National Training Seminar for Domestic Election Monitors

March 7 to 9, 1995

Rajendrapur, Gazipur
Bangladesh

NATIONAL TRAINING SEMINAR FOR DOMESTIC ELECTION MONITORS

Sponsored by the Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA)
and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI)

March 7 to 9, 1995

C.D.M. Rajendrapur, Gazipur
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I. INTRODUCTION

From March 7 to 9, 1995, NDI, in conjunction with the Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA), a coalition of NGOs interested in monitoring the upcoming general elections in Bangladesh, conducted a national training seminar on domestic election monitoring.

Attending the seminar were 30 Bangladeshi participants, including five women, from seven of the eight organizations in FEMA. FEMA drew participants from throughout the country. Participants represented the following organizations: Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC); Community Development Association (CDA); Gono Unnayan Prochesta (GUP); Jagorani Chakra (JC); Study and Research Group for Democracy and Socio-Economic Development (SRG); and Voluntary Health Services Society (VHSS). Proshika Manobik Unnayan Kendra (PMUK), also a member of FEMA, was unable to send any representatives to the seminar due to logistical difficulties. These organizations have varying mandates, approaches, constituencies and strengths, but all share a commitment to accountable, democratic government, and all have either experience in or commitment to election monitoring in Bangladesh.

NDI invited two international participants: Santiago Canton, NDI's director of Latin America and Caribbean programs, and Telibert Laoc, a volunteer from the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL) in the Philippines. Canton has participated in election monitoring programs in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Panama and Mexico, and has worked extensively on independent vote tabulations in Mexico and Peru. He has also served as a consultant for the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Carter Center. Laoc has served as a support group member, an organizer and a trainer for local and national elections in the Philippines since 1986. Since 1991, he has served as a regional director responsible for setting up fully-functional provincial chapters of NAMFREL. Laoc has observed several elections in South Africa and Mozambique and has trained domestic observers and observed elections in Sri Lanka. NDI staff members included Field Representative Maryam Montague and Program Assistant Rebecca Kind.

II. SUMMARY

Bangladesh is currently undergoing its most serious political crisis since the 1991 national elections. Election issues have grown increasingly contentious and have contributed to the deterioration of the political situation. After boycotting the parliament for months, opposition MPs have submitted resignation letters, alleging government bad faith and vote rigging. The country's politics have been virtually paralyzed for most of the last year -- with a non-functioning parliament, frequent *hartals* (strikes), a by-election under question, the autonomy of the Election Commission questioned and a government accused of corruption by the opposition.

As part of a program designed to support the electoral process in Bangladesh, NDI conducted a domestic election monitoring seminar from March 7 to 9, 1995. The seminar was co-sponsored by the Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA), a coalition of NGOs interested

in monitoring the next general elections in Bangladesh, scheduled to take place no later than February 1996. Bangladeshi participants included 30 representatives from civic organizations in regions throughout the country. These participants will establish regional chapters of FEMA and will conduct regional workshops for trainers. While they have had extensive experience in recruiting and training volunteers for their own organizations, most of the participants have had little experience in election monitoring. FEMA leaders -- Fakruddin Ahmed, Feroz Hassan, Tarikul Ghani and Nazmul Ahsan Kalimullah -- and international participants -- Telibert Laoc of the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (NAMREL) in the Philippines and Santiago Canton, NDI Director of Latin America programs -- shared their experience in election monitoring with their Bangladeshi counterparts.

The seminar was divided into plenary sessions and workshops. Seminar topics included pre-election monitoring; election day monitoring; post-election monitoring; recruiting, training and organizing volunteers; and conducting a parallel vote tabulation (PVT). The seminar also featured a presentation by Election Commission Additional Secretary S.M. Zakaria on "Election Monitoring Within the Context of the Bangladesh Electoral Law" and an election day simulation exercise led by NDI Field Representative Maryam Montague.

The plenary sessions were designed to foster interactive discourse among participants. The Bangladeshi and international facilitators began each session with a brief presentation. Following these remarks, everyone discussed and debated the issues raised. Participants were interested especially in learning how NAMFREL addressed each element of an election monitoring plan. They also had a number of questions about the history of and theory behind PVTs. Considerable attention was given to the following issues: the public image of FEMA and its member organizations; the neutrality/nonpartisanship of monitors; the relationship between FEMA and the Election Commission; and the feasibility of conducting a parallel vote tabulation in Bangladesh.

In workshop sessions, participants explored in more detail topics discussed during the plenary sessions. The workshops gave participants the opportunity to consider the practical challenges of creating the large network of volunteers necessary to conduct a successful election monitoring effort and to develop possible solutions to obstacles. The workshops also provided a forum for discussion of techniques and strategies for creating regional chapters of FEMA and for conducting training sessions.

During the afternoon of the second day, the participants developed a concrete plan for organizing regional chapters of FEMA. They also decided who would be responsible for representing FEMA in each region of the country. Following this session, participants signed FEMA's oath of neutrality and pledged their support for the coalition's goals.

III. BACKGROUND

NDI has conducted democratic development programs in Bangladesh since 1987. These programs have involved domestic and international election monitoring, technical assistance for civic organizations and training to strengthen the parliament.

Beginning with an initial survey mission in Bangladesh in 1987, NDI established contacts that led to Bangladeshi participation in election observation in the Philippines. NDI first became involved in the Bangladesh electoral process in March 1990 when a small multinational team observed the *upazila* (district) elections. The team issued a report that made recommendations on how to improve and promote confidence in the electoral process. The report suggested specific electoral reforms and emphasized the need to develop indigenous election-monitoring programs. Based on the recommendations of that observer team and the report of a small survey team that visited Dhaka in October 1990, NDI developed a program to support nonpartisan monitoring organizations in Bangladesh.

In December 1990, then-president Hussain Mohammed Ershad gave in to the opposition's demands and resigned, and an interim government, led by Chief Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed as Acting President, announced that parliamentary elections would be held on February 27, 1991. In January 1991, NDI sent a multinational team to assess the pre-election environment and begin the training of domestic election monitors from Bangladeshi political parties and NGOs. In response to specific requests, in February of that year, NDI organized week-long visits of two election monitoring experts from the Philippines, who worked closely with Bangladeshi groups involved in organizing election monitoring networks. A small NDI team went to Bangladesh to assess the February 27 elections.

All major political parties, the Bangladeshi public and observers viewed the 1991 elections as legitimate and accepted the results. In fact, many Bangladeshis described the elections as a "second independence," and they were widely acclaimed as a "trend setter" for elections in Asia.

Although NDI joined others in applauding the 1991 election process, the Institute raised several concerns in its post-election report, which was distributed widely, in Bangladesh and elsewhere. Specifically, the report expressed concern about problems with the voters list, including the presence of fictitious names and the omission of eligible voters; the apparent inclusion of underage voters; sporadic violence; and the general attitude that the elections were only "workable" and free because they were held under an interim government. NDI also recommended that indigenous groups consider an independent vote count for future elections. Given these concerns, NDI sponsored a post-election conference on "The Role of Civic Organizations and Political Parties in Strengthening Democratic Institutions" in Dhaka in July 1991.

In 1992, NDI began a program designed to assist the Bangladesh parliament. During the next two years, the Institute organized a seminar on parliamentary processes, brought

Bangladeshis from NGOs and political parties to programs in Pakistan, Cambodia, and the West Bank and Gaza, among other countries, and conducted ongoing consultations with Bangladeshi democratic activists, parliamentarians and party leaders. However, election issues grew increasingly contentious and contributed to the deterioration of the political situation in Bangladesh. Alleged problems with City Corporation elections in January 1994 and the Magura by-election in March 1994 fueled the perception that elections can be manipulated. In light of the changed political situation in the country, the opposition parties' boycott of parliament beginning in March 1994 and their unwillingness to participate in activities related to the Parliament, NDI decided to shift the focus of its program.

After several visits to Bangladesh in 1994 during which NDI staff members met with Bangladesh government officials, election commissioners, political party leaders and civic organizers, the Institute developed a proposal for an electoral assistance program that would include a parallel vote tabulation component. The program was designed to assist a group of Bangladeshi NGOs interested in forming a coalition to organize an effective system of election monitoring for the general elections anticipated in late 1995 or early 1996. Given the political environment, the credibility of upcoming general elections seems crucial for the survival of multiparty democracy in Bangladesh. Public confidence in the electoral process, and ultimately in the political process as a whole, must be restored. An organized system of well-trained domestic election monitors will be necessary to ensure the fairness of the next national elections and to lay the foundation for long-term cooperation among civic groups.

After boycotting the parliament for months, in December 1994, opposition MPs submitted resignation letters, alleging government bad faith and vote rigging. The country's politics have been virtually paralyzed for most of the last year -- with a non-functioning parliament, frequent *hartals* (strikes), a by-election under question, the autonomy of the Election Commission questioned and a government accused of corruption by the opposition.

In early January 1995, NDI Program Officer Maryam Montague went to Dhaka to begin implementing the election support program. Initially, NDI worked primarily with the Study and Research Group for Democracy and Socio-Economic Development, an NGO formed in 1991 with the goal of consolidating democracy in Bangladesh. The SRG conducted a series of bilateral meetings with numerous large, grassroots-oriented NGOs and other groups based in Dhaka. Several of these groups expressed enthusiasm in participating in an election monitoring coalition.

