

ISSN 1991-8976

RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY LAW JOURNAL



**FACULTY OF LAW
RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY
2008**

ARTICLES

A Legal Study on Fatwa regarding Hilla Marriage in Bangladesh

Transnational State Responsibility for Violations of Human Rights

The Economic and Social Council and the Specialized Agencies

The Role of NGO'S in Protection and Promotion of Human Rights of Women in Bangladesh

Blasphemy and Criminality: An Islamic Perspective; Special Reference to Bangladesh

Sexual Harassment in Bangladesh: Law and Realities

Land Management in Islam: A Legal Study

The Role of Selected Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights: An Analysis

State of Minimum Wages in Bangladesh –Problems and Perspectives

বাংলাদেশের বিচার ব্যবস্থায় পদ্ধতিগত জটিলতা: শিশু-কিশোর প্রসঙ্গ

নারীদের উপর এসিড-নিষ্ক্ষেপ: গণমাধ্যমের ভূমিকা ও আইন

Rajshahi University Law Journal

Volume 05 2008

**Published by
Dean**

Faculty of Law
University of Rajshahi
Rajshahi-6205
Bangladesh



Faculty of Law
University of Rajshahi

Rajshahi University Law Journal 2008

Editorial Board

Editor

Dr. Begum Asma Siddiqua

Professor, Department of Law & Justice
and

Dean, Faculty of Law, RU

Member

Dr. M. Habibur Rahman

Professor, Department of Law & Justice, RU

Dr. Muhammad Faiz-Ud-Din

Professor, Department of Law & Justice, RU

Mr. Abu Naser Md Wahid

Associate Professor, Department of Law & Justice, RU

Dr. Mohammad Abdul Hannan

Associate Professor, Department of Law & Justice, RU

Mrs. Sayeeda Anju

Assistant Professor, Department of Law & Justice, RU

Mr. Md. Sahal Uddin

Lecturer, Department of Law & Justice, RU

Rajshahi University Law Journal
Faculty of Law
University of Rajshahi

Volume 05 2008

Published by
Dean

Faculty of Law
University of Rajshahi
Rajshahi-6205
Bangladesh

© Reserved by the Publisher

Cover Design & Printed by

Md. Ariful Islam
Text Dot Com (TDC)
Farmgate, Motihar, Rajshahi-6212
Mobile: 01711-951377

Printed at

Padma Offset Printers
Malopara, Rajshahi. Phone : 775356

Subscription Rates

For Individuals : TK 100.00 US\$ 20 (without postage)
For Organisation : TK 150.00 US\$ 30 (without postage)

[Published in September 2009]

Rajshahi University Law Journal 2008

Authors' Name	Article	Page
Dr. Begum Asma Siddiqua	A Legal Study on <i>Fatwa</i> regarding <i>Hilla</i> Marriage in Bangladesh	01-14
Dr. M Abdul Hannan	Transnational State Responsibility for Violations of Human Rights	15-54
M. Ehteshamul Bari	The Economic and Social Council and the Specialized Agencies	55-70
Md. Abdul Alim	The Role of NGO'S in Protection and Promotion of Human Rights of Women in Bangladesh	71-84
Md. Abdul Awal Khan	Blasphemy and Criminality: An Islamic perspective; Special Reference to Bangladesh	85-98
Md. Abdur Rahim Mia	Sexual Harassment in Bangladesh: Law and Realities	99-118
Mohammad Azharul Islam	Land Management in Islam: A Legal Study	119-138
Dr. Muhammad Faiz-ud-Din	The Role of selected Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights: An Analysis	139-166
Muhammad Shaheen Chowdhury	State of Minimum Wages in Bangladesh – Problems and Perspectives	167-194
নাহিদ ফেরদৌসী	বাংলাদেশের বিচার ব্যবস্থায় পদ্ধতিগত জটিলতা: শিশু-কিশোর প্রসঙ্গ	195-210
মুসতাক আহমেদ ও মো. সাহাল উদ্দীন	নারীদের উপর এসিড-নিষ্ক্ষেপ: গণমাধ্যমের ভূমিকা ও আইন	211-230

The Role of selected Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights: An Analysis

Dr. Muhammad Faiz-ud-Din*

1. Introduction

Non- Governmental Organizations (NGOs), both national and International, are now a days playing a laudable role for the protection and promotion of human rights. NGOs bring up particular cases of alleged human rights violations to the agenda of the UN human rights bodies, primarily the Commission on Human Rights and its sub-commissions. Today NGOs' submissions and oral interventions represent an influential source of information on human rights violations. The NGOs use information as their main weapon for the prevention the human rights. A simple proposal to place a specific country on the human rights agenda for violations triggers off fierce diplomatic and political activity. NGOs' information is a check on economic human rights violation; and the Commission on Human Rights has been blacklisting countries in which there are serious and widespread violations of human rights acting against the development of those countries in international economic transactions. It is a fact that the violation of human rights has been committed both at home and abroad by the executives and civilians, though respective governments failed to combat effectively both types of violators. But the NGOs have come forward to the legal and financial aid of the victims of violation of human rights to extend all necessary steps for the protection and promotion of human rights.

2. Definition of Non-government organization

Different bodies have defined NGO differently. The World Bank, for example, has given an acceptable definition as follows: "NGOs are private organizations that pursue activities to relieve suffering, promote the interest of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services or undertake community

* Professor, Department of Law & Justice, Rajshahi University, Rajshahi

development¹." NGOs can be classified in respect of their activities as to development, religious, secular, service delivery, participatory private or public.² In spite of difference in activities, the common functions they discharge are that they mobilize the mechanisms of shared values and expectations. Besides, the NGOs perform some other common activities which include strong grassroots links, field-based development expertise, the ability to innovate and adopt participatory methodologies and tools, promoting gender issues, flexibility and cost effectiveness.³

3. Evolution of NGOs

The development of an international norm, institutions and procedures for the protection of human rights has been running simultaneously with the origin of non-governmental international organizations working in the field of human rights⁴. The NGOs received formal institutional recognition by the UN in its Charter which states that "The Economic and Social Council may make suitable arrangements for consultation with non-governmental organizations which are concerned with matters within its competence..⁵"

