

# **CALL FOR PAPERS**

**International Conference on Social Sciences and Humanities**

Conference Theme

**Bangladesh in 2041: Notions and Narratives of Diversification and Transformation**

Conference Date

Thursday, October 28, 2021  
9.30 a.m. - 5.30 p.m.

Abstract Submission Deadline

September 05, 2021

Venue

**Independent University (IUB) Campus, Bashundhara, Dhaka, Bangladesh**

***Organized by***

**Department of Social Sciences and Humanities, Independent University,  
Bangladesh (IUB)**

***In Collaboration with***

All Other Departments under the School of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences (SLASS),  
IUB

**International Conference on**  
**Bangladesh in 2041: Notions and Narratives of Diversification and**  
**Transformation**

**Concept Note**

Since gaining independence in 1971, Bangladesh has unequivocally experienced palpable economic, political, social, and even cultural changes. The term “changes” seems particularly appropriate for a constructive discourse on the 50-year long journey made by Bangladesh, rather than ‘advancement’ or ‘development’ or ‘deterioration’, for the nation has had a fair share of sobriquets (an RMG heavyweight, a value chain climber, newly established automobile assembly plant and whatnot), each connoting a different representation of the 163 million Bengali people, but none fit for uniform, homogeneous use. Yes, from a nation deemed to be a “basket case”, as infamously ridiculed by Henry Kissinger, during the Liberation War, to becoming one of the fastest-growing economies in the world, Bangladesh has come a long way, currently outperforming her neighbours; in terms of GDP per capita, even India is lagging behind Bangladesh. In 2015, the country graduated from a Low Income Country to a Low Middle Income Country after meeting the threshold of the World Bank and is at present on the way to officially becoming a ‘developing’ country by 2026, as recommended by the UN committee. While quantifiable macro indicators such as GDPs, depict a rather one-sided positive portrayal of the country, one must not dismiss the idea that ‘development’ could be a double-edged sword and trade-offs are an integral part of economic interests. Moreover, a thorough discourse on the ideas of development must be set in motion as soon as possible because of the recent announcement made by the government, with regard to its long-term development plan, titled ‘Vision 2041’, according to which by the year 2041, Bangladesh will become a developed country with over \$12,500 per capita income, and poverty will be completely eradicated. Whether the plan sounds ambitious or not, realizable or not, are questions that can only be answered by identifying the weaknesses and strengths of Bangladesh’s economic, political, and social paradigm.

In 1998, the Nobel Prize winner economist, Amartya Sen published a book titled *Development as Freedom* where he stated: “Development can be seen... as a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy. Focusing on human freedoms contrasts with narrower views of development, such as identifying development with the growth of the gross national product, or with the rise in personal incomes, or with industrialisation, or with technological advance, or with social modernisation.” Taking a leaf out of Sen’s book, it can be concluded that development cannot be measured alone with an economic yardstick and in order to interpret the scope of “real freedoms that people enjoy”, social, cultural, and to be precise, qualitative aspects of life need to be considered.

For instance, the RMG sector of Bangladesh has attained remarkable global success and contributes the largest in terms of export earnings of the country, but at the same time, the workers who roughly make around 96 dollars a month, need 3.5 times that amount, to live a “decent life with basic facilities”, according to the country’s government wage board. On one hand, the dream of a ‘Digital Bangladesh’ has been thoroughly romanticized, with every budget allocation emphasizing on IT sector since then and talks of setting up ICT parks being rampant, and on the other hand, according to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics in 2019, 62% of households did not have any internet access. Even if accessibility is granted, questions loom regarding the excessive effects of online usage, especially social media usage, which comprises 45 million users at present. GDP might be ensuring the construction of metro rails, but the risks of sexual harassment faced by women every day in public transport are widely prevalent. With

development emerged a series of westernisation, and arguably secularism, which is evident among consumer purchases, and consumption of Netflix perhaps; but the numbers of women wearing hijab are more visible now compared to 50 years and religious muezzins and/or imams are now resorting to YouTube for gaining millions of followers with their *waz-mehfils*, often coupled with menacing misinformation.

Bangladesh has made progress – there is absolutely no doubt about this statement. But there does not seem to be a definite answer to sustainable development as of yet, for most of the indicators of development, lauded so far, have been quantifiable, in economic terms; whereas a better understanding of the quality of life, the well-being of people is imperative for actual development. One certain way of achieving the latter is to source directly and involve social scientists in the process, for they can present a better picture of where the country is heading and whether it can absorb all the changes that a globally accepted developmental transition is bound to bring along. Or can we consider a new trail of 'development model' that Bangladesh is propositioning to the global community?