In response to requests from Bangladeshi organizations, NDI Senior Advisor Glenn Cowan, an expert on independent vote counts, visited Dhaka in early January 1995 to discuss the possibility of conducting a parallel vote tabulation (PVT) in Bangladesh. On January 8, Cowan and Montague met with communications experts, statisticians, pollsters and sociologists. On January 9, Cowan conducted a workshop for 23 representatives from ten organizations and coalitions. This was the first large meeting of NGOs interested in forming a coalition to monitor the upcoming general elections. In addition to discussing the history and theory of PVTs, the group discussed the feasibility of conducting PVTs within a parliamentary system. The

Bangladeshis decided to use the term "independent vote tabulation" instead of "parallel vote tabulation" because they felt that the word "independent" would be perceived as less threatening than the word "parallel." On January 10, Cowan conducted a technical session for a number of NGO representatives. Following Cowan's departure, the Study and Research Group tested some of Cowan's IVT techniques during the January municipal and by-elections.

The group of organizations interested in monitoring the upcoming general elections had its first formal meeting as a coalition on January 28, 1995. The organizations present at that meeting decided to adopt the name "Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA)" and began organizing a national training seminar on domestic election monitoring. FEMA meetings took place regularly in the following weeks. Seminar participants were chosen from FEMA member organizations, which have chapters in various regions of the country. Participants will establish regional chapters of FEMA and will conduct regional workshops for trainers. While they have had extensive experience in recruiting and training volunteers for their own organizations, most of the participants have had little experience in election monitoring.

As part of NDI's ongoing efforts to support the Bangladeshi democratization process, four Bangladeshi leaders of nonpartisan domestic monitoring groups attended a joint NDI/National Citizen's Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL) conference in Manila from February 22 to 25. The conference was designed to provide representatives from Asian monitoring organizations in 12 countries with an opportunity to compare activities and develop a formalized network. The conference inspired the Bangladeshi NGO leaders and helped convince them that they could carry out a wide range of monitoring activities if they worked together in a coalition.

IV. SEMINAR PREPARATIONS

A. Working Sessions

NDI staff members, international participants and FEMA leaders had two three-hour working sessions in preparation for the seminar. In the first working session, they discussed FEMA's plans for organizing a communications network for its election monitoring operation and FEMA's election-day checklist for monitors. They considered several communication options and discussed the potential problems FEMA might face due to poor infrastructure.

FEMA plans to provide monitors with a checklist to guide them in observing and recording activities at the polling stations on election day. The international participants and FEMA leaders discussed and debated checklist questions and consulted checklists from other countries. FEMA leaders decided to provide their monitors with two checklists: a long one to be used for research purposes and a short one to be used to determine quickly, for the purpose of writing a report, the fairness of the election. FEMA leaders decided that the long checklist would be based on a comprehensive checklist that the SRG had used for municipal and by-elections. As a result of this working session, FEMA created a short checklist with ten

questions they considered essential for determining whether an election is free and fair.

In the second working session, NDI staff members, international participants and FEMA leaders discussed the approach and content of the plenary sessions and workshops. Significant changes were made to the seminar agenda. The international participants and FEMA leaders decided to make the seminar more interactive. They built in more time for discussion of FEMA's expectations about the responsibilities of trainers and participants' expectations about the role of the FEMA national secretariat. They also added two plenary sessions where participants could present workshop results and a plenary session where participants could discuss how they would implement the plans developed at the seminar.

B. Meeting with Election Commission

NDI staff members and international participants met with Election Commission Additional Secretary S.M. Zakaria. Zakaria briefed them on the Bangladeshi electoral law and informed them of the Election Commission's preparations for the general elections. Zakaria expressed the concerns of the Election Commission with regard to the neutrality and credibility of monitors, the adjudication process, voter registration lists and voter identification cards. The international participants explained the benefits of conducting an independent vote tabulation in Bangladesh. Despite the fact that election monitors are not expressly contemplated under the election law, Zakaria was supportive of FEMA's plan to organize a large domestic election monitoring operation. He was less certain about the value of conducting an IVT in Bangladesh but indicated that he would like to receive more information.

C. Meetings with Political Parties

NDI staff members and international participants met with politicians from the governing Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and the opposition Awami League to learn about their concerns with regard to election fraud. They discussed the current political situation in the country and outlined their party's position.

Kaiser Chowdhury of the Awami League stressed the opposition view that a neutral nonpartisan caretaker government is necessary for free and fair elections. He described two proposals for a caretaker government: 1) a caretaker government headed by a council of advisors composed of five members from the opposition and five members from the governing party; and 2) a caretaker government headed by the president. Chowdhury said that the opposition would increase its agitation to push for elections as soon as possible. According to Chowdhury, problems with elections in Bangladesh involve intimidation, black money, bribes, booth capturing, ballot box stuffing and faulty voter lists. Chowdhury said that he believes an IVT will be effective only if the elections are fair; that is, an IVT will be effective only if elections are administered under a caretaker government.

Ziaur Rahman Khan, an MP from the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, informed NDI staff members and international participants that the BNP would like the parliament serve its full term

or at least get through the June budget session. Khan believes that elections will not be held before December. If a caretaker government were to be formed, Khan believes that its members should be selected from within the parliament so that it represents the will of the people. According to Khan, problems with elections in Bangladesh involve intimidation, false voting and multiple voting. Khan wondered whether an IVT would be possible in Bangladesh.

D. Donor Meeting

The international participants joined the FEMA steering committee for a meeting with the election sub-committee of the donor community in Bangladesh. This served as the first formal meeting between FEMA and the donor community. The international participants shared with the donors their knowledge of independent vote tabulations.

E. Press Briefing

On the afternoon of March 7, FEMA steering committee members organized an informal meeting with NDI staff members, international and Bangladeshi seminar participants and selected members of the press. At this gathering, FEMA distributed a press statement that served to: 1) describe the importance of election monitoring in the Bangladeshi context; 2) announce the formation, membership and goals of FEMA; and 3) describe FEMA's plans to conduct jointly with NDI a training seminar for the Alliance's core election monitor trainers. After FEMA national secretary Tarikul Ghani spoke about FEMA, the international participants, Santiago Canton and Telibert Laoc, introduced themselves. The following day, FEMA received coverage in the *Daily Star*, an English language daily.

V. SEMINAR PROCEEDINGS

A. Keynote Speech: *The Importance of Election Monitors in a Transparent Election Process*

Former Foreign Advisor to the 1991 Interim Bangladesh Government and current Chairman of FEMA Fakhruddin Ahmed gave the keynote address. Fakhruddin stressed the importance of free and fair elections and explained the role that domestic monitors can play in increasing public confidence in the electoral process.

Fakhruddin also explained the responsibilities of election monitors. He told seminar participants that they must understand the election law, know what to look for and know how to record and report their observations. At this seminar, they would be trained to train others to monitor the pre-election period, the proceedings on election day and the post-election period.

After speaking about the goals of the seminar and introducing FEMA, NDI and NAMFREL, Fakhruddin urged seminar participants to become "valiant soldiers of democracy."

B. Opening

Feroz Hassan, the convenor of the SRG and a member of the FEMA steering committee, acted as moderator of the seminar. After NDI Field Representative Maryam Montague introduced Canton and Laoc, Hassan provided some background on FEMA. Hassan explained the goals of FEMA, welcomed participants who had come from various regions of Bangladesh and introduced the idea of creating a spirit of volunterism. The importance of volunterism for the success of FEMA's monitoring efforts was stressed throughout the course of the seminar.

Following Hassan's presentation, Canton provided a brief description of NDI's philosophy and activities. He indicated that the NDI staff members and international participants would share their experience in election monitoring but that they also expected to learn from the Bangladeshi participants.

Hassan referred participants to the agenda and asked for suggestions and comments on it. Participants had questions about the following issues: the electoral process and their rights; candidate promises; FEMA's relationship with the government; policy advocacy; IVTs; and the security of monitors. The discussions during this session established the interactive nature of the seminar.

C. Plenary Session I: Election Monitoring Within the Context of the Bangladesh Electoral Law

Election Commission Additional Secretary S.M. Zakaria delivered a speech on the Bangladesh Electoral Law. Zakaria provided a detailed history of elections in Bangladesh, reminding participants that the 1991 parliamentary elections were not the first elections in Bangladesh. Zakaria outlined specific articles in the Representation of the People Order of 1972, which forms the basis of Bangladesh electoral law.

Zakaria proceeded to address the areas of the Bangladeshi electoral system which should be of concern to election monitors. In Bangladesh, elections are conducted through the government administration. Deputy commissioners, who are the administrative leaders of the districts, often serve as returning officers. Returning officers are in charge of the electoral process at that level; they are so-named because they bring tally sheets from polling stations to district offices. The Election Commission relies on these government employees because they have the resources and manpower necessary to conduct an election. Zakaria reminded participants that this situation is a peculiarity of Bangladesh. Because of their connection with the government, the neutrality of the returning officers has come into question. Zakaria also reviewed the role of the presiding officer, the assistant presiding officer and the polling agent.

