

Private Security Services in Bangladesh: Problems and Prospects

Murshid Al Hasan^{*†}

Abstract: A large number of private security agencies are providing services in Bangladesh during the last two decades. It is estimated that presently more than 400 agencies are engaged in security business in Bangladesh. These agencies are selling their services in the market that required greater levels of security. The purpose of this study is to describe the nature and extent of private security services in Bangladesh. Additionally, the study will attempt to identify the problems of security agencies and will examine the prospect of its further growth. Multiple methods and techniques were used to collect data. A sample survey of commercial security agency was the primary method for data collection. The findings suggest that there are wide variations with respect to size and functions of security agencies and the vast majority of the security agencies are small and providing guarding service only. It is seen that private security service is not provided with professionalism and the activities of those agencies are still unregulated. It also appears that many people are engaged in this business with a motive of higher profit ignoring public interests. Therefore, security agencies have to do more to make their services accountable and trustworthy.

Keywords: Private Security; Security Agency; Security Service; Neo-Marxism

Introduction

During the last two decades a large number of private security agencies[‡] have been emerged in Bangladesh. These agencies are selling their services in the market that provide wide range of security along with the government law enforcing agencies. The privatization of security has now become a global phenomenon. From the beginning of the 21st century the world has witnessed some big turmoil in our social and political life, which has given rise to terrorism and various other types of crimes not known to the civilized world so far. After the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon world wide the importance of private security has increased significantly (Chowdhury, 2006).

Like many third world countries Bangladesh is considered as a high crime society where our security situation is very much alarming (Islam, 2005). The pattern of crime is gradually changing with the changing condition of socio- economic and political trends of the country. The series of bomb blast on 17th August 2005 all over the country clearly indicates that Bangladesh is under serious security threat. The rise of militant Islamic groups and their terrorist activities have created widespread public fear and anxiety in

* Murshid Al Hasan, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, National University.

† In this paper the term private security agency, private security company, private security firm have been used interchangeably.

recent years. The incidents of violence against human body and crime against property have significantly increased. In this situation security is understood as no longer an amenity but a social necessity (Rahaman, 2005). In this situation more consciousness has been growing among the citizens and this is also focusing us to rethink about all our security arrangements both public and private. The public security agencies like Police, RAB, BGB, Ansar and other intelligence forces are the part of public security working for the general public benefit. Presently the manpower of police is not enough against the gradual demand of security in the country. According to Police Head Quarters the total manpower of police is now 1, 52,000 up and the ratio of public and police is 1200: 1 in Bangladesh. So it is not possible for the police alone to provide full pledged security to lives and materials of the people. Such situation between the citizen and the law enforcing agencies has widely expanded the market of private security to this country.

Private security services came into being in our country around 1987-88. Over the years there have been widespread developments of private security agencies. Between 1987 and 2014 the numbers of private security companies have increases of 1323.33%. According to Bangladesh Professional Security Service Provider Association (BPSSPA), presently more than 400 private security companies are engaged in security business in Bangladesh. The number of private security personnel has now exceeded that of police officers (Daily Star report, 2008). In the year 1989 about 500 employees worked in a few private security companies. By now more than 4 lacs people (BPSSPA Source, 2012) are working in these agencies throughout the country. Private security agencies provides a wide spectrum of security services to commercial, Industrial, and residential customers. The rapid growth of private security agencies in Bangladesh can be attributed to the increased security demands of the people especially the rich, increase in economic activities of people.

However, a serious question that has been already raised about the private security services is lack of standard and quality control (Raid, 2000). Many people strongly feel that if a sensitive and strictly regulated subject like security is arrogated to private sector it will obviously bring disastrous consequences (Huda, 2007). It is very vital for a security agency both public and private to gain public trust. But evidence suggests that private security guards have involved in different kinds of crime. As a result, they have lost public confidence. A security agency must be operated by persons who have adequate knowledge and skill about security related matters. Due to lack of concrete guidelines many unskilled and untrained person have started this business with a desire of higher profit and this mentality ultimately deteriorates the quality of a security company.

Though significant growth has been occurred but there is no scientific study on private security. One of the prime responsibilities of the government to maintain law and order situation of the country but due to shortage of manpower and fund of public law enforcement agencies, private security companies can take a role in law and order maintenance. In this situation, serious thoughts and actions demand for widening the existing private sector involvement in security service. From this point of view, private security sector has become an important area of research.