Human rights NGOs have had an important role in the evolution of an International system in the protection of human rights. They perform their functions to the fulfillment of the purpose in consideration of their resources, their area of operation and also the nature of their membership. Some NGOs are working for worldwide promotion of human rights, while others are working regionally or in specific countries. Amnesty International, the International league for Human Rights, the International Commission of Jurists, the Watch Committees, the Lawyer Committee for Human Rights, Transparency International etc. are a few well known NGOs which have world-wide

¹ Nekesh Amit, "NGO's as civil society organizations". The daily star, 17 July 2004

² Ibid

³ Ibid

⁴ Thomas Buergenthal, International Human Rights, USA, 1995, p.318

⁵ UN Charter, Article 71

interests.⁶ In recent past, some NGOs have made significant contributions to strengthening the reporting systems established under various human rights treaties like the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,⁷ the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD),⁸ Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT),⁹ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)¹⁰ and Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)¹¹ Under these treaties, state parties are required to submit periodic reports stating actions they have taken to comply with their obligations. Special committees created under these conventions examine these reports. The representatives of the concerned states parties are asked regarding the contents of their reports by members of the committee in order to find out the reliable fact. This situation, actually, prompted a number of NGOs to prepare their own country reports, which help the members of concerned Committee to probe the veracity of the reports.¹² Thus the reports prepared by the NGOs regarding human rights of particular country help the International Committees to form a neutral idea.

4. International NGOs and Bangladesh

Of the important NGOs, Transparency International (TI) and Amnesty International (AI) have their Bangladesh chapters. They are working for the promotion and protection of human rights globally.

⁶ Thomas Buergenthal, op.cit, p.320

⁷ The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights have been ratified by Bangladesh on 5th October 1998 and 7th September 2000 respectively

⁸ This Convention (CERD) was ratified by Bangladesh on 11 June 1979

⁹ Bangladesh has ratified this Convention (CAT) on 5 October, 1998

¹⁰ This Convention (CEDAW) was ratified by Bangladesh on 6 November 1984

¹¹ It (CRC) has been ratified by Bangladesh on 3 August 1990

¹² Thomas Buergenthal, op.cit, p.323

4.1 Transparency International (TI)

It is the only international non-government organization, devoted to combating corruption, brings civil society, businessman and government together in a powerful global coalition. Through its International secretariat and with more than 85 independent national chapters around the world, it works at both the national and international level to curb the supply and demand of corruption. In the international arena, it raises awareness about the damaging effects of corruption, advocates policy reform, works towards the implementation of multilateral conventions and subsequently monitors compliance by governments, corporations and banks. Similarly, at the national level, it also works to increase levels of accountability and transparency, monitoring the performance of key institutions and processing for necessary reforms neutrally.¹³ According to the annual survey by the Berlin-based organization Transparency International, Finland, Denmark, and New Zealand are perceived to be the world's least corrupt countries, and Somalia and Myanmar are perceived to be the most corrupt. The index defines corruption as the abuse of public office for private gain and measures the degree to which corruption is perceived to exist among a country's public officials and politicians. It is a composite index, drawing on 14 polls and surveys from 12 independent institutions, which gathered the opinions of businesspeople and country analysts. Only 180 of the world's 193 countries are included in the survey, due to an absence of reliable data from the remaining countries. The scores range from ten (squeaky clean) to zero (highly corrupt). A score of 5.0 is the number Transparency International considers the borderline figure distinguishing countries that do and do not have a serious corruption problem. Out of 193 countries of the World, Bangladesh, according to TIB Report 2006, placed 19th position as corrupt country securing only 2.00 points out of 10.¹⁴ It was also

¹³ The daily Independent, 21 October, 2004.

¹⁴ The Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2006

19th position into the Report of 2007.¹⁵ Earlier, it identified Bangladesh as the most corrupt country. Out of 146 countries, Bangladesh, according to its report, topped the list for the fourth time as corrupt country securing only 1.5 points out of 10.¹⁶

Corruption abets the infringement of human rights directly or indirectly. Police, for example, by taking bribe, distort fact, delay in submitting charge sheet and intimidate the victims which indirectly jeopardizes the rights of the persons or the party concerned. In the like manner, sometimes bribe is taken for giving employment in government, semi- government or autonomous bodies depriving the deserving candidates. This is tantamount to the violation of human rights. Professor Muzaffar Ahmad, Head of the Bangladesh Chapter of Transparency International, Bangladesh, said that Bangladesh government should take proper measures to combat corruption.¹⁷ Bangladesh government rejected the TIB report.

4.2 Amnesty International (AI)

It is another launching worldwide movement of people and campaigns for the protection and promotion of internationally recognized human rights. Its target is of a world in which every person enjoys all the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards. With this end in view, it has undertaken research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of the rights to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression, and freedom from discrimination. Amnesty International seeks to disclose human rights abuses accurately, quickly and persistently. It also urges all governments to uphold the rule of law and to ratify and implement human rights standards.¹⁸

¹⁵ The Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2007

¹⁶ The Daily Independent, 25 October 2004

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ Amnesty International, Website: < [http:// www. amnesty. org/report](http://www.amnesty.org/report) 2004

Amnesty International publishes annual report on the state of human rights in Bangladesh. In its report on Bangladesh AI expressed its concern regarding failure of successive governments to curb serious human rights violation from the use of legislation and wide spread practices in the law enforcement and justice system which violate international human rights standards. These violations include torture, death in custody, arbitrary detention of government opponents and others, excessive use of force leading at times to extra-judicial executions, death penalty and acts of violence against women. As regards the methods of torture, the report pin points that it includes beating with rifle butts, iron road, bamboo sticks, or bottles filled with hot water so they do not leave marks on the body, hanging by the hands, rape, "water treatment" in which hose pipes fixed into each nostril and tapes turned on full for two minutes at a time, the use of pliers to crush fingers and electric stocks.¹⁹

According to the Amnesty International Report- 2007,²⁰ human rights abuses by gangs linked to political parties continued in the context of widespread political violence in Bangladesh. Police used excessive force against protesters seeking improved economic conditions, and against opposition rallies here. Mass arbitrary arrests of political activists took place. Scores of people were killed in bomb attacks or in violent clashes between the opposition and ruling party supporters. Women continued to face violence, including acid attacks. Death sentences were handed down and one execution was carried out in Bangladesh.