In Bangladesh, election monitors are not expressly contemplated under the election law, so their role is somewhat ambiguous. Admitting that he did not accept the idea of independent monitors at first, Zakaria spoke about what nonpartisan monitors could do to ensure that elections were free and fair. According to Zakaria, the most important purpose of a nonpartisan

monitoring effort is to prevent fraud. Zakaria showed participants a form used by presiding officers for recording observations on election day and indicated that he was considering allowing monitors to use the form and giving them the power to act on their findings.

The question and answer session following Zakaria's presentation provided seminar participants with a unique opportunity to express their concerns to the Election Commission and ask questions. There was a great deal of participation in this session and time was not sufficient.

Participants brought up the issue of the March 20, 1994, Magura by-election. One participant asked Zakaria whether the Election Commission has the power to cancel an election if a situation like that in Magura were to occur in the future. Zakaria replied that recent amendments to the Election Law have given the Election Commission more authority to investigate claims of fraud.

Before the Magura by-election there were claims that fraud would take place on election day. Chief Election Commissioner Justice Mohammed Abdur Rouf and Additional Secretary Zakaria travelled to Magura to personally supervise the election. The Chief Election Commissioner proposed a plan to create multiparty mobile teams of monitors, but the BNP rejected the idea, allegedly because the teams would have more opposition members than BNP members. Complicating the situation was the fact that more than 150 MPs went to Magura to participate in the campaigning. In addition, leader of the opposition Sheik Hasina and Chief Election Commissioner Rouf had a dispute over the use of the government guest house in Magura. On the day before the election, the Chief Election Commissioner left Magura. The opposition claimed that by doing so, he allowed fraud to occur. From the Magura election on, the opposition maintained that the election commission was not a neutral body and was both unwilling and unable to ensure free and fair elections. The governing party claimed that the polls were not rigged. The Magura election remains a contentious issue.

Participants were concerned about the relationship between FEMA and the Election Commission. Zakaria assured them that he would give some power to nonpartisan monitors but that he would not remove authority from election commission officials. Although observation forms will not be provided to monitors, they can be obtained from presiding officers. As he did in the March 6 meeting with NDI, Zakaria stressed the importance of neutrality of the election monitors. He warned participants that they must be vigilant in ensuring that FEMA monitors are nonpartisan.

In response to a question about independent vote tabulations, Zakaria said that he was concerned about doing an IVT in Bangladesh since the concept was developed in the Philippines and "democracy is a native flower." He acknowledged that the credibility of the Election Commission's results would increase if these results matched those of the IVT but worried about what would happen if the IVT results were not the same as the official results.

One participant stated that he doubted an election could be fair unless it was conducted under a caretaker government. Zakaria refuted this claim, asserting that the fairness of an

election ultimately depends on the behavior of the candidates. He added that Pakistan's experience with caretaker governments is not a good model and that a caretaker government was possible in Bangladesh in 1991 only because of the unique political situation at the time.

D. Film: *Free and Fair Elections*

NDI's film on free and fair elections, dubbed in Bangla for this seminar, served as an introduction to election monitoring activities. The film provides an overview of all the steps in the electoral process including registration, the campaign period and voting procedures on election day. Using a comparative approach, the film includes clips of election-related activities around the world. Participants enjoyed the film, found it relevant to their own situation and planned to use it for their regional training seminars.

E. Plenary Session II: Election Monitoring Activities

Tarikul Ghani, along with Santiago Canton and Telibert Laoc, led the plenary session on election monitoring activities. Ghani stressed the importance of impartiality. Specifically, he warned that as monitors the participants should not express any political preferences they might have. In addition, monitors must not get involved in any disputes that might occur in the polling place. Their job is to observe, record and report on the polling process.

Ghani told seminar participants that the responsibilities of monitors are not confined to election day; they begin with the registration process and continue through the reporting process. He outlined the three stages of the electoral process and explained monitoring activities to be conducted by FEMA during each stage.

In Bangladesh, previous monitoring efforts have focused on election day. For the upcoming general elections, FEMA has decided to monitor the pre-election period as well. Before the election, FEMA will monitor voter registration, the eligibility of candidates, the safety/security of polling centers, campaigns and the media. There has been controversy surrounding each of these items in past elections in Bangladesh.

Ghani explained in detail the duties of observers on election day. He reminded participants that they should keep careful records of any irregularities they might observe so that proper action can be taken following the elections.

Canton spoke about issues FEMA might want to consider in conducting an effective election monitoring effort. FEMA needs to be credible; specifically, it should be a nonpartisan and transparent operation. In addition, FEMA needs to be well-organized. FEMA should have a clear structure, well-defined objectives, specific principles and a well-trained staff.

Laoc began his presentation by saying that the main purpose of monitoring is to prevent fraud since it is always better to prevent fraud than to react to it. Linking the responsibilities of the participants as both monitors and citizens, Laoc stated that "The best weapon against

electoral fraud is a well-informed voter." Voters must know their rights, know the law and know what to do if the law is violated.

Laoc presented activities that FEMA might conduct during the pre-election, election and post-election periods. He focused on pre-election monitoring activities for two reasons: 1) these activities can help prevent fraud; and 2) participants had little experience monitoring the pre-election period.

Pre-election activities:

- monitor the candidates or the political parties
  publish candidates' campaign promises and party platforms
  publish candidates' professional background
  sponsor "meet the voters" forums

- monitor the media
  monitor column-inch allocations for each candidate or party in the major dailies
  monitor radio and TV air-time allocations for each candidate or party

- educate voters
  inform voters to vote wisely, guard their ballot and make sure that counting is done properly
  ask for speaking engagements, arrange to be guests on radio shows and ask columnist friends to write about FEMA

Laoc ended his presentation on pre-election activities with several motivational messages: "Go out and vote!" "Vote wisely!" and "Count your votes carefully!" The idea of monitoring the media was particularly relevant to the participants because the electronic media in Bangladesh are controlled by the government and the print media are often irresponsible.

Election period activities:

- ensure that candidates have a functional knowledge of their rights and duties

- ensure that polling officials adhere to electoral procedures before, during and after the voting, counting and tabulation processes

- ensure that polling officials administer their duties freely

- ensure that voters are not intimidated

Post-election activities:

- monitor candidates' performance

- monitor the Election Commission
  investigate whether election cases are resolved
  make recommendations for improvements in the electoral law
  improve the accuracy of the voter registry

- work with voters to ensure that they receive correct information about the performance of the MPs they elected and to promote critical and issue-based voting

One participant asked Laoc to describe some of the difficulties NAMFREL encountered in previous elections. Laoc replied that the three main issues for NAMFREL were its relationship with the Election Commission, its credibility and its lack of manpower. Canton added that based on the experience of groups in Panama, Mexico, Peru and Chile, three groups in Bangladesh would have concerns about FEMA: the Election Commission, the political parties and the public. Participants agreed that they should be prepared to convince these groups that FEMA is a nonpartisan coalition with an important job to do. The issue of public perception was revisited later in the seminar.

Another participant expressed skepticism about FEMA's ability to motivate volunteers. This issue was discussed further in the following plenary session. Laoc described briefly the situation NAMFREL faced when it began election monitoring in the Philippines. Canton told participants that they would not be asking potential volunteers for a favor; instead potential volunteers should think of their work as a favor for themselves or for their country.

F. Workshops: Election Monitoring Activities

Participants split into two groups, one led by Hassan and Laoc and one led by Ghani and Canton, to explore in more detail the ideas discussed in the plenary session on election monitoring activities. The Bangladeshi facilitators presented FEMA's plans and the international participants provided practical suggestions on conducting election monitoring activities. Participants shared their experience in election monitoring as well.

Both groups agreed that the long election-day checklist should be shortened and discussed ways to eliminate or modify various questions. In Workshop A, participants discussed specific concerns about the fairness of elections in Bangladesh including problems with the electronic media, bribes, indelible ink, ID cards and underage voters. Based on his experience as a NAMFREL organizer, Laoc suggested that FEMA form a small group at headquarters to analyze the data collected from the checklists.

In Workshop B, participants focused on the issue of accreditation; they were concerned that they would not receive credentials from the Election Commission. By the end of the workshop session, they seemed more confident about the prospect of developing a working relationship with the Election Commission. Participants in this workshop were concerned about problems relating to improperly stamped ballots, violence and multiple voting. Participants also debated the degree to which observers should intervene in conflict at the polling station.

G. Plenary Session III, Part A: Creating an Election Monitoring Apparatus - Recruiting Volunteers

After the plenary session and workshops on election monitoring activities, Bangladeshi and international participants began to discuss how to recruit and organize the people who will conduct these activities. Hassan explained what FEMA expects with regard to recruitment and organization and asked participants to tell the FEMA steering committee what their expectations were. There was a great deal of interaction between the participants during this session.

Hassan described the structure of FEMA. FEMA will be composed of national, regional and district chapters. FEMA volunteers will not be able to work for any other monitoring effort and members of other monitoring coalitions cannot work for FEMA. There will be four stages in the development of FEMA: 1) recruitment and organization; 2) planning and training; 3) operational; and 4) reporting.

Discussion focused on how to recruit the large number of volunteers necessary to make FEMA's election monitoring operation successful. The FEMA leaders and international and Bangladeshi participants discussed the types of people who could be recruited. The issue of partisanship was discussed throughout the workshop. Participants agreed that it is very important that monitors be nonpartisan. They expressed doubt that NGO leaders are nonpartisan and concern that it would be very difficult to find enough nonpartisan people to form a FEMA network. Hassan pointed out that an individual could vote for a particular party on election day but still be a nonpartisan monitor.