Primarily this study will serve the important purpose of understanding the private security issue within the appropriate theoretical framework. In addition to that this study tries to describe the nature and extent of services offered by these agencies. It is also important to know what contributions the private security agencies are making for the greater interest of society and what roles are being played by these agencies particularly in preventing crime. After that the main intent of this study is to examine the problems and prospects of private security agencies in Bangladesh.

Understanding Private Security

In general private security is understood as services that are provided by private security agencies in exchange of service charge. In another words private security means- any service provided by a company on commercial basis pertaining to security personnel, property and any valuables belonging to a person or a group of persons or any organization be those local or foreign should come under the preview of 'Private Security Service'. Private security service is also viewed as an industry made up of individuals and business providing a service to clients or employees, which consists of the protection and safe guarding of property and person (Gumedze, 2007). Many consider private security as supplemental to public security. Its focus is in specialized areas such as proprietary (in- house) security; guard and patrol services; alarm services; private investigations; armored car services; manufacturers of security equipments; locksmiths; security consultants and engineers; and a miscellaneous category that includes guard dogs, drug testing, forensic analysis and honesty testing (Raid 2000). However, private security includes three broad categories: the provision of guards, equipment, and investigation or consulting services (Joh, 2004)

Historical Background

The concept of private security is nothing new. In ancient Roman city a group of army named 'vigil' used to work as night guards. The use of private security was expanded in Roman times, where wealthy landowners hired off-duty soldiers to protect their property from criminals (Talukder,2005).In ancient Egypt, Ramses hired foreign soldiers for use as his personal bodyguards, creating an early precedent for the use of private security in order to protect public officials(Alfredo,2007). The modern origins of private security can be traced after the fall of the Roman Empire where the landowning nobles became the primary provider of security. This came in the form of feudalism where lords granted land usage rights to vassals in exchange for military aid and counsel in times of danger.

In Britain, private security agencies emerged as part of commercial policing. In 16th and 17th century the process of appointing salary based informer and thief –taker started in London for controlling crime. Especially this kind of effort was taken when London government failed to control his unregulated areas (South.1984).

Private security firms were found in America in mid 19th century in the face of deteriorating law and order situation (Johnston, 1999;).In 1844, the first public police force was organized in America. In the earlier stage the police force was not so skilled

and politically trustworthy. At the same time, there were lot of complains of corruption against the police department. By 1892, about 20 private security companies are formed in New York and 15 in Chicago City. Presently more than 10,000 private security agencies are operating security business in America (Carson, 2009). Private security companies are engaged in fund transferring work in Spain since 1974(Gomez-Baeza, 1986). Feeling necessity of security of Olympic game security industries was started functioning in Japan in 1962. However the dramatic growth of security companies started in Japan during 1989 to1993 and the number of security guards stands at 232617 to 321721(Miyazawa 1991). In Australia, private security personnel do in fact outnumber the republic police. In 1990, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in its 1987-88 Service Industries Survey reported that, there were 1,087 security enterprises nationally, employing over 235,000 personnel(Wilson and Stunning 1992). In Singapore as a protector or guardian the private security firms protect company property, assets, reputation and employees (Nalla and Lim 2002). Private security began to take on its modern scope, being used to deter crime and disturbances at everything from sports stadiums to shopping malls by the middle of the 20th century. Today, many military bases are now protected by private security, and private security is once again taking on mercenary like roles in the wars of Iraq and Afghanistan (*Carson 2009*).

Private security services in Bangladesh:

Private security agency came in to being in Bangladesh around mid eighties. It is known that in 1987 a retired major of Bangladesh Army formed private security firm named 'Rora Guards' after seeing the advertisement of American embassy, Dhaka . In the same year in May a retired Colonel. formed another private security company named 'Atandra-O-Nishchit' Services Ltd. This company started functioning as Enterprise Company and started supplying security stuff to Toyo Engineering Corporation since 1988 to safeguard the materials of CUFL. In Bangladesh, Securex Pvt. Limited laid the foundation of 1st generated private security business. In the year 1988, a retired group captain of Bangladesh Air Force started the company commercially (Sayed, 2006). At present about 4 lacs security guards are working in more than 400 security companies in Bangladesh (BPSSPA, 2012) Source). Retired Army, BDR, Police and member of Ansar Battalion comprises most of the guards and the rest have come from low educated unemployed youths. Other studies reveal that in our country a major boost to the growth of private security has been the development of office plazas, shopping malls, entertainment and sports complexes that blur the distinction between public and private space (Huda, 2007; Akhter.2008; Khan, 2008).

