

**BANGLADESH LEGAL AID AND SERVICES TRUST  
(BLAST)**

**ANNUAL REPORT  
April to December 2009**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## *Introduction*

The Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (“BLAST”) is mandated to provide free legal aid to ensure that all people have an opportunity to access justice, regardless of economic means or other disadvantage. BLAST institutes litigation and alternative dispute resolution on behalf of individuals, engages in public interest litigation and lobbies for the enactment of laws and policies for the protection of the rights of those living in poverty and /or facing disadvantage or social exclusion.

## *Legal Aid*

During 2009, BLAST handled a total of **10,378** complaints of which, **5,549** complaints were new and **4,829** were pending from previous years.

**Alternative Dispute Resolution:** Of these complaints, **5,908** disputes were dealt with by mediation, **1,268** disputes were settled outside mediation, and another **2,112** disputes are pending mediation.

**Litigation:** Through the year, BLAST instituted **3,071** cases in various courts of the country, including the apex court, while **18,854** cases were carried over from the previous years. BLAST thus dealt with a total of **21,925** during the year, of which **4,053** were settled: **2,087** (51.4%) cases were disposed of positively in favour of BLAST’s beneficiaries, **340** (8.3%) cases went against BLAST’s clients, **1,350** (33.3%) cases were dismissed for default, and **276** (7%) the parties settled the matter themselves out of court.

**Money Recovered:** Money recovered through mediation and litigation during the year amounted to **Tk. 15,186,003 (USD 215,343)** which included **Tk. 7,396,505 (USD 104,878)** paid out following mediation and a further sum of **Tk. 7,789,498 (USD 110,450)** realised from litigation.

**Women as beneficiaries:** Women were the main beneficiaries of BLAST’s legal services. During the year under review, **88%** of the total complaints received were received from women, while **97%** of the mediations held were resolved in favour of women. Similarly, **87%** of the total cases filed during the year were to safeguard the interest of women, and **90%** of the resolved cases went in favour of women.

**Strategic Legal Aid – Public Interest Litigation:** During the period under review, BLAST instituted **five writ petitions in the public interest** and **appeared in one Suo Motu Rule** as an Intervener.

- **Access to Justice – Family Courts:** BLAST and co-petitioner ASK filed **Writ Petition No. 2813 of 2009** for setting up Family Courts in three hill districts. For years, the people of the hill districts have been denied justice under the Family Court Ordinance, 1985, which is a violation of their fundamental rights.
- **Right to Life – Right to a Remedy – Extra Judicial Executions:** BLAST and co-petitioners ASK, Nijera Kori and Kormojibi Nari filed an intervener petition against extra judicial killings by the law enforcing agencies. Abuse of power by law enforcement agencies results in not only a gross violation of the Constitution and

rule of law, but also increasingly leads towards a situation in which the law enforcement agencies are seen to operate without accountability and transparency and feel they can operate with impunity. (**Writ Petition No.4152 of 2009**)

- **Right to Life – Right to Shelter –Forced Evictions:** BLAST and co-petitioners ASK and CUP filed **Writ Petition No. 4456 of 2009** for protecting the right to shelter and livelihood of slum dwellers of Purbo Bahistaki Gudraghat Basti. The PIL challenged verbal notice of eviction served upon the petitioners (slum dwellers) on the plea of illegal, unauthorized occupation without providing alternative accommodation.
- **Right to Equality – Access to Education -- Gender Discrimination:** BLAST and co-petitioners Bangladesh Mahila Parishad and Naripokkho filed **Writ Petition No. 5343 of 2009** for not issuing an admit card to sit for a professional examination to a 16 year-old girl who did not want to provide her father's identify.
- **Right to Equality – Freedom from Cruel and Degrading Treatment:** BLAST and co-petitioners Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, ASK, Nijera Kori and BRAC, filed **Writ Petition No. 5863 of 2009** for failure of the respondents to take prompt and effective measures to prevent the commission of crimes resulting from the imposition and execution of extra-legal punishments (fatwa) by persons wholly without lawful authority, in violation of individuals' fundamental rights to be treated in accordance with the law and to be protected from cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment.
- Two petitions by the Government seeking leave against interim orders obtained by BLAST were dismissed.

### ***Networking***

BLAST organized **18 networking meetings with local level NGOs** during the period, which resulted in the referral of **1,020** (18% of total **5,549** complaints received) to BLAST through networked organizations such as NGOs, trade union, local elected bodies etc.

### ***Advocacy***

#### *Labour Laws:*

- BLAST organised **five in-house meetings regarding amendment of the Bangladesh Labour Law, 2009** for effective legal aid and networking with the panel lawyers of Labour Court, trade union representatives, supervisors, compliance officers of HR section of garments factories, and representatives of networking organizations.
- BLAST held a seminar on 1 May 2009 on “**Reviewing the Labour Law 2006 and How to Improve the Relationship between Workers and Owners,**” followed by a **Round Table Discussion on 26 December 2009 on ”Amendment of Section 307 of the Bangladesh Labour Law, 2006”**.

#### *Consumer Protection:*

- During the reporting period, **nineteen Advocacy Meetings were held on the issue of “The Consumer Protection Act, 2009” at the nineteen units of BLAST.** District Judges, Judges and Magistrates, police officers, panel lawyers, lawyers, civil servants, marketing officers, representatives of civil society, public representatives, businessmen, NGO representatives and journalists participated in this meeting. The participants gave their valuable recommendations on this

issue. BLAST arranged the advocacy meetings in view to implement the law and also to amend it to make it more effective to protect the interest of the consumers.

### ***Capacity Building***

- BLAST prepared a **strategic plan for the coming five year period (2011-2015)** to enable it to address the immediate funding crisis and to identify means to reorient its management and day to day activities with limited resources and personnel.
- BLAST co-organized a **three-day PIL workshop** on emerging issues of discrimination and equality, particularly in respect of marginalised communities, and on delays in the justice system.
- Panel lawyers also received **training on legal skills and BLAST policies**. The sessions also provided the lawyers the opportunity to work together on resolving problems within the legal system. A total of 19 meetings were held this year.

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# 1. MISSION

BLAST's mission is to make the legal system accessible to the poor and the marginalized. It envisions a society based on the rule of law in which every individual, particularly the poor, the marginalized, women, children, people with disabilities, *adivasis*, and *dalits* have access to justice, and their human rights are respected and protected.

To realize its goal, BLAST's objectives are to:

1. Provide free legal aid and to undertake public interest litigation and advocacy activities to ensure that opportunities for securing justice are not denied to any person for any reason;
2. Administer a trust fund for establishing and maintaining legal aid and services units supported by the grants from the Trust;
3. Establish legal aid/assistance and human rights protection units in the bar associations and in different localities of the country, including rural areas;
4. Conduct special training programmes through which relevant skills and expertise can be imparted to lawyers, activists and others to ensure legal protection of rights;
5. Coordinate the activities of its district units with other organizations, including NGOs working in related fields;
6. Publish original research articles and reports about matters useful to lawyers focused on legal protection of rights;
7. Promote improved legal education, including awareness of responsibility for providing legal aid to disadvantaged persons, and to promote, establish and maintain national institutions for legal education;
8. Organize seminars, symposiums and extension lectures on various law subjects for advocates, teachers, law students, and to promote participation in international conferences, workshops, and training and educational programmes

## **2. HISTORY**

The idea for a national organization that could engage lawyers around the country to provide pro bono services was raised at a national conference of lawyers held by the Bangladesh Bar Council in 1992. BLAST was established in 1993 as a free legal services organisation with a Board of Trustees comprising eminent jurists, lawyers, and former judges of the Bangladesh Supreme Court. After beginning operations at five offices in 1994, BLAST grew rapidly and now has nineteen unit offices in addition to the head office in Dhaka. BLAST operates at the frontlines of the legal system, from the Magistrate's Court right up to the Supreme Court. It is the only legal services organisation to provide advice and assistance in criminal, family, civil, land and constitutional law matters.