Participants expressed concern about involving women and children in monitoring activities. Given the cultural context, families might be reluctant to allow women and children to serve as monitors. Laoc explained that election monitoring in the Philippines is a family endeavor. Each person contributes in whatever way he or she can. For example, children often run errands for NAMFREL.

Canton suggested that participants use existing networks when seeking volunteers and provided examples from other countries to illustrate this point. In Panama and Chile, election monitoring alliances looked to the Catholic Church for volunteers; in Peru, they looked to the university students; and in Mexico, they looked to civic groups.

FEMA leaders stressed the spirit of volunterism. Hassan indicated that FEMA would use the assets of the member NGOs. One member NGO might provide transportation while another might allow FEMA volunteers to use its communication system. Laoc underlined Hassan's point and provided examples of how NAMFREL has obtained services as well as material support necessary for its election monitoring activities.

One participant raised the issue of how a monitor could vote on election day. Participants agreed that it is important for monitors to vote. In order to allow them to do so, FEMA could station monitors close to their own polling stations or have a second monitor watch

the polls while the first one votes. Hassan stated that FEMA plans to have mobile monitors in addition to stationary monitors.

In this plenary session, participants began to consider the practical implications of conducting a large election monitoring effort. They were unsure of their ability to achieve FEMA's goal of recruiting and training tens of thousands of people to monitor the voting and counting procedures on election day.

H. Plenary Session III, Part B: Creating an Election Monitoring Apparatus - Practical Implications/Training

During the morning of the second day, participants revisited the topics of the previous day's plenary session on creating an election monitoring apparatus and then focused on how to conduct training sessions. They discussed potential problems that FEMA might encounter with respect to its public image. In general, participants feared that the member NGOs' reputations might suffer if they become involved in FEMA. Several participants wondered how the government and citizens would view NGOs who are usually involved in development activities if they began to conduct election monitoring activities. Some felt that FEMA would be perceived as political. Several participants also believed that NGOS who conduct election monitoring activities are seen as agents of the government and of foreign governments. Other participants stated that the government sees NGOs as a threat since NGOs provide services that the government should be providing; thus, FEMA itself would be perceived as a threat to the government. In addition, fundamentalists and local elites are often anti-NGO.

Canton and Laoc shared their views on the issue of public perception. Canton said that FEMA would face most of these problems and many others. However, given the experiences of election monitoring groups in other countries, it is not likely that FEMA will be viewed as an agent of the government. Canton stated that there are no magic answers but that FEMA should try to establish its credibility early. Laoc reminded participants that election monitoring is inherently political but that it is not necessarily a threat to those in power.

In addition to issues of perception, participants discussed practical problems that might occur. For example, families might not allow potential volunteers to participate in FEMA's activities because an observer could be attacked.

By the end of the discussion, participants concluded that they should attempt to overcome these obstacles. Regardless of other people's perceptions, they know that NGOs, including those in FEMA, are working for a good cause.

After participants had voiced their concerns, discussion returned to recruitment strategies and FEMA's structure. Laoc spoke about the organizational structure of FEMA. He provided practical advice on forming a FEMA network and stressed the importance of creativity in this effort. FEMA's structure could include an executive director, a secretariat, and people

responsible for recruiting, training and organizing, media relations, logistics, legal issues, finances and IVT planning and implementation.

Based on his experiences with NAMFREL, Laoc suggested types of individuals and groups whom FEMA could ask for support. Hassan provided additional examples of resources and referred participants to the manual on recruiting and training that FEMA had produced. Hassan explained that volunteers could be found through word of mouth or through newspaper advertisements and posters. A lively debate on the merits of these two recruitment methods ensued.

Following the discussions on recruitment, the FEMA leaders and international trainers conducted a session on training. Hassan referred participants to FEMA's training manual which explains what to include in a training session. Laoc also gave a presentation on the elements of a training session. A training session should include an orientation on the background and goals of FEMA; a section on pollwatching including the process on election day, reporting procedures and security issues; and section on independent vote tabulations including collection of data, verification of results, tabulation of votes and reporting of results. Laoc also advised FEMA that it is important to develop a system of communication between the national and local leadership so that members can be informed of changes in procedure and policy.

Canton provided participants with suggestions on how to conduct a training session. He recommended that they create an agenda and not improvise. Trainers should prepare short presentations and should seek to make their sessions interactive.

Participants also discussed the need to emphasize both the goals of FEMA and skills development in a training session. At the regional level, FEMA core trainers will conduct sessions for trainers rather than for monitors. FEMA core trainers might want to advise regional trainers that it could be more effective to train the actual monitors close to the election date so that they will remember what they have learned.

During the session on training, the following issues were raised again: women's participation, nonpartisanship and security of monitors. Montague advised participants to consider the important role that women can play in a monitoring effort; trainers should work to increase women's participation in their training workshops. Montague also advised participants on security precautions. Monitors should avoid dangerous situations and should trust their instincts. Participants agreed that if a volunteer is found to be partisan, he or she should be asked nicely to leave FEMA.

I. Workshops: Creating an Election Monitoring Apparatus

After the morning plenary session, participants split again into two groups, one led by Hassan and Laoc and one led by Ghani and Canton, to discuss how to create an election monitoring apparatus and to develop a concrete plan for organizing regional chapters. Since the

two workshops produced different recommendations, the seminar facilitators decided to call all participants back to the conference room to discuss their ideas and to try to reach a consensus.

In Workshop A, participants discussed the structure of the regional committees. They acknowledged that after the regional structure is determined, the district structures can be determined. They developed a plan for organizing regional committees and estimated that this task could be accomplished in three to four weeks. Participants also discussed who should be invited to the first organizational meeting of the regional committees.

Workshop B used a different approach to discuss the formation of regional committees. Participants in this workshop created a hypothetical situation where they had to decide how to organize a regional chapter in Dinajpur and Rangpur, two districts in northwest Bangladesh. By discussing the task of organizing in concrete terms, the participants were able to identify and consider real challenges that they might face. Like Workshop A, Workshop B produced a plan for organizing regional committees, but Workshop B also decided how much time each step would take. Participants in Workshop B believed that the steps would require a total of 15 days. At the end of this workshop session, the participants discussed how to conduct a FEMA regional meeting.

After two participants from each workshop presented their workshop's plan, they discussed how to combine the two approaches. The following plan was developed:

How to Organize a Regional Chapter

Task [to be carried out by FEMA regional facilitators (seminar participants)]	**Time**
1. Identify two or more nonpartisan, well-known people to serve as convenors for the regional committee	7 days
2. Motivate convenors	3 days
3. Hold a coordinating meeting for the regional facilitators and regional convenors	1 day
4. Invite people to FEMA regional meeting	5 days
a. Two people from each region should be invited	

b. These people can include:
   1) principals of colleges/ headmasters of schools
   2) heads of socio-cultural institutions
   3) members of bar associations and the press
   4) members of chambers/*Bonic Samity*
   5) religious leaders

5. Prepare a meeting agenda — 1 day

   a. Describe the political situation in the country

   b. Describe FEMA's goals, general plan and activities

6. Facilitate an organizing meeting — 1 day

Structure of Regional Committee

Title of position	**number of people**
Chairperson	1
Vice Chairperson	3 (minimum 1 woman)
Secretary	1
Joint Secretary	2 (minimum 1 woman)
Treasurer	1
Members	13-17

Participants discussed how many people should compose each committee. The group agreed that the number of members in each regional committee would not be fixed, but that the positions were. Hassan noted that the chairs of the district committees would be members of the regional committees.

Participants also discussed whether the timetable was realistic and finally decided that regional chapters could be organized in three to four weeks. After regional committees are

organized, regional leaders will hold regional workshops to train people who will form district chapters. Regional training should take six to eight weeks.

By the conclusion of this session, participants had expressed a great deal of confidence and enthusiasm. They found it very useful to discuss the practical implications of organizing an election monitoring apparatus and to create a concrete plan for establishing regional chapters of FEMA. Participants seemed to realize that they could organize an effective system of election monitoring.

J. Plenary Session IV: Conducting an Independent Vote Tabulation

The purpose of this plenary session was to introduce participants to the concept of an independent vote tabulation. Santiago Canton explained what an IVT is and why it is useful and then answered participants' questions. Initially, participants were confused, but they began to gain an understanding of IVTs.

Canton began his presentation with an exercise to demonstrate the value of sampling. He asked participants to imagine that they had to decide whether they preferred Argentina or England to win the 1988 World Cup. Canton put some pressure on participants to vote for Argentina. After the votes had been cast, he explained how counting only 10 of the 40 votes would allow him to predict who had won. Similarly, FEMA might collect election results from a small percentage of the polling places to predict the outcome of the election in an entire constituency.

After the exercise, Canton provided data from a 1988 plebiscite in Chile and a 1990 election in Bulgaria to demonstrate the accuracy of independent vote tabulations. He explained how a sample could be created in Bangladesh. Statisticians will work with FEMA to determine how many polling sites are necessary for accurate predictions, and FEMA will then randomly select a series of polling sites from which to collect data.

