers and workers in 2007. In the First Five Year Plan (1973-1978) it was stated that the people and their representative should play a role in setting the socio-economic objectives and in its formulation in 1977. Similar principles were embodied in subsequent plans. Accordingly, while making the draft plan's documents, the Planning Commission constituted several panels of experts of consultation in which representation was also given to the employers and workers organizations. Now at this moment there are no such provisions, as there exists no five-year plan of the existing Government. At the time of talking with the secretary of the Ministry of Labour and Employment researcher came to know that the existing government is thinking with the implementation of vision 2021.¹⁵ He hoped, after implementing vision 2021 there will no need of TCC for protecting the worker's rights.

In July 2009, workers of the garment industries made violence demanding increased wage rate.¹⁶ During the violence under the auspices of TCC on 27th July it was decided by the Minimum Wages Board under the chairmanship of Ikhtedar Ahmed that the minimum wages rate would be 3000 *taka* per month. After this declaration by the Minimum Wages Board a group of worker remained silent whereas another group was aggrieved on principle that their minimum rates of wages should be 5000 *taka* per month. The aggrieved group tried to make agitation but failed for government's hardy action. Besides, there are some politics within the issue. The one group remained silent as because they have some link with the government and they are the activists of government's labour wing namely *Sramik League*. Both the pressure from *Sramik League* as well as Government the agitation did not spread over on the spot. But after some days at the first week of August 2009, an agitation of garment workers broke out at Mohammadpur Dhaka, Mirpur Dhaka and Narayanganj. Government again took hard action and as such the agitation stopped. As part of the action police arrested Montu Ghose¹⁷ and some other workers. The issue is still pending and the minimum rates of wages to date for the garment workers are

¹⁵ Vision 2021 is a thinking of government. Government hoped that within the year 2021 Bangladesh would be turned into a developed country with digital format.

¹⁶ The violence was at Jamgora, Savar, Dhaka from 20th to 29th July 2009.

¹⁷ Montu Ghose a leader of the Bangladesh Samajtrntik Dal (Basod) as well as a leader of the workers.

taka 3000 per month. But a large number of workers are dissatisfied with the aforesaid minimum rates of wages.

IX. Industrial Workers' Wages Commission (IWWC)

After Independence of Bangladesh, a large number of industrial and commercial undertakings had been brought under public sector. The Government felt the necessity of providing a formalised wage structure in the public sector covering about 75% of the workers in the country. The Government set up two Commissions in 1973, one, the Industrial Workers' Wages Commission (IWWC) to bring about uniformity in the rates of wages/fringe benefits etc. of the workers engaged in manufacturing industries and the other National Pay Commission (NPC) to nationalize the pay structure of the State-owned industrial workers and employees. The IWWC and NPC were under the Ministry of Planning designed pay structure. Now at this moment most of the nationalized industries have gone to the private sectors under golden handshake and as such IWWC and NPC are de facto inactive. For handing over the other nationalized industries to the private sectors privatization commission is working.

X. National Wages and Productivity Commission (NWPC)

In 1984, the Government constituted a tripartite National Wages and Productivity Commission with the following objectives:

- 1) To review, in the context of the present cost of living and productivity of industrial enterprises, the wage structure, remuneration and other benefits of workers of the state-owned industries, nationalised industries and industries taken-over and managed by the Government.
- 2) To recommend the wage structure, remuneration and other benefits of various categories of workers in various industries, co-relating them with the productivity of such industries, including wages or remuneration payable in respect of time-work and piece rate work system.
- 3) To recommend possible areas or spheres where the piece-rate work system can be extended with a view to boosting production in various industries;
- 4) To recommend measures which might operate as incentives to enhance labour productivity;
- 5) To give views on such other matters as are ancillary to the above matters, or as the Commission may consider useful for the purposes of the terms of reference;

The law provides that in making its recommendations the Commission should take into account the cost of living of workers; the productivity, resources and economic viability of industries; the desirability of fairness and efficiency with reference to the nature of work, for determination of wages, remuneration and other benefits for workers in different industries, and the need for removal of disparities in wages, if any, between workers of the same categories in different units of the same industry.

The NWPC submitted an interim report in May 1985. The Government reviewed the interim report and declared a new wage structure with effect from 1 June 1985. The last NWPC was constituted in 1992 to formulate a wage structure with broad terms of reference for the public sector. The terms of reference of this Commission cover the following main references:

- 1) Cost of living of the workers;
- 2) Productivity, resources and economic viability of the industries;
- 3) The desirability of applying uniform principles of determining wages, if any, between the workers of the same categories;
- 4) The recommendation of a National Minimum Wage.

The Government has implemented certain recommendations of both the National Pay Commission (NPC), 1991 and NWPC, 1992. From 1992 to 2010 there were several political and non political governments in Bangladesh and as such rules regarding NPC and NWPC were changed at several times. The present scenario is that NPC and NWPC are inactive in Bangladesh.

XI. National Council for Skill Development and Training (NCSDT)

The National Council for Skill Development and Training (NCSDT) was established in 1979 as an inter- ministerial organisation under a project funded by the International Development Agency (IDA). Its main object is to facilitate national policy co-ordination in the field of vocational training and education. It is primarily responsible for:

- 1) establishment of national skill standard;
- 2) establishment of national level policy relating to skill training;
- 3) preparation and implementation of industry- support training programme;
- 4) recommendation of legislation relating to skill development and implementation of such legislation.

