

Abstract

The present study on the effectiveness of the Village Courts has been conducted on the Fatullah, Kutubpur and Kashipur Village Courts of Narayangonj Sadar and Sadar Village Court of the Bondar Upazila of the Narayangonj district. The main objective of the study was to assess the effectiveness of the existing Village Courts in the Union Parishads mentioned above and also to find out means for further improvement of the performance of the Village Courts. Six groups of respondents were interviewed during this study- the chairman, petitioners and the respondents in the Village Court, the local elites, lawyers and the complainants in the magistrate's Court. The case records and case registers of the Village Courts were also examined. The prevalent notion was that the Village Courts are not much effective. This study has found that though the Village Courts have limitations and drawbacks but still it is playing an important role in the settlements of disputes and maintaining social peace and tranquility in the study area. The performance of the existing Village Courts is constrained by poor implementation capacity and record management of the Village Courts, lack of knowledge of the Village Court Officials etc. An increase of financial and penal jurisdiction, supervision by the formal Court, proper election and training of the Court official and awareness creation and advocacy programs by the both Government and Non-Government Organization can make the Village Courts more effective.