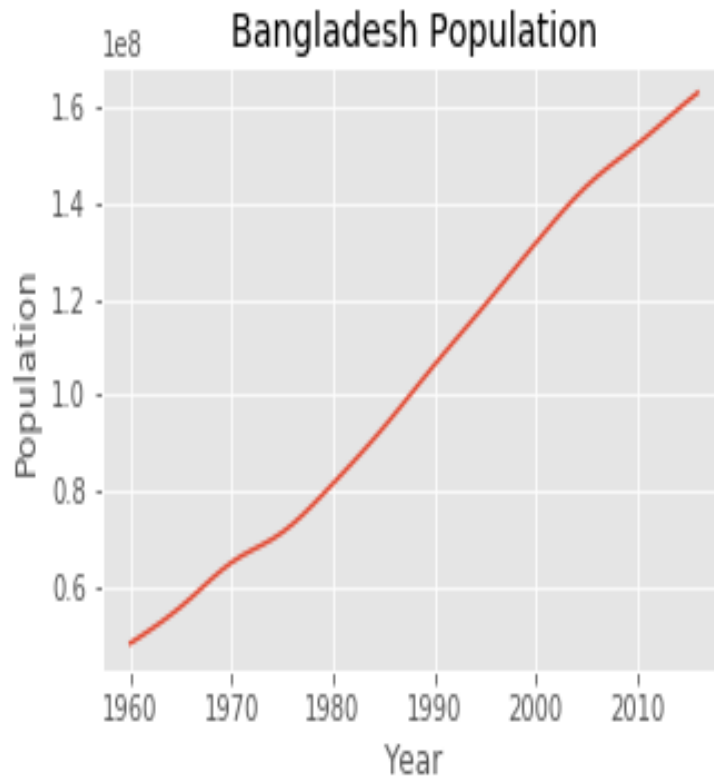


Bangladesh



Bangladesh ([listen](#)); Bengali: বাংলাদেশ [baŋlad̪eʃ] ([listen](#)), lit. "The country of Bengal"), officially the People's Republic of Bangladesh (গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ), is a country in South Asia. It shares land borders with India and Myanmar (Burma). Nepal, Bhutan and China are located near Bangladesh but do not share a border with it. The country's maritime territory in the Bay of Bengal is roughly equal to the size of its land area. Bangladesh is the world's eighth most populous country. Dhaka is its capital and largest city, followed by Chittagong, which has the country's largest port. Bangladesh forms the largest and easternmost part of the Bengal region. Bangladeshis include people from a range of ethnic groups and religions. Bengalis, who speak the official Bengali language, make up 98% of the population. The politically dominant Bengali Muslims make the nation the world's third largest Muslim-majority country. Islam is the official religion of Bangladesh. Most of Bangladesh is covered by the Bengal delta, the largest delta on Earth. The country has 700 rivers and 8,046 km (5,000 miles) of inland waterways. Highlands with evergreen forests are found in the northeastern and southeastern regions of the country. Bangladesh has many islands and a coral reef. The longest unbroken sea beach, Cox's Bazar Beach, is located here. It is home to the Sundarbans, the largest mangrove forest in the world. The country's biodiversity includes a vast array of plant and wildlife, including endangered Bengal tigers, the national animal. The Greeks and Romans identified the region as Gangaridai, a powerful kingdom of the historical Indian subcontinent, in the 3rd century BCE. Archaeological research has unearthed several ancient cities in Bangladesh, which enjoyed international trade links for millennia. The Bengal Sultanate and Mughal Bengal transformed the region into a cosmopolitan Islamic imperial power between the 14th and 18th centuries. The region was home to many principalities that made use of their inland naval prowess. It was also a notable center of the global muslin and silk trade. As part of British India, the region was influenced by the Bengali renaissance and played an important role in anti-colonial movements. The Partition of British India made East Bengal a part of the Dominion of Pakistan; and renamed it as East Pakistan. The region witnessed the Bengali Language Movement in 1952 and the Bangladesh

Liberation War in 1971. After independence was achieved, a parliamentary republic was established. A presidential government was in place between 1975 and 1990, followed by a return to parliamentary democracy. The country continues to face challenges in the areas of poverty, education, healthcare and corruption. Bangladesh is a middle power and a developing nation. Listed as one of the Next Eleven, its economy ranks 46th in terms of nominal gross domestic product (GDP) and 29th in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP). It is one of the largest textile exporters in the world. Its major trading partners are the European Union, the United States, China, India, Japan, Malaysia and Singapore. With its strategically vital location between Southern, Eastern and Southeast Asia, Bangladesh is an important promoter of regional connectivity and cooperation. It is a founding member of SAARC, BIMSTEC, the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Forum for Regional Cooperation and the Bangladesh Bhutan India Nepal Initiative. It is also a member of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, Commonwealth of Nations, the Developing 8 Countries, the OIC, the Indian-Ocean Rim Association, the Non Aligned Movement, the Group of 77 and the World Trade Organization. Bangladesh is one of the largest contributors to United Nations peacekeeping forces.

== Etymology == The etymology of Bangladesh (Country of Bengal) can be traced to the early 20th century, when Bengali patriotic songs, such as Namo Namo Namo Bangladesh Momo by Kazi Nazrul Islam and Aaji Bangladesher Hridoy by Rabindranath Tagore, used the term. The term Bangladesh was often written as two words, Bangla Desh, in the past. Starting in the 1950s, Bengali nationalists used the term in political rallies in East Pakistan. The term Bangla is a major name for both the Bengal region and the Bengali language. The earliest known usage of the term is the Nesari plate in 805 AD. The term Vangaladesa is found in 11th century South Indian records. The term gained official status during the Sultanate of Bengal in the 14th century. Shamsuddin Ilyas Shah proclaimed himself as the first "Shah of Bangala" in 1342. The word Bangla became the most common name for the region during the Islamic period. The Portuguese referred to the region as Bengala in the 16th century. The origins of the term Bangla are unclear, with theories pointing to a Bronze Age proto-Dravidian tribe, the Austric word "Bonga" (Sun god), and the Iron Age Vanga Kingdom. The Indo-Aryan suffix Desh is derived from the Sanskrit word देश, which means "land" or "country". Hence, the name Bangladesh means "Land of Bengal" or "Country of Bengal".

== History ==

=== Early and medieval periods ===

Stone Age tools found in Bangladesh indicate human habitation for over 20,000 years, and remnants of Copper Age settlements date back 4,000 years. Ancient Bengal was settled by Austroasiatics, Tibeto-Burmans, Dravidians and Indo-Aryans in consecutive waves of migration. Archaeological evidence confirms that by the second millennium BCE, rice-cultivating communities inhabited the region. By the 11th century people lived in systemically-aligned housing, buried their dead, and manufactured copper ornaments and black and red pottery. The Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna rivers were natural arteries for communication and transportation, and estuaries on the Bay of Bengal permitted maritime trade. The early Iron Age saw the development of metal weaponry, coinage, agriculture and irrigation. Major urban settlements formed during the late Iron Age, in the mid-first millennium BCE, when the Northern Black Polished Ware culture developed. In 1879, Alexander Cunningham identified Mahasthangarh as the capital of the Pundra Kingdom mentioned in the Rigveda. Greek and Roman records of the ancient Gangaridai Kingdom, which (according to legend) deterred the invasion of Alexander the Great, are linked to the fort city in Wari-Bateshwar. The site is also identified with the prosperous trading center of Souanagoura listed on Ptolemy's world map. Roman geographers noted a large seaport in southeastern Bengal, corresponding to the present-day Chittagong region. Ancient Buddhist and Hindu states which ruled Bangladesh included the Vanga, Samatata and Pundra kingdoms, the Maurya and Gupta Empires, the Varman dynasty, Shashanka's kingdom, the Khadga and Candradynasties, the Pala Empire, the Sena dynasty, the Harikela kingdom and the Deva dynasty. These states had well-developed currencies, banking, shipping, architecture and art, and the ancient universities of Bikrampur and Mainamati hosted scholars and students from other parts of Asia. Xuanzang of China was a noted scholar who resided at the Somapura Mahavihara (the largest monastery in ancient India), and Atisa traveled from Bengal to Tibet to preach Buddhism. The earliest form of the Bengali language began to emerge during the eighth century. Early Muslim explorers and missionaries arrived in Bengal late in the first millennium CE. The Islamic conquest of Bengal began with the 1204 invasion by Bakhtiar Khilji; after annexing Bengal to the Delhi Sultanate, Khilji waged a military campaign in Tibet. Bengal was ruled by the Delhi Sultanate for a century by governors from the Mamluk, Balban and Tughluq dynasties. During the 14th century, an independent Bengal Sultanate was established by rebel governors. The sultanate's ruling houses included the Ilyas Shahi, Jalaluddin Muhammad Shah, Hussain Shahi, Suri and Karrani dynasties, and the era saw the introduction of a distinct mosque