According to the Amnesty International Report- 2008,²¹ human rights of Bangladesh were severely restricted under a state of emergency imposed in the wake of widespread political violence. Hundred of thousands of people were reportedly arrested and law enforcement agencies were implicated in the deaths of more than 100 people in custody, but no one is held to account for this death.

¹⁹ The Daily Star, 8 June 2003

²⁰ <http://report2007.amnesty.org/eng/Regions/Asia-Pacific/Bangladesh>

²¹ <http://report2008.amnesty.org/eng/regions/asia-pacific/bangladesh>

According to the Amnesty International Report-2009, "In the first national parliamentary elections in seven years, the Awami League won a landslide victory in predominantly peaceful polls held on 29 December, 2008. Before the election, despite the relaxing of emergency measures and institutional reform, restrictions on freedom of assembly and association remained and tens of thousands of political activists reportedly attempting to gather peacefully in their party offices were detained throughout the country. Police used excessive force to disperse peaceful rallies, injuring participants. At least 54 people were estimated to have died in suspected extrajudicial executions by police and the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) in the first half of the year alone. No one was held accountable for the deaths. At least 185 people were sentenced to death, and 5 men were executed."²²

Successive government, according to the report of Amnesty International Bangladesh, have failed to prevent torture, though there are provisions in the Constitution of Bangladesh and the obligation to provide effective protection against torture to the people in the country under treaties which Bangladesh has ratified.²³ Bangladesh, though one of the signatories to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, but still torture has not been eliminated from it. Amnesty International expressed its great concern about the misapplication of section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure which enables the Police to arrest any one without a warrant of arrest and keeping them in detention up to 24 hours on vaguely formulated grounds and the torture on detainees begins from the moment of arrest.²⁴ The report of AI also expressed its great concern regarding the detention of thousands of people arbitrarily each year under the Special Powers Act, 1974.²⁵ The reports published by TI and AI are reliable.

²² <http://report2008.amnesty.org/eng/regions/asia-pacific/bangladesh#amnesty-international-reports>

²³ The Daily Star 8 June, 2003

²⁴ Amnesty International's Report on Bangladesh 2003. See, The Daily Star, 8 June 2003

²⁵ Ibid

The Amnesty International suggested several recommendations for the improvement of human rights. It recommended that the Special Powers Act should be repealed without delay. Another suggestion was that section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure should be amended to avoid unnecessary arrest. Further recommendation of AI was that other Bangladeshi laws should be amended in order to reflect provisions of the international human rights instrument to which Bangladesh is a party.²⁶ Amnesty International observed neutrally the human rights conditions in Bangladesh and suggested to the government specific recommendations with the end in view that the human rights of people can be protected and promoted. The government of Bangladesh should think it with objectivity and implement the recommendations to ensure the protection of human rights. The role of AI is definitely laudable which has been working throughout the globe including Bangladesh aiming at the improvement of human rights conditions.

5. National NGOs in Bangladesh

Most of the national NGOs in Bangladesh started working during and after the liberation war of Bangladesh in 1971 to help deliver relief and rehabilitation materials to the war affected people. Like International NGOs around the globe, Bangladeshi NGOs have also graduated step by step. These NGOs are non-profit making organizations.

National NGOs in Bangladesh work under the legal framework formulated by the NGO Affairs Bureau established by the government of Bangladesh. The NGO Affairs Bureau and the Foreign Donations Act ensure the legality of NGOs to operate. The provisions of license to operate and permission to receive foreign funding regulate the operation of NGOs. Besides this, NGOs themselves have developed a method of self-regulation by adopting Code of Ethics under the supervision of the Association of Development Agencies Bangladesh (ADAB).²⁷ NGOs have their grassroots network through which

²⁶ Ibid

²⁷ The Daily Star, 17 July, 2004

they play an important role in all national disasters of the country and they also reach to the poor people before the government agency and thus the acceptability of the NGOs to the common people as well as to the government has increased. Some NGOs of Bangladesh are basically working for the protection of human rights by rendering legal and financial assistance. Here we study those few human rights NGOs that have nation-wide programme for offering legal and financial aids to the victims of violation of human rights indiscriminately. Of the large number human rights NGOs working in Bangladesh, the role of four of them are credible. They are not only extending to the victims of violation of human rights all sorts of assistance including legal and financial aids but also taking preventive measures so that human rights are not violated.

Now it is devoted to evaluate the activities of the following human rights NGOs that are making relentless efforts to uphold the rights of victims of violation of human rights in criminal justice:

- 1) Bangladesh National Women Lawyer's Association (BNWLA)
- 2) Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST)
- 3) Bangladesh Rehabilitation Centre for Trauma Victims (BRCT)
- 4) Ain O Salish Kendro (ASK)

5.1 Bangladesh National Women Lawyer's Association (BNWLA)

BNWLA was established in 1979 with the objective to provide services for the establishment of human rights of women and children in the country. It has been working successfully to combat violence against women who are deprived, abused and battered. It has, in fact, devoted its full attention to ensure promotion of rights of women and children and establish justice in the society, for ensuring the human rights of women and children, which has become a burning issue in Bangladesh. This organization firmly holds the view that the protection alone is not sufficient to ensure justice rather concurrent preventive measures can help to reduce the severity and future risk of violence. BNWLA has therefore, organized its programme in an integrated way so that it can work

for the protection, prevention and rehabilitation of the victims of various forms of violence.²⁸ According to BNWLA reports—

Violence Against Women in Bangladesh from 2005 to 2007²⁹

Nature of Violence Against Women	2005		2006		2007	
Domestic Violence	915	414	493	164	490	223
Dowry related violence	373	201	205	88	298	160
V against Domestic Worker	157	73	71	33	110	55
Rape	928	409	446	178	463	301
Trafficking	267	28	82	00	123	29
Abduction	303	165	139	00	163	108
Acid burn	140	57	58	29	80	40

The objective of BNWLA are to organize women to develop their status through awareness, to improve women and children's domestic, social, legal and economic status, to ensure justice for all and combat violence against women and children, to create equal opportunities and equal rights for all women and children in Bangladesh, to take measure for removing all forms of discriminations against women and to establish working relationship with the law enforcing agents, local elected bodies, civil society and also with other organizations working for the rights of women and children.³⁰ Since its inception it has been providing legal aid, providing rescue, release, repatriation, protection and prevention for the victims of violation of human rights. In spite of the restricted abortion law, through the delivery of Menstrual Regulation (MR) services, many women have nevertheless enjoyed access to a way to avoid unwanted pregnancies. In 2007 the 20 branch clinics have performed

²⁸ Annual Report 2004, Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BNWLA), p. 2 (2004)

²⁹ Documentation Unit, BNWLA, Bangladesh

³⁰ Annual Report, 2004, BNWLA, P. 2

3,131 MR, which is more than double of the year 2006 (1,447 MR were performed in the year 2006)³¹.