When founded, BLAST focused on providing legal aid, but it soon broadened its mandate to include alternative dispute resolution, public interest litigation, and legislative advocacy, providing a comprehensive approach to justice for marginalized and vulnerable persons. BLAST has undertaken significant public interest litigation and advocacy on criminal justice, economic and social rights, equality issues, and people with disabilities.

### **3. DIRECT CLIENT SERVICE FOR THE POOR AND MARGINALISED**

BLAST firmly believes that by promoting individual rights and dignity it can help the poor, especially women, break out of the poverty cycle. By nesting BLAST within the legal establishment (from the top, with a network of Supreme Court advocates bringing PIL cases, to the bottom, with offices situated in the local bar associations and panel lawyers providing legal aid services) and working with the government legal aid services office, BLAST is changing the way justice is seen in society as a service that is increasingly available to more people who were previously excluded for both social and economic reasons.

BLAST's clients are among the most marginalised people in the country. The majority are women with small children who have been abused and abandoned by their husbands, as well as garments workers deprived by factory owners. Traditionally, the poor and marginalised in Bangladesh do not know their rights or where to turn for help. Therefore, BLAST conducts awareness programmes across Bangladesh among the public regarding legal rights and remedies, focusing on courtyard meetings for women.

Most BLAST clients come to BLAST only after earlier efforts at out of court settlement - through conversations with families, employers, local leaders, and/or trade unions -- have failed. BLAST is highly effective in promoting access to greater justice amongst its clients, giving claimants, particularly women and workers, a chance to voice their grievances in a public and supported arena. BLAST also plays a crucial role in ensuring that women and other marginalized individuals can take part in justice-related decision-making processes that affect them.

Due to awareness of their rights and remedies, referrals to appropriate services, access to lawyers, support in negotiating court procedures, and the opportunity to engage in ADR, the numbers of disadvantaged individuals who are actively engaged in justice-seeking has clearly increased. BLAST's clients have been able to demand basic rights, including freedom from discrimination and violence. BLAST is also opening up spaces in which impoverished citizens can increase their understanding of the judiciary and other power-holders within the justice system. Power-holders themselves are beginning to treat poor claimants with increased respect and are becoming more willing to act on their behalf.

BLAST was responsible for 10,378 complaints this year: 5,549 new and 4,829 carried over from the previous year. Cases are settled either through mediation or litigation. When a case is mediated, the disputing parties work with a trained mediator at a BLAST office to reach a mutually agreeable solution. Cases that are litigated are decided by a judge in a formal court. This year, 1,268 complaints were settled by mediation, 2,112 are pending for mediation, another 3,071 cases were filed with the formal, court and 1,719 are pending for filing.

About 88% percent of the complaints filed this year were from women, regarding repeated allegations of discrimination and mistreatment. Some 235 complaints were received by garment workers who work in deplorable conditions, are underpaid, exploited, and subject to termination at the will of their employer. Women and workers have voiced confidence in the BLAST office and feel that their grievances will be settled through the efforts of BLAST. Moreover, many clients said that the BLAST unit offices act as a platform for poor and disadvantaged.

The following table indicates the breakdown of the women and men who received BLAST services this year.

**Table 1**

<b>Nature</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Total</b>
Settled through mediation	41(3%)	1227(97%)	1268
Filed in court	402(13%)	2669(87%)	3071

*Please also see Annexes A.i and A.ii*

**Mediation**

The majority of individuals who turn to BLAST to help resolve a conflict prefer mediation to litigation due to the reduced costs and time involved, and relative effectiveness in terms of sustainability of the outcomes. During the reporting period, BLAST recovered Taka 73,96,505 (USD 105,063) through 1,268 successfully mediated cases on issues pertaining to family, civil, and land disputes. The litigants/client have used this money to invest in small businesses, maintain and educate their children, release their mortgaged land, purchase rickshaw vans, or get married. (See Annex A.iii)

The mediations conducted by BLAST were almost exclusively for female clients (97%)—all but 41 of the mediations were initiated by female clients and women recovered a total of BDT 72,16,241. Additionally, 86% of the women who initiated mediation due to a family disputes reported a reduction in violence, and increase in decision making opportunities, and a more balanced marital power dynamic.

Garment workers have also benefited from mediation. This year eighteen garment workers recovered BDT 1,80,264. One worker was also reinstated in his job.

When looking at the number of people assisted by mediation, it is important to remember that in reality resolution of a dispute benefits more people than the disputing parties. For example, in a mediation for maintenance by a deserted wife, the parents (who would resume financial responsibility for their daughter) and any children also benefit from the financial settlement. BLAST believes that 6,340 people were indirectly benefited from the mediations conducted this year.

During the reporting period, BLAST followed up with 115 mediation clients, six months after the case was completed, to assess the impact of the mediation on the their life. Ninety-seven out of 115 (84%) of the clients involved in mediations reported positive improvements in their lives. About 81% of the couples that went to mediation to resolve a martial dispute reported an improvement in their marriage. Of those who got divorced, about 89% reported that they consider themselves to be better off than when they were married.

Some examples of amicable settlements of disputes dealt with by BLAST are given below:

- Sultana, Khursheed, Maleka, Rebecca, and Binitahad all had husbands who did not provide them with sufficient maintenance and also demanded dowry. The complainants sought their maintenance through BLAST and expressed their willingness to live with their husbands if there were assurances that they would not be beaten in the future. Through BLAST mediation, reconciliation was achieved between the couples.

- Bashoti filed a complaint with the Khulna office that her husband frequently demanded dowry and threatened to contract a second marriage. Bashobi left her husband and took shelter at her parents' home. Mediation resulted in a reconciliation between the husband and wife.
- Parveen was deprived of her father's property by her brothers. She complained to BLAST's Head Office who held a through mediation and realised the sum of Tk 1,20,000.00 and gained possession of her flat from her brothers.
- Rehana wanted to divorce her husband and complained to the Bogra Unit office. This Office mediated the matter and received Tk 70,000.00 from Rehana's husband by mutual consent as dower and maintenance before divorce was complete.
- Safiya did not receive maintenance form her husband. She approached the Kushtia Unit office, which successfully mediated the mater and was able to realise payment of Tk. 60,000.00 from her husband by mutual consent as dower and maintenance after divorce.

### **Mediation Case Study: Family Law**

Fatima married Amirul in 2007 in accordance with Muslim law; the marriage was registered, and an amount of Tk.40,000 was fixed as dower. Soon after they married, Amirul made demands for dowry, and started beating Fatima inhumanly. Ultimately, he threw her out of the house, and she had to return to her parent's home, where she lived in hardship.

Fatima made a complaint to BLAST's Head Office, which sent a mediation notice to Amirul. After two mediation sessions, Amirul and Fatima reached a settlement in November 2009, agreeing that Fatima would divorce Amirul by exercising her right of delegated divorce (talaq-e-tawfiz), and that Amirul would pay Fatima the dower money due to her under the marriage contract.

After the divorce, Amirul's family members paid Tk. 84,000 to Fatima in settlement of her dower, which she received through BLAST's office. Fatima deposited part of this sum in a bank. She now works at a garments factory, earning Tk. 4,000 per month.

### **Mediation Case Study: Labour Law**

On 10.09.09, Siraj came to the BLAST Head Office stating that he had been working as a store manager at a factory as a permanent worker since 01.07.06. On 11.08.09 the applicant was given notice of termination on the grounds that he took goods of the factory by gate pass. The applicant denied this allegation. The manager gave notice on 14.08.09 and 17.08.09 on the same grounds. He prohibited Siraj from working in that factory. The applicant denied all the allegations brought against him and claimed all his due salary and other legal benefits, but the manager refused him to pay all his payments. Finding no other alternatives, Siraj came to BLAST for legal assistance to get his back salary, including notice pay and other legal benefits.