Questions such as these still loom large in the faces of people for a lack of constructive discourses which consider every minute detail of an economy, and they could only be answered through a rigorous examination conducted by the bodies of social science. Therefore, the Department of Social Sciences and Humanities, IUB in collaboration with the Department of English and Modern Languages, the Department of Global Studies & Governance, the Department of Law, and the Department of Media and Communication calls for papers from a particular discipline and/or from a multi-disciplinary angle addressing topics, including, but not limited to:

- Building Plan-B for future pandemic-like disruptions: recovery, coping mechanisms, resilience and role of the Communication for Development (C4D)
- Migrant workers and remittances: past, present, future
- Of divergence and diversity: Ethnicity, Religion, and Politics
- Replenishing Dhaka's underground water table & purifying 200+ rivers
- Appraising Bangladesh's SEZs/EPZs along with sustainable development criteria
- Low-wage work & the post-RMG era
- Rise of the informal economy: decent work and workplace safety implementation, employment of the subaltern, grass-root entrepreneurship
- Bangladesh as a humanitarian role model: Rohingya issues
- Bangladesh as a natural and man-made disaster management role model: from cyclone to flood
- 4th Industrial Revolution: Bangladesh's level of readiness, skill, and demand mismatch and doable agenda.
- Education in the new frontier: the new normal paradigms
- SDGs in Bangladesh: Bangladesh as a role model for localising SDGs and attaining goals.
- Climate change and environmental discourse: From the global negotiation on the mitigation and adaptation of the climate refugee
- Civil service for future
- Transformational e-governance: governance in digital age, e-service, service delivery model
- Micro-credit and agrarian society: How far have we achieved poverty alleviation?
- Politics, governance, and development in search of a democratic society
- Regional development and connectivity: from SAARC to the BBIN
- Role of community participation in development: community clinics, community-led problem solution (e.g., sanitation)
- Emerging legal issues for Bangladesh: competition law, dispute settlement and arbitration mechanisms

- Marriage and family in contemporary Bangladesh: where are we heading?
- Visual arts and culture for transforming Bangladesh: Meena, Sisimpur, etc.
- Gender rights and relations: equality, empowerment and emancipation
- Media and its ascendancy in constructing and representing realities

**This is only a suggested list of topics. Paper abstracts on any other relevant area are also welcome.**

### **Abstract Submission**

Please submit paper abstracts of 300 words along with a short biography of 100 words. Abstracts should be written in English or Bengali. The deadline for submission of abstracts is **September 05, 2021**. Email submissions to: [dssh@iub.edu.bd](mailto:dssh@iub.edu.bd). Abstracts should be written in Calibri, in MS Word doc/docx format. Font size would be 11.

Decisions on acceptance of presentations will be communicated to applicants no later than **September 15, 2021**. The deadline for submission of full papers is **October 18, 2021**. Accepted abstracts will be published in a conference proceeding. Selected papers will be published in a peer-reviewed journal or as an edited volume.

### **Important Dates**

- Abstract Submission Deadline: **September 05, 2021**
- Notification of Abstract Acceptance: **September 15, 2021**
- Submission of full paper Due: **October 18, 2021**
- Conference date: **October 28, 2021**

### **Conference Organisation Modalities:**

Due to the pandemic, the conference will be organised on dual platforms: online and offline-in-person presence at the conference venue: IUB campus. There will be professional support for the paper presenter and participants who wish to present their papers online. However, strict guidelines will be applied and proper hygiene will be maintained while conducting sessions/presentations/participation in the offline-campus.

### **Registration Procedure**

- All presenters have to register before the conference. The procedure is given below:
- Registration Deadline: **September 30, 2021**
- Due to the Pandemic, there will be **no registration fee, however, we strongly advise all participants and paper presenters to register within the due date for enjoying the full privilege of the conference.**
- **Registration link: [rebrand.ly/icssh](https://rebrand.ly/icssh)**
- For updates or any change please visit: [<http://sclass.iub.edu.bd/>]

### **Submission of Abstract:**

You can submit your abstract through this link: [rebrand.ly/icssh](https://rebrand.ly/icssh)

You can also submit your abstract through this email: [ssh@iub.edu.com](mailto:ssh@iub.edu.com)

General Contact and Query: +880 17 9282 5352, 01715212790