



Bangladesh: Politics, Economy and Civil Society

By Professor David Lewis

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Relatively little is known or understood about Bangladesh by outsiders. Since its hard-won independence from Pakistan in 1971, it has been ravaged by economic and environmental disasters. Only recently has the country begun to emerge as a fragile, but functioning, parliamentary democracy, relatively self-sufficient in food production and with an economy that has been consistently achieving growth. The story of Bangladesh, told through the pages of this concise and readable book, is a truly remarkable one. By delving into its past, and through an analysis of the economic, political and social changes that have taken place over the last twenty years, the book explains how Bangladesh is becoming of increasing interest to the international community as a portal into some of the key issues of our age: the way globalization affects the world's poorer countries, the long-term effects of the international development industry, the potential risks to people and environment from climate change and the political challenges facing modern Muslim-majority nations. In this way the book offers an important corrective to the view of Bangladesh as a failed state and also sheds light on the lives of a new generation of its citizens.

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Review

"This book analyzing the social, political and economic changes in Bangladesh presents the complex story of the evolution of a new state in a globalized world. It highlights the challenges, achievements and dilemmas of Bangladesh and provides a new perspective to the country. The study will be an excellent resource for academics, policy makers as well as practitioners interested in understanding the interlocking processes of global and local development." - Rounaq Jahan, Distinguished Fellow, Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), Bangladesh

"The book is a thorough yet concise account of this vastly understudied and under-reported country of 150 million people. It would be an ideal text for a university course on South Asian politics or anyone wishing to get a well-written and comprehensive background on contemporary Bangladesh. Diplomats, journalists, donor officials, and business representatives will find it an excellent introduction to this country." - Harry Blair, Yale University

"Bangladesh: Politics, Economy and Civil Society offers important new insights into the changing role and growing importance of Bangladesh within the global political-economic order. But it should also be a key text for anyone who wants to get to know Bangladesh - a lively introduction to a country that few outsiders ever get to know as well as Professor Lewis." - Naomi Hossain, Institute of Development Studies (IDS)

About the Author

David Lewis is an anthropologist by training and has written and researched extensively on development issues, particularly with reference to South Asia. His primary geographical focus is Bangladesh, but he has also worked in Nepal, India and the Philippines. Books include *Anthropology, Development and the Postmodern Challenge* (with K. Gardner, 1996) and *The Management of Non-Governmental Development Organizations* (2001). He recently completed a life work history research project funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) on the experiences and policy implications of activists and professionals who cross between the public sector and the non-governmental sectors. He is currently Professor of Social Policy and Development at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

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