High Court awarded the full custody of the much-talked-about seven babies, claimed by an ex-DIG of police and his wife as their septuplets, to Bangladesh Women Lawyers' Association (BNWLA) for their upkeep, reports UNB. They are already under custody of the BNWLA at its shelter home 'Proshanti' in the capital following an interim HC order regarding their doubtful parentage. Delivering the judgment upon a public-interest litigation filed by BNWLA, a High Court Division bench comprising Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain and Justice Farid Ahmed made absolute its rule issued two years ago. The HC ruling came after taking cognizance of the August 12, 2008 DNA test that found no genetic similitude of septuplet in the unfortunate babies. On August 6, the HC, during hearing on the rule, asked Dhaka Medical College authorities to carry out the sibling test of the seven babies at its DNA Lab under the supervision of the Supreme Court authorities. The BNWLA had moved the HC with a writ that sought custody of the seven babies, arising doubt about parenthood of the children and apprehending that they might be trafficked out. Since the emergence of the dispute, the couples have claimed that the seven children have been born to them as septuplets. The children's 'mother', Anwara Rahman, has been staying in jail for the last few months in an extortion case, while 'father' Anisur Rahman did not appear in court. In its ruling the High Court directed the BNWLA to look after the seven babies with 'utmost care' providing them with food, shelter, healthcare and education.³²

Besides, it has been providing rehabilitation and reintegration support to the survivors. BNWLA has 27 local level clinics throughout Bangladesh for providing legal support to the victims. There are also two divisional offices of the organization to co-ordinate with the clinics. Women can receive free legal assistance in combating violence and other abuses from these clinics. During

³¹ Annual Report, 2007, BNWLA, P. 73

³² The Financial Express, 15 August 2008

the year 2003, BNWLA received 6566 complaints regarding maintenance, restitution of conjugal rights, dowry and cruelty to women. Of the total complaints received, it has successfully mediated 3080, 145 mediated with the help of its partners and 145 complaints were mediated on the survivor's own initiative.³³ In 2002, it received 3108 complaints, which are less than the year 2003. The reasons behind the receipt of more complaints by BNWLA are identified as (a) the number of violation has increased, (b) people have become more aware and (c) above all, public trust on BNWLA has been enhanced. During the period 2003, it filed and conducted 774 court cases in addition to 1036 previous pending cases. It also filed and conducted 19 Public Interest Litigation (PIL) suits during this period. BNWLA filed PILS on behalf of a group of citizens to uphold their interest. In 2003 it filed a PIL suit, which was as follows.³⁴

BNWLA along with BLAST and ASK filed a writ petition in the High Court Division against Health Directorate, Mohakhali, Dhaka for inviting applications from Bangladeshi nationals of concerned districts for temporary appointments to fill 3999 vacant posts of 'Health Assistant'. The invitation for application had a clause saying that all female candidates should be married if they wanted to apply for the posts and it was required that they should enclose a photocopy of the marriage certificate and '*Nikahnama*' along with the application. BNWLA feels that this is a discriminatory requirement and against the rights provided in the Constitution. Such an arbitrary requirement has given rise to the situation whereby some unmarried female candidates who were otherwise qualified and competent to apply for the post, resorted to obtaining fake *Nikahnama* to fulfil the mandatory requirement of marriage. In response to this petition the High Court issued a Rule *Nisi* upon the respondent to show cause as to why the impugned appointment and why they should not be directed to delete the aforementioned condition'.

³³ Annual Report 2003, BNWLA, p. 4 (2004)

³⁴ *Op.cit*, P. 5

In response to the Rule Nisi the government (Health Directorate) appealed to the Supreme Court. Afterwards considering the public interest, both parties sat on a meeting and agreed on the conditions that clause 11 of the circulation would be deleted and a fresh appointment notice would be circulated. The government agreed to take necessary steps to withdraw the case from the Supreme Court and afterwards the petitioners would withdraw the case from the High Court Division. In 2003 BNWLA rescued/released 118 victims from different confinements.³⁵

High court issued judgment protecting women and girl children from sexual harassment at workplaces, educational institutions and public places. The High Court on May 14, 2009 issued a set of guidelines defining what would be called sexual misdemeanors and asked the authorities concerned to stop it at workplaces [non-government, government and semi government], educational institutions and public places with a view to protect women and girl children. The guideline provides clear definition of physical, sexual and psychological harassments that might be conducted through short message service, wall writing, pornography, eve teasing etc. The judgment also elaborately directed the government and other concerned to form committees in the spirit of the constitution, the rules and procedure of the committees and the power of the committee to deal with complaints, to look after the incidents of sexual harassment against women and girl child. The guideline also mentioned not to disclose the identity of any individual unless the complaints are not proved.