On 13.09.09 and 25.10.09 BLAST, issued two letters to the authority of the factory to resolve the aforesaid matter through mediation. On 12.11.09, the executive director of the factory came to the BLAST office and discussed the disputed matter. Finally, the parties settled the dispute after tripartite discussion and the factory director agreed to pay Siraj's due salary and other legal benefits.

Through mediation, Siraj received Tk. 32,054 as his legal benefits, including due salary, from the opposite party.

## ***Litigation***

When mediation does not result in a settlement, or is inappropriate given the nature of the dispute/complaint, BLAST provides legal advice and representation to its clients, to enable them to seek remedies through litigation.

In the reporting period, BLAST provided legal representation in 21,925 cases, of which 4,053 cases were resolved. Out of these, 2087 were resolved in favour of BLAST's clients through court and 1350 cases were dismissed for default, as clients did not appear before the courts to pursue their claims. In 276 case, the parties settled the matter themselves and lost interest in litigation. Court verdicts in 340 cases went against our clients. (See Annex B)

Of the total settled cases, ninety percent (**90%**) of the beneficiaries were women. Six months after the settlement, out of 107 clients surveyed, 86% confirmed that they remained satisfied with the settlement reached.

During this period, BLAST successfully settled 126 family-related disputes through court cases, resulting in the recovery for women of a sum of Tk. 71,68,813 by way of dower and/or maintenance.

BLAST enabled garment workers to recover a sum of Tk. 6,20,685 in arrears of wages and compensation. It also resolved 142 labour disputes through litigation. Of these, 105 cases were disposed of positively in favour of BLAST's clients, while 87 cases were successfully resolved through court (which resulted in the recovery of arrears of wages and compensation. In addition, four workers were reinstated in their jobs with back wages.

Unfortunately, BLAST currently has a backlog of over 17,000 cases. This year 21,925 cases were dealt with through litigation. 3,071 new cases were instituted in various courts of the country, including the Supreme Court of Bangladesh, while another 18,854 cases were carried over from previous years.

Table 2

<b>Carried Over</b>	<b>New filed</b>	<b>Disposed of</b>	<b>Pending</b>
18,854	3,071	4,053	17,872

Not all of the cases that come to BLAST are filed in the courts. Cases sometimes cannot be moved forward by a lawyer because of lack of proper documents or inadequate legal merit. Additionally, BLAST may no longer be able to represent a client because they become solvent or retain a private lawyer. As with all court cases, sometimes clients just lose interest.

### **Litigation Case Study: Family Law**

On 21.08.07, Abdul came to the BLAST Head Office alleging that he had been working at a factory as a permanent worker since 15.06.99. On 13.06.07, the manager and general manager of the factory compelled Abdul to sign on a white stamp paper. When the applicant refused to sign on that paper, the authority of the factory dismissed him by golden handshake under the rules of their factory. Abdul came to BLAST for legal help to

realize his back wages, including notice pay and other legal benefits, according to Bangladesh Labor Law, 2006.

On 09.09.07, BLAST issued a letter to the authority of the factory to resolve the matter through mediation. The opposite party did not communicate directly or by phone with BLAST or the complainant. After the step of mediation failed, the complainant filed a case against the accused party in the Labor Court of Dhaka to resolve the matter.

On 16.11.09, the court ordered the factory to pay Tk. 63,966 to the complainant party as her legal benefits, including back wages.

### **Litigation Case Study: Labour Law**

Fahima was married to Faruk in 2002 by a registered Kbaan Nama for a consideration of dower of Tk. 45,000. A son was born out of their wedlock. After some time, Faruk demanded dowry from Fahima's family for starting business. But Fahima's father had given Faruk money on different occasions to save his daughter's marital life. He could no longer give money to his son-in law, and Fahima was driven away from the house of her husband. Fahima took shelter in her father's house. Faruk did not provide maintenance to Fahima and their son. Under these circumstances, Fahima filed a family case to recover her dower money and maintenance. BLAST engaged a lawyer to handle the case. The Court delivered its judgment, and passed a decree for Tk. 56,000 in Fahima's favour on 21.11.2006.

Faruk did not comply with order of the Court and did not pay the decreed money to Fahima. Fahima came to the BLAST office again to file a decree execution case in 2007. The Court delivered its judgment on 29.04.2009, and Fahima got fifty six thousand taka through court.

Fahima used Tk. 40,000 to purchase 45 decimals of agricultural land. With the remaining Tk. 16,000, she invested in cultivation of paddy, sugar and other crops. She hopes that she will be able to earn Tk. 5000 per year by selling those crops.

### ***Legal Aid for Indigent Prisoners***

BLAST is involved with a pilot project, Improving the Real Situation of Overcrowding in Prison, in cooperation with the Prison Authorities and the German Technical Corporation (GTZ), to provide legal assistance to those awaiting trial in prison. Those arrested often find themselves waiting years for trial, or even to be represented by a lawyer. BLAST has employed and trained six paralegals who work in the Bogra jail and serve as a resource of legal advice and assistance. For example, the paralegals will advise prisoners on their legal rights, help them find lawyers, conduct interviews and do basic paperwork to assist the lawyers, as well as track down witnesses and the prisoner's family. To date 159 prisoners have been released with the assistance of the paralegals.

## 4. PUBLIC INTEREST LITIGATION

BLAST initiated five public interest litigations (PIL) and intervened in one Suo Motu Rule as an intervener.

The Government sought leave to appeal before the apex court, the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh, against two interim orders passed by the High Court Division in favour of BLAST. BLAST'S lawyers opposed the Government's arguments, and the Court did not grant leave in either case.

### Access to Justice

- **Family Courts in CHT:** BLAST and Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) filed a writ petition challenging Section 1(2) of the Family Courts Ordinance, 1985 which excludes the three hill districts Rangamati, Khagrachari and Bandarban, from its ambit, while providing that Family Courts be established in the other 61 districts of Bangladesh. BLAST and ASK argued that depriving residents, in particular women, from the hill districts of a separate Family Court constitutes a violation of the fundamental rights to equal treatment under law and non-discrimination, as enshrined in Articles 27 and 31 of the Constitution. The High Court has directed the respondents to show cause why Family Courts should not be established in the three hill districts. (Writ Petition No. 5863 of 2009)

### Right to Life

- **Extra Judicial Killings:** BLAST, along with other human rights organisations, filed an intervener writ petition challenging the deaths of various persons which allegedly took place during 'crossfire' or 'encounters'. The petitioners argued that executions and extra-judicial killings by law enforcement agencies constitute grave violations of the rights to be treated in accordance with law, the right to life, and the right to fair trial under Articles 31, 32 and 35 of the Bangladesh Constitution. The High Court has directed the respondents to explain why extra-judicial killings in 'crossfire' or 'encounters' by law enforcement agencies should not be declared illegal and why departmental and criminal proceedings should not be initiated against those responsible for such killings. (Writ Petition No. 4152 of 2009)

### Right to Equality and Non-Discrimination /Women's Rights

- **Recognition of Mother as Guardian:** BLAST, with two leading women's rights organisations, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad and Naripokkho, filed a writ petition based on allegations that the Rajshahi Board of Education had refused to issue an admit card to a young woman in Thakurgaon for failing to complete the entry regarding 'father's name' in the Student's Information Form (S.I.F.) required prior to sitting for S.S.C. examinations. The petitioners argued that the mandatory requirement of an entry in the fields for both 'father's name' and 'mother's name' is inconsistent with the constitutionally guaranteed rights to be treated equally in accordance with law and the right to access to education under Articles 27, 31 read with Article 17 of the Constitution. To date, the High Court has directed the Ministry of Education to submit a report on which Education Boards required candidates for S.S.C. and H.S.C. examination to complete mandatory fields for both father and mother's name in the Student Information Form (S.I.F.). It also issued a Rule Nisi upon the respondents to show cause as to why such a requirement should not be held to be arbitrary, discriminatory and unconstitutional. (Writ Petition No.5343 of 2009).