Theoretical Framework

The Expansion of private security business in the security arena is one of the consequences of neo-liberal policies. Neo-liberalism is a hegemonic ideology which has spreading impacts on political economic practices that is based on bourgeois class dominance. The main economic target of neo-liberalism has been creating new areas for

capital accumulation for profit maximization and it includes privatization of public services such as education, health, transportation and security. Private security is related with the dominance of neo-liberal ideas where its services are considered as commodity with a view to expand the capital accumulation process. In that respect, on the one hand there is a “Marketization of Security” in which security is acquired as commodity; on the other hand there is “Securitization of Capital” in which local and global accumulation is expansively protected in the name of security (Neocleous, 2008:148).

Borrowing the idea, present study tries to understand the private security issue from a *critical political economy perspective* supported by some *Neo-Marxist approaches*. However, the following *Neo-Marxist* approaches can evaluate the emergence of private security companies (PSCs) worldwide and especially in our country:

Security as commodification

The neo-liberal changes have resulted in consideration of private security firms as market actors who offer a service, a commodity that can be bought and sold in the free market (Abrahamsen and Williams, 2007:6). Hence, security has now reflected a technique that requires specialization and a form of expert knowledge that exercised by private providers. As a result of these hiring private security has become pervasive for individuals, offices and business organizations.

Private security in the service of capital accumulation

One of the major roles of private security operators is capital accumulation at both local and international level. Hence, PSCs provide security for capitalist class as opposed to the working class. Accordingly, not everything and everyone are provided security by PSCs and who is protected by PSCs has been bourgeois population and its private property. In that case PSCs offer variety of security solutions to individual security threats of capitalist class for the protection of capitalist order. For example PSCs have role in impeding intrusion on private property, surveillance of merchandise, money, bonds, stocks, notes, valuable documents or papers (Born, Caparini and Cole, 2007: 3). Therefore, the role of PSCs indicates securitization of capital.

Private security and the role of the state

In recent time there is a limit to marketization of security in capitalist society with a view that security

field cannot be totally privatized since under the appearance of “neutrality”, coercive apparatus of the state is needed for the protection and reproduction of public order of capitalism and state’s interests. Moreover, by examining the relationship between PSCs and the state in different developed and developing countries, it is found that the state role in the security field is not abolished vis-à-vis PSCs.

It appears that in Bangladesh most of the business organizations hire security to maximize their profit from their business. At the same time, most of the security companies tend to get more business by selling their security products both manual (e.g.

guarding service, gunman service, vip protection etc) and electrical (e.g. cctv camera, metal detectors, archway, bomb detectors, alarm machine etc). In capitalist economy security services is also viewed as commodity and anybody can hire security by expanding money.

Methodology

Multiple methods were used to collect data for this study. A mail survey was conducted on the selected private security agencies throughout the country to collect the primary data. In addition to that in-person interviews of chief executives, operation managers and security officers and in depth interviews with the hiring agencies (private security user), key-informants interviews and content analysis were conducted. According to BPSSPA directory, there were more than 400 security companies. Of them 100 private security agencies were purposely selected. Questionnaires were sent to the selected security agencies. To increase the response rate follow-up letters were sent as well as telephonic contacts were also made. Seventy-two questionnaires were sent back, that's response rate is 72.

A total of 100 security guards were purposely selected from Dhaka City area for in-person interview. The main reason of conducting in-person interview was to assess the private security agencies. Using stratified sampling method 30 executives, 10 operation managers and 10 security officers were selected from Dhaka city for semi-structured interview to identify the problems of Private security agencies. On the other hand, 10 persons were purposely selected (which include 03 executives of banks, 03 showroom managers and 04 apartment house owners) for in-depth interview as private security users. In addition to that 04 Key-informants were interviewed to ascertain their views on private security services. Data were processed and analyzed by descriptive statistics such as percentage, mean and standard deviation.

Study Findings

Size and Structure of Private Security Agencies of Bangladesh

Data reveals that there are wide variations with respect to size, manpower and functions among the security agencies in Bangladesh. Table -1 shows top ten security agency that's have branch offices in more than 40 districts and manpower ranges from 1300 to 9000 up.