architecture and the tangka currency. The Arakan region was brought under Bengali hegemony. The Bengal Sultanate was visited by explorers Ibn Battuta, Admiral Zheng He and Niccolo De Conti. During the late 16th century, the Baro-Bhuyan (a confederation of Muslim and Hindu aristocrats) ruled eastern Bengal; its leader was the Mansad-e-Ala, a title held by Isa Khan and his son Musa Khan. The Khan dynasty are considered local heroes for resisting North Indian invasions with their river navies. The Mughal Empire controlled Bengal by the 17th century. During the reign of Emperor Akbar, the Bengali agrarian calendar was reformed to facilitate tax collection. The Mughals established Dhaka as a fort city and commercial metropolis, and it was the capital of Mughal Bengal for 75 years. In 1666, the Mughals expelled the Arakanese from Chittagong. Mughal Bengal attracted foreign traders for its muslin and silk goods, and the Armenians were a notable merchant community. A Portuguese settlement in Chittagong flourished in the southeast, and a Dutch settlement in Rajshahi existed in the north. During the 18th century, the Nawabs of Bengal became the region's de facto rulers. The Nawabs forged alliances with European colonial companies, which made the region relatively prosperous early in the century. The Bengali Muslim population was a product of conversion and religious evolution, and their pre-Islamic beliefs included elements of Buddhism and Hinduism. The construction of mosques, Islamic academies (madrasas) and Sufi monasteries (khanqahs) facilitated conversion, and Islamic cosmology played a significant role in developing Bengali Muslim society. Scholars have theorized that Bengalis were attracted to Islam by its egalitarian social order, which contrasted with the Hindu caste system. By the 15th century, Muslim poets were writing in the Bengali language. Notable medieval Bengali Muslim poets included Daulat Qazi, Abdul Hakim and Alaol. Syncretic cults, such as the Baul movement, emerged on the fringes of Bengali Muslim society. The Persianate culture was significant in Bengal, where cities like Sonargaon became the easternmost centers of Persian influence. === Colonial period === After the 1757 Battle of Plassey, Bengal was the first region of the Indian subcontinent conquered by the British East India Company. The company formed the Presidency of Fort William, which administered the region until 1858. A notable aspect of company rule was the Permanent Settlement, which established the feudal zamindari system. A number of famines, including the great Bengal famine of 1770, occurred under company rule. Several rebellions broke out during the early 19th century (including one led by Titumir), but British rule displaced the Muslim ruling class. A conservative Islamic cleric, Haji Shariatullah, sought to overthrow the British by propagating Islamic revivalism. Several towns in Bangladesh participated in the Indian Mutiny and pledged allegiance to the last Mughal emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar, who was later exiled to neighboring Burma. The challenge posed to company rule by the failed Indian Mutiny led to the creation of the British Indian Empire as a crown colony, and the first railway was built in 1862. Syed Ahmed Khan and Ram Mohan Roy promoted modern and liberal education on the subcontinent, inspiring the Aligarh movement and the Bengal Renaissance. During the late 19th century, novelists, social reformers and feminists emerged from Muslim Bengali society. Electricity and municipal water systems were introduced in the 1890s; cinemas opened in many towns during the early 20th century. East Bengal's plantation economy was important to the British Empire, particularly its jute and tea. The British established tax-free river ports, such as the Port of Narayanganj, and large seaports like the Port of Chittagong. Social tensions also increased under British rule, particularly between wealthy Hindus and the Muslim-majority population. The Permanent Settlement made millions of Muslim peasants tenants of Hindu estates, and resentment of the Hindu landed gentry grew. Supported by the Muslim aristocracy, the British government created the province of Eastern Bengal and Assam in 1905; the new province received increased investment in education, transport and industry. However, the first partition of Bengal created an uproar in Calcutta and the Indian National Congress. In response to growing Hindu nationalism, the All India Muslim League was formed in Dhaka during the 1906 All India Muhammadan Educational Conference. The British government reorganized the provinces in 1912, reuniting East and West Bengal and making Assam a second province. The Raj was slow to allow self-rule in the colonial subcontinent. It established the Bengal Legislative Council in 1862, and the council's native Bengali representation increased during the early 20th century. The Bengal Provincial Muslim League was formed in 1913 to advocate civil rights for Bengali Muslims within a constitutional framework. During the 1920s, the league was divided into factions supporting the Khilafat movement and favoring cooperation with the British to achieve self-rule. Segments of the Bengali elite supported Mustafa Kemal Atatürk secularist forces. In 1929, the All Bengal Tenants Association was formed in the Bengal Legislative Council to counter the influence of the Hindu landed gentry, and the Indian Independence and Pakistan Movements strengthened during the early 20th century. After the Morley-Minto Reforms and the diarchy era in the legislatures of British India, the British government promised limited provincial

autonomy in 1935. The Bengal Legislative Assembly, British India's largest legislature, was established in 1937. Although it won a majority of seats in 1937, the Bengal Congress boycotted the legislature. A. K. Fazlul Huq of the Krishak Praja Party was elected as the first Prime Minister of Bengal. In 1940 Huq supported the Lahore Resolution, which envisaged independent states in the northwestern and eastern Muslim-majority regions of the subcontinent. The first Huq ministry, a coalition with the Bengal Provincial Muslim League, lasted until 1941; it was followed by a Huq coalition with the Hindu Mahasabha which lasted until 1943. Huq was succeeded by Khawaja Nazimuddin, who grappled with the effects of the Burma Campaign, the Bengal famine of 1943 and the Quit India movement. In 1946, the Bengal Provincial Muslim League won the provincial election, taking 113 of the 250-seat assembly (the largest Muslim League mandate in British India). H. S. Suhrawardy, who made a final futile effort for a United Bengal in 1946, was the last premier of Bengal. === Union with Pakistan === On 3 June 1947 Mountbatten Plan outlined the partition of British India. On 20 June, the Bengal Legislative Assembly met to decide on the partition of Bengal. At the preliminary joint meeting, it was decided (120 votes to 90) that if the province remained united it should join the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. At a separate meeting of legislators from West Bengal, it was decided (58 votes to 21) that the province should be partitioned and West Bengal should join the Constituent Assembly of India. At another meeting of legislators from East Bengal, it was decided (106 votes to 35) that the province should not be partitioned and (107 votes to 34) that East Bengal should join the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan if Bengal was partitioned. On 6 July, the Sylhet region of Assam voted in a referendum to join East Bengal. Cyril Radcliffe was tasked with drawing the borders of Pakistan and India, and the Radcliffe Line established the borders of present-day Bangladesh. The Dominion of Pakistan was created on 14 August 1947. East Bengal, with Dhaka its capital, was the most populous province of the 1947 Pakistani federation (led by Governor General Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who promised freedom of religion and secular democracy in the new state). East Bengal was also Pakistan's most cosmopolitan province, home to peoples of different faiths, cultures and ethnic groups. Partition gave increased economic opportunity to East Bengalis, producing an urban population during the 1950s. Khawaja Nazimuddin was East Bengal's first chief minister with Frederick Chalmers Bourne its governor. The All Pakistan Awami Muslim League was formed in 1949 as a centre-left alternative to the centre-right All Pakistan Muslim League. In 1950, the East Bengal Legislative Assembly enacted land reform, abolishing the Permanent Settlement and the zamindari system. The 1952 Bengali Language Movement was the first sign of friction between the country's geographically-separated wings. The Awami Muslim League was renamed the more-secular Awami League in 1953. The first constituent assembly was dissolved in 1954; this was challenged by its East Bengali speaker, Maulvi Tamizuddin Khan. The United Front coalition swept aside the Muslim League in a landslide victory in the 1954 East Bengali legislative election. The following year, East Bengal was renamed East Pakistan as part of the One Unit program and the province became a vital part of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization. Pakistan adopted its first constitution in 1956. Three Bengalis were its Prime Minister until 1957: Nazimuddin, Mohammad Ali of Bogra and Suhrawardy. None of the three completed their terms, and resigned from office. The Pakistan Army imposed military rule in 1958, and Ayub Khan was the country's strongman for 11 years. Political repression increased after the coup. Khan introduced a new constitution in 1962, replacing Pakistan's parliamentary system with a presidential and gubernatorial system (based on electoral college selection) known as Basic Democracy. In 1962 Dhaka became the seat of the National Assembly of Pakistan, a move seen as appeasing increased Bengali nationalism. The Pakistani government built the controversial Kaptai Dam, displacing the Chakma people from their indigenous homeland in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. During the 1965 presidential election, Fatima Jinnah lost to Ayub Khan despite support from the Combined Opposition alliance (which included the Awami League). The Indo-Pakistani War of 1965 blocked cross-border transport links with neighboring India in what is described as a second partition. In 1966, Awami League leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman announced a six point movement for a federal parliamentary democracy. According to senior World Bank officials, Pakistan practiced extensive economic discrimination against East Pakistan: greater government spending on West Pakistan, financial transfers from East to West Pakistan, the use of East Pakistan's foreign-exchange surpluses to finance West Pakistani imports, and refusal by the central government to release funds allocated to East Pakistan because previous spending had been under budget; East Pakistan generated 70 percent of Pakistan's export revenue with its jute and tea. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was arrested for treason in the Agartala Conspiracy Case, and was released during the 1969 uprising in East Pakistan which resulted in Ayub Khan's resignation. General Yahya Khan assumed power, reintroducing martial law. Ethnic and linguistic discrimination was common in