But the complaint shall be tried based on the merit and nature of the offence, if it is found true. The guidelines, which emphasized to aware, mass people about sexual harassment and its punishment will be considered law until necessary laws are enacted by the government on the basis of the guidelines to be followed by the institutions mentioned. It is worth to mention that a writ petition no. 5916 of 2008 was filed by Advocate Salma Ali, Executive Director of Bangladesh National Woman Lawyer's Association (BNWLA) for direction

³⁵ Annual Report 2003, BNWLA, p. 6 (2004)

against "Sexual harassment on Women and Girl Children at workplace/universities/educational institutes" on August 07, 2008. In the Court of Honourable Justice Mr. Syed Mahmood Hossain and Honourable Justice Farid Ahmed. One week Rule was given on the government Ministries and Universities including " Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education, University Grant Commission, University of Dhaka, University of Jahangirnagar, Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA), Bangladesh Police, Bangladesh Bar Council and Ministry of Information for enactment of Legislation and Policy or Guideline or procedures for addressing sexual harassment. On behalf of Bangladesh National Woman Lawyer's Association (BNWLA), Advocate Fawzia Karim Firoze, the President of the Association appeared as lawyer and moved the writ petition while Advocate Rebeca Sultana and Advocate Seema Jahur were in the panel.³⁶

This organization has also been working in the field of repatriation . BNWLA repatriated 36 trafficked persons from Kolkata, Delhi, Mumbai and Pakistan during the period 2003. BNWLA repatriated a 2 years old child named Arifa from India.³⁷

Besides legal support, BNWLA also extends rehabilitation to support the survivors. It has established three shelter Homes named " Proshanti-I" Proshanti-2 in Dhaka and another at Rajshahi. During the period 2003, a total of 512 survivors were provided with basic survival support in those Shelter Homes.³⁸ BNWLA, therefore, has been making sincere efforts to protect and promote human rights by taking both protecting and preventive measures.

³⁶ <http://www.bnwla.org.bd/content/view/228/lang,en/>

³⁷ Annual Report, 2003, BNWLA, P. 6 (2004)

³⁸ Annual Report 2003, BNWLA, p. 9-10

4.2 Bangladesh Legal Aid Services Trust (BLAST)

The need for establishing an organization for providing legal aid and its proposed structure was first tabled at the National Conference of Lawyers held in 1992 under the auspices of Bangladesh Bar Council. Later in pursuance of that deliberation, the Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) was formed and registered as a non-profit earning organization on 29 May 1993 and it was registered on 11th December 1993 under the Foreign Donations Regulation Ordinance, 1978 and also registered with the NGO Affairs Bureau on 11th December 1993.³⁹ It is worthy of mention that up to 1999, 1404 NGOs were registered with NGO Affairs Bureau, but only a limited number of them are directly involved with protection and promotion of human rights.⁴⁰ Since its inception in 1993, the goal of BLAST has been to open up the judicial system to the disadvantaged in Bangladesh society.

The main objectives of Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) are as follows:⁴¹

- To ensure that the operation of the legal system promotes access to justice;
- To provide free legal aid to ensure that opportunities for securing justice are not denied to any citizen or person by reasons of economic or other disabilities;
- To administer a Trust Fund for establishing and maintaining legal aid and services units to be supported by the grants from the Trust;
- To establish legal aid/ assistance and human rights protection units in the Bar Associations and in different localities of the country including rural areas;

³⁹ Annual Report 1995, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST), p. 7 (1996)

⁴⁰ Annual Report 1999, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST), p. 7 (2000)

⁴¹ Annual Report 2002-2003, *op.cit.*, p. 14 (2003)

- To promote the use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms i.e. mediation and compromise for amicable settlement of disputes that do not require adjudication by courts;
- To conduct special training programmes and courses for lawyer's, mediators, human rights activists and others;
- To co-ordinate the works of the units with other institution, including NGOs working in related fields.

BLAST realized that effective and efficient activities cannot be carried on without the co-operation of other similar NGOs. With this end in view **BLAST** has been working with NGOs and other organizations as partner organization, some of which are:

Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK), Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB), Bangladesh Bar Council, Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BNWLA), Bangladesh Society for Enforcement for Human Rights (BSEHR), Coordinating Council for Human Rights in Bangladesh, Institute of Development of Human Rights in Bangladesh, Madaripur Legal Aid Association, Odhikar, Save the Children (UK), The Royal Danish Embassy, The Asia Foundation, The Royal Norwegian Embassy and UNICEF.

BLAST has been working through 18 divisional and district units. It has also three Legal Aid Clinics:- at (1) Gopibag, Dhaka (2) Mohammadpur, Dhaka; and (3) Hathazari, Chittagong. These units are working for disposing of family disputes, second marriage, dowry, and cruelty to women trafficking, repatriation and Public Interest Litigation free of cost. Deprived and disadvantaged people are becoming more aware about their rights due to the role of BLAST and they are receiving free services from this NGO.

BLAST primarily has been assisting the victims of violation of human rights by extending legal aids with the intention of restoration of their infringed rights. BLAST has been providing legal aid to the needy selected on the basis of low range of income. Simultaneously, it is contributing to increasing general

awareness of the concept of legal redress and the availability of free legal aid to the poor. BLAST has developed its expertise in protecting the rights of people in areas like labour rights, violence against women, trafficking, child rights, legal counseling and training for community awareness and *Salish*. In recent years greater number of deprived and aggrieved workers, especially from the garments industries, are seeking assistance from BLAST to resolve conflicts with their employers and to secure their rights at work.

Legal Aid Services at a glance (August 1994 to September, 2007)⁴²

Head Office & Unit Offices	Complaints received	Mediation	Cases Filed	Settled Case
Aug-94	589	8	459	23
1995	1,202	43	726	273
1996	1,596	90	1,037	452
1997	2,389	172	1,460	766
1998	3,496	226	2,256	1,192
1999	4,531	320	2,836	1,581
Jan 00 to Mar 01	6,204	543	3,490	2,626
Apr 01 to Mar 02	4,447	782	2,157	2,227
Apr 02 to Mar 03	5,756	997	3,021	2,412
Apr 03 to Mar 04	8,874	1,518	4,049	2,514
Apr 04 to Mar 05	12,585	2,213	5,959	2,991
Apr 05 to Mar 06	14,134	2,585	6,418	3,940
Apr 06 to Mar 07	13,661	2,751	6,438	4,716
Apr 07 to Sep 07	9,074	1,740	3,765	2,377
Total	88,538	13,988	44,071	28,090

⁴² <http://www.blast.org.bd/legalaid.html> accessed on

- 7,572 complaints are pending for mediation up to September 2007.
- Total Case filed 44,071, settled 28,090 (64%) Pending Case 15,981 (36%)
- Out of 28,090 settled cases 19,494 (69%) were in favour of the clients, 2,307 (8%) were against the clients and 6,289 (22%) were dismissed for default due to absence of clients.⁴³