Table-1: Top Ten Security Agency in Bangladesh (N=72)

Sl. No	Name of the security Agency/Company	Year of Starting Operation	Services spread in district (s)	Manpower
1.	Group 4 Securities Pvt. Ltd. (Multinational)	1998	64	9335
2.	Elite Force Security Pvt. Ltd.	1999	61	8000
3.	Integrated Security Service Ltd(ISSL)	1995	60	6000
4.	Sentry	1993	60	6000
5.	Securex Pvt. Ltd.	1988	40	4000

Sl. No	Name of the security Agency/Company	Year of Starting Operation	Services spread in district (s)	Manpower
6.	Defender	1996	55	3500
7.	Safe Hand	1999	64	2600
8.	Aegis	1991	40	1800
9.	Atandra-O-Nishchit	1987	40	1400
10.	Ornate	1998	40	1300

Table-2: Category of Security agencies on the basis of Manpower (N= 72)

Category of Security agencies (according to manpower)	Manpower starts from	Number of Company(s)	Calculated Mean
Large	4000 - 10000	05	6500
Medium	1000 - 3500	19	1723.68
Small	0050 - 0600	48	300
Total		72	

(Standard deviation, $\sigma=1768.65$)

The Private Security Agencies in Bangladesh also vary greatly in terms of manpower. Table-2 illustrates that out of 72 private security company 48 belong to the 'Small' category (manpower ranges from 50 to 600 and calculated mean 300), 19 belong to the 'Medium' category (manpower consist of 1000 to 3500, calculated mean 1723.68), and only 05 security agencies belong to the 'Large' category (manpower ranges from 4000 to 10000 and the calculated average manpower of this category is 6500). It reveals that the vast majority of security agencies of our country are small in terms of manpower.

Services Offered by the Private Security Agencies of Bangladesh

Private security agencies in Bangladesh provide various types of services. Table-3 shows that of the sampled agencies all of them (100%) provide guarding services, 06(8.33%) agencies offer cash in transit service, 11(15.28%) private security agencies offer electronic equipment based security services, 09(12.5%) agencies provide consultancy services, 17(23.61%) security agencies provide investigation services, 12(16.67%) security agencies provide event management services, 16(22.22%) private security agencies have their own gunman, 67(93.05%) security agencies provide fire protection services and only one private security agency provides dog squad service to their valued clients. It also appears that in Bangladesh along side the men a small number of female guards found in the shopping malls, beauty parlors, cinema halls, private universities and garments factories of Dhaka City. The important role of female guards is to search women body, as the men are not allowed to perform this duty.

Table-3: Services Provided by the Private Security Companies: (N= 72)

Types of Service	Total	Percentage (%)
Guarding	72	100
Cash In Transit (CIT)	06	8.33
Security Related Consultancy Service	09	12.5
Installation and Maintain Electronic Security Devices	11	15.28
Security Investigation and Inquiry	17	23.61
Event Security Management Service	12	16.67
Gunman Service	16	22.22
Dog squad Service	01	1.39
Security Awareness Training	65	90.27
Fire-Fighting Training	67	93.05

Findings of in person interview of security guards

Respondents Characteristics (N=100)

Respondents were evenly distributed in terms of age, with 9% in the age group of below 18 years, 31% in the age group of 18 – 29 years, 49% in 30- 41 years being the highest and 11% over 42 years. Of the total respondents 89% were male and the remaining female. The majority of the respondents (47%) completed 6 to 8th grade. Respondents having education up to class 5 are 11%, respondents up to SSC and HSC level are 12% and 7% respectively and only 2% having their Bachelor degree. In terms of prior experience 12% of them came from military service, 18% from battalion Ansar and 59% who had no previous job experience. They came from very small business sectors as well as agricultural sectors and (2%) of sample had past job experience in police department.

Table-4: Duration of Training of the guards (N= 100)

Duration of Training (Days)	Number of Security Guard(Respondents)	Percentage (%)
01 – 14	64	64
15 – 21	22	22
22 – 28	11	11
28 above	03	03
Total	100	

Training is a very vital thing for the security profession. In general security agencies provide two types of training - (1) Refreshment training, (2) In-service training. Interview suggests that most of the security companies do not provide adequate training for their new recruits. Table-4 shows that the majority (64%) guards received training ranges from

01-14 days, 22% guards received training ranges from 15- 21 days, 11% guard's ranges from 22-28 days and only 03% guards received training of 28 days above. It is also found that small companies often arrange training for their new recruits in their own office premises or barracks or open field. Duration of this training is very short (e.g. 3- 4 days) similarly its quality also is not up to the mark.