Pakistan's civil and military services, in which Bengalis were under-represented. Fifteen percent of Pakistani central-government offices were occupied by East Pakistanis, who formed 10 percent of the military. Cultural discrimination also prevailed, making East Pakistan forge a distinct political identity. Pakistan banned Bengali literature and music in state media, including the works of Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore. A cyclone devastated the coast of East Pakistan in 1970, killing an estimated 500,000 people, and the central government was criticized for its poor response. After the December 1970 elections, calls for the independence of East Bengal became louder; the Bengali-nationalist Awami League won 167 of 169 East Pakistani seats in the National Assembly. The League claimed the right to form a government and develop a new constitution, but was strongly opposed by the Pakistani military and the Pakistan Peoples Party (led by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto). === War of Independence === The Bengali population was angered when Prime Minister-elect Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was prevented from taking the office. Civil disobedience erupted across East Pakistan, with calls for independence. Mujib addressed a pro-independence rally of nearly 2 million people in Dacca on 7 March 1971, where he said, "This time the struggle is for our freedom. This time the struggle is for our independence." The flag of Bangladesh was raised for the first time on 23 March, Pakistan's Republic Day. During the night of 25 March, the Pakistani military junta led by Yahya Khan launched Operation Searchlight (a sustained military assault on East Pakistan). Pakistan army arrested Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and flew him away to Karachi. Mujib however, before his arrest proclaimed the Independence of Bangladesh on 26 March midnight which led the Bangladesh Liberation War to officially break out within hours. The Pakistan Army continued to massacre Bengali students, intellectuals, politicians, civil servants and military defectors in the 1971 Bangladesh genocide, while the Mukti Bahini and other Bengali guerilla forces created strong resistance throughout the country. During the war, estimated 300,000 to three million people were killed and several million people took shelter in neighboring India. Global public opinion turned against Pakistan as news of the atrocities spread; the Bangladesh movement was supported by prominent political and cultural figures in the West, including Ted Kennedy, George Harrison, Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, Victoria Ocampo and André Malraux. The Concert for Bangladesh was held at Madison Square Garden in New York City to raise funds for Bangladeshi refugees. The first major benefit concert in history, it was organized by Harrison and Indian Bengali sitarist Ravi Shankar. During the Bangladesh Liberation War, Bengali nationalists declared independence and formed the Mukti Bahini (the Bangladeshi National Liberation Army). The Provisional Government of Bangladesh was established on 17 April 1971, converting the 469 elected members of the Pakistani national assembly and East Pakistani provincial assembly into the Constituent Assembly of Bangladesh. The provisional government issued the Proclamation of the Independence of Bangladeshi, which was the country's interim constitution and declared "equality, human dignity and social justice" as its fundamental principles. Due to Mujib's detention, the acting president was Syed Nazrul Islam, while Tajuddin Ahmad was Bangladesh's first prime minister. The military wing of the provisional government was the Bangladesh Forces that included Mukti Bahini and other Bengali guerilla forces. Led by General M. A. G. Osmani and eleven sector commanders, the forces strongly held the countryside during the war and conducted wide-ranging guerrilla operations against Pakistani forces. As a result, almost entire country except capital Dacca was liberated by Bangladesh Forces by late November. This led Pakistan Army to attack neighboring India's western front on 2 December. India retaliated both in western and eastern fronts. By joint Bangladeshi ground advance and Indian air strike, the rest capital Dacca was liberated from Pakistani occupation in mid December. During the last phase of the war, the Soviet Union and the United States dispatched naval forces to the Bay of Bengal in a Cold War standoff. The nine-months long war ended with the surrender of Pakistani armed forces to the Bangladesh-India Allied Forces on 16 December 1971. Under international pressure, Pakistan released Rahman from imprisonment on 8 January 1972 and he was flown by the British Royal Air Force to a million-strong homecoming in Dacca. Remaining Indian troops were withdrawn by 12 March 1972, three months after the war ended. The cause of Bangladeshi self-determination was recognized around the world. By the time of its admission to UN membership in August 1972, the new state was recognized by 86 countries. Pakistan recognized Bangladesh in 1974 after pressure from most of the Muslim countries. === People's Republic of Bangladesh === ===== First parliamentary era ===== The constituent assembly adopted Bangladesh's constitution on 4 November 1972, establishing a secular, multiparty parliamentary democracy. The new constitution included references to socialism, and Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman nationalized major industries in 1972. A major reconstruction and rehabilitation program was launched. The Awami League won the country's first general election in 1973, securing a large majority in the Jatiyo Sangshad. Bangladesh joined the Commonwealth of

Nations, the UN, the OIC and the Non-Aligned Movement, and Rahman strengthened ties with India. Amid growing agitation by the opposition National Awami Party and National Socialist Party, he became increasingly authoritarian. Rahman amended the constitution, giving himself more emergency powers (including the suspension of fundamental rights). The Bangladesh famine of 1974 also worsened the political situation. ===== Presidential era and coups (1975–1991) ===== In January 1975, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman introduced one-party socialist rule under BAKSAL. Rahman banned all newspapers except four state-owned publications, and amended the constitution to increase his power. He was assassinated during a coup on 15 August 1975. Martial law was declared, and the presidency passed to the usurper Khondaker Mostaq Ahmad for four months. Ahmad is widely regarded as a quisling by Bangladeshis. Tajuddin Ahmad, the nation's first prime minister, and four other independence leaders were assassinated on 4 November 1975. Chief Justice Abu Sadat Mohammad Sayem was installed as president by the military on 6 November 1975. Bangladesh was governed by a military junta led by the Chief Martial Law Administrator for three years. In 1977, Army chief Ziaur Rahman became president. Rahman reinstated multiparty politics, privatized industries and newspapers, established BEPZA and held the country's second general election in 1979. A semi-presidential system evolved, with the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) governing until 1982. Rahman was assassinated in 1981, and was succeeded by Vice President Abdus Sattar. Sattar received 65.5 percent of the vote in the 1981 presidential election. After a year in office, Sattar was overthrown in the 1982 Bangladesh coup d'état. Chief Justice A. F. M. Ahsanuddin Chowdhury was installed as president, but army chief Hussain Muhammad Ershad became the country's de facto leader and assumed the presidency in 1983. Ershad lifted martial law in 1986. He governed with four successive prime ministers (Aur Rahman Khan, Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, Moudud Ahmed and Kazi Zafar Ahmed) and a parliament dominated by his Jatiyo Party. General elections were held in 1986 and 1988, although the latter was boycotted by the opposition BNP and Awami League. Ershad pursued administrative decentralization, dividing the country into 64 districts, and pushed Parliament to make Islam the state religion in 1988. A 1990 mass uprising forced him to resign, and Chief Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed led the country's first caretaker government as part of the transition to parliamentary rule. ===== Current parliamentary era (1991–present) ===== After the 1991 general election, the twelfth amendment to the constitution restored the parliamentary republic and Begum Khaleda Zia became Bangladesh's first female prime minister. Zia, a former first lady, led a BNP government from 1990 to 1996. In 1991 her finance minister, Saifur Rahman, began a major program to liberalize the Bangladeshi economy. After an Awami League initiative, the BNP introduced a system of caretaker governments to oversee the transfer of power. Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman was the first Chief Adviser of Bangladesh, and oversaw the 1996 election. The Awami League, led by Sheikh Hasina, won the seventh general election. Hasina's first term was highlighted by the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord and a Ganges water-sharing treaty with India. The second caretaker government, led by Chief Adviser Justice Latifur Rahman, oversaw the eighth general election in 2001 which returned Begum Zia and the BNP to power. The second Zia ministry saw improved economic growth, but political turmoil gripped the country between 2004 and 2006. A radical Islamist militant group, the JMB, carried out a series of bombings. Amid widespread political unrest the Bangladeshi military urged President Iajuddin Ahmed to impose a state of emergency and a caretaker government, led by technocrat Fakhruddin Ahmed, was installed. Emergency rule lasted for two years, until the ninth general election in 2008 which returned Sheikh Hasina and the Awami League to power. In 2010, the Supreme Court ruled martial law illegal and affirmed secular principles in the constitution. The following year, the Awami League abolished the caretaker-government system. The 2014 general election was boycotted by the BNP, giving the Awami League a decisive victory. == Geography == The geography of Bangladesh is divided between three regions. Most of the country is dominated by the fertile Ganges-Brahmaputra delta; the northwest and central parts of the country are formed by the Madhupur and the Barind plateaus. The northeast and southeast are home to evergreen hill ranges. The Ganges delta is formed by the confluence of the Ganges (local name Padma or Pôdda), Brahmaputra (Jamuna or Jomuna), and Meghna rivers and their respective tributaries. The Ganges unites with the Jamuna (main channel of the Brahmaputra) and later joins the Meghna, finally flowing into the Bay of Bengal. Bangladesh has 57 trans-boundary rivers, making the resolution of water issues to be politically complicated, in most cases, as the country is a lower riparian state to India. Bangladesh is predominately rich fertile flat land. Most parts of it is less than 12 m (39.4 ft) above sea level, and it is estimated that about 10% of its land would be flooded if the sea level were to rise by 1 m (3.28 ft). 17% of the country is covered by forests and 12% is covered by hill systems. The country's haor wetlands