To NDI's knowledge, a comprehensive IVT has never been conducted in a parliamentary system for a significant number of individual districts at the same time. It would therefore be ground breaking if conducted in Bangladesh in multiple constituencies. Canton acknowledged that the countries he had used as examples have presidential systems, but he explained that the main difference between presidential and parliamentary systems with regard to IVTs is that in parliamentary systems there are multiple elections and thus separate counts. In Bangladesh, there will be 300 different counts because there are 300 constituencies.

Canton outlined the two methods of conducting an independent vote tabulation: 1) quick count; and 2) comprehensive count. The system described earlier was a quick count. A comprehensive count, in contrast, involves collecting data from 100 percent of the polling stations. This type of count was conducted by NAMFREL in 1986. Canton pointed out that comprehensive counts require a large number of volunteers and a well-developed communications network.

Participants did not fully understand the definition of and theory behind independent vote tabulations. One major concern was its accuracy. Some participants thought that the main purpose of an IVT was to get election results more quickly. They worried that IVT results would be inaccurate if supporters of one party voted at one time and supporters of another party voted at another time. One participant asked whether IVT volunteers would count the ballots from each box or whether they would mix the ballots from all boxes and then count them. Another participant asked why FEMA would conduct a quick count when, by the time FEMA finished tabulating the results from the sample points, the results from all stations would have arrived at national headquarters.

Canton clarified what an IVT is and how it is conducted. An IVT is a way to monitor and independently check the ballot counting process in an election. Monitors count the actual results from the official tally sheet at the polling station on election night after the voting is completed. Canton explained that the purpose of an IVT is to act as a deterrent against fraud and to prevent the manipulation of results after the voting. An IVT cannot determine whether problems -- such as Canton pressuring the participants to vote for Argentina -- occurred before the voting. Canton also explained how an organization such as FEMA conducts an IVT on election day: 1) an observer records the actual results from the tally sheet; 2) he or she reports these results to the local chapter; and 3) the local chapter transmits the results to national headquarters.

Canton noted that the purpose of sampling is to achieve accurate predictions. It is very difficult to collect results from all polling stations. If FEMA attempts to conduct a comprehensive count but receives information from less than 100 percent of the polling stations, this information may not be representative. It is important to have data from a random or stratified sample of polling stations.

Canton pointed out that a communications system is the backbone of a successful IVT. Organizations conducting IVTs usually set up two chains of communication so that results will reach the national headquarters even if one chain is broken. This precaution was important in Paraguay in 1990 when the government cut the telephone lines to the national headquarters of the civic organization conducting the IVT. FEMA leaders asked participants to explore the communications options in their own regions, identify telephone lines and send communications information to headquarters so that the FEMA national committee can decide what type of system to establish.

Participants continued to consider possible problems with conducting an IVT in Bangladesh. One participant asked whether there could be any negative consequences of conducting an IVT. Canton told him that an IVT can fail but that the margin of error in all IVTs in which NDI has been involved has been less than 1 percentage point. A successful IVT depends on a strong communications system and a group of well-trained monitors. In response to participants' concerns about the poor communications infrastructure in Bangladesh, Canton explained that successful IVTs have been conducted in other countries with infrastructure problems. One way that FEMA could avoid the problem of an overload on telephone lines

would be to collect information from all polling stations for research purposes but transmit results from only selected polling stations for the IVT on election night.

One participant questioned the usefulness of discussing IVTs at this seminar; he said that FEMA's main strategy should be developing a plan and organizing volunteers. Hassan explained that an IVT can be an important part of an election monitoring effort such as the one planned by FEMA because it can help ensure that an election is free and fair. Perhaps most importantly, an IVT can act as a deterrent to election fraud. Canton added that the seminar facilitators wanted participants to discuss the option of conducting an IVT so that they could fill out a communications form that FEMA would use to determine whether an IVT might be possible in Bangladesh. Seminar facilitators assured participants that FEMA will conduct an IVT only if the national committee decides that it will be feasible.

K. Election Day Simulation

NDI and FEMA created a comprehensive election day simulation kit to be used in Bangladesh. These kits were extremely inexpensive to produce because they used simple, readily available materials.

Using the kit, NDI Field Representative Maryam Montague led an election day simulation to show participants what they could include in a training session. Participants also had the chance to review the election-day checklist for monitors and ask questions.

During the simulation, Montague tested the participants' knowledge of the duties of election monitors -- from deciding what to bring with them to the polling station, to observing the counting. Montague suggested that monitors should report any problems to the presiding officer, that monitors should not get involved if violence occurs and that monitors should walk around outside the polling station in addition to observing activities inside the station.

Participants enjoyed playing the roles of voters, polling officials and election monitors. Voters tried to commit fraud, polling officials attempted to ensure that the voting process proceeded as it should, and monitors observed the activities and informed polling officials of problems. Eventually, the polling station had to be closed because the actors created such a scene. After closing the station, Montague reviewed what should happen in an election day simulation so that participants would know how to conduct one when they went out to the regions.

This exercise helped build a sense of community among participants and they referred fondly to it later in the seminar. During the closing session, when certificates were being distributed, participants called one another by their titles from the simulation.

L. "Where do we go from here?"

Participants returned to the conference room to discuss how they would implement the plans developed at the seminar. There was a great deal of participation in this session and everyone seemed energized about organizing regional chapters of FEMA and conducting training sessions.

Participants said they would inform people in the regions about FEMA's background, goals and plans. In addition, they requested that the national secretariat of FEMA keep in contact with them. One participant asked if the national secretariat could write a letter to the organizations from which participants came to let them know who attended the seminar. Another participant provided a specific example of how he intended to begin recruiting volunteers for FEMA; at a rotary club meeting the following day, he would tell his fellow club members about FEMA.

One participant brought up the idea of dividing the regions and assigning specific responsibilities to participants before they left the seminar site. This suggestion was strongly supported. Another participant informed everyone that another NGO that plans to monitor the upcoming general elections had sent letters to many organizations asking if they were interested in participating in this effort. Since that NGO had requested a list of interested parties by March 31, the participant felt that it was very important to mobilize FEMA volunteers immediately. Participants insisted that focal points for organizing regional chapters be established before they left the seminar site. This task was accomplished.

After deciding which participants would be responsible for each region, FEMA leaders distributed contact information sheets and communications information sheets. Participants also received a copy of FEMA's press statement on the seminar and a copy of the *Daily Star* article. These documents could be used by the participants to generate national press coverage for FEMA. Organizers promised to have all of FEMA's manuals translated into Bangla and distributed.

M. Closing

FEMA Chairman Ambassador Fakhruddin and National Training Coordinator Dr. Nazmul Ahsan Kalimullah distributed certificates to all participants. Fakhruddin reviewed the lessons learned in the past two days.

Hassan said that if participants think of themselves as part of a FEMA family and swear to be soldiers of democracy, they can build FEMA into an organization of thousands. Everyone joined hands and recited in unison the FEMA oath of nonpartisanship. Hassan said that such a human chain is necessary for safeguarding democracy in Bangladesh and throughout the world. He said that he had confidence that FEMA will be able to accomplish the huge task of organizing a domestic election monitoring network.

One participant, who was chosen by the others to serve as a spokesperson, thanked FEMA, NDI, the international participants, the conference center staff, and the interpreters, and gave a motivational speech. He thanked the FEMA national committee, in particular, for making all participants feel comfortable and for creating the "FEMA Family." He said that all the participants believed that this type of training would help establish and institutionalize democracy in Bangladesh. He also remarked that the participants had gained hope and that they would try with all their heart and soul to turn their plans into reality.

Following the Bangladeshi participants' closing remarks, Canton and Laoc welcomed them to the worldwide family of civic alliances working for free and fair elections. Laoc stated that the mere fact that FEMA exists is a victory. He reminded participants that the road before them will be long and difficult but that they will overcome problems through their commitment.

VI. CONCLUSION

Through conversations with the FEMA national secretariat, NDI has learned that participants found the seminar useful, understood the goals and mission of FEMA and planned to conduct regional training workshops in the near future. In general, they were confident that they would be able to recruit and train election monitor trainers but they wanted to remain in close contact with the national secretariat for advice and guidance. Participants wanted to receive additional information on independent vote tabulations.

In the period leading up to and during the general elections, expected no later than February 1996, NDI plans to continue and to expand its election program in support of Bangladeshi NGOs and political parties interested in organizing an effective system of election monitoring that will increase public confidence in the electoral process. This program will include nonpartisan monitoring, an independent vote tabulation and political party monitoring. As part of the nonpartisan monitoring component of the program, the Institute will continue to provide technical advice and assistance to FEMA.

The program will be organized and implemented in Bangladesh by a team of two NDI field representatives experienced in election monitoring and the organization of political parties, civic groups and other NGOs. NDI will conduct consultations with FEMA on a day-to-day basis. Topics to be addressed include coalition-building, developing an election calendar, recruiting monitors, training monitors, developing a public information strategy, organizing logistics, monitoring the electronic and print media, conducting IVTS, and analyzing information and issuing reports.