## Right to Freedom from Violence/ Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment

- **Extra Judicial Penalties:** BLAST, with ASK, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, BRAC Human Rights and Legal Services Programme and Nijera Kori, filed a writ petition challenging the imposition and execution of extra judicial penalties in the name of ‘fatwa’ during local *dispute resolution processes (shalish)* by persons without any lawful authority. The petition was filed following the publication of several newspaper reports and onsite investigations by the petitioners of violence/extra-judicial penalties inflicted on women and girls in the name of ‘fatwas’ by local religious leaders and other powerful persons. It was alleged that these reports indicated that women had been subjected to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and punishments, but the law enforcing agencies had failed to take any action to prevent or punish these illegal actions. The petitioners argued that infliction of brutal punishments, for example, caning, whipping and beating in local *salish* by persons without any judicial authority constituted violations of the rights to life, to equal protection of law and to be treated in accordance with law, and to not be subjected to cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment or punishment as guaranteed by Articles 27, 31, 32, 35(2) of the Constitution. The Court directed the concerned Ministries and local authorities to take immediate measures against extra-judicial penalties issued in the course of *salish*, and to show cause as to why their failure to prevent such illegal acts in compliance with their statutory and constitutional obligations should not be declared to be illegal and without any lawful effect. (Writ Petition No. 5863 of 2009).

## Right to Shelter

- **Gudarghat Basti Eviction Case:** BLAST, ASK, and Coalition for the Urban Poor (CUP) challenged the threat to forcibly evict approximately 5,000 inhabitants of Gudarghat Basti, Kafrul, Dhaka. BLAST and the other petitioners argued that forced eviction of slum dwellers without alternative prior resettlement constitutes a violation of the right to life, including the right to shelter, guaranteed by Articles 31 and 32, read with Article 15 of the Constitution. The High Court directed the concerned Government authorities (who) to show cause as to why the threat of eviction of the slum dwellers without alternative rehabilitation or resettlement should not be declared to be without lawful authority and unconstitutional, being in violation of their fundamental rights to life, including to a livelihood and to shelter, and to be treated in accordance with law. The High Court also issued an injunction restraining the respondents from evicting the slum dwellers (Writ Petition No. 4456 of 2009).

The Government also filed two petitions in the apex court seeking leave to appeal against High Court orders. However, in both cases the leave petitions were dismissed. The petitions were:

- **Civil Petition No. 1722 of 2008:** The Government filed this Civil Petition for Leave to Appeal before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court against an order dated 20 May 2008, passed by the High Court Division in Writ Petition No. 2760 of 2008, rejecting the application for vacating an order of stay granted in favour of the slum dwellers. BLAST appeared and opposed

this Civil Petition for Leave to Appeal and it was dismissed on 27.07.09 on merit. As a result, slum dwellers of Jhilphar will be safe from eviction

- **Civil Petition No. 2059 of 2008:** The Government filed this Civil Petition for Leave to Appeal against the order dated 30.05.2007, passed by the High Court Division in Writ Petition No. 5207 of 2007, adding BLAST as a party therein. BLAST appeared and opposed this Leave Petition, which was dismissed on 11.08.09. As a result, the order of the High Court Division adding BLAST as a party was upheld.

## 5. FACT FINDING INVESTIGATIONS

BLAST investigated five major allegations of human rights violations during the reporting period:

### Right to Shelter

- **Threatened Eviction of Dalits in Slum at Sutrapur, Dhaka**

After receiving information from the Dalit Foundation, BLAST started an investigation on 21 April 2009 regarding the threat of eviction of people residing in a slum, many of whom were from the Dalit community, at Reboti Mohon Das Lane in Old Dhaka. The investigations indicated that there was pending litigation relating to the land, and there were also disputed allegations regarding destruction of a temple in the area. The role of the police, who refused to cooperate with the investigation, was of some concern.

Action Taken: Press Conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity Auditorium; Advice given regarding possible legal action to Dalit Foundation. BLAST and other NGOs also met with the residents of Sutrapur slum in response to their requests to provide legal aid, to assist them with respect to any further threatened evictions of others families in that area, and to initiate a joint investigation into the allegations of eviction.

- **Eviction and Violence against Adivasis/Bengalis by a Land-Grabber in Naogaon**

BLAST conducted an onsite investigation, together with ALRD and ASK, after receiving a complaint from the Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD) into allegations of attack on 72 indigenous and Bengali families residing in Porsha, Naogaon, resulting in injuries and evictions, and the looting of their houses.

Action Taken: Press Conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity VIP Auditorium on 25 June 2009; Legal Advice provided to affected persons.

### Right to Life

- **Association Police Firing**

Following media reports on demonstrations at Nippon Garments in Ershad Nagar, Tongi after its sudden closure on 30 October 2009 without informing staff or paying their arrears of wages, BLAST conducted an onsite investigation. It found that the police had reportedly used bullets and tear gas to disperse workers, who reportedly attacked police forces. In retaliation, three people died and thousands of workers suffered injuries.

Action: BLAST communicated with trade unions and workers representatives and monitored the provision of compensation to the bereaved families of workers, and to those whose arrears of wages had not been paid earlier. (See Annex C.i)

- **Launch Capsize**

The M.V. Koko-4 launch travelling from Dhaka to Bhola on 27 November 2009 capsized at the Nazirpur terminal in Bhola, leaving 86 passengers dead and many injured. BLAST's Investigation Cell conducted an onsite investigation and submitted a full investigation report.

Action Taken: Press Conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity VIP Auditorium.

### Right to a Fair Trial

- **Arbitrary Arrest and Detention/Prisoners Rights**

BLAST communicated closely with the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) to trace information regarding Bangladeshi prisoners allegedly held in prison in India (West Bengal) for periods long beyond the expiry of their period of sentence. After collecting related information through CHRI's right to information request in India, BLAST provided this information to the High Court in Bangladesh in relation to a pending PIL on the issue.

## 6. PARTNERSHIPS AND NETWORKING

BLAST recognizes that promoting access to justice and safeguarding the rights of the poor and marginalized men, women, and children requires the efforts of many. It therefore continued to build and strengthen alliances with local, national and regional NGOs, and civil society groups concerned about legal protection of rights. It also continued strong collaborations with relevant government agencies both at the local and national levels.

### ***Legal Services/Outreach***

BLAST arranged *eighteen networking meetings* with local NGOs to enhance its legal aid activities by ensuring dissemination of information on the scope of its services to local organisations and also learning about the needs and expectations of local communities.

BLAST also organized nineteen meetings for its panel lawyers, that is lawyers in private practice who conduct litigation on its behalf in various courts. The purpose of the meetings were: (a) familiarise the panel lawyers with BLAST policies; (b) offer training on legal skills; (c) provide a forum for sharing difficulties with moving/filing cases; and (d) receive information from practitioners on problems with current laws and procedures. Almost 1311 (24%) of the complaints received by BLAST this period was due to its relationship with panel lawyers

### ***Support Services/Referrals***

BLAST signed memoranda of understanding with 113 organizations which specialized in providing shelter, psychological counselling, health care, and livelihood support. The document specified the services each organization provided to assist with making appropriate referrals.