are of significance to global environmental science. In southeastern Bangladesh, experiments have been done since the 1960s to 'build with nature'. Construction of cross dams has induced a natural accretion of silt, creating new land. With Dutch funding, the Bangladeshi government began promoting the development of this new land in the late 1970s. The effort has become a multi-agency endeavor, building roads, culverts, embankments, cyclone shelters, toilets and ponds, as well as distributing land to settlers. It was expected that by fall 2010, the program would have allotted some 27,000 acres (10,927 ha) to 21,000 families. With an elevation of 1,064 m (3,491 ft), the highest peak of Bangladesh is Keokradong, near the border with Myanmar. === Administrative geography === Bangladesh is divided into eight administrative divisions, each named after their respective divisional headquarters: Barisal, Chittagong, Dhaka, Khulna, Mymensingh, Rajshahi, Rangpur, and Sylhet. Divisions are subdivided into districts (zila). There are 64 districts in Bangladesh, each further subdivided into upazila (subdistricts) or thana. The area within each police station, except for those in metropolitan areas, is divided into several unions, with each union consisting of multiple villages. In the metropolitan areas, police stations are divided into wards, which are further divided into mahallas. There are no elected officials at the divisional or district levels, and the administration is composed only of government officials. Direct elections are held in each union (or ward) for a chairperson and a number of members. In 1997, a parliamentary act was passed to reserve three seats (out of 12) in every union for female candidates. === Climate === Straddling the Tropic of Cancer, Bangladesh's climate is tropical with a mild winter from October to March, and a hot, humid summer from March to June. The country has never recorded an air temperature below 0 °C (32 °F), with a record low of 1.1 °C (34.0 °F) in the north west city of Dinajpur on 3 February 1905. A warm and humid monsoon season lasts from June to October and supplies most of the country's rainfall. Natural calamities, such as floods, tropical cyclones, tornadoes, and tidal bores occur almost every year, combined with the effects of deforestation, soil degradation and erosion. The cyclones of 1970 and 1991 were particularly devastating, the latter killing some 140,000 people. In September 1998, Bangladesh saw the most severe flooding in modern world history. As the Brahmaputra, the Ganges and Meghna spilt over and swallowed 300,000 houses, 9,700 km (6,000 mi) of road and 2,700 km (1,700 mi) of embankment, 1,000 people were killed and 30 million more made homeless, 135,000 cattle killed, 50 km² (19 sq mi) of land destroyed and 11,000 km (6,800 mi) of roads damaged or destroyed. Effectively, two-thirds of the country was underwater. The severity of the flooding was attributed to unusually high monsoon rains, the shedding off of equally unusually large amounts of melt water from the Himalayas, and the widespread cutting down of trees (that would have intercepted rain water) for firewood or animal husbandry. Bangladesh is now widely recognised to be one of the countries most vulnerable to climate change. Natural hazards that come from increased rainfall, rising sea levels, and tropical cyclones are expected to increase as climate changes, each seriously affecting agriculture, water and food security, human health and shelter. It is believed that in the coming decades the rising sea level alone will create more than 20 million climate refugees. Bangladesh is prone to floods, tornadoes and cyclones. Also, there is evidence that earthquakes pose a threat to the country, and that tectonics have caused rivers to shift course suddenly and dramatically. It has also been shown that rainy-season flooding in Bangladesh, on the world's largest river delta, can push the underlying crust down by as much as 6 centimetres, and possibly perturb faults. Bangladeshi water is frequently contaminated with arsenic because of the high arsenic content of the soil—up to 77 million people are exposed to toxic arsenic from drinking water. The scientists have come to agree that by 2050, a 3 feet rise in sea levels will inundate some 20 percent of the land and displace more than 30 million people. === Biodiversity === Bangladesh ratified the Rio Convention on Biological Diversity on 3 May 1994. As of 2014, the country was set to revise its National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. Bangladesh is located in the Indomalaya ecozone. Its ecology includes a long sea coastline, numerous rivers and tributaries, lakes, wetlands, evergreen forests, semi evergreen forests, hill forests, moist deciduous forests, freshwater swamp forests and flat land with tall grass. The Bangladesh Plain is famous for its fertile alluvial soil which supports extensive cultivation. The country is dominated by lush vegetation, with villages often buried in groves of mango, jackfruit, bamboo, betel nut, coconut and date palm. The country has up to 6000 species of plant life, including 5000 flowering plants. Water bodies and wetland systems provide a habitat for many aquatic plants. Water lilies and lotuses grow vividly during the monsoon season. The country has 50 wildlife sanctuaries. Bangladesh is home to much of the Sundarbans, the world's largest mangrove forest, covering an area of 6,000 km² in the southwest littoral region. It is divided into three protected sanctuaries—the South, East and West zones. The forest is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The northeastern Sylhet region is home to haor wetlands, which is a unique ecosystem. It also includes

tropical and subtropical coniferous forests, a freshwater swamp forest and mixed deciduous forests. The southeastern Chittagong region covers evergreen and semi evergreen hilly jungles. Central Bangladesh includes the plainland Sal forest running along the districts of Gazipur, Tangail and Mymensingh. St. Martin's Island is the only coral reef in the country. Bangladesh has an abundance of wildlife in its forests, marshes, woodlands and hills. The vast majority of animals dwell within a habitat of 150,000 km². The Bengal tiger, clouded leopard, saltwater crocodile, black panther and fishing cat are among the chief predators in the Sundarbans. Northern and eastern Bangladesh is home to the Asian elephant, hoolock gibbon, Asian black bear and oriental pied hornbill. The Chital deer are widely seen in southwestern woodlands. Other animals include the black giant squirrel, capped langur, Bengal fox, sambar deer, jungle cat, king cobra, wild boar, mongooses, pangolins, pythons and water monitors. Bangladesh has one of the largest population of Irrawaddy dolphins and Ganges dolphins. A 2009 census found 6,000 Irrawaddy dolphins inhabiting the littoral rivers of Bangladesh. The country has numerous species of amphibians (53), reptiles (139), marine reptiles (19) and marine mammals (5). It also has 628 species of birds. Several animals became extinct in Bangladesh during the last century, including the one horned and two horned rhinoceros and common peafowl. The human population is concentrated in urban areas, hence limiting deforestation to a certain extent. Rapid urban growth has threatened natural habitats. Though many areas are protected under law, a large portion of Bangladeshi wildlife is threatened by this growth. The Bangladesh Environment Conservation Act was enacted in 1995. The government has designated several regions as Ecologically Critical Areas, including wetlands, forests and rivers. The Sundarbans Tiger Project and the Bangladesh Bear Project are among the key initiatives to strengthen conservation.

== Politics == The Constitution of Bangladesh established a unitary, Westminster-style parliamentary republic with universal suffrage. A member of parliament supported by a parliamentary majority (usually the chair of the largest party) is the Prime Minister, the head of government and of the cabinet. Bangladesh is governed by a 350-member parliament, known as the Jatiyo Sangshad. Three hundred of its members are elected on a first past the post basis, and 50 seats are reserved for female nominees by political parties. Although parliamentary elections are scheduled every five years, they have often been delayed by political crises, emergency rule or martial law. The President of Bangladesh is the head of state. From 1975 to 1990 the presidency had executive powers, but it has been reduced to a largely-ceremonial role by the Twelfth Amendment to the constitution. In 2011, the Fifteenth Amendment mandated the "highest punishment" for usurpers. The amendment was controversial for abolishing the caretaker-government system, which had been a neutral administration during election periods since the 1990s. The 2014 national election was boycotted by the largest opposition party, which argued that a free election could not be held without a neutral interim government. The Jatiyo Sangshad is restrained from holding no-confidence motions, floor crossing and free votes by Article 70 of the constitution. Human-rights violations have increased due to the growing power of security forces—particularly the Rapid Action Battalion, which is accused of arbitrary arrests, summary executions and forced disappearances. ===

Legal system === Bangladesh's legal system is based on common law, and its principal source of laws are acts of Parliament. The Bangladesh Code includes a list of all laws in force in the country. The code begins in 1836, and most of its listed laws were crafted under the British Raj by the Bengal Legislative Council, the Bengal Legislative Assembly, the Eastern Bengal and Assam Legislative Council, the Imperial Legislative Council and the Parliament of the United Kingdom; one example is the 1860 Penal Code. From 1947 to 1971, laws were enacted by Pakistan's national assembly and the East Pakistani legislature. The Constituent Assembly of Bangladesh was the country's provisional parliament until 1973, when the first elected Jatiyo Sangshad was sworn in. Although most of Bangladesh's laws were compiled in English, after a 1987 government directive laws are now primarily written in Bengali. Marriage, divorce and inheritance are governed by Islamic, Hindu and Christian family law. The judiciary is often influenced by legal developments in the Commonwealth of Nations, such as the doctrine of legitimate expectation. The Supreme Court of Bangladesh, including its High Court and Appellate Divisions, is the high court of the land. The head of the judiciary is the Chief Justice of Bangladesh, who sits on the Supreme Court. The courts have wide latitude in judicial review, and judicial precedent is supported by the Article 111 of the constitution. The judiciary includes district and metropolitan courts, which are divided into civil and criminal courts. Due to a shortage of judges, the judiciary has a large backlog. The Bangladesh Judicial Service Commission is an independent body responsible for judicial appointments, salaries and discipline. ===

Military === The Bangladesh Armed Forces have inherited the institutional framework of the British military and the British Indian Army. It was formed in 1971 from the military regiments of East Pakistan. In 2012 the army strength was around