Table-5: Pay structure of the Security Guards (N=100)

Amount Tk/-	Number of security guards	Percentage (%)
2000 - 2500	23	23+41= 64
2500 - 3000	41	
3000 - 3500	21	21
3500 - 4000	09	09
4000 - 4500	06	06
Total	100	100

As compared to neighboring countries guards of private security agencies are receiving very poor salary. Monthly salary of a guard is about 12 to 15 thousand in Bangladeshi currency in the neighboring countries. Table-5.4 shows that 64% (23%+41%) of the guards receive salary ranges from Tk/-2000 to 3000, 21% percent guards receive ranges from Tk/-3000 to 3500, 09% percent guards receive ranges from Tk/-3500 to 4000 and only 06% guards receive salary ranges from Tk/- 4000 to 4500. So it is appeared that most of the respondents receive salary ranges from Tk/=2000 to 3000 at times little more for a senior guard.

Table-6: Level of status of the Respondents: (N=100)

Level Of Status on the basis of guards own assessment	Number of Security Guards	Percentage %
Medium	17	17
Low	67	67
Very low	16	16
Total	100	

Interviews reveal that most of the respondents are in the same agreement that they are doing a low status job. Since the employees of private security companies have low education with very poor family background, so people generally hold poor perception of security guards (Sayed, 2007). For that reason many guards do not continue there jobs in the security company for long time. Table-6 shows that of the total respondents, 67% feel that they are enjoying lower social status and about one-sixth portion (16%) think that they are belonging to 'very low' category.

Table-7: Job Satisfaction of Security Guards: (N=100)

Level of satisfaction	Number of Security Guards	Percentage %
Satisfied	23	23
Not Satisfied	49	49
Highly Unsatisfied	21	21
Undecided	07	07
Total	N=100	100

Respondents differ greatly in terms of their job satisfaction. Table-7 shows that almost half (49%) of the respondents are not satisfied with their present job, about one-fourth (23%) respondents are satisfied with their jobs, 21% respondents told that they are highly unsatisfied and the rest 07% are undecided. Interviews suggest that the major reasons for their dissatisfaction are: poor salary, exploitation of the Security Company, low social status, bad treatment of the management etc.

Table-8: (A Multiple Response Table)

How to Improve the Quality of Services: (N=100)

Steps	Number of Security Guards	Percentage %
Which step(s) would you suggest to improve the quality of services-		
a. enforcement of private security service Act-		
b. better recruitment –	11	11
c. effective training -	29	29
d. better pay structure -	51	51
e. Provide firearms -	76	76
f. Provide good logistic back up for security staff- (Food, Shelter, Transportation, Dresses and Uniforms etc.) -	39	39
	42	42

While asked about how to improve the quality of services the majority of the respondents suggest that better pay structure and more training would be very useful in improving the services of the private security agencies. Table-8 also shows that of the respondents 57% for good logistic support, 39% for providing with fire arms, 29% suggest for better recruitment and only 11% of respondents suggest that the government should enforce the private security service Act immediately.

Table-9: Calculated earnings of Some Selected Security Agencies

Name of the Security agency	Name of the security user /client	Security agency receives from the client (TK)	Security agency pay to his security guard(TK)	Surplus money earned from per guard (Tk)
Group 4S	City Bank Ltd	5500	2700	2800
	Eastern Bank Ltd	5000	2700	2300
Elite Force	Dutch-Bangla Bank	4000	2700	1300
Safe hand	Jibon Bima Corporation	2750	2300	450
	IFIC Bank	3750	2400	1350
Securex	Dhaka Bank	4500	3000	1500
Ornate	Bangladesh Bank	3500	2500	1000
Sentry	Banglalink	8000	4000	4000
Orion	Warid Telecom	6000	3000	3000

Table-9 indicates the profit margins of those security agencies. For example G4S (A multinational security company) has 9335 security guards (As per G4S official Source). If only from guarding site G4S earns TK/=2800 from per guard then total monthly gross earnings of G4S will be $9335 \times 2800 = 26,138,000$ Tk/- (not deducting the company's cost and expense). It is learnt that security companies earns above 15% as net profit. According to this rate G4S monthly earns above Tk/-39, 00,000 net from guarding site. Similarly 'Sentry' (A Bangladeshi security company) has 6000 security guards (As per Sentry's official Source). A portion of Sentry's guards is deployed in the offices, showrooms and customer care centers of Banglalink Mobile Phone Company. As per contract Sentry receives Tk/- 8000 for per guard from Banglalink Company but Sentry offers Tk/-4000 for their security guards for 08 hours duty. It is learnt from the guards that the companies expend very little amount of money for their guards.