### ***Coalition Building***

BLAST remains engaged with various coalition partners on advocacy on a range of issues, including labour rights and occupational health, violence against women (VAW) in particular domestic violence, child rights, and CEDAW implementation, providing technical legal perspectives through joint planning, forum discussion, analysis and drafting as required. It has been involved in the following alliances on various issues as follows:

- *Alliance to End Domestic Violence (We Can)*: A network of 400 organisations in 48 districts, which aims to end domestic violence, through combined strategies, including mass mobilisation and awareness raising, and is supported by OXFAM-Bangladesh.
- *Citizen's Initiative to Address Domestic Violence*: This coalition has been engaged for the past two years in consultations with the broader women's rights movement and with legal practitioners on drafting the "Domestic Violence Prevention and Protection of Women Bill." BLAST is a core member of this coalition and has played a

key role in the drafting committee and also in periodic convening of legal practitioners to review and give input on drafts of the Domestic Violence bill.<sup>1</sup>

- Domestic Workers Rights Network(DWRN): (This Coalition was formed with 22 organizations in 2006, and is supported by the Ministry of Justice. The Coalition prepared a Code of Conduct for Domestic Workers, which it submitted to the Ministry of Labour along with a proposed amendment of the Labour Law regarding the rights of domestic workers on 1 September 2009.
- Victim Support Center: BLAST is the member of the Victim Support Centre set up by the Bangladesh Police, and provides legal aid and advice services there once a week. As a member of the Victim Support Centre, BLAST dealt with ten complaints this year.

### **Government Partnership**

- Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs: BLAST attended two meetings of the Government's National Legal Aid and Services Organisation, as a member of the Organisation.
- Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs: BLAST played an active role in drafting the Domestic Violence Bill and in consultations on the Child Labour Elimination Policy, 2010, and on the National Women's Development Policy.
- Ministry of Labour: BLAST contributed comments on the Labour Policy and on suggested amendments to the Labour Law 2006.
- Prime Minister: After BLAST and ASK met with representatives of the Bhashantek slum dwellers to discuss the scope for full implementation of the existing rehabilitation scheme and further action, a memorandum was finalized to place before the Honourable Prime Minister raising the concerns of the slum dwellers and appealing for an amendment to the terms and conditions in the ongoing public-private partnership Bhashantek Rehabilitation Project.

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<sup>1</sup> Editorial Note (2010): The Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act 2010 was enacted on 6 October 2010.

## 7. LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY REFORM

BLAST has been impacting legislative and policy reform on the following issues:

### Children's Rights

BLAST participated actively in dialogues led by the Ministry of Women's and Children's Affairs on review of the draft Children Policy, and the draft Child Labour Policy.

### Consumer Rights

**BLAST's Unit offices held** advocacy meetings in 19 Districts across the country on the scope and ambit of the **Consumer Rights Protection Act, 2009**. Judges and magistrates, police officers, lawyers, government officers, sales officers, sanitary officers, medical representatives, civil society representatives, public representatives, businesspersons, local NGOs and journalists participated. Participants at each meeting developed recommendations on strategies for implementing the law and for necessary amendments to ensure more effective protection of consumer rights. These recommendations were then fed into a national roundtable discussion meeting titled, "Consumer Rights Protection Act, 2009: Reviews and Recommendations" held on 12 December 2009 at the Mahabub Kabir Memorial Hall, BIAM Foundation, Eskaton, Dhaka. (See Annex D.ii)

### Women's Rights

BLAST continued to be actively involved in the Drafting Committee of the broad-based network the Coalition of Voices against Domestic Violence, engaged in reviewing and revising the draft of the **Domestic Violence (Protection and Prevention) Bill**. In this capacity it took part in ongoing consultations led by the Ministry of Women's and Children's Affairs.

BLAST also took part in consultations held by the Ministry of Women's and Children's Affairs on proposed revisions to the **National Women's Development Policy**.

### Workers' Rights

BLAST held a seminar on 1 May 2009 in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, Government of Bangladesh, at the Osmani Memorial Hall, Dhaka on "**Reviewing the Labour Law, 2006 and How to Improve the Relationship between Workers and Employers**". Representatives of the Government, employers, and NGOs, lawyers, trade union leaders and workers participated in the programme. Meeting preparations were published as a supplementary in the national newspapers "Daily Jugantor" and "Daily Samokal" on 30 April 2009. The recommendations were then submitted to the Government in June.

BLAST held a Round Table Discussion on 26 December 2009, Reporters Unity, at CIDAP auditorium on "**Amendment of Section 307 of the Bangladesh Labour Law, 2006**". Lawyers, workers, trade union activists and representatives from NGOs, employers, and owners participated, voicing key concerns and offering suggestions. Recommendations including changing the language to make it harder for owners to be discharged from cases and making violations of the act non-bailable offenses. BLAST

submitted the recommendations from the roundtable discussion to the Government on 17 February 2010.

### Police Powers

BLAST held a discussion on police reform, with several NGOs and Supreme Court lawyers on the issue of more effective policing, including the scope for more effective implementation of existing High Court Guidelines to check arbitrary powers of arrest on suspicion, and on the strengthening of community policing programs.

### Property Rights

BLAST and other NGOs participated in a press conference regarding the proposed Vested Property Amendment Act, 2009.

### Disability Rights

BLAST organized a discussion meeting at which Michael Szporluk, Program Officer, Disability Rights Fund, spoke on the scope for undertaking strategic litigation on disability rights. Supreme Court lawyers, representatives of national disability rights organizations and human rights organizations participated. Participants reviewed earlier public interest litigation by BLAST and others on disability rights, and discussed the scope for collaboration and coordination, including the need to amend/review the existing Disability Welfare Act 2001, and to focus on PIL as a tool to raise issues of disability based discrimination, while strengthening related efforts at individual legal aid to persons with disabilities alongside more broad-based advocacy on needed legal and procedural reforms.

### Gender Equality

BLAST Head Office Staff met with Rebecca Gonsalvez and Kunal P Endit, from the Lawyers Collective HIV/AIDS Unit, Mumbai, India, to exchange information about the impact of HIV/AIDS on inheritance and property rights of women. BLAST decided to initiate exchanges nationally to identify the need and scope for providing legal support to People living with HIV/AIDS, in particular women, to establish their rights to inheritance and property.

## 8. CAPACITY BUILDING

### *Monitoring*

The Monitoring and Evaluation Cell visited fifteen unit offices to review documentation and meet with BLAST's concerned panel lawyers and clients. They prepared field visit reports and submitted them to the Executive Director who took necessary actions.

Regular meetings were held throughout the year to facilitate the sharing of views across the organisation, both across Unit Offices, and to enable exchanges between the Unit Offices and Head Office. The meetings also helped to identify key problems faced by litigants and to strategise on means to overcome such difficulties.

During the reporting period, 250 meetings such meetings were held at different levels at Unit Offices and Head Office with Coordinators, Unit Management Committees, Advisory Committees, Staff and finally, committees of districts without unit offices (Non-District Committees). (See Annex C.ii)

Table 3

Nature of meetings	
Coordinators' Meetings at Head Office	3
Management Committee Meetings at Unit Offices	77
Advisory Committee Meetings at Unit Offices	14
Staff Meetings at Head Office and Unit Offices	150
Non-District Committees	6

*Please also see Annex E*

### *Training*

- Two staff lawyers (Hafizur Rahman and Taufiqul Islam) of PIL cell anticipated in training on environmental law and land law run by ALRD and BELA.
- BLAST conducted twelve awareness sessions for garments workers. A total of 333 (167 male and 166 female) garments workers participated in these training sessions, and the following labour matters were discussed: working hours, overtime, minimum wages, leaves & holidays, compensation for workers, handling of grievances, resignation, retrenchment, termination, discharge, dismissal, benefits, health & hygiene, misconduct of workers.
- One training programme was held with twelve Headmen and Karbaries of Traditional Justice Institutions in the Rangamati District in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.
- BLAST and Research Initiatives of Bangladesh (RIB) jointly conducted a one-day follow up training with ethnic minority groups. Twelve members of various ethnic minority groups in Bangladesh, such as Munda, Buno, Kawra, Santal, Manipuri, Bede, Harijan, Shabdakar and Jharudar, participated in this training. The people who attended the training will act as ``Ain Kormi'' (legal activists) to protect the legal and human rights of ethnic minorities.