300,000, including reservists, the Air Force (22,000) and the Navy (24,000). In addition to traditional defence roles, the military has supported civil authorities in disaster relief and provided internal security during periods of political unrest. For many years, Bangladesh has been the world's largest contributor to UN peacekeeping forces. In February 2015, the country made major deployments to Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Darfur, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Golan Heights, Haiti, Lebanon, Liberia and South Sudan. The Bangladesh Navy has the third-largest fleet (after India and Thailand) of countries dependent on the Bay of Bengal, including guided-missile frigates, submarines, cutters and aircraft. The Bangladesh Air Force is equipped with several Russian multi-role fighter jets. Bangladesh cooperates defensively with the United States Armed Forces, participating in the Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) exercises. Ties between the Bangladeshi and the Indian military have increased, with high-level visits by the military chiefs of both countries. Eighty percent of Bangladesh's military equipment comes from China. === Foreign relations === The first major intergovernmental organization joined by Bangladesh was the Commonwealth of Nations in 1972. The country joined the United Nations in 1974, and has been elected twice to the UN Security Council. Ambassador Humayun Rashid Choudhury was elected president of the UN General Assembly in 1986. Bangladesh relies on multilateral diplomacy in the World Trade Organization. It is a major contributor to UN peacekeeping, providing 113,000 personnel to 54 UN missions in the Middle East, the Balkans, Africa and the Caribbean in 2014. In addition to membership in the Commonwealth and the United Nations, Bangladesh pioneered regional cooperation in South Asia. Bangladesh is a founding member of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), an organization designed to strengthen relations and promote economic and cultural growth among its members. It has hosted several summits, and two Bangladeshi diplomats were the organization's secretary-general. Bangladesh joined the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in 1973. It has hosted the summit of OIC foreign ministers, which addresses issues, conflicts and disputes affecting Muslim-majority countries. Bangladesh is a founding member of the Developing 8 Countries, a bloc of eight Muslim-majority republics. Japan is Bangladesh's largest economic-aid provider, and the countries have common political goals. The United Kingdom has longstanding economic, cultural and military links with Bangladesh. The United States is a major economic and security partner, including its largest export market and foreign investor. Seventy-six percent of Bangladeshis viewed the United States favorably in 2014, one of the highest ratings among Asian countries. The European Union is Bangladesh's largest regional market, conducting public diplomacy and providing development assistance. Relations with other countries are generally positive. Shared democratic values ease relations with Western countries, and similar economic concerns forge ties to other developing countries. Despite poor working conditions and war affecting overseas Bangladeshi workers, relations with Middle Eastern countries are friendly and bounded by religion and culture; more than a million Bangladeshis are employed in the region. In 2016, the king of Saudi Arabia called Bangladesh "one of the most important Muslim countries". Bangladesh's most politically-important bilateral relationship is with neighboring India. In 2015, major Indian newspapers called Bangladesh a "trusted friend". Bangladesh and India are South Asia's largest trading partners. The countries are forging regional economic and infrastructure projects, such as a regional motor-vehicle agreement in eastern South Asia and a coastal shipping agreement in the Bay of Bengal. Indo-Bangladesh relations have a shared cultural heritage and democratic values and a history of support for Bangladeshi independence. Despite political goodwill, border killings of Bangladeshi civilians and the lack of a comprehensive water-sharing agreement for 54 trans-boundary rivers are major issues. In 2017, India joined Russia and China in refusing to condemn Myanmar's atrocities against the Rohingya, which contradicted with Bangladesh's demand for recognizing Rohingya human rights. However, the Indian air force delivered aid shipments for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. The rise of Hindu extremism and Islamophobia in India has also affected Bangladesh. The Bangladeshi beef and leather industries have seen increased prices due to the Indian BJP government's Hindu nationalist campaign against the export of beef and cattle skin. Sino-Bangladesh relations date to the 1950s and are relatively warm, despite the Chinese leadership siding with Pakistan during Bangladesh's war of independence. China and Bangladesh established bilateral relations in 1976 which have significantly strengthened, and the country is considered a cost-effective source of arms for the Bangladeshi military. Since the 1980s 80 percent of Bangladesh's military equipment has been supplied by China (often with generous credit terms), and China is Bangladesh's largest trading partner. Both countries are part of the BCIM Forum. The neighbouring country of Myanmar was one of first countries to recognize Bangladesh. Despite common regional interests, Bangladesh-Myanmar relations have been strained by the Rohingya refugee issue

and the isolationist policies of the Myanmar military. In 2012, the countries came to terms at the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea over maritime disputes in the Bay of Bengal. In 2016 and 2017, relations with Myanmar again strained as over 400,000 Rohingya refugees entered Bangladesh after atrocities. The parliament, government and civil society of Bangladesh have been at the forefront of international criticism against Myanmar for military operations against the Rohingya, which the United Nations has described as ethnic cleansing. Pakistan and Bangladesh have a US\$550 million trade relationship, particularly in Pakistani cotton imports for the Bangladeshi textile industry. Although Bangladeshi and Pakistani businesses have invested in each other, diplomatic relations are strained because of Pakistani denial of the 1971 Bangladesh genocide. Bangladeshi aid agencies work in many developing countries. An example is BRAC in Afghanistan, which benefits 12 million people in that country. Bangladesh has a record of nuclear nonproliferation as a party to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). It is a state party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Bangladeshi foreign policy is influenced by the principle of "friendship to all and malice to none", first articulated by Bengali statesman H. S. Suhrawardy in 1957. Suhrawardy led East and West Pakistan to join the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, CENTO and the Regional Cooperation for Development. === Human rights === Rights in Bangladesh are enshrined in the country's constitution. However, government and security forces have flouted constitutional principles and have been accused of human rights abuses. Bangladesh is ranked "partly free" in Freedom House's Freedom in the World report, but its press is ranked "not free". According to the British Economist Intelligence Unit, the country has a hybrid regime: the third of four rankings in its Democracy Index. Bangladesh was the third-most-peaceful South Asian country in the 2015 Global Peace Index. Civil society and media in Bangladesh have been attacked by the ruling Awami League government and Islamic extremists. According to National Human Rights Commission chairman Mizanur Rahman, 70% of alleged human-rights violations are committed by law-enforcement agencies. Targets have included Nobel Peace Prize winner Muhammad Yunus and the Grameen Bank, secularist bloggers and independent and pro-opposition newspapers and television networks. The United Nations is concerned about government "measures that restrict freedom of expression and democratic space". Bangladeshi security forces, particularly the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), have received international condemnation for human-rights abuses (including enforced disappearances, torture and extrajudicial killings). Over 1,000 people have been said to have been victims of extrajudicial killings by RAB since its inception under the last Bangladesh Nationalist Party government. The RAB has been called a "death squad" by Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, which have called for the force to be disbanded. The British and American governments have been criticized for funding and engaging the force in counter-terrorism operations. The Bangladeshi government has not fully implemented the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord. The Hill Tracts region remains heavily militarized, despite a peace treaty with indigenous people forged by the United People's Party of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Secularism is protected by the constitution of Bangladesh, and religious parties are barred from contesting elections; however, the government is accused of courting religious extremist groups. Islam's ambiguous position as the de facto state religion has been criticized by the United Nations. Despite relative harmony, religious minorities have faced occasional persecution. The Hindu and Buddhist communities have experienced religious violence from Islamic groups, notably the Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami and its student wing (Shibir). Islamic far-right candidates peaked at 12 percent of the vote in 2001, falling to four percent in 2008. Homosexuality is outlawed by section 377 of the criminal code, and is punishable by a maximum of life imprisonment. According to the 2016 Global Slavery Index, an estimated 1,531,300 people are enslaved in modern-day Bangladesh, or 0.95% of the population. A number of slaves in Bangladesh are forced to work in the fish and shrimp industries. === Corruption === Bangladesh was 14th on Transparency International's 2014 Corruption Perceptions Index. In 2015, bribes made up 3.7 percent of the national budget. The country's Anti-Corruption Commission was active during the 2006–08 Bangladeshi political crisis, indicting many leading politicians, bureaucrats and businessmen for graft. After it assumed power in 2009, the Awami League government reduced the commission's independent power to investigate and prosecute. Land administration was the sector with the most bribery in 2015, followed by education, police and water supply. == Economy == Bangladesh, a developing country with a market-based mixed economy, is one of the Next Eleven emerging markets. Its per-capita income was US\$1,190 in 2014, with a GDP of \$209 billion. Bangladesh has the third-largest South Asian economy (after India and Pakistan) and the second-highest foreign-exchange reserves (after India). The Bangladeshi diaspora contributed \$15.31 billion in remittances in 2015. During its first five years of independence Bangladesh adopted socialist