NDI will organize a small conference on independent vote tabulations that will bring together international IVT experts and domestic election monitors, statisticians, political scientists, sociologists and local experts from around Bangladesh. NDI will also arrange for periodic consultations with IVT experts who will work with FEMA to set up the actual IVT

operation, evaluate the progress of the IVT program once a plan is developed and make any necessary modifications.

NDI also plans to organize a program to train political party election monitors. In addition to working with parties to create manuals and election-day checklists for monitors, NDI will organize national and regional conferences on domestic election monitoring for political party representatives.

Following its program work in preparation for the national elections, NDI will send a small assessment team to Bangladesh to observe the elections.

Appendix I

Seminar Agenda

National Training Seminar
on
Domestic Election Monitoring
of
Fair Election Monitoring Alliance
March 7 - 9, 1995
C.D.M. RAJENDRAPUR, GAZIPUR

Tuesday, March 7, 1995

6:00	Departure for CDM training site from SRG office located at 11/16 Iqbal Road, Mohammadpur
7:00	Registration
8:00	Dinner Keynote Speech - The Importance of Election Monitors in a Transparent Election Process (Ambassador Fakruddin Ahmed)

Wednesday, March 8, 1995

7:30 - 8:00	Breakfast
8:00 - 9:15	OPENING (Feroz Hassan) Background on the Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA) Background on the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), and Introduction of International Participants and NDI Field Representative (Feroz Hassan)
:15 - 10:15	Plenary Session I: Election Monitoring Within the Context of the Bangladesh Electoral Law (S.M. Zakaria, Election Commission Additional Secretary) * Adjudication Process/Rights of Candidates * Fact-finding and Documentation * How to register a valid complaint
0:15 - 10:45	Question and Answer Session
0:45 - 11:00	Tea Break
1:00 - 11:30	Film: *Free and Fair Elections*

11:30 - 1:30 Interactive Plenary Session II: Electior Monitoring Activities
(Tarikul Ghani, Telibert Laoc, Santiago Canton)

* Monitoring the Pre-Election Period
* Monitoring on Election Day
(Interaction between pollwatchers and: voters, polling place officials, party representative: and monitor coordinators)
* Monitoring the Post-Election Period
* Conflict Resolution
* Recording Observations
* Adjudication Process

1:30 - 2:30 Lunch

2:30 - 4:30 Workshops: Election Monitoring Activities

1. Monitoring Activities A (Feroz Hassan Telibert Laoc)
2. Monitoring Activities B (Tarikul Ghani Santiago Canton)

4:30 - 4:45 Tea Break

4:45 - 6:15 Interactive Plenary Session III, Part A: Creatir an Election Monitoring Apparatus - Recruiting ar Organizing Volunteers (Feroz Hassan, Telibert Laoc Santiago Canton)

* Plan of Action: Costs and Strategies
FEMA expectations
(What is the structure? How many volunteer: Where to deploy? How to create a timeline f recruitment and training of volunteers? How set up a system of communication?)
* Volunteer Recruitment

8:00 Dinner

Thursday, March 9, 1995

7:30 - 8:00 Breakfast

8:00 - 10:30 Interactive Plenary Session III, Part B: Creating an Election Monitoring Apparatus - Practical Implications (Feroz Hassan, Telibert Laoc, Santiago Canton)

* What to include in a training session

10:30 - 10:45 Tea Break

10:45 - 12:15 Workshops: Creating an Election Monitoring Apparatus

1. Recruitment/Plan of Action (Feroz Hassan, Telibert Laoc)

2. Training (Tarikul Ghani, N.A. Kalimullah, Santiago Canton)

12:15 - 12:45 Presentations on Workshops

12:45 - 1:15 Plenary Session IV : Conducting an Independent Vote Tabulation (IVT)
What is an IVT? Why is it useful?
(Feroz Hassan, Santiago Canton, Telibert Laoc)

* Developing an IVT plan

* Collecting Sampling Information

* Incorporating IVT into a training session

* Obtaining information from election monitors

* Coordination with Headquarters

* IVT on Election Night

:15 - 1:45 Question and Answer Session

:45 - 2:45 Lunch

:45 - 4:15 Workshops: Creating an Election Monitoring Apparatus

1. Recruitment/Plan of Action (Feroz Hassan, Telibert Laoc)

2. Training (Tarikul Ghani, N.A. Kalimullah, Santiago Canton)

:15 - 4:45 Presentations on Workshops

:45 - 5:00 Tea Break

5:00 - 5:45	Election Day Simulation (Maryam Montague)
5:45 - 6:00	Evaluation
6:00 - 6:30	CLOSE (Final remarks by FEMA and International Participants, Distribution of Certificates)
6:45	Departure for Dhaka

Appendix II

Facilitator Biographies

SANTIAGO A. CANTON

Santiago Canton was born in Argentina. He received his law degree in Buenos Aires, Argentina and completed his Master's work in International Law at The American University in Washington, D.C. He is currently the Director of Programs for Latin America and the Caribbean at the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI). He has made numerous television and radio appearances and presented at various seminars. He has also been a consultant for the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Carter Center.

Mr. Canton has participated in election monitoring programs in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Panama and the last national elections in Mexico. He has also worked extensively on parallel vote tabulation's (PVT) in Mexico and currently in Peru for the April 9th national elections.

MR. TELIBERT LAOC

Mr. Telibert Laoc volunteered for Namfrel in 1986 in the province of Cebu as a member of the support group. His group was sent to a town identified as a security risk area to provide additional presence in support to the local volunteers there. In the same year he became Project Director and coordinated the province-wide consultations for the drafting the new constitution of the philippines. Since then, he was served as organizer and trainor for the succeeding local and national elections. In 1991 up to the present, he serves as regional Director with the task of setting-up fully functional provincial chpters in the country. Mr. Laoc has observed several elections in south Africa and Mozambique, and has trained domestic observers and also observed the elections in Sri-Lanka.

TARIKUL GHANI

Personal

Name : TARIKUL GHANI

Address : 11/16, Iqbal Road (1st floor)
Mohammadpur, Dhaka-1207.
Tel: 323889, 324276

Education : Masters in Social Science with major in Political Science. Graduation with Honours in Political Science with Economics and History as subsidiaries from the University of Dhaka.

Language : Fluent in English and Bangla. Can speak and understand Urdu and Hindi also.

Other relevant information :

Founder Member of Manabik Shahajya Sangstha (MSS) - a private voluntary development organization engaged in socio-economic development of the urban poor and the underprivileged. MSS presently runs a Family Planning programme, a health programme and an urban Women's Credit Programme which is the first urban replication of the Grameen Bank model in Bangladesh - it is now the largest urban Women's Credit Programme in Bangladesh covering over 8000 families in Dhaka city. Presently serving as the executive Director of MSS.

The Study and Research Group (SRG) which now enjoys the status of a project of MSS is a centre within MSS and works as a civic organization focusing on election monitoring. SRG also undertakes activities for reinforcing values and patterns of behaviour among the citizens that are conducive to the sustenance of a democratic regime.

Observed several by elections and local body elections. Occasionally, writes on contemporary issues involving urban poor.

FEROZ M. HASSAN

Personal

Name	:	Feroz M. Hassan
Home Address	:	House no. 41, Road no. 6 Block-C, Banani, Dhaka Bangladesh. Tel: 323889
Academic qualification	:	Graduated in Law from DhakaUniversity in 1976; Obtaine LL.B degree.
Language	:	Proficient in English and Bangla Also can understand and speak Hindi and urdu.

Founder president of Manabik Shahajya Sangstha (MSS) - a non-government organization engaged in various programmes directed towards socio-economic development of the poor and underprivileged people. Of many projects, one noteworthy project is the Women Credit programme (WCP) which is a very successful credit programme replicating the Grameen Bank model in urban areas.

Study and Research Group (SRG) was convened by Mr. Feroz and was started in April 1991, within MSS to carry on the work of not only to do election monitoring to ensure free fair and meaningful elections, but also to undertake activities for reinforcing values and patterns of behaviour among the citizens that are conducive to maintenance and operation of a successful democratic regime.

Observed and monitored the 1991 General election in Bangladesh and also directly involved in the monitoring c the subsequent by-elections and local government elections, under the "Election Watch" project of MSS/SRG, as the leader of the group.

International experience

1. Participated as a delegate in the International Election Observer Mission to observe the October 13, 1990 National Election in Bulgaria.

2. Participated as member of the NDI pre-election surve mission to Philippines in November, 1991.

3. Attended the Democratic National Convention held in New York in 1992 on invitation of vice-president Walter Mondale.

4. Was member of the International Election Observer Delegation to both the National & Provincial Elections in Pakistan held in October, 1993.

5. participated at Asian Regional Civic Organization Conference in Manila, Philiprines in February, 1995.

Appendix III

Background Information on Organizations Participating in Seminar

Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BJMAS)

Background :

Bangladesh Jatyo Mahila Ainjibi Samity was formed by the women lawyers of Bangladesh as a result of a longfelt need of an organized women's legal aid body to cater to the deprived, battered, harassed and denied women of Bangladesh. The women lawyers further felt that in order to promote the rights of women, it was imperative that there be a strong women association such as the Women Lawyers Association which could act as a buffer or a pillar to the other women organizations who would feel more secure and strengthened by the presence and support of such an organization. As such, the organization was formed at first, loosely, in the year 1979 and then registered in the year 1981.