### ***PIL Review Workshop***

BLAST together with BRAC, ALRD and ASK, jointly organised a PIL Review Workshop on 19-21 December 2009 at the BRAC Training and Resource Centre (TARC) at Srimongol, Sylhet. Justice Nizamul Haque Nasim of the High Court, Supreme Court and District Court lawyers representatives from like-minded organisations; human rights activists; and representatives from BLAST, BRAC, ALRD participated in the workshop. The three-day workshop reviewed present PIL cases, the scope for PIL on emerging issues of discrimination and equality, particularly in respect of marginalised communities, and on delays in the justice system. A further action plan and ways to work collectively were also discussed. The workshop provided an opportunity for young lawyers and human rights activists to learn more about PIL cases and strategies. The substantive issues discussed included land rights, equality (including with respect to indigenous people, disabled persons and sexual minorities).

### ***Strategic Plan***

BLAST prepared a Five Year Strategic Plan for 2011-2015. Led by Tahera Yasmin, as a consultant, the planning process involved consultations with stakeholders, panel lawyers, management committee members, staff members, and members of the Consultative Group and Board of Trustees, to review the scope and management of BLAST activities, particularly in view of the recent funding crisis.

The Strategic Plan was used to inform the development of an action plan for 2010 to be taken forward by a committee involving representation from different levels of the organisation including Staff, Trustees and Consultative Group Members.

## **9. STAFF**

### **Head Office:**

#### **Executive Director**

Mr. Mohsin Ali Khan Executive Director

#### **Legal Cell**

Ms. Farida Yeasmin, Deputy Director

Mr. Md. Borkot Ali, Assistant Director

Ms. Shahnaz Babli, Senior Staff Lawyer (High Court)

Ms. Bulbul Rabeya Banu, Staff Lawyer (High Court)

Ms. Taposhi Rabeya, Asst.Coordinator, Mediation

Ms. Kaniz Tania Rupa, Junior Staff Lawyer (Labour)

Mr. Rasedul Islam, Junior Staff Lawyer (Labour)

Mr. Salahuddin Khan, Program Assistant

Mr. Khandokar Ali Amzad, Program Assistant

Mr. Motiur Rahman, Program Support Staff

#### **PIL and Advocacy Cell**

Mr. Taufiqul Islam, Staff Lawyer (PIL)

Mr. Md. Masuduzzaman, Research Lawyer (PIL)

Mr. Amir Hamja Khan, Law Clerk

Mr. Khandoker Mahmud Alam, Program Support Staff

#### **Investigation, Monitoring and Evaluation Cell**

Mr. Abdul Malek, Coordinator

Mr. Rashed Shekh, M&E Officer

Mr. Md. Monowarul Islam, Junior M&E Officer

#### **Administration**

Ms. Shahriar Parveen, Assistant Director

Mr. Md. Ali Akbar, Administrative Officer

Mr. Md. Saidur Rahman, Store Officer

Mr. Shahin Akon, Vehicle Operator

Mr. Ali Akbar Hawlader, Vehicle Operator

Mr. Abdur Rahman, Programme Support staff

Mr. Faruk Mia, Programme Support staff

Mr. Emdadul Haque, Program Support staff

#### **Accounts**

Ms. Karmel Kabita Samadder, Senior Finance Officer

Mr. Md. Asafuddoula, Senior. Finance Officer

Mr. Md. Mahbulul Alam Sikder, Finance Officer

Mr. Mohammad Mostofa Kamal, Junior Accounts Officer

#### **Information Technology Support**

Mr. Md. Jahangir Alam, Deputy Coordinator IT

### **Unit Offices:**

## **1. BARISAL**

Mr. Khalilur Rahman, Coordinator  
Ms. Shahida Talukder, Staff Lawyer  
Ms. Sabina Nazneen, Accounts and Program Support Officer  
Mr. Md. Mostofa Kamal, Program Support Staff

## **2. BOGRA:**

Ms. Husne Noor Rashid Rupali, Junior Staff Lawyer  
Mr. Enamul Kabir, Accounts and Program Support Officer  
Mr. Md. Sahar Ali, Program Support Staff

## **3. CHITTAGONG:**

Mr. Rezaul Karim Chowdhury, Coordinator  
Mr. Md. Ferdous, Accounts and Program Support Officer  
Mr. Md. Shahed, Court Clerk  
Mr. Sajal Kanti Acharjee, Program Support Staff

## **4. COMILLA:**

Ms. Shamima Akhter Jahan, Coordinator  
Mr. Jafarullah Bhuiyan, Staff Lawyer  
Mr. Billal Hossain, Accounts and Program Support Officer  
Mr. Nazrul Islam, Law Clerk

## **5. DHAKA:**

Mr. Khandakar Abdul Mannan, Coordinator  
Mr. Md. Moshir Rahman, Assistant Coordinator  
Mr. Kamrul Islam, Staff Lawyer  
Mr. Md. Zakaria Mollah, Accounts and Program Support Officer  
Mr. Md. Sahjahan, Program Support Staff

## **6. DINAJPUR:**

Ms. Shirajum Monira, Coordinator  
Mr. Pinak Pani Roy, Junior Staff Lawyer  
Mr. Mobinul Islam, Accounts and Program Support Officer  
Mr. Md. Obaidullah, Law Clerk

## **7. FARIDPUR:**

Ms. Sipra Goswami, Acting Coordinator  
Ms. Sukla Acharya, Accounts and Program Support Officer  
Mr. Md. Ayub Ali Biswas, Program Support Staff

## **8. JESSORE:**

Mr. Md. Ishaq, Coordinator  
Mr. Mostofa Humayun Kabir, Staff Lawyer  
Mr. Md. Bodruddoza, Accounts and Program Support Officer  
Mr. Md. Ashanurzaman, Program Support Staff

## **9. KHULNA:**

Mr. Ashok Kumar Saha, Coordinator  
Mr. Faruq Hossain Sheikh, Assistant Coordinator  
Ms. Fatema Khondokar Rima, Staff Lawyer  
Mr. Sheikh Azmal Hossain, Accounts and Program Support Officer  
Mr. S.M. Ali Akram Hossain, Law Clerk

