



American Institute of Bangladesh Studies

**A SYMPOSIUM ON:
BANGLADESH'S RECENT PAST AND IMMINENT FUTURE: COMMEMORATING 30
YEARS OF AIBS**

Hosted by the American Institute of Bangladesh Studies (AIBS)

Madison, Wisconsin, USA

Thursday, October 17, 2019 (1:45p.m.-5:30p.m.)

The last 30 years have brought tremendous change in Bangladesh. The country has witnessed the return to democracy after over a decade of military rule; the rise of homegrown development models such as microfinance; the emergence of a new militancy within the state; the rise of climate change as an existential threat; one of the worst refugee crises; and more.

We chose this 30-year timeframe because it has been a period of tumultuous change, as well when the American Institute of Bangladesh Studies has been involved in collaborative, scholarly investigations of Bangladeshi culture, politics, economy, and society. We see this 30 year anniversary as an opportunity to reflect, not only on what AIBS' accomplishments have and what has happened in Bangladesh's recent past, but also as an opportunity to think through and chart a future of scholarly engagement with this rapidly changing country. As such, this symposium will showcase cutting edge work on Bangladesh's history, culture, society, economy, and environment, exploring and contextualizing both where the country has been and where it is going.

This symposium will include presentations followed by a concluding roundtable with former grantees of AIBS. We hope this program will set a new agenda for scholarship on Bangladesh in the coming years, commemorate AIBS' past achievements, and focus on future planning and programming.

This symposium invites scholars to reflect on the above transformations in the social, cultural, political, environmental, and economic landscapes of the country. Our theme and interest here is tracing and historicizing contemporary Bangladesh by interrogating the ways that challenges around democracy, development, and refugees have been shaped by the country's recent and more distant pasts.

SYMPOSIUM PROGRAM SCHEDULE

1:45p.m: Opening Remarks by Golam M. Mathbor, AIBS President

2:00p.m: Bangladesh's Recent Past

Chair: Sufia Uddin

Paper 1: *Three Decades of Bangladesh Politics: The Emergence and Collapse of the Political Settlement*
Ali Riaz, Professor, Department of Politics and Government, Illinois State University, Illinois, USA

Paper 2: *Bangladesh and its Internationalism: From Democracy to its Foreign Policy*
Jessica Tartila Suma & Obydullah Al Marjuk, Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB), Dhaka, Bangladesh

Paper 3: *Democracy in Bangladesh as Aspiration or Chimera*
Harry Blair, South Asia Studies Center, Yale University, Connecticut, USA

Paper 4: *Investigating Visual Political Allegory in Current Art and Activists Movements in Bangladesh*
Amena K. Sharmin, Department of Art and Visual Studies, University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

3:30-3:45p.m: Afternoon Tea Break

3:45p.m: Bangladesh's Imminent Future

Chair: Sanchita Saxena

Paper 1: *Rohingya Refugees in the Borderland: Rethinking State Sovereignty of Bangladesh*
Sharif Wahab, Department of Geography, Indiana University Bloomington, Indiana, USA

Paper 2: *Thirst for Energy: Where does Bangladesh Go?*
Azmal Hossain, Sociology, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado, USA

Paper-3: *The Razor's Edge: Gender Politics and Structural Violence in the Work of Bangladesh Artist Tayeba Begum Lipi*
Melia B. Bose, University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

4:30p.m: Round Table with AIBS Grantees

Moderator: Frank Korom

Speakers: Rebecca Manring, Indiana University; Michael Bowler, Winona State University; Calynn Dowler, Boston University

5:15p.m: Closing Remarks

5:30-6:30p.m: AIBS Reception

Symposium Chair:

Dr. Golam M. Mathbor, Monmouth University

Members:

Dr. Frank Korom, Boston University

Dr. Sanchita Saxena, University of California-Berkeley

Dr. Sufia Uddin, Connecticut College

Dr. Jason Cons, University of Texas at Austin