policies, an Awami League blunder. The subsequent military regime and BNP and Jatiya Party governments restored free markets and promoted the country's private sector. In 1991, finance minister Saifur Rahman introduced a programme of economic liberalization. The Bangladeshi private sector has rapidly expanded, with a number of conglomerates driving the economy. Major industries include textiles, pharmaceuticals, shipbuilding, steel, electronics, energy, construction materials, chemicals, ceramics, food processing and leather goods. Export-oriented industrialization has increased, with fiscal year 2014–15 exports increasing by 3.3% over the previous year to \$30 billion, although Bangladesh's trade deficit ballooned by over 45% in this same time period. Most export earnings are from the garment-manufacturing industry. Bangladesh also has social enterprises, including the Nobel Peace Prize-winning Grameen Bank and BRAC (the world's largest non-governmental organisation). However, an insufficient power supply is a significant obstacle to Bangladesh's economic development. According to the World Bank, poor governance, corruption and weak public institutions are also major challenges. In April 2010, Standard & Poor's gave Bangladesh a BB- long-term credit rating, below India's but above those of Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The country is notable for its soil fertility land, including the Ganges Delta, Sylhet Division and the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Agriculture is the largest sector of the economy, making up 18.6 percent of Bangladesh's GDP in November 2010 and employing about 45 percent of the workforce. The agricultural sector impacts employment generation, poverty alleviation, human resources development and food security. More Bangladeshis earn their living from agriculture than from any other sector. The country is among the top producers of rice (fourth), potatoes (seventh), tropical fruits (sixth), jute (second), and farmed fish (fifth). Bangladesh is the seventh-largest natural gas producer in Asia, ahead of neighboring Myanmar, and 56 percent of the country's electricity is generated by natural gas. Major gas fields are located in the northeastern (particularly Sylhet) and southern (including Barisal and Chittagong) regions. Petrobangla is the national energy company. The American multinational corporation Chevron produces 50 percent of Bangladesh's natural gas. According to geologists, the Bay of Bengal contains large, untapped gas reserves in Bangladesh's exclusive economic zone. Bangladesh has substantial coal reserves, with several coal mines operating in the northwest. Jute exports remain significant, although the global jute trade has shrunk considerably since its World War II peak. Bangladesh has one of the world's oldest tea industries, and is a major exporter of fish and seafood. Bangladesh's textile and ready-made garment industries are the country's largest manufacturing sector, with 2014 exports of \$25 billion. Leather-goods manufacturing, particularly footwear, is the second-largest export sector. The pharmaceutical industry meets 97 percent of domestic demand, and exports to many countries. Shipbuilding has grown rapidly, with exports to Europe. Steel is concentrated in the port city of Chittagong, and the ceramics industry is prominent in international trade. In 2005 Bangladesh was the world's 20th-largest cement producer, an industry dependent on limestone imports from northeast India. Food processing is a major sector, with local brands such as PRAN increasing their international market share. The electronics industry is growing rapidly, particularly the Walton Group. Bangladesh's defense industry includes the Bangladesh Ordnance Factories and the Khulna Shipyard. The service sector accounts for 51 percent of the country's GDP. Bangladesh ranks with Pakistan as South Asia's second-largest banking sector. The Dhaka and Chittagong Stock Exchanges are the country's twin financial markets. Bangladesh's telecommunications industry is one of the world's fastest-growing, with 114 million cellphone subscribers in December 2013, and Grameenphone, Banglalink, Robi and BTTB are major companies. Tourism is developing, with the beach resort of Cox's Bazar the center of the industry. The Sylhet region, home to Bangladesh's tea country, also hosts a large number of visitors. The country has three UNESCO World Heritage Sites (the Mosque City, the Buddhist Vihara and the Sundarbans) and five tentative-list sites. Microfinance was pioneered in Bangladesh by Muhammad Yunus. In 2015, the country had over 35 million microcredit borrowers. === Transport === Transport is a major sector of the economy. Aviation has grown rapidly, and includes the flag carrier Biman Bangladesh Airlines and other privately owned airlines. Bangladesh has a number of airports: three international and several domestic and STOL (short takeoff and landing) airports. The busiest, Shahjalal International Airport connects Dhaka with major destinations. Bangladesh has a 2,706-kilometre (1,681-mile) rail network operated by state-owned Bangladesh Railway. The total length of the country's road and highway network is nearly 21,000-kilometre (13,000-mile). It has one of the largest inland waterway networks in the world, with 8,046 kilometres (5,000 miles) of navigable waters. The southeastern port of Chittagong is its busiest seaport, handling over \$60 billion in annual trade (more than 80 percent of the country's export-import commerce). The second-busiest seaport is Mongla. Bangladesh has three seaports and 22 river ports. === Energy and infrastructure ===

Bangladesh had an installed electrical capacity of 10,289 MW in January 2014. About 56 percent of the country's commercial energy is generated by natural gas, followed by oil, hydropower and coal. Bangladesh has planned to import hydropower from Bhutan and Nepal. Nuclear energy is being developed with Russian support in the Ruppur Nuclear Power Plant project. The country ranks fifth worldwide in the number of renewable energy green jobs, and solar panels are increasingly used to power urban and off-grid rural areas. An estimated 98 percent of the country's population had access to improved water sources in 2004 (a high percentage for a low-income country), achieved largely through the construction of hand pumps with support from external donors. However, in 1993 it was discovered that much of Bangladesh's groundwater (the source of drinking water for 97 percent of the rural population and a significant share of the urban population) is naturally contaminated with arsenic. Another challenge is low cost recovery due to low tariffs and poor economic efficiency, especially in urban areas (where water revenue does not cover operating costs). An estimated 56 percent of the population had access to adequate sanitation facilities in 2010. Community-led total sanitation, addressing the problem of open defecation in rural areas, is credited with improving public health since its introduction in 2000. === Science and technology === The Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, founded in 1973, traces its roots to the East Pakistan Regional Laboratories established in Dhaka (1955), Rajshahi (1965) and Chittagong (1967). Bangladesh's space agency, SPARRSO, was founded in 1983 with assistance from the United States. Bangladesh plans to launch the Bangabandhu-1 communications satellite in 2018. The Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission operates a TRIGA research reactor at its atomic-energy facility in Savar. In 2015, Bangladesh was ranked the 26th global IT outsourcing destination. === Tourism === See Tourism in Bangladesh Bangladesh's tourist attractions include historical and monuments, resorts, beaches, picnic spots, forests and tribal people, wildlife of various species. Activities for tourists include angling, water skiing, river cruising, hiking, rowing, yachting, and sea bathing. The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) reported in 2013 that the travel and tourism industry in Bangladesh directly generated 1,281,500 jobs in 2012 or 1.8 percent of the country's total employment, which ranked Bangladesh 157 out of 178 countries worldwide. Direct and indirect employment in the industry totalled 2,714,500 jobs, or 3.7 percent of the country's total employment. The WTTC predicted that by 2023, travel and tourism will directly generate 1,785,000 jobs and support an overall total of 3,891,000 jobs, or 4.2 percent of the country's total employment. This would represent an annual growth rate in direct jobs of 2.9 percent. Domestic spending generated 97.7 percent of direct travel and tourism gross domestic product (GDP) in 2012. Bangladesh's world ranking in 2012 for travel and tourism's direct contribution to GDP, as a percentage of GDP, was 142 out of 176. == Demographics == Estimates of the Bangladeshi population vary, but 2016 UN data suggests 163 million. The 2011 census estimated 142.3 million, much less than 2007–2010 estimates of Bangladesh's population (150– 170 million). Bangladesh is the world's eighth-most-populous nation. In 1951, its population was 44 million. Bangladesh is the most densely-populated large country in the world, ranking 11th in population density when small countries and city-states are included. The country's population-growth rate was among the highest in the world in the 1960s and 1970s, when its population grew from 65 to 110 million. With the promotion of birth control in the 1980s, Bangladesh's growth rate began to slow. Its total fertility rate is now 2.55, lower than India's (2.58) and Pakistan's (3.07). The population is relatively young, with 34 percent aged 15 or younger and five percent 65 or older. Life expectancy at birth was estimated at 70 years in 2012. Despite the rapid economic growth, 43% of the country still lives below the international poverty line on less than \$1.25 per day. Bengalis are 98 percent of the population. Of Bengalis, Muslims are the majority, followed by Hindus, Christians and Buddhists. The Adivasi population includes the Chakma, Marma, Tanchangya, Tripuri, Kuki, Khamti, Khumi, Murang, Mru, Chak, Lushei, Bawm, Bishnupriya Manipuri, Khasi, Jaintia, Garo, Santal, Munda and Oraon tribes. The Chittagong Hill Tracts region experienced unrest and an insurgency from 1975 to 1997 in an autonomy movement by its indigenous people. Although a peace accord was signed in 1997, the region remains militarized. Bangladesh is home to a significant Ismaili community. It hosts many Urdu-speaking immigrants, who migrated there after the partition of India. Stranded Pakistanis were given citizenship by the Supreme Court in 2008. An estimated over 670,000 Rohingya refugees from Myanmar live in refugee camps in Cox's Bazar District in the southeast. The region has received influxes of Rohingya refugees during Burmese military crackdowns in 1978, 1991, 2012 and 2016. === Urban centres === Dhaka is Bangladesh's capital and largest city. Cities with a corporation and mayoral elections include Dhaka South, Dhaka North, Chittagong, Khulna, Sylhet, Rajshahi, Barisal, Rangpur, Comilla and Gazipur. Other major cities elect a chairperson; they include Mymensingh, Gopalganj, Jessore, Bogra, Dinajpur, Saidpur,

