

Note from the Editor

This issue comes in amidst grave political crisis in Bangladesh. The confrontational political culture with high-handed administration and corruption at all levels have led to the current impasse. And to add to the anguish and despair of the nation, the way out may neither be easy nor soon.

On our part, like the rest of the country, we lend a hand to understand the scenario within our limited capabilities. Towards this end we feature a couple of articles dealing with corruption in administration and the amassing of ill-gotten fortunes. Masudur Rahman in trying to make sense of the economic and political nexus focuses on the analysis of various social mechanisms in which functioning of both state institutions and market institutions are circumvented by elite networks of various kind – political, bureaucratic and business. He shows that various elite sub-groups have the capability of employing state institutions in enhancing their particularistic interests. Md. Rezaul Karim, on the other hand, takes on the Bangladesh Public Service Commission and demonstrates how much of the corruption in administration is rooted in the very process of the selection of the administrators.

The major contribution of the issue, however, is a new measurement of poverty worked out by A.I. Mahbub Uddin Ahmed. Not happy with the head-count or the money-in-pocket kind of assessment of poverty Ahmed picks up a few British and Swedish studies of self assessment of poverty and very skillfully applies these to the situation in Bangladesh. What he comes up with is an exiting new “deprivation index” the application of which is likely to offer a whole new perspective on the poverty in Bangladesh.

Dilara Zahid with her study set on the opposite pole looks at the “rich kids” in Dhaka city. Focusing on a small group of the upper class boys and girls in Dhaka city she ventures into some taboo areas in trying to assess how exposure to the global media has influenced the behaviour, including sex, and thought process of the youngsters. Though it is a sample study and one may not want to conclude much from it, it is undoubtedly a bold step into to the private lives of the young of this generation.

The other two studies are of Nigeria. Muhammad Sani Umar and Usman Ahmad Karofi look at the female labour turnover in the Kebbi State Civil Service. They argue that the higher the perception of prevalence of certain non-work related factors, the earlier the decision by female workers to disengage from the civil service. On a similar note Bunmi Omolayo, looks at the effect of leadership style on job-related tension and psychological sense of community in work organization in Lagos. He shows that workers under democratic leadership style do not experience higher job-related tension compared to the workers under autocratic leadership style.

Thus, this issue, in keeping with the past, also brings in young and first time authors like Dilara Zahid and Md. Rezaul karim. We hope that their works will be as appreciated as those of their senior colleagues.