Objectives :

* To organize the women to develop their status and community.
* To improve women's domestic, social, legal, economic and political status.
* To provide justice for all and eradicate crime.
* To create equal opportunities and equal rights for every women in Bangladesh.
* Establish linkages and networking with law enforcement authority, local people, local NGOs, administration, people's representatives sharing concern for women and children.

Programs and Activities :

Project 1

Legal representation cell for women prisoners and urban legal aid clinic.

Downtown Clinics : This project has 5 urban downtown legal aid clinics in different areas of Dhaka city. Members of the B N W L A are available to advise, prepare draft, provide mediation facilities to needy or poor who come to these clinics.

Legal Aid : Members of B N W L A are giving free legal aid and awareness training to women groups, schools, colleges, social groups worker groups, on issues relating to family laws, labour laws, rape, domestic violence, sexual harrasement and other important issues involving discrimination against women.

Jail Prisoners Programme : The Association assists women prisoners who need legal assistance for releasing them from jails.

Shelter Home : This home provides the released women safety and protection, creates the right environment for their moral development, gives medical aid, arranges legal counselling and arbitration, imparts education and training so as to equip them to adjust to a normal life.

Research Cell : This cell mainly conducts research and is respossible to collect datas and make survey to find out the root causes and prevention methods to stop violence against women in Bangladesh and reduce the crime rate of women.

PROJECT II

Mass Legal Literacy Programme :

a) Training Programme conducted for NGOs, wokers and GOs all over Bangladesh.
b) Awarness Programme conducted for urban and rural women for asserting their rights in every sphere of their life and in their need.

It has launched monitoring activities of law enforcement authorities throughout Bangladesh with regard to cases of human rights violation, fighting police abuse, custodial violence etc.

Election Monitoring Activities :

BJMAS has monitored the 1991 general election of Bangladesh. Its representative Advocate Salma Ali has also monitored elections in Nepal in 1994. The organization has field a writ petition at the Bangladesh High Court on behalf of women voters of Mahamaya Union and got a rule nisi.

BANGLADESH RURAL ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE (BRAC)

BRAC, a national private development organization was formed in 1972 in the Sulla area north east of Bangladesh. Although it was first set up to resettle refugees in post war Bangladesh. BRAC later redesigned its strategies in accordance with its philosophy of alleviation of poverty and empowerment of the poor. Today, BRAC has come a long way having a large number of development programs that cover the areas of health, education, income, employment and training for the landless rural people of Bangladesh.

BRAC is now a multifaceted organization with 12,000 regular staff, 33,000 part time functionaries covering some 55,443 villages in 54 districts of Bangladesh. The Rural Development Programme, one of the core programmes of BRAC, has organized upto now over 40,492 poor landless groups in rural areas. The Credit program initiated in 1990, has already disbursed Tk. 5632 million among the rural poor to develop their income generating activities. The Oral Therapy Extension Programme (OTEP), has brought a home based oral solution for the prevention of diarrhoea to almost all the households in the country. It has today expanded into a more comprehensive health care programme. The Health & Population Programme is involved in decreasing maternal and infant mortality which is a burning question in Bangladesh. The Non Formal Primary Education Program, a cost effective method of education, has so far opened more than 28,000 schools for poor rural children, especially girls.

BRAC's programs & activities include: the Rural Development Program (RDP), the Rural Credit Project (RCP), the Small Holders Livestock Development Program (SLDP), the Income Generation For Vulnerable Group Development Program (IGVGD), the Rural Enterprise Project (REP), the Non Formal Primary Education Program (NFPE), the Health & Population Program (HPP) and the Post Cyclone Rehabilitation and Development Program (PCRDP). BRAC has its own Training Division, Research and Evaluation Division (RED) as well as the Departments of Monitoring, Accounts and Audit, Logistics, and Construction. It also has a Public Affairs & Communications Department and Publications, Audio Visual Center, Computer Center, Craft Development and Marketing services through 'Aarong and some commercial projects that include the BRAC Printers and a Cold Storage plant.

The Year 1994 was a year of national and international recognition and achievement for BRAC. In June , 1994 the Queen's University, Canada, bestowed special distinction on BRAC's NFPE Program by conferring the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws on Mr. F.H. Abed, Founder and Executive Director of BRAC. BRAC received an international award from ICDDR,B in February for its herculean effort in reaching almost all households of rural Bangladesh with the know how to prepare oral saline. BRAC was also honored with several national awards of Bangladesh. In order to advise the countries of Eastern and Southern Africa about BRAC system of Non-Formal Primary Education and help set up such schools, BRAC opened a cell at UNICEF's Regional Office in Nairobi.

<u>Election Monitoring</u> :

BRAC was a member of the Bangladesh Mukta Nirbachan Andolan (BMNA), a coalition for election monitoring and monitored the 1991 general election.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION (CDA)

Community Development Association (CDA) is a national non governmental voluntary organization registered with the Department of Social Service, Department of family Planning and NGO Affairs Bureau. Its goal is to uplift social, economic, environmental and cultural status of the disadvantaged people through community development programme.

Its main objectives are to reduce poverty; empower the disadvantaged people; and develop a sustainable livelihood.

CDA runs different programmes such as,

a) Institution building
b) Education
c) Training and Research
d) Environment and Regeneration Agriculture Afforestation
e) Income and Employment Generation
f) Health, Nutrition and Sanitation
g) Gender Relations and Development
h) Human Rights and Legal Assistance
i) Advocacy and Lobbying
j) Disaster Management

At present the organization is working in two districts covering 45 unions, 7 thanas and 355 villages. CDA is supported by 86 Regular staffs and 130 volunteers.

The organization is affiliated to national organizations such as the ADAB, BARRA and FORUM. And internationally it is affiliated to IIRR Philippines, Approtech Asia Philippines, Greenpeace International Netherlands, DCI Netherlands and PRIA India.

CDA has monitored elections in Dinajpur sadar and Kaharole in 1991 with Human Rights Commission.

GONO UNNAYAN PROCHESTA (GUP)

Gono Unnayan Prochesta (GUP) is a 22 years old NGO working in rur Bangladesh for the empowerment and socio-economic & cultural development (the rural poor. GUP has a National Executive Committee for general polic guidance and facilitating implementation of the planned programs. There ar 200 staff members working with GUP and there is a team of village base volunteers numbering more than 200 at any given time. There are also 4(trained volunteers living in the project areas, whose services can be calle for on any emergency caused by natural catastrophes. GUP follows a integrated approach to human development in the rural areas by organizin chain of activities including functional education, agriculture, co-operativ community health care, special program for women & children' various skill training, job creation, legal assistance by way of local mediation.Over 75,00 families are involved in the development activities with GUP. GUP's Peac center offers a venue for peace making and peace promotion at the loca regional and national level.

VOTER EDUCATION EXPERIENCE :

GUP firmly believes that if the grass root level people are not well educate in voting at there own levels, there can't be any educated nation to vote. T be educated in voting people must exercise their voting rights properly fro the grassroots to the national level. In order to make this possible since las 6 years GUP has inspired the Samities to practice vote by ballots in thei Annual General Meeting's (AGM). This exercise has brought in very positiv experiences in the voting culture of the people involved. GUP believes that i the same practice is practiced by all other NGO's and Samities at all levels ou people will then have education for voting properly. This emphasis should b on till the majority of our people are educated. GUP is determined to continu voting education by the people in its project area for another decade or sc

ELECTION MONITORING :

In connection with the election monitoring of national election, 1991 GUP a a member of CCHRB played its due role by attending most of the meetings i connection with the preparation of the monitoring including one, organized b the NDI. Some of the preparatory meetings were also held in GUP's office. Bu when it came to the actual monitoring GUP's staff members had to play a lo key role, as suddenly, most of the mid-level staffs were requisitioned by th local governments as polling officers. Some of the vehicles were also taken b the local governments for their movement during the election. However, som senior members of the team were out during the election day for monitorin the voting. Small report of this monitoring was circulated. Presently GUP ha some staff members who know about and has experience in election monitoring

JAGORANI CHAKRA (JC)

JAGORANI CHAKRA is a National Small Voluntary Development Organization working in the south-western belt (Jessore, Kustia, Jhenaidah, Narail, Magura) of Bangladesh since 1979.

Objectives : Poverty Alleviation of the underprivileged group of the society through Education conscientisation with skill training and income generating activities.

Major Programmes :

Institution Building, Child Education, Functional Education, Adult Education/Mass Literacy, MCH & FP, Health & Nutrition, Women's Development, Gender & Development, Focus on Adolescent Youth & Children particularly Girl Children, Coordination and Networking, Environment & Social Forestry, Water & Sanitation, Agriculture, Pre. & Management, Livestock, Poultry, Fisheries, Training, Development, Communication & Publication Credit, Apiculture, Rural enterprise, Research, Library, Sectoral Forum, Human Rights, Advocacy & Lobbying, Micro enterprise, Housing, Food Processing, Slum development, Landless Contracting Society (LCS) programme, etc.

Target Group :

Helpless and underprivileged groups of the society.

Underprivileged Children of both rural and urban areas.

Election Monitoring Activities :

Jagorani Chakra has monitored Jessore Municipal Election. They have also monitored Parliamentary Election of 1991. The organisation was assigned by the district administration to work at the election monitoring control room at Jessore district during the parliamentary election of 1991.