**10. KUSHTIA;**

Mr. Shanker Mazumder, Coordinator

Mr. A. S. M. Asaduzzaman, Staff Lawyer

Mr. Shushanta Kumer Dey, Accounts and Program Support Officer

Mr. Sk. Istiak Baksha, Law Clerk

**11. MYMENSINGH:**

Mr. A. H. Habib Khan, Coordinator

Mr. Md. Rezaul Karim, Accounts and Program Support Officer

Mr. Md. Shahidul Islam, Program Support Staff

**12. NOAKHALI:**

Mr. Md. Nuruzzaman, Coordinator

Ms. Kalpana Rani Das, Jr. Staff Lawyer

Mr. Shohid Ullah, Accounts and Program Support Officer

Mr. Md. Abul Hossain, Program Support Staff

**13. PABNA:**

Mr. Alamgir Hossain, Coordinator

Mr. Monirul Islam, Jr. Staff Lawyer

Mr. Md. Shahinur Rahman, Accounts and Program Support Officer

Mr. Ratan Kumar Kundu, Law Clerk

**14. PATUAKHALI:**

Mr. Nizam Uddin Ahmed, Coordinator

Mr. Md. Jabidul Huq Khan, Accounts and Program Support Officer

Mr. Md. Hafizur Rahman, Program Support Staff

**15. RAJSHAHI:**

Mr. Md. Abdus Samad, Coordinator

Ms. Samina Begum, Staff Lawyer

Mr. Md. Aminul Islam, Accounts and Program Support Officer

Mr. Md. Muzahid-Al-Azad, Law Clerk

**16. RANGPUR:**

Ms. Nasima Khanam, Coordinator

Ms. Dilruba Rahman, Staff Lawyer

Mr. Md. Azizul Islam, Accounts and Program Support Officer

Mr. Nirmal Chandra Barman, Law Clerk

**17. RANGAMATI:**

Mr. Jewel Dewan, Coordinator

Mr. Sourav Dewan, Staff Lawyer

Mr. Nantu Marma, Accts and Program Support Officer

Mr. Ripon Joti Chakma, Program Support Staff

**18. SYLHET:**

Mr. Irfanuzzaman Chowdhury, Coordinator

Ms. Sorifa Khatoon, Staff Lawyer

Mr. Sanju Bir Roy, Accounts and Program Support Officer

Mr. Md. Foyasal Ahmed, Program Support Staff

**19. TANGAIL:**

Mr. M. A. Karim, Coordinator

Mr. Mohammad Abdul Latif, Accounts and Program Support Officer

Mr. Juran Chandra Das, Program Support Staff

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Executive Director Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST)  
Former Ambassador/High Commissioner to Canada  
Former Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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Advocate Ms. Taslima Khatun, Member  
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Advocate Mr. Abul Kalam Azad Kamal, Member  
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Advocate Mr. Giasuddin, Member

Advocate Mr. Anwar Hossain Khan, Member  
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Advocate Mr Humayun Kabir Chowdhur, Member  
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Advocate Mr Mahmud Hasan, Member

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Advocate Mr. Al-Haj Mirza Azizur Rahman, Member  
Advocate Mr. Al-Haj Zahir Ali Quadri, Member  
Advocate Mr. Md. Mofizul Hossain, Member  
Advocate Mr. Shree Anil Chandra Chowdhur, Member  
Advocate Mr. Kh. Shafiullah, Member  
Advocate Mr. Md. Shahjahan Ali Mondol, Member  
Advocate Mr. Md. Shah Alam, Member  
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Advocate Ms. Shamsunnahar Bithika, Member

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Advocate Mr. Abul Kashem, Member  
Advocate Mr. Md.Abul Hossain, Member  
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Advocate Mr. Khondoker A.Hai, Member  
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Advocate Mr. Tarok Chandra Saha, Member  
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Advocate Mr. Al-Haj Md.Abdul Mottalib, Vice President  
Advocate Mr. Al-Haj Md.Abul Quasem, Member  
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Advocate Mr. Md.Lokman Ali, Member  
Advocate Mr. Md.Rahamtullah, Member  
Advocate Mr. Md.Ershad Ali Isha, Member

Advocate Mr. Bholanath Mazhi, Member  
Advocate Mr. Md.Jamsed Ali, Member  
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## **TABLE OF ANNEXES**

**Number of Complaints**

#	Name of the Offices/Units	Total Complaints			Complaints Already Considered							Complaints Pending for...			
		Pending From Last PeriodYear	Received This Period	Total (2+3)	Mediation			Cases Filed	Sent to the Head Office/ Unit Office	Not Processed & Rejected	Total (7+8+9+10)	Mediation	Litigation	Necessary Papers/ Steps	Total (12+13+14)
					Office	Local	Total (5+6)								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
<b>A</b>	<b>Head Office</b>														
1	High Court	60	42	102	0	0	0	36	0	46	82	0	20	0	20
2	Judge Court	56	47	103	7	6	13	8	19	38	78	21	4	0	25
3	Labour Court	248	235	483	18	0	18	163	0	36	217	222	25	19	266
	<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>311</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>Unit Offices</b>														
1	Dhaka	392	252	644	14	11	25	125	0	0	150	217	192	85	494
2	Chittagong	553	197	750	36	16	52	64	1	19	136	448	85	81	614
3	Barisal	167	341	508	75	0	75	155	2	128	360	89	42	17	148
4	Rajshahi	177	360	537	77	23	100	203	5	36	344	147	45	1	193
5	Khulna	48	274	322	58	5	63	171	0	31	265	32	25	0	57
6	Sylhet	41	145	186	23	12	35	90	7	25	157	23	6	0	29
7	Mymensingh	588	193	781	53	27	80	158	1	349	588	107	76	10	193
8	Noakhali	149	209	358	31	4	35	138	0	39	212	85	61	0	146
9	Jessore	161	258	419	22	24	46	220	14	96	376	23	20	0	43
10	Rangpur	115	483	598	79	50	129	259	0	103	491	35	72	0	107
11	Comilla	164	386	550	67	20	87	198	0	151	436	70	44	0	114
12	Patuakhali	528	206	734	36	0	36	85	0	565	686	24	23	1	48
13	Bogra	442	390	832	73	16	89	209	6	227	531	66	110	125	301
14	Pabna	156	275	431	68	9	77	182	3	22	284	73	74	0	147
15	Tangail	80	110	190	28	3	31	53	0	22	106	13	71	0	84
16	Kustia	59	270	329	64	3	67	173	1	21	262	18	40	9	67
17	Faridpur	199	225	424	24	13	37	126	7	47	217	135	44	28	207
18	Dinajpur	153	408	561	67	42	109	157	0	141	407	72	0	82	154
19	Rangamati	293	243	536	46	18	64	98	0	0	162	192	78	104	374
	<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>4465</b>	<b>5225</b>	<b>9690</b>	<b>941</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>1237</b>	<b>2864</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>6170</b>	<b>1869</b>	<b>1108</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>3520</b>
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4829</b>	<b>5549</b>	<b>10378</b>	<b>966</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>1268</b>	<b>3071</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>2142</b>	<b>6547</b>	<b>2112</b>	<b>1157</b>	<b>562</b>	<b>3831</b>

## Complaints by Gender

#	Offices	Complaints Received			Settled Mediation			Filed Cases			DISPOSED CASES												Total Disposed Cases		Total	
		Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total	Favour			Compromise			Against			Default		Total	Women	Men		
											Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men					Total
A	Head Office																									
1	High Court	17	25	42	0	0	0	13	23	36	11	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	0	11
2	Judge Court	40	7	47	13	0	13	4	4	8	4	0	4	0	0	0	0	1	1	17	0	17	21	1	22	
3	Labour Court	92	143	235	3	15	18	66	97	163	19	41	60	0	45	45	3	2	5	9	26	35	31	114	145	
B	Unit Offices																									
1	Dhaka	213	39	252	24	1	25	100	25	125	32	1	33	10	2	12	11	0	11	36	11	47	89	14	103	
2	Chittagong	172	25	197	51	1	52	62	2	64	46	0	46	8	0	8	7	0	7	3	1	4	64	1	65	
3	Barisal	322	19	341	75	0	75	147	8	155	30	5	35	34	1	35	10	0	10	28	1	29	102	7	109	
4	Rajshahi	338	22	360	98	2	100	194	9	203	134	16	150	69	2	71	33	9	42	118	4	122	354	31	385	
5	Khulna	245	29	274	63	0	63	161	10	171	92	3	95	36	1	37	27	1	28	25	2	27	180	7	187	
6	Sylhet	142	3	145	35	0	35	87	3	90	68	0	68	20	0	20	4	0	4	15	0	15	107	0	107	
7	Mymensingh	191	2	193	80	0	80	153	5	158	56	1	57	43	0	43	33	0	33	116	1	117	248	2	250	
8	Noakhali	191	18	209	34	1	35	116	22	138	48	1	49	52	2	54	11	2	13	207	16	223	318	21	339	
9	Jessore	253	5	258	45	1	46	215	5	220	115	5	120	147	3	150	6	2	8	164	26	190	432	36	468	
10	Rangpur	436	47	483	129	0	129	250	9	259	78	8	86	51	1	52	4	0	4	101	4	105	234	13	247	
11	Comilla	347	39	386	87	0	87	171	27	198	64	18	82	37	0	37	60	51	111	18	2	20	179	71	250	
12	Potua khali	206	0	206	36	0	36	85	0	85	23	0	23	32	0	32	8	0	8	69	2	71	132	2	134	
13	Bogra	298	92	390	89	0	89	136	73	209	34	17	51	60	0	60	9	2	11	307	1	308	410	20	430	
14	Pabna	270	5	275	77	0	77	179	3	182	32	4	36	51	0	51	4	0	4	108	2	110	195	6	201	
15	Tangail	110	0	110	31	0	31	53	0	53	26	3	29	32	0	32	2	0	2	63	3	66	123	6	129	
16	Kustia	233	37	270	66	1	67	169	4	173	46	5	51	80	11	91	7	5	12	32	0	32	165	21	186	
17	Faridpur	196	29	225	37	0	37	114	12	126	27	9	36	24	0	24	4	8	12	30	2	32	85	19	104	
18	Dinajpur	392	16	408	106	3	109	145	12	157	53	6	59	39	0	39	11	2	13	42	3	45	145	11	156	
19	Rangamati	160	83	243	48	16	64	49	49	98	2	3	5	8	0	8	1	0	1	11	0	11	22	3	25	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4864</b>	<b>685</b>	<b>5549</b>	<b>1227</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>1268</b>	<b>2669</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>3071</b>	<b>1040</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>1186</b>	<b>833</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>901</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>1519</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>1626</b>	<b>3647</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>4053</b>	