Narayanganj and Rangamati. Mayors and chairs are elected for five-year terms. === Languages === More than 98 percent of people in Bangladesh speak Bengali, sometimes called Bangla, as their native language. Dialects of Bengali are spoken in some parts of the country, which include non-standard dialects (sometimes viewed as separate languages) such as Chatgaiya, Sylheti and Rangpuri. Pakistani Biharis, stranded since 1971 and living in Bangladeshi camps, speak Urdu. Rohingya refugees from Myanmar, living in Bangladeshi camps since 1978, speak Rohingya. Several indigenous minority languages are also spoken. Bengali is the official language. However, English is sometimes used secondarily for official purposes (especially in the legal system). Although laws were historically written in English, they were not translated into Bengali until 1987. Bangladesh's constitution and laws now exist in English and Bengali. English is used as a second language by the middle and upper classes, and is widely used in higher education. === Religion === Islam is the largest and the official state religion of Bangladesh, followed by 90 percent of the population. The country is home to most Bengali Muslims, the second-largest ethnic group in the Muslim world. Most Bangladeshi Muslims are Sunni, followed by Shia and Ahmadiya. About four percent are non-denominational Muslims. Bangladesh has the fourth-largest Muslim population in the world, and is the third-largest Muslim-majority country (after Indonesia and Pakistan). Sufism has a lengthy heritage in the region. The largest gathering of Muslims in Bangladesh is the Bishwa Ijtema, held annually by the Tablighi Jamaat. The Ijtema is the second-largest Muslim congregation in the world, after the Hajj. Hinduism is followed by 9.5 percent of the population; most are Bengali Hindus, and some are members of ethnic minority groups. Bangladeshi Hindus are the country's second-largest religious group and the third-largest Hindu community in the world, after those in India and Nepal. Hindus in Bangladesh are fairly evenly distributed, with concentrations in Gopalganj, Dinajpur, Sylhet, Sunamganj, Mymensingh, Khulna, Jessore, Chittagong and parts of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Despite their dwindling numbers, Hindus are the second-largest religious community (after the Muslims) in Dhaka. Buddhism is the third-largest religion, at 0.3 percent. Bangladeshi Buddhists are concentrated among ethnic groups in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (particularly the Chakma, Marma and Tanchangya peoples), and coastal Chittagong is home to a large number of Bengali Buddhists. Christianity is the fourth-largest religion, at 0.2 percent. The Constitution of Bangladesh declares Islam the state religion, but bans religion-based politics. It proclaims equal recognition of Hindus, Buddhists, Christians and people of all faiths. In 1972, Bangladesh was South Asia's first constitutionally-secular country. The U. S. State Department describes Bangladesh as a secular, pluralistic democracy. === Education === Bangladesh has a low literacy rate, which was estimated at 66.5 percent for males and 63.1 percent for females in 2014. The country's educational system is three-tiered and heavily subsidized, with the government operating many schools at the primary, secondary and higher-secondary levels and subsidizing many private schools. In the tertiary-education sector, the Bangladeshi government funds over 15 state universities through the University Grants Commission. The education system is divided into five levels: primary (first to fifth grade), junior secondary (sixth to eighth grade), secondary (ninth and tenth grade), higher secondary (11th and 12th grade) and tertiary. Five years of secondary education end with a Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examination; since 2009, the Primary Education Closing (PEC) examination has also been given. Students who pass the PEC examination proceed to four years of secondary or matriculation training, culminating in the SSC examination. Students who pass the PEC examination proceed to three years of junior-secondary education, culminating in the Junior School Certificate (JSC) examination. Students who pass this examination proceed to two years of secondary education, culminating in the SSC examination. Students who pass this examination proceed to two years of higher-secondary education, culminating in the Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSC) examination. Education is primarily in Bengali, but English is commonly taught and used. Many Muslim families send their children to part-time courses or full-time religious education in Bengali and Arabic in madrasas. Bangladesh conforms with the Education For All (EFA) objectives, the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and international declarations. Article 17 of the Bangladesh Constitution provides that all children between the ages of six and ten years receive a basic education free of charge. Universities in Bangladesh are of three general types: public (government-owned and -subsidized), private (privately owned universities) and international (operated and funded by international organizations). Bangladesh has 34 public, 64 private and two international universities; Bangladesh National University has the largest enrollment, and the University of Dhaka (established in 1921) is the oldest. Islamic University of Technology, commonly known as IUT, is a subsidiary of the Organisation of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC, representing 57 countries in Asia, Africa, Europe and South America). Asian University for Women in Chittagong is the preeminent South Asian liberal-arts

university for women, representing 14 Asian countries; its faculty hails from notable academic institutions in North America, Europe, Asia, Australia and the Middle East. BUET, CUET, KUET and RUET are Bangladesh's four public engineering universities. BUTex and DUET are two specialized engineering universities; BUTex specializes in textile engineering, and DUET offers higher education to diploma engineers. The NITER is a specialized public-private partnership institute which provides higher education in textile engineering. Science and technology universities include SUST, PUST, JUST and NSTU. Bangladeshi universities are accredited by and affiliated with the University Grants Commission (UGC), created by Presidential Order 10 in 1973. Medical education is provided by 29 government and private medical colleges. All medical colleges are affiliated with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Bangladesh's 2015 literacy rate rose to 71 percent due to education modernization and improved funding, with 16,087 schools and 2,363 colleges receiving Monthly Pay Order (MPO) facilities. According to education minister Nurul Islam Nahid, 27,558 madrasas and technical and vocational institutions were enlisted for the facility. 6,036 educational institutions were outside MPO coverage, and the government enlisted 1,624 private schools for MPO in 2010.

=== Health === Health and education levels remain relatively low, although they have improved as poverty levels have decreased. In rural areas, village doctors with little or no formal training constitute 62 percent of healthcare providers practising "modern medicine"; formally-trained providers make up four percent of the total health workforce. A Future Health Systems survey indicated significant deficiencies in the treatment practices of village doctors, with widespread harmful and inappropriate drug prescribing. Receiving health care from informal providers is encouraged. A 2007 study of 1,000 households in rural Bangladesh found that direct payments to formal and informal healthcare providers and indirect costs (loss of earnings because of illness) associated with illness were deterrents to accessing healthcare from qualified providers. A community survey of 6,183 individuals in rural Bangladesh found a gender difference in treatment-seeking behaviour, with women less likely to seek treatment than to men. The use of skilled birth attendant (SBA) services, however, rose from 2005 to 2007 among women from all socioeconomic quintiles except the highest. A health watch, a pilot community-empowerment tool, was successfully developed and implemented in south-eastern Bangladesh to improve the uptake and monitoring of public-health services. Bangladesh's poor health conditions are attributed to the lack of healthcare provision by the government. According to a 2010 World Bank report, 2009 healthcare spending was 3.35 percent of the country's GDP. The number of hospital beds is 3 per 10,000 population. Government spending on healthcare that year was 7.9 percent of the total budget; out-of-pocket expenditures totaled 96.5 percent. Malnutrition has been a persistent problem in Bangladesh, with the World Bank ranking the country first in the number of malnourished children worldwide. Twenty-six percent of the population (two-thirds of children under the age of five) are undernourished, and 46 percent of children are moderately or severely underweight. Forty-three to 60 percent of children under five are smaller than normal; one in five preschool children are vitamin-A deficient, and one in two are anemic. More than 45 percent of rural families and 76 percent of urban families were below the acceptable caloric-intake level.

== Culture == === Visual arts === The recorded history of art in Bangladesh can be traced to the 3rd century BCE, when terracotta sculptures were made in the region. In classical antiquity, a notable school of sculptural Hindu, Jain and Buddhist art developed in the Pala Empire and the Sena dynasty. Islamic art evolved since the 14th century. The architecture of the Bengal Sultanate saw a distinct style of domed mosques with complex niche pillars that had no minarets. Mughal Bengal's most celebrated artistic tradition was the weaving of Jamdani motifs on fine muslin, which is now classified by UNESCO as an intangible cultural heritage. Jamdani motifs were similar to Iranian textile art (buta motifs) and Western textile art (paisley). The Jamdani weavers in Dhaka received imperial patronage. Ivory and brass were also widely used in Mughal art. Pottery is widely used in Bengali culture. The modern art movement in Bangladesh took shape during the 1950s, particularly with the pioneering works of Zainul Abedin. East Bengal developed its own modernist painting and sculpture traditions, which were distinct from the art movements in West Bengal. The Art Institute Dhaka has been an important center for visual art in the region. Its annual Bengali New Year parade was enlisted as an intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO in 2016. Modern Bangladesh has produced many of South Asia's leading painters, including SM Sultan, Mohammad Kibria, Shahabuddin Ahmed, Kanak Chanpa Chakma, Kafil Ahmed, Saifuddin Ahmed, Qayyum Chowdhury, Rashid Choudhury, Quamrul Hassan, Rafiqun Nabi and Syed Jahangir, among others. Novera Ahmed and Nitun Kundu were the country's pioneers of modernist sculpture. The Chobi Mela is the largest photography festival in Asia.