PROSHIKA MANOBIK UNNAYAN KENDRA (PMUK)

Proshika is one of the largest national non-governmental development organization in Bangladesh. Since its very inception in 1976 it has been endeavouring to engender a participatory process of development and succeeded in pioneering approach that puts human development at the centre of its vision.This vision of founded upon the understanding that poverty reduction and promotion sustainable development is dependent upon the human and material capacity building of the poor and their socio-economic and cultural empowerment through a process of generating human, social, economical and cultural capital among them. The very word Proshika is an acronym of three words (the Bangla for training, education and action) which encapsulate the organization's development ethos.

WHAT PROSHIKA DOES :

These objectives are achieved through a broad range of programmes for education, training and activities for income & employment generation, health education & building of health infrastructure and environmental protection & regeneration. The programme are augmented through research activities and advocacy campaigns which increasingly call for cooperation with like-minded development partners at the national and international levels. Thus the network of activities in which proshika is involved links the poorest of the poor with like mined development actors worldwide. Proshika now comprises 1,500 women and men of field animators, technical specialists, researchers, media specialists, advocates and development managers committed to the development of people in Bangladesh.

WHO PROSHIKA WORKS WITH :

Working in well over 5,000 villages and in excess o 70 urban slums in 34 districts, Proshika now works with over 660,000 female and male members drawn from rural and urban poor household and organized into over 38,000 groups. This translates into a total programme reach of nearly 4 million individuals.

AREAS OF PROSHIKA'S ACTIVITY

A. Organization Building among The Poor
B. Development Education.
C. Employment and Income generating Activities.
D. Environmental Protection and Regeneration.
E. Universal Education Programme
F. Health Education and Infrastructure Building Programme
G. Integrated Multi-sectoral Women's Development Programme
H. Urban Poor Development Programme
I. Housing Programme
J. Disaster Preparedness and management
K. Institution for Development Policy Analysis and Advocacy (IDPAA).

Election Monitoring :

It has observed and monitored the 1991 general election with BAMNA.

STUDY AND RESEARCH GROUP (SRG)

Study and Research Group (SRG), which works as an independent centre within Manabik Shahajya Sangstha (MSS) an NGO, was formed following the successful experience of the General election of February 27, 1991 to carry forward the work of not only to do election monitoring but also undertake various activities for sustaining and consolidating democracy in Bangladesh.

SRG is a non-partisan group comprising of academicians, human rights and social workers, senior executives from various professional groups and business.

The Group was formed to provide an independent, institutional framework through which research in the democratic process could be made, and information dissemination to raise public awareness about how to develop a sustainable democratic culture as well as the rights the members of the civic society should enjoy in a democratic dispensation.

ELECTION WATCH is one of the main program activities of SRG the objective of which is to do election monitoring and facilitate informed balloting to ensure free, fair and meaningful elections in Bangladesh. The ELECTION WATCH project aims to raise the confidence of the people in the total electoral process, deter intimidation at polls and create the conditions under which the will of the people, whatever it might be, could be respected.

To further its aims and objectives SRG works with Election commission to develop and publicize the rules and procedures of the elections with other NGOs and professional organizations and especially the grass-roots groups to sensitize the population to civic-voter education issues during the elections.

SRG is now an effective non-partisan domestic election monitoring organization. It has observed and monitored many by-elections including local government elections in the country for the past 3 years. It has also designed and undertaken training programs for the domestic pollwatchers. Till date it has provided training to several hundred domestic pollwatchers throughout the country.

Upcoming Election Monitoring Plan

For the upcoming general elections SRG has initiated large-scale election monitoring plan under which it plans to recruit, train and mobilise thousands and thousands of volunteers on the election-day to monitor a large number of polling centres of the 30,000 centres to be set-up by the authorities throughout the country.

The election monitoring operation has the following objectives:

a) Increasing voter participation by building confidence in the electoral process;

b) deterring election fraud and irregularities; and

c) detecting and reporting election fraud and irregularities should they occur.

This huge big domestic election monitoring plan is being launched through a Coalition of NGOs, (who are operating at grass-roots level) and other civic organizations and persons who are clearly non-partisan and has high reputation within the community. All of them together will not only be able to pull in resources and logistics necessary to undertake a successful operation, but will also lend greater credibility/acceptability.

VOLUNTARY HEALTH SERVICES SOCIETY (VHSS)

The VHSS is a coordinating and support service agency for organizations active in health throughout Bangladesh.

The staff of 54 (Sept. '94) encompasses an extremely diverse range of professional skills, supported by a dedicated and fully qualified staff and a co-ordinated team, enables VHSS to respond to even the most urgent requests.

PROGRAMMES : In order to address the above concerns, VHSS has identified the following key programmatic areas.

* HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (HRD)
* COMMUNICATION
* PUBLIC POLICY AND ADVOCACY
* RESEARCH, EVALUATION AND DOCUMENTATION
* ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

TRAINING : Through training VHSS supports and equips members with technical, organisational and financial capacities in addressing individual, institutional and community needs.

VILLAGE VOLUNTARY PROGRAMME : The Village Voluntary Programme is another component under HRD to replicate and transfer successful case studies of development interventions from one location to another by using locally available and cost effective specialist services of proven field level development practitioners.

COMMUNICATION :

PUBLICATIONS : VHSS has continually played an important role in health information dissemination in Bangladesh since 1978. Formation of VHSS was partly initiated by the newsletter "In Touch", which aims at providing information to health programme managers and top level executives. Besides, VHSS has a Bangla newsletter named Jogajog.

EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS UNIT : These materials are used by different sectors - NGOs, government agencies and international organisations in information dissemination training programmes and community mobilization.

RESOURCE UNIT : This unit is comprised of a library, and IEC material clearing house, a subscription service and a display of IEC materials.

PUBLIC POLICY AND ADVOCACY :

WOMEN AND HEALTH : The unit provides assistance to NGOs with MCH, FP and WH activities through effective coordination of programmes. It advocates for women's rights and provides technical support to NGOs and other agencies for women's reproductive health, standardize TBA training programmes.

CHILDREN'S AND ADOLESCENT FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION : The unit provides technical assistance to NGOs with programmes on working children, advocates children's rights and monitors child exploitation and abuse, mobilizes public awareness for providing basic services to those children.

FOOD AND NUTRITION : The unit mobilizes NGOs for extensive nutrition programmes to address problems related to protein-energy malnutrition complemented by efforts to control micro nutrient malnutrition particularly caused by vitamin A, Iodine and Iron deficiency.

AIDS EDUCATION AND PREVENTION : VHSS was the first NGO in Bangladesh to start Aids awareness programme in 1987.

DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAMME : The organisation developes messages and education materials on the drug issue, conducts surveys among drug addicts, update a directory for NGOs working in this area.

SPECIAL NEEDS FOR DISABILITY : The special needs desk of VHSS, initiated in 1990 is to provide and effective coordination mechanism for NGOs working in the field of disability. Subsequently, the national forum for organisations working with disabled was formed in 1990. VHSS serves as the secretariat of this forum. This unit promotes community based rehabilitation, provides support to NGO programmes through production of IEC materials.

RESEARCH, EVALUATION AND DOCUMENTATION : VHSS identifies research topics and collects information and analyzes factors that are likely to influence advocacy work, policy, planning and programme implementation.

ANUBHAB : Anubhab (quarterly in Bangla and English)is a collection of information of local and national agencies working in health related programmes in Bangladesh to document the failures and successes of selected NGOs.

MEMBER SUPPORT SERVICE, ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE : VHSS has its own member support service, administration and finance units to support, coordinate and strengthen activities of office members and affiliates by arranging training sesions, workshops, seminars. The finance section deals with the financial activities of VHSS and helps various VHSS member organisation to improve financial management skills by organising training programmes with HRD section.

Appendix IV

News Clip on FEMA National Training Seminar

The Daily Star
March 8, 1995

Alliance for monitoring elections

By Staff Correspondent

Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA), a combine of different non-government organisations and individuals is planning to introduce an independent vote tabulation (IVT) during the national elections.

This was revealed by Fakhruddin Ahmed, former adviser to the interim government of Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed and chairman of the FEMA at a meeting with journalists in the city yesterday.

The meeting was organised in connection with a national training seminar for 30 non-partisan election monitors from different parts of the country. The seminar begins at Gazipur today.

Experts from the National Democratic Institute (NDI) of the USA, the National Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL) of the Philippines and local experts including officials of the Elections Commission will conduct the two-day training seminar.

The seminar will also focus on domestic election monitoring, volunteers recruitment and training, organisation and management of a large-scale monitoring operation.

The FEMA, which was initiated by the Study and Research Group (SRG), presently includes the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), Proshika, Gano Unnayan Prochesta (GUP), the Voluntary Health Services Society (VHSS), the Community Development Association (CDA) and Bangladesh Jatiya Mahila Alujibi Samity (BJMAS).

The FEMA hopes to announce a more comprehensive list of participating organisations during the formal launching of the Alliance at an appropriate time, said Tarikul Ghani, member-secretary of the organisation.

Yesterday's meeting was also attended by Santiago Canton, Maryam Montague and Rebecca Rind of NDI and Tellbert Lace of NAMFREL.