Private Security and Crime Prevention

As mentioned earlier, private security companies are engaged in maintaining neighborhood safety. Private security companies are providing security to many residential houses. In fact, the growth of private security companies is associated with a large-scale expansion of private housing businesses in Bangladesh. Therefore, the outer security of those residential places is maintained by the private security guards. As a result, many valuable materials and goods are being saved from unexpected incident like theft, burglary and robbery. Private security agencies are also playing a vital role in providing security to various commercial places. To ensure more business, commercial places must have to provide with security for their customer and obviously these security arrangements are assured by the private security companies. It is observed that private security guards are performing duties in various business offices, showrooms and

shopping malls for maintenance of law and order and to create a safe atmosphere for the public. Moreover, physical appearance of a uniformed security guard is also a threat to the miscreants who tend to commit crime in different commercial establishments. Private security guards are also performing duties in various financial institutions like government and private Banks, Insurance Companies, Money Exchange Centers etc. In ATM booths of private banks private security guards are doing duties to prevent robbery. Moreover guarding in the ATM booths security guards make it impossible for unauthorized persons to gain access to the electronic cash-drawing machine.

Perceptions of Security Users:

In this research, in depth interviews with the executives of hiring agencies were conducted to assess the perceptions of security users. Interviews suggest that respondents hold positive attitude towards private security guards. Generally banks, showroom manager of different national and multinational companies and apartment house owners prefer security guards who had previous job experience in defense service because they are naturally very smart, dutiful, disciplined and well trained. In addition to that branch/head Office generally are very responsive to our complaints. They also opined that except a few unfortunate events they efficiently perform duties.

Citing the reasons for not hiring Ansar respondents argued that the official process of hiring Ansar from Ansar H.Q. is a lengthy process. Also it is very difficult to gain quick response from Ansar H.Q. when there is a complaint against their member. Guards are cheaper and easily available. They also added that we generally receive very quick service from private security operators as well as receive very prompt response when any incident is occurred. In this regard, an official of Ansar Head Quarters was interviewed. Findings suggest that a written contract is enough for hiring private security but some official procedure must be maintained for hiring Ansars as they are provided with firearms.

Police Officer's Perceptions

Senior police executives argued that given the shortage of manpower of police, private security agencies are playing an important role in providing guarding services to numerous private housing apartments and business establishments. The officer in charge of a Thana (Police station) however pointed out that they (Private security agencies) are required to submit their deployment chart to the local police station but in practice they do not send it regularly. Senior officers also emphasized the need for more training to improve the quality of services.

Problem Areas of Private Security Services

In order to identify the major problems of the private security agency's semi-structured interviews with the senior executives were conducted. Findings of interviews are as follows:

Negative Attitudes towards Private Security

Interviews with the executives of private security agencies reveal that in many cases the security providers do not get necessary support from the concerned government authority

(e.g. Ministry of Home Affairs, Police department etc.) due to negative views and misconceptions on private security. Some official's of government authorities do not have clear knowledge regarding private security. According to one respondent, "In case of a robbery at a shopping mall, the first and only task of police authority is to arrest the private security guards on duty." This creates mutual distrust between the client and the company. It also affects the overall image of the security agencies.

Problems at the Policy Level

There were no guidelines for the private security company before 2006. In the year 2006, the government first time formulated 'Private Security Services Act'. In the said act provision of license, license & renewal fee, penalty, no firearms and ammunition license for private security agencies were kept. There after in May 2007 the 'private security service regulation 2007' have been compiled by the government. Under this regulation minimum salary of a private security guard was fixed at Tk/- 2700, Provision of 28 days long foundation training for newly recruited guards at Ansar and VDP Department Training Academy. Besides these, in question of engaging gunman, provisions of appointing armed Ansar is also kept in case of carrying of cash money (Bangladesh Gazette, May03, 2007). But the senior executives of the leading security agencies argued that some provisions of the Act would hinder the growth and expansion of the private security agencies in Bangladesh. The provisions are as follows:

- i) Fixation of license fee, license renewal fee and security money are very high. They argued that as we pay 4.5% government Vat, 37.5% Corporate Tax and 1.225% Advanced Income Tax so the government should not impose such a big amount on us. Though the big security agencies will be able to pay this amount but for the small private security agencies it will be difficult to pay.
- ii) Provision of hiring Ansar will be problematic because they (Ansars) will not be so loyal to the security companies like private security guards.
- iii) They also argued that provision of 4 weeks training at the Ansar Academy will create problems. As per the Act and Regulation security companies are required to bear the cost of training. But there is no protective clause in the ordinance that after completing the training the recruits will join their previous security companies again.