The contributions of BLAST can be evaluated from the following case study:

- (a) 12 year old Shazedul Islam was arrested by the Tangail police on 14.03.96. He was a student of class seven of Khash Shahzani M.AA Karim High School, Tangail. An order for his detention for one month under the Special Powers Act, 1974 was issued on 18.3.96 and the detention order was extended for another three months on 17.3.96. The detention order was again extended for another two months on 17.7.96. For BLAST, advocate Jaglul Haider Arif filed a writ of habeas corpus on behalf of Shazedul Islam and his detention was declared illegal by the High Court Division and he was released from detention.⁴⁴
- (b) Md. Zabed was a minor boy of 10 years. He came of a hawker family and helped his father in hawker business. Sutrapur Police of Dhaka district arrested him showing his age as 19. He was produced before the court of Metropolitan Magistrate on the next day. He was served with an order of detention for a period of 30 days under the Special Powers Act, 1974. The news of minor Zabed's detention was published in the daily Muktakantha on 28 December 1998 which drew the attention of BLAST. It filed writ Petition (No. 4191/98) before the High Court. In the writ petition BLAST challenged the detention order of Md. Zabed aged 10 years. The High Court issued a rule. It also ruled why appropriate legal action would not be taken against the respondent Md. Alauddin Miah, a Sub-Inspector of

⁴³ <http://www.blast.org.bd/legalaid.html>

⁴⁴ Annual Report 1996 op.cit., p. 2, (1997)

Sutrapur Thana. It was alleged that out of grudge and ulterior motive, the minor boy was wrongfully detained by falsely showing him to be 19.⁴⁵

- (c) The Daily Prothom Alo published a report on 4 January 2003 that about 400 children were detained in Dhaka Central Jail for more than 2 years. The report also stated that two human rights organizations namely *Odhikar* and Save the Children, UK, had compiled a list of 1200 children who were kept with dangerous criminals in violation of the provision of Children Act, 1974.

According to the report, police arrested these children before political events like hartals on the pretext of stopping picketing and violence. They were implicated under the Arms Act 1878, Narcotics Control Act 1990, Explosive Substance Act 1908 and Penal laws. Police did not mention the age of the minor accused in the First Information Report and also delayed submitting reports before the court regarding the age of minor accused. As a result, they remained detained in jail as general prisoners. The report also highlighted the living condition of those accused children including their food, accommodation, and medical facilities etc. that were insufficient and miserable. It also focused on the miserable conditions of female prisoners and overcrowding and dilapidated conditions of Dhaka Central Jail. This news and reports influenced BLAST to step into this matter. BLAST took this matter seriously and jointly filed a suit before the High Court Division of the Supreme Court on 9 February 2003 with Ain-O-Shalish Kendra and another Human Rights Organization.

Honorable Justice Mr. Amirul Kabir Chowdhury and Justice Mr. Md Nizamul Huq disposed of the matter by giving the following directions:⁴⁶

The law enforcing agencies, prosecuting agencies and Legal Aid Committees take immediate steps for trial of all juvenile accused by the juvenile courts.

⁴⁵ Annual Report 1998 (BLAST), p. 27 (1999)

⁴⁶ Annual Report April 2002-March 2003 (BLAST) p. 58-59

That the Government considers making prayers to the court concerned for discharging the juvenile accused under sections 82 and 83 of the Penal Code and also consider withdrawal of juvenile accused from prosecution under section 494 of the Code of Criminal Procedure in appropriate cases.

The local Legal Aid Committees formed by the Government are instructed to move the courts for bail of the juvenile accused. Juvenile accused in jail must be kept in isolation from other prisoners and be transferred to correctional homes and other approved homes with utmost expedition.

Bangladesh Legal Aids and Services Trust (BLAST) along with other organizations make a remarkable contribution to combat abuse of powers of law enforcement agents by their misuse of sections 54 and 167 of the Code of Criminal Procedure by filing a writ petition to High Court Division of the Supreme Court Bangladesh on 29, 1998 in Public Interest Litigation (writ No.3806/1998). In this case, BLAST V. Bangladesh,⁴⁷ the learned Judges delivered a land mark judgment ordering the government to amend Sections 54,167 of Cr. P.C and other related laws so that law enforcement agents cannot violate human rights by misusing those provisions of law. This credit, it is firmly observed, goes mainly to BLAST, which took initiative for amending those laws which are contrary to human rights. But unfortunately the reform of the law has not been tabled in the Parliament as yet.

4.3 Bangladesh Rehabilitation Centre for Trauma Victims (BRCT)

Bangladesh Rehabilitation Centre for Trauma Victims (BRCT) is also another human rights NGO which was founded in February, 1992 with the initiative of Mr. Akram Hassain Chowdhury, a leading and successful human rights activist, as a follow up to the national workshop on " Human Rights: Rehabilitation of Trauma victims" held in Dhaka on February 25-26,1992 with a promise to assist the torture survivors of the country . BRCT was initially registered with the Department of Social Welfare, Government of Bangladesh as a non-profit

⁴⁷ 55 DLR 363 (2003)

making non-governmental organization (NGO) in 1993. Later, it got registered with the NGO Affairs Bureau of Bangladesh in 1996.⁴⁸

Since its inception, BRCT has been providing services to the hundred of torture victims through physical and mental treatment and also legal services for justice and economic integration so that they can come back to social life. It started working by offering medical treatment for a number of torture victims on 25 February 1992 with the exclusive support from foreign medical experts. Now BRCT is the only organization of its kind working for the torture victims in Bangladesh. It has been serving mankind specially who are mal-treated by the law enforcement agents like police, Bangladesh Rifles, Army from its very origin. BRCT extends co-operation to the tortured people without discrimination as to race, sex, religion, age etc. The main objectives of BRCT are as follows:⁴⁹

- To provide supports for rehabilitation of torture victims;
- To provide legal aid to defend rights and compensation of the victims of torture;
- To ensure physical and mental soundness of the torture survivors and their families through Integrated Rehabilitation Approach (IRA);
- To initiate advocacy efforts to prevent torture;
- To prefer appeals to the government for urgent legal actions against perpetrators of crime;
- To conduct fact-finding mission on the occurrences of torture for ensuring supports for trauma victims and punishment for perpetrators;
- To organize seminars, workshops and training for the professionals to disseminate knowledge and experience relating to rehabilitation and treatment of torture survivors;