Medium of Complaints Received

Sl. No.	Type of Complaints	Direct	Lawyer	Previous Client	NGOs and Other Organizations	Local Elected Representative	Head Office	Unit Office	Through Jailer	Jail Visit	Judge/ Justice	Total
<b>A</b>	<b>Head Office</b>											
1	HighCourt	13	1				1	27				42
2	Judge Court	23	2	8	10	1	0	2	0	0	1	47
3	Labour Court	85	20	3	117	0	0	0	0	0	0	235
	<b>Sub Total</b>	121	23	21	127	1	1	29	0	0	1	324
<b>B</b>	<b>Unit Offices</b>											
1	Dhaka	137	66	17	6	0	21	5	0	0	0	252
2	Chittagong	74	22	42	40	18	0	0	0	0	1	197
3	Barisal	111	74	70	56	29	0	0	0	0	1	341
4	Rajshahi	185	69	51	24	24	0	1	0	3	3	360
5	Khulna	70	112	32	57	3	0	0	0	0	0	274
6	Sylhet	80	14	14	18	13	0	5	0	1	0	145
7	Mymensingh	91	66	21	6	6	2	0	0	0	1	193
8	Noakahli	110	80	11	4	3	0	0	0	0	1	209
9	Jessore	85	138	7	15	4	3	6	0	0	0	258
10	Rangpur	277	79	54	57	12	0	1	0	0	3	483
11	Comilla	146	50	78	84	19	0	0	0	6	3	386
12	Potuahali	72	78	16	35	5	0	0	0	0	0	206
13	Bogra	213	61	34	7	4	0	0	0	0	71	390
14	Pabna	102	102	37	24	10	0	0	0	0	0	275
15	Tangail	45	27	17	8	12	0	0	0	0	1	110
16	Kustia	53	106	96	10	3	0	1	0	0	1	270
17	Faridpur	140	67	3	14	1	0	0	0	0	0	225
18	Dinajpur	74	29	74	218	11	1	0	0	0	1	408
19	Rangamati	120	48	40	5	27	0	0	0	0	3	243
	<b>Sub Total</b>	2185	1288	714	688	204	27	19	0	10	90	5225
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2306</b>	<b>1311</b>	<b>735</b>	<b>815</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>5549</b>

Money Recovered

	Name of Unit	Number of Cases	Tk. Recovered Through Litigation	Number of Mediations	Tk. Recovered Through Mediation
A.	<b>Head Office</b>				
1	Judge Court	2	32,001	2	48,200
2	Labour Court	87	620,685	18	180,264
B	<b>Unit Offices</b>				
1	Dhaka	1	120,000	5	335,000
2	Chittagong	0	0	17	413,800
3	Rajshahi	26	1,172,952	31	523,951
4	Khulna	0	0	26	253,466
5	Barisal	8	415,000	11	386,000
6	Sylhet	4	303,000	14	334,000
7	Mymensingh	6	192,000	11	288,900
8	Comilla	16	856,100	16	975,500
9	Noakhali	1	109,000	1	6,000
10	Bogra	0	0	5	80,000
11	Rangpur	12	678,660	15	513,900
12	Jessore	5	1,450,000	11	275,576
13	Patuakhali	9	276,000	4	55,900
14	Pabna	9	279,000	15	510,500
15	Tangail	2	45,000	5	219,000
16	Dinajpur	4	435,500	9	702,748
17	Kustia	14	369,600	19	440,600
18	Faridpur	6	375,000	8	458,000
19	Rangamati	1	60,000	5	395,200
	<b>Total</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>7,789,498</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>7,396,505</b>

Litigation Status

Sl. no	Name of the Unit	Total Pending Cases Carried Over from Previous Year	No. of Cases Initiated During the Year	Total Cases up to the Last Day of the Year (2+3)	No. of Cases Disposed of During the Reporting Period							Total pending Cases Carried to Next Year(4-12)	
					Court Verdict			Dismissed for Default			Against our Clients		Total (7+10+11)
					In Favour of our Clients	Compromise	Total (5+6)	Local Compromise	Others	Total (8+9)			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
<b>A</b>	<b>Head Office</b>												
1	High Court	918	36	954	11	0	11	0	0	0	0	11	943
2	Judge Court	207	8	215	4	0	4	0	17	17	1	22	193
3	Labour Court	513	163	676	60	45	105	0	35	35	5	145	531
	<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>1638</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>1845</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>1667</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>Unit Offices</b>												
1	Dhaka	1618	125	1743	33	12	45	26	21	47	11	103	1640
2	Chittagong	1082	64	1146	46	8	54	0	4	4	7	65	1081
3	Barisal	1032	155	1187	35	35	70	0	29	29	10	109	1078
4	Rajshahi	1136	203	1339	150	71	221	17	105	122	42	385	954
5	Khulna	750	171	921	95	37	132	0	27	27	28	187	734
6	Sylhet	487	90	577	68	20	88	0	15	15	4	107	470
7	Mymensingh	1145	158	1303	57	43	100	13	104	117	33	250	1053
8	Noakhali	865	138	1003	49	54	103	15	208	223	13	339	664
9	Jessore	1345	220	1565	120	150	270	18	172	190	8	468	1097
10	Rangpur	1173	259	1432	86	52	138	105	0	105	4	247	1185
11	Comilla	776	198	974	82	37	119	0	20	20	111	250	724
12	Potua khali	459	85	544	23	32	55	27	44	71	8	134	410
13	Bogra	1576	209	1785	51	60	111	41	267	308	11	430	1355
14	Pabna	854	182	1036	36	51	87	0	110	110	4	201	835
15	Tangail	431	53	484	29	32	61	1	65	66	2	129	355
16	Kustia	814	173	987	51	91	142	0	32	32	12	186	801
17	Faridpur	697	126	823	36	24	60	8	24	32	12	104	719
18	Dinajpur	655	157	812	59	39	98	3	42	45	13	156	656
19	Rangamati	321	98	419	5	8	13	2	9	11	1	25	394
	<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>17216</b>	<b>2864</b>	<b>20080</b>	<b>1111</b>	<b>856</b>	<b>1967</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>1298</b>	<b>1574</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>3875</b>	<b>16205</b>
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>18854</b>	<b>3071</b>	<b>21925</b>	<b>1186</b>	<b>901</b>	<b>2087</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>1350</b>	<b>1626</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>4053</b>	<b>17872</b>