Problems at Work Places

Interviews also reveal that in many cases security users or hiring authorities also create some problems. These problems are mostly related to bill payment and improper use of private security guards. According to the respondents, many of their clients tend to make delay in making payments that causes financial pressure to the security agencies. It is also observed that sometime clients tend to engage guards in other services such as shopping, washing cars, cleaning areas etc. These tendencies of security users seriously hamper the dignity of security guards. It creates inconvenience for the security guards to show better performance. Besides these, clients tend to absorb guards with respective security agencies as their regular employee causes missing of guards.

Operational Problems:

Interviews with chief executives suggest that private security agencies also suffer from various problems in conducting their business. Interviews revealed that shortage of trained manpower is the main problem of almost all security agencies in Bangladesh. The security agencies often do not have sufficient trained manpower. For that reason they can not provide trained guards as per the requirements of their clients. The cited reason for not getting trained manpower includes low salary, monotonous work and low social status of the guards. Interviews suggest that due to huge shortage of manpower guards are overworked. Most of the guards have to perform duties on an average of 16 hours. Interviews also suggest that low pay structure is another problem of the security agencies of Bangladesh. Still many security agencies are not in position to pay minimum wages (Tk/ - 2700) to their security guards. So security guards have to lead very miserable life. Interviews suggest that high turn out rate is a big problem for the security agencies. Guards are frequently leaving their job without permission. According to the respondents the causes of high turn over rate are low salary, desire for better job, unwilling to perform static duty and over work.

Interviews also suggest that low morale of guards is another problem for the private security agencies. In many instances the security guard themselves are involved in criminal activities. For example, theft in jewelries shops, robbery at banks, killing of persons and so on where security guards were accused. Admitting the fact one of leaders of the executives said that appointment of qualified guards through proper verification could reduce the number of such incidents.

Prospects of Further Growth

As a business, private security service is still emerging. The prospect of this emerging sector can be understood in the context of increasing demand of security in this country. As noted earlier the government law enforcing agencies can not provide security everywhere when needed. Under these circumstances, private security agencies can play an important role especially in protecting private properties. Though private security agencies came into being around 1987-88, still this business remains unregulated and their accountability is questionable as well. Therefore, prospect of this sector largely depends on their performances. This reason suggests that for further growth of this industry, private security agencies must meet the following requirements:

1. Gain respect and confidence:

Earlier findings suggest that most of the security company hire guards at the cheapest rate so they often compromise with the standard in respect of education, family background, character etc. It is also seen that some security agency recruit guards without proper verification. Such situation not only creates disrespect and low confidence among the clients but also general public, the government and the regulatory agencies hold a negative perception on private security services mainly due to poor recruitment policy. So private security agencies have upgrade the standard of work and also have to gain respects and confidence of all by selecting qualified personnel.

2. Improving Professionalism:

Security agencies must earn professionalism in discharging their duties. Lack of professionalism is one of the major problems for the security agencies in Bangladesh. In conducting their business security agencies must maintain their professional ethics. It is observed that pay structure of entry-level guards is still very poor. So it is very difficult for the guards to survive with this poor salary and allowances. As a result sense of deprivation exists among the guards and ultimately leaves the job. If the security agencies do not offer better pay then they would not be able to attract qualified persons in this sector. It is learnt that there is no promotion system for the private security guards at the job. A security guard will not be promoted after continuing his job for a certain period of time. Therefore, no upward mobility is seen in life of a security guard. As a result guards are gradually losing their interest in pursuing job in the security agency. So the security agencies must initiate promotion or up gradation system for their guards.

3. Training:

As mentioned earlier, most of the private security agencies do not provide adequate training to their new recruit guards. It is also observed that in the face of heavy demands of guards the operators send the guard for duty without training. The performance of a security personnel largely depend on training that he receives from the company. So the security agencies must provide proper training to their guards.

4. Positive Image:

Private security agencies in Bangladesh suffer from negative images. In some cases, the private security guards are also involved in crimes. General public know little about the activities of private security agency and they in general observed that security agencies are mainly providing guarding services to various establishments. Hence the security agencies have to do more to create a positive image in the society.