⁴⁸ Annual Report 2003 Bangladesh Rehabilitation Centre for Trauma Victims (BRCT), p. 1

⁴⁹ Annual Report 2003 Bangladesh Rehabilitation Centre for Trauma Victims (BRCT), p. 1-2

- To establish Documentation and Information centre to ensure exchange and dissemination of human rights violations;
- To form Task Force against Torture (TFT)- a local body of professional at district level for creating awareness against torture and to stop torture before its occurrence and
- To organize campaign and lobbying for reformation of laws related to torture and ratification of International human rights instruments.
- BRCT has also chalked out some strategies to achieve the objectives for which it has been originated. The strategies are;⁵⁰
- To prevent torture by educating, informing and rousing the conscience of people, especially the professionals;
- To ensure community participation at the local level against torture;
- To restore the mental and physical capacity of the victims through a multidisciplinary approach and
- To re- integrate the torture victims to his /her own world by rehabilitation works.

BRCT has divided its activities into two major parts- preventive and curative. "Prevention is better than cure" is its belief. On the basis of this principle, it has started a program known as Task Force against Torture (TET) formed at district level. This is consisted of local physicians, lawyers, journalists, teachers and social workers. They work for the protection against torture as well as human rights violations. The members of the TFT facilitate treatment for the victims of torture locally. They arrange workshop, seminars, and discussion meeting for general awareness about torture and human rights violations and take imitative to stop future incidents of any such violations.

BRCT takes curative measures through an Integrated Rehabilitation Approach (IRA). These measures include medicine, physiotherapy, psychotherapy,

⁵⁰ Annual Report 2002 (BRCT), p.2 (2003)

counseling, home visit, legal assistance and social rehabilitation program.⁵¹ Result of fact-finding can be seen from the following case.

Case study⁵²:

Young businessman, Quamrul Hasan Maula (30) was released from jail having support from BRCT after a fact-finding mission. The police of Detective Branch (DB) arrested him from West Rampura area of the City (Dhaka) following a traffic signal at about 8:00 P.M on June 8, 2001. Following a press report on June 10, the fact-finding team of BRCT conducted fact-finding on 11, 12, 13, 14 June, 2001. The BRCT lawyers pleaded and succeeded to convince the Court to grant bail for him on the same day. The eyewitnesses informed the fact-finding team that druggist Maula was helping wedding party vehicles of his family to cross the road. Civil dressed Sub Inspector of DB police drove his motorbike over right foot of Maula at that time. Maula, inhabitation of the locality, asked him to stop there. The police punched on his face. Maula became excited for this attitude of the man. He asked the man about the reason of driving motorbike over his foot and punching on his face. The SI started punching and kicking on Maula. During a tussle with the SI Maula found a pistol on his pocket. He held off the man then and there. The policeman called another police team and asked them to beat Maula. About 6 civil dressed policemen started beating him barbarously. The business leaders and influential people tried to save the victim from the clutch of police but failed. A group of policemen took Maula in the police van beating and pulling. At night the SI Mahbubur Rahman beat Maula with stick, kicked on his abdomen and electrocuted. For the whole night police beat him sometimes in the office room and sometimes taking him in a microbus moving into the city. On the next morning June 09, 2001, he was produced before the court implicating him in a

⁵¹ Annual Report 2000 (BRCT), p. 1 (2001); Annual Report 2001 (BRCT) p. 1 (2002); Annual Report 2002 (BRCT), pp. 1, 4, 29, 34, 36, 38, 47, (2003); Annual Report 2003 (BRCT) pp. 8-16 (2004)

⁵² Annual Report 2001 (BRCT) p. 49 (2002)

snatching case of Khilgaon police station. The fact-finding team rushed to the spot to provide support to the victim and his family.

BRCT believes that for prevention of torture or other human rights violations, beside government initiatives, mass awareness is essential. The members of the law enforcement agencies should respect Constitution. And the constitutional provisions of torture mentioned in Article 35.(5) of the Constitution of Bangladesh. Simultaneously, the professionals Journalists, doctors, lawyers and social workers should come forward to organize massive human rights awareness program throughout the country. A day may come when human rights culture will grow up to pave the way for a torture free society.

4.4 Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK)

ASK was established in 1986 by a group of lawyers, social workers, journalists and development workers. The prime aim of ASK is to empower the disadvantaged group through community activism. Its functions are directed towards creating awareness of rights to negotiate for change within a democratic process. ASK was registered on 20 September, 1986 under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 and also registered on 28 June, 1993 under the NGO Affairs Bureau under Foreign Donation Regulation Ordinance, 1978. Further, it has special consultative status with UNECOSOC since 31 July 1998.⁵³ Since its inception as a legal aid organization, ASK has been working to defend the rights of individuals. ASK, a politically neutral organization, has been endeavoring with all its sincerity to uphold human rights of the people.

ASK facilitates access to justice and gives priority to the poor and excluded, specially women, workers and working children, religious and ethnic minorities.⁵⁴ It has been working to regain the lost rights of the victims through filing suit, mediation, giving shelter, legal counseling. Due to its active involvement, awareness among the people about their rights has been increased and ASK has been receiving response from all quarters:

⁵³ Annual Report 2003, *Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK)*, p. 9 (2004)

⁵⁴ Annual Report 2002 (ASK), p. 9 (2003)

ASK imposes more importance on legal aid programme like filing of suit and mediation. It has its litigation unit (LIT) which files cases related to domestic disputes, human right violations, detention, jail appeals, criminal revision and labour disputes, when mediation fails.

ASK has been rendering laudable service, to the aggrieved persons by filing suit on their behalf under Public Interest Litigation (PIL).

ASK's monitoring of news reports of violence against women, indicates somewhat lower reporting of acid attacks, and fatwa- instigated violence, but a less clear picture in reports of rape, domestic violence and violence against domestic workers. These figures, in the absence of more systematic data, can only indicate the nature of such violence, rather than its extent, given the continuing prevalence of key factors inhibiting reporting of such violence.