The NCSDT is headed by the Secretary of the Ministry of Labour and Manpower as its chairman. It was originally comprised of Secretaries from 18 relevant Ministries, 2 members of the National Parliament, and employers and workers' representatives. In October 1991 the NCSDT was reconstituted under the chairmanship of the Ministry of Labour and Manpower taking Secretaries from 24 relevant Ministries, 5 members of the National Parliament, and employers and workers representatives to activate its function. The BMET acts as the secretariat of the NCSDT.

The NCSDT has, however, not been very much effective in meeting its objectives, mainly due to: (a) lack of effective secretariat support for shortage of manpower and low priority attached to training i.e. lack of staff as well as inefficiency of the staffs (b) lack of technical committee support, and (c) lack of funds for committee activities. Despite these, the NCSDT has undertaken important steps, which are considered to be a milestone in the field of skill development and training in the country. These are: (a) establishment of national skill standard NSS for the Technical Training Centres (TTCs) & Vocational Training Institutes (VTIs), (b) authorisation to the Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB) to conduct tests and examinations for NSS and (c) introduction of courses with nine month's institutional and three month's industrial attachment or project work since 1986. Besides, verification of trade standards, admission criteria, and common certification are being implemented through BTEB.

Since skill development training is a multisectoral activity, involving a number of Ministries, divisions, organisations and institutions, the issue of co-ordination in this field will remain a priority area for the policy makers. Hence, the role of NCSDT will be to supervise and guide them in evolving an efficient and effective system for skill development and training in the country. This type of training embodies creation of an environment conducive to improved labour management relations in order to provide higher wages through higher productivity, tripartism, provisions of incentives, labour welfare, employment generation earnings according to work and a healthy growth of trade unionism have been emphasized for ensuring basic needs of all and a balanced economic growth.¹⁸

XII. Employers' Association

The Bangladesh Employers' Association (BEA) represents nearly 90% of the established employers in the private sector corporations and autonomous bodies in the public sector. The BEA in their Memorandum of Association, has included some laudable goals for promoting good relations and unanimity amongst employers, creating mutual interests and good

¹⁸ www.discoverybangladesh.com accessed on 09/03/2014

feelings between such employers and employees, to encourage reasonable and admissible scheme for the general welfare and uplift of labour and other employers who are not incorporated under BEA, to negotiate on behalf of employers with trade unions and other labour organisations etc. It has (a) assumed responsibility for conducting studies on productivity in various industries and (b) indicated it's willingness to assist the Government in the area of factory inspection in addition to it's traditional involvement in the adjudication process by nominating it's members for Labour Courts and other temporary bodies. So far, it has effectively contributed to the development of tripartism in the country.

XIII. National Federation of Trade Unions (NFTU)

On the worker's side, the national federation of trade unions is expected to share responsibility in labour administration. There are twenty-three such federations. These federations have so far nominated their representatives to Technical Training Centres (TTCs) and other temporary bodies constituted by the Government like BMET, BIMT and so on. They have also sent representatives to national seminars and conferences.

XIV. International Labour Standard & Labour Administration in Bangladesh

International labour standards are implemented through national law and policy. Internationally recognised labour standards in social development were expressed earlier at the UN World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995). The Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organizations (WTO) in Singapore (1996) marked a renewed commitment to internationally recognised core labour standards and identified the ILO as the competent body to deal with labour matters all over the world. While labour administration exists in most of the countries of the world, many of them face financial and material difficulties.

In practice, various factors such as political unrest, lack of devotion at work, etc affects adversely to the fulfilment of its objectives. So adequate labour administration is therefore necessary to maintain and strengthen this important tool for development.¹⁹

As a ratifying country of the Labour Administration Convention, 1978 (No, 150) Bangladesh is required to ensure, in a manner appropriate to national conditions, the organization and effective operation in it's territory

¹⁹ A brief introduction to international labour standards, Rules of the Game, a booklet funded by France, printed in Switzerland p.36.

of a system of labour administration, the functions and responsibilities of which are properly coordinated.

The labour administration system shall be responsible for the formulation, implementation and supervision of national labour standards, employment and human resources development, studies, research and statistics on labour and shall provide support for labour relations. Participation of workers and employers and their respective organizations in relation to national labour policy shall be ensured as well. Labour administration staff shall have the status, the material means and the financial resources necessary for the effective performance of their duties.

XV. Conclusion

Bangladesh is considered a country with much potential that it is trapped in a low growth cycle, worldwide indications clearly point to significant and positive co-relation between efficiency of labour force and economic growth. It is also becoming increasingly clear that Bangladesh's inability to get out of the low growth trap is largely due to the weak implementation capacity and inefficiencies of labour administration, the government's inability to plan and manage key-reforms, and its inclination for managing the economic activities at the micro-level for the most part.²⁰ Again the existing tools have not yet been able to fulfil the proper labour administration in Bangladesh. But Bangladesh is destined to be a different country as it enters twenty-first century. The internal pressures from a rapidly growing, and more demanding, population will fuse with the external pressures, from a much more competitive global economic environment, to create new opportunities and new demands. Keeping the situation in mind, the labour administration system in Bangladesh should be decorated in such a form that proper co-ordination among the implementing agencies could be maintained. Bangladesh has ratified the Labour Administration Convention-1978 (No-150). So Bangladesh has a legal binding to abide by the provisions of the Convention. Complying with the provisions of the said Convention and formulating a well decorated institutionalized administration system proper labour administration can be established in Bangladesh.

²⁰ Syed Gias Ahmed 'Improving Public Administration Efficiency: The Task Ahead', Bangladesh in the New Millennium, edited by Abul Kalam, The University Press Limited, University of Dhaka, p.137.