Discussion

The expansion of business sectors especially the private industries, increased security demands, use of modern technology and profitability issue are the main contributing factors for the rapid expansion of private security agencies in Bangladesh. In recent time general human insecurity is gradually increased in our country. As a means to reduce the feeling of insecurity upper class people started to rely on private security. Increased use of technology in various organizations and offices and adopting modern systems is another major cause of rapid expansion of private security agencies. In recent years various costly equipments and fittings have been installed in various establishments to upgrade human lives. For example, private banks introduced ATM services for their clients where expansive electronic cash drawing machine is used. To ensure security of cash drawing machines and to protect illegal accesses, private banks employ private security guards in their establishments.

In recent years increased growth of trade and commerce has been observed in our country which requires huge capital mobilization. In this situation in the face of growing

economic activities business centers must need security to make secure their capitals and goods. So it is clear that private security service has been introduced mainly for economic reason. Worldwide it is seen that one of the major goals of hiring private security is for capital accumulation. This is also true for our country where private security service is being hired for earning profit. For example, in shopping malls, children parks, cinema halls etc. private security is being engaged to maintain a safe atmosphere so that people could spend more time and money there. That is, the more security they can assure the more business they get. By employing private security, these business organizations are making more profit.

In addressing security threat private security agencies offer proactive services to its clients by selling their security products (e.g. guarding service, cash carrying, Installation and maintain electronic security devices etc) in the market. Therefore, security is viewed as a commodity with a thinking that this service can be purchased and those who can afford are hiring private security for their own safety. It is seen that the services of these agencies are not for all classes of people. Only the rich people can afford their services by expending money while the poor people are not the beneficiary of the services of private security company. So it appears that private security service mainly serves the purposes of rich people especially the bourgeois class.

As said idea of neo-liberalism encourages private entrepreneurship in the security arena therefore, many people engaged themselves in security business in our country. Unfortunately, due to absence of government monitoring and lack of professionalism among the members of the security companies, most of the agencies are not in a position to deliver quality services to their clients. Most importantly, only one third of the total agencies are conducting their business with government license. It is clear that the vast majority of the agencies did not obtain the license till today. The private security sector is also facing some problems. Findings suggest that inadequate training, very low salary of security guards and lack of professionalism are very common characteristics of most of the security agencies of this country. In addition to that, the security operators (The Managements) very often show their disinterest in providing adequate training and handsome salary to their guards though they are financially sound. In many cases it is learnt that guards are deployed from the very next day of their joining. Findings also show that many security companies recruits their guard without proper verification. According to the Private Security Act they are required to provide adequate training to their new recruits.

Private security agencies have been providing services along with the government law-enforcing agency. Therefore, there services by no way a substitute of law enforcing agencies and a co-sharer of government responsibility. In our country most of the security agencies are mainly providing surveillance work by deploying their guards in various establishments. Therefore, security agencies are yet to put any significant role in preventing crime in our society. Under this circumstance, private security service is not fully accountable to the society or to the government. Though it is the state responsibility to provide full pledged security to her citizen, but in question of coercion and legitimate

use of force, security field cannot be totally privatized. Here the private security incorporating sponsorship in appropriate sectors could be a partial answer to a cost – effective security solution as their services are sold in the market. This transforms the relationship of individuals to authority, for the citizen's relationship to the state is replaced by the consumer's contract with the supplier.

Conclusion

Despite of various challenges, private security sector has gained remarkable expansion in Bangladesh during the decades. Though it is not fully possible for the PSCs to prevent major crimes but guarding in houses and other places (for example- showrooms, banks, ATM booths, shopping malls etc) by the private security guards definitely prevented some property crimes. In addition to that, huge amount of cash and valuables are safely carried and transferred by the private security agency where incident of mishap is still not reported. Private security agencies also provided huge job to the unemployed youth. So it can be argued that private security sector will attract more people.

Present study indicates that security agencies have to overcome some challenges and to do more for its sound expansion. Especially, they (security agencies) have to provide adequate training, handsome pay structure for their guards. They also have to ensure quality recruitment and to create positive images. If the above mentioned things are properly addressed by the private security agencies then the security industry will be expanded in the coming days. However, the success of this industry would depend on how their services will be utilized by the government law enforcing agencies, what level of professional ethics they (security operators) will maintain , how efficiently they can grab the market and what levels of state patronization they will get. Thus, considering the activities of PSCs, it is hoped that security industry will be expanded within the current capitalist development of Bangladesh.

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