Comparative Data on other Violence in Bangladesh from 2004 to 2008

Category of Violence	2004 ⁵⁵	2005 ⁵⁶	2006 ⁵⁷	2007 ⁵⁸	2008 ⁵⁹
Extra Judicial Death By Law enforcing Agencies	212	377	352	180	175
Political Violence	2252	989	not reported	1198	234
Death in Prison	104	86	71	106	61
Violence against Journalists	550	450	439	307	70
Border Killings	not reported	-	-	-	121

⁵⁵ Sara Hossain and Hamida Hossain, 'Human Rights in Bangladesh, 2004' *Ain o Salish Kendra*, 2005, Dhaka, Bangladesh,

⁵⁶ Sara Hossain and Hamida Hossain, 'Human Rights in Bangladesh, 2005' *Ain o Salish Kendra*, 2006, Dhaka, Bangladesh,

⁵⁷ Sara Hossain and Hamida Hossain, 'Human Rights in Bangladesh, 2006' *Ain o Salish Kendra*, 2007, Dhaka, Bangladesh,

⁵⁸ Sara Hossain and Hamida Hossain, 'Human Rights in Bangladesh, 2007' *Ain o Salish Kendra*, 2008, Dhaka, Bangladesh

⁵⁹ Sara Hossain and, 'Human Rights in Bangladesh, 2008' *Ain o Salish Kendra*, 2009, Dhaka, Bangladesh,

Comparative Data on Reports of Violence against Women From 2004 to 2008⁶⁰

Category of Violence	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Acid Attacks	228	130	142	95	80
Domestic Violence	616	689	635	577	608
Dowry related violence	352	356	334	294	296
Rape	618	585	515	436	486
Gang Rape	395	250	226	198	127
Violence against Domestic Workers	83	115	107	83	110
Fatwa-instigated violence	35	46	39	35	20

A brief account of PIL cases are mentioned year-wise:

In 2000, ASK took five PIL cases-⁶¹

- Challenging unlawful use of handcuffs on minors (writ petition No.3176/2000);
- Challenging legality of police search without warrant (writ petition No.3539/(2000);
- Protection of the minority community from harassment and violence and for appropriate administrative action against perpetrators (writ petition No.176/(2000);
- Challenging government's arbitrary decision for eviction of slums (writ petition No.59/946 and
- Challenging the legality of fatwa (writ petition No.5897/2000).

In 2001 ASK took the following measures to ensure the rights of the aggrieved:⁶²

- Appeared in the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court in appeal against the High Court judgment in fatwa case;

⁶⁰ Sara Hossain, 'Human Rights in Bangladesh, 2008' *Ain o Salish Kendra*, 2009, Dhaka, Bangladesh. P-171

⁶¹ Annual Report 2000 (ASK), p. 7(2001)

⁶² Annual Report 2001 (ASK), p. 32-33 (2002)

- Released a Nigerian citizen named Goddi Ochondo who was in jail for five years after completion of his sentence (writ petition No.489/2001).

ASK sent a letter to the Chief Justice regarding the situation of 29 foreign citizens detained in jail long after completion of their sentence. High Court Division accepted the letter as petition and asked the government for their release and send them homes at government expense (Rule Nisi No.2737/2001). A prisoner named Shahin was kept in jail with bar fetters. ASK challenged the jail authority for such violation of constitutional law and human rights. The High Court Division issued a show cause on the government.

ASK drew the attention of the High Court regarding over-crowdedness in the jails by a writ petition (3679/2001). High Court Division issued a show cause notice on the government, ASK field a Writ Petition to the High Court Division for enforcement of safety regulations in the garment factories and demanded the accountability in case of fire from the industry, the Labour Directorate and Fire Service Department. The High Court Division directed the respondents to implement safety regulations under the Factory Rules 1979.

In 2002 ASK filed the Public Interest Litigation on behalf of the victims:⁶³

ASK filed two writ petitions. (No.658/2002 and 1471/2002) to stop eviction of the people of Amtoli Basti (slum) (15000 residents) and Kallanpur Basti (slum) (10000 residents) respectively. High Court issued show causes to the respondent;

ASK filed Writ Petition (No 3621/2002) against arrest and torture by BDR of citizens. High Court declared such incidents of torture and arrest illegal;

ASK filed a case against trial of two minors in the same case with adults. Case no.241/2002). Trial Court ordered to produce the minors and transfer them to the Tongi Correction Centre and also ordered to frame separate charges against them.

Besides, ASK alone and with Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust filed several Public Interest writs in 2003.⁶⁴ These were against forcibly eviction

⁶³ Annual Report 2002 (ASK), p. 32 (2003)

from Mohakhali Bosti (slum); against jail custody of 400 children; against discriminatory policy of Health Directorate. In these cases the High Court gave verdict in favour of ASK. So, like other human rights NGOs, ASK has also been rendering relentless and systematic efforts to protect human rights in Bangladesh in all possible ways. The activities of NGOs like Grameen and BRAC have not been brought under this study simply because these are not engaged to protect and promote human rights in Bangladesh. Of the two, one is involved in micro credit business and the other is more attentive to spread education in rural areas.

5. Conclusion

A large number of NGOs is working around the globe to protect and promote human rights of them, two international and four national NGOs have been selected for our discussion. It has been found that these NGOs are providing different types of assistance to the victims of violation of human rights. These include legal, financial, medical shelter; mediation, rehabilitation and awareness so that the victim's infringed rights can be restored or compensated. The role played by these NGOs is undoubtedly appreciable. Had there been no such NGOs, the perpetrators would get more indulgence and as such there would have been more violation of human rights. People have become more aware about their rights due to the active and sincere efforts of the NGOs. Moreover, due to the pressure of the NGOs, government also has been taking administrative and legislative steps to combat the perpetrators of human rights. The Prevention of Repression against Women and Children Act, 2000, The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1980, The Prevention of Acid Crime Act, 2002 and Acid Control Act, 2002 are the outcomes of NGOs pressure on government in Bangladesh. Law enforcing agents are also more aware than before due to human rights NGOs'. It is, therefore, concluded from the above analysis that if further NGOs emerge and play effective role, protection and promotion of human rights in Bangladesh will be more ensured. This is the expectation of all concerned.

⁶⁴ Annual Report 2003 (ASK), p. 33 (2004).