=== Literature === The oldest evidence of writing in Bangladesh is the Mahasthan Brahmi Inscription, which dates back to the 3rd century BCE. In the

Gupta Empire, Sanskrit literature thrived in the region. Bengali developed from Sanskrit and Magadhi Prakrit in the 11th century. Bengali literature is a millennium-old tradition; the Charyapada are the earliest examples of Bengali poetry. Sufi spiritualism inspired many Bengali Muslim writers. During the Bengal Sultanate, medieval Bengali writers were influenced by Arabic and Persian works. Syed Alaol was a noted secular poet and translator. The Chandidas are an example of the Bangladeshi folk literature that developed during the Middle Ages. The Bengal Renaissance shaped the emergence of modern Bengali literature, including novels, short stories and science fiction. Rabindranath Tagore was the first non-European laureate of the Nobel Prize in Literature and is described as the Bengali Shakespeare. Kazi Nazrul Islam was a revolutionary poet who espoused spiritual rebellion against colonialism and fascism. Begum Rokeya was a pioneer of Bengali writing in English, with her early work of feminist science fiction. Other renaissance icons included Michael Madhusudan Dutt and Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay. The writer Syed Mujtaba Ali is noted for his cosmopolitan Bengali worldview. Humayun Ahmed was a popular writer of modern Bangladeshi magical realism and science fiction. Shamsur Rahman was the poet laureate of Bangladesh for many years. Jasimuddin was a renowned pastoral poet. Farrukh Ahmed, Sufia Kamal, Kaiser Haq and Nirmalendu Goon are important figures of modern Bangladeshi poetry. Notable writers of Bangladeshi novels include Mir Mosharraf Hossain, Akhteruzzaman Elias, Syed Waliullah, Shahidullah Kaiser, Shawkat Osman, Selina Hossain, Taslima Nasreen, Haripada Datta, Razia Khan, Anisul Hoque, Al Mahmud, Bipradash Barua, Tahmima Anam, Neamat Imam, Monica Ali, and Zia Haider Rahman. Many Bangladeshi writers, such as Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, K. Anis Ahmed and Farah Ghuznavi are acclaimed for their short stories. The annual Ekushey Book Fair and Dhaka Literature Festival, organized by the Bangla Academy, are among the largest literary festivals in South Asia. === Women in Bangladesh === Although, as of 2015, several women occupied major political office in Bangladesh, its women continue to live under a patriarchal social regime where violence is common. Whereas in India and Pakistan women participate less in the workforce as their education increases, the reverse is the case in Bangladesh. Bengal has a long history of feminist activism dating back to the 19th century. Begum Rokeya and Faizunnessa Chowdhurani played an important role in emancipating Bengali Muslim women from purdah, prior to the country's division, as well as promoting girls' education. Several women were elected to the Bengal Legislative Assembly in the British Raj. The first women's magazine, Begum, was published in 1948. In 2008, Bangladeshi female workforce participation stood at 26%. Women dominate blue collar jobs in the Bangladeshi garment industry. Agriculture, social services, healthcare and education are also major occupations for Bangladeshi women, while their employment in white collar positions has steadily increased. === Architecture === The architectural traditions of Bangladesh have a 2,500-year-old heritage. Terracotta architecture is a distinct feature of Bengal. Pre-Islamic Bengali architecture reached its pinnacle in the Pala Empire, when the Pala School of Sculptural Art established grand structures such as the Somapura Mahavihara. Islamic architecture began developing under the Bengal Sultanate, when local terracotta styles influenced medieval mosque construction. The Adina Mosque of united Bengal was the largest mosque built on the Indian subcontinent. The Sixty Dome Mosque was the largest medieval mosque built in Bangladesh, and is a fine example of Turkic-Bengali architecture. The Mughal style replaced indigenous architecture when Bengal became a province of the Mughal Empire and influenced the development of urban housing. The Kantajew Temple and Dhakeshwari Temple are excellent examples of late medieval Hindu temple architecture. Indo-Saracenic Revival architecture, based on Indo-Islamic styles, flourished during the British period. The zamindar gentry in Bangladesh built numerous Indo-Saracenic palaces and country mansions, such as the Ahsan Manzil, Tajhat Palace, Dighapatia Palace, Puthia Rajbari and Natore Rajbari. Bengali vernacular architecture is noted for pioneering the bungalow. Bangladeshi villages consist of thatched roofed houses made of natural materials like mud, straw, wood and bamboo. In modern times, village bungalows are increasingly made of tin. Muzharul Islam was the pioneer of Bangladeshi modern architecture. His varied works set the course of modern architectural practice in the country. Islam brought leading global architects, including Louis Kahn, Richard Neutra, Stanley Tigerman, Paul Rudolph, Robert Boughey and Konstantinos Doxiadis, to work in erstwhile East Pakistan. Louis Kahn was chosen to design the National Parliament Complex in Sher-e-Bangla Nagar. Kahn's monumental designs, combining regional red brick aesthetics, his own concrete and marble brutalism and the use of lakes to represent Bengali geography, are regarded as one of the masterpieces of the 20th century. In more recent times, award-winning architects like Rafiq Azam have set the course of contemporary architecture by adopting influences from the works of Islam and Kahn. === Performing arts === Theatre in Bangladesh includes various forms with a history dating back to the 4th century CE. It

includes narrative forms, song and dance forms, supra-personae forms, performances with scroll paintings, puppet theatre and processional forms. The Jatra is the most popular form of Bengali folk theatre. The dance traditions of Bangladesh include indigenous tribal and Bengali dance forms, as well as classical Indian dances, including the Kathak, Odissi and Manipuri dances. The music of Bangladesh features the Baul mystical tradition, listed by UNESCO as a Masterpiece of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Numerous lyric-based musical traditions, varying from one region to the next, exist, including Gombhira, Bhatiali and Bhawaiya. Folk music is accompanied by a one-stringed instrument known as the ektara. Other instruments include the dotara, dhol, flute, and tabla. Bengali classical music includes Tagore songs and Nazrul geeti. Bangladesh has a rich tradition of Indian classical music, which uses instruments like the sitar, tabla, sarod and santoor. === Textiles === The Nakshi Kantha is a centuries-old embroidery tradition for quilts, said to be indigenous to eastern Bengal (i.e. Bangladesh). The sari is the national dress for Bangladeshi women. Mughal Dhaka was renowned for producing the finest Muslin saris, including the famed Dhakai and Jamdani, the weaving of which is listed by UNESCO as one of the masterpieces of humanity's intangible cultural heritage. Bangladesh also produces the Rajshahi silk. The shalwar kameez is also widely worn by Bangladeshi women. In urban areas some women can be seen in western clothing. The kurta and sherwani are the national dress of Bangladeshi men; the lungi and dhoti are worn by them in informal settings. Aside from ethnic wear, domestically tailored suits and neckties are customarily worn by the country's men in offices, in schools and at social events. The handloom industry supplies 60–65% of the country's clothing demand. The Bengali ethnic fashion industry has flourished in the changing environment of the fashion world. The retailer Aarong is one of the most successful ethnic wear brands in South Asia. The development of the Bangladesh textile industry, which supplies leading international brands, has promoted the production and retail of modern Western attire locally, with the country now having a number of expanding local brands like Westecs and Yellow. Bangladesh is the world's second largest garments exporter. Among Bangladesh's fashion designers, Bibi Russell has received international acclaim for her "Fashion for Development" shows. === Cuisine === White rice is the staple of Bangladeshi cuisine, along with many vegetables and lentils. Rice preparations also include Bengali biryanis, pulaos, and khichuris. Mustard sauce, ghee, sunflower oil and fruit chutneys are widely used in Bangladeshi cooking. Fish is the main source of protein in Bengali cuisine. The Hilsa is the national fish and immensely popular across Bangladesh. Other kinds of fish eaten include rohu, butterfly, catfish, tilapia and barramundi. Fish eggs are a gourmet delicacy. Seafood holds an important place in Bengali cuisine, especially lobsters, shrimps and dried fish. Meat consumption includes chicken, beef, mutton, venison, duck and squab. In Chittagong, Mezban feasts are a popular tradition featuring the serving of hot beef curry. In Sylhet, the shatkora lemons are used to marinate dishes. In the tribal Hill Tracts, bamboo shoot cooking is prevalent. Bangladesh has a vast spread of desserts, including distinctive sweets like Rôshogolla, Rôshomalai, Chomchom, Mishti Doi and Kalojaam. Pithas are traditional boiled desserts made with rice or fruits. Halwa is served during religious festivities. Naan, paratha, luchi and bakarkhani are the main local breads. Black tea is offered to guests as a gesture of welcome. Kebabs are widely popular across Bangladesh, particularly seekh kebabs, chicken tikka and shashliks. Bangladesh shares its culinary heritage with the neighboring Indian state of West Bengal. The two regions have several differences, however. In Muslim-majority Bangladesh, meat consumption is greater; whereas in Hindu-majority West Bengal, vegetarianism is more prevalent. The Bangladeshi diaspora dominates the South Asian restaurant industry in many Western countries, particularly in the United Kingdom. === Festivals === Pohela Boishakh, the Bengali new year, is the major festival of Bengali culture and sees widespread festivities. Of the major holidays celebrated in Bangladesh, only Pohela Boishakh comes without any preexisting expectations (specific religious identity, culture of gift-giving, etc.). Unlike holidays like Eid al-Fitr, where dressing up in lavish clothes has become a norm, or Christmas where exchanging gifts has become an integral part of the holiday, Pohela Boishakh is really about celebrating the simpler, rural roots of the Bengal. As a result, more people can participate in the festivities together without the burden of having to reveal one's class, religion, or financial capacity. Other cultural festivals include Nabonno, and Poush Parbon both of which are Bengali harvest festivals. The Muslim festivals of Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, Milad un Nabi, Muharram, Chand Raat, Shab-e-Barat; the Hindu festivals of Durga Puja, Janmashtami and Rath Yatra; the Buddhist festival of Buddha Purnima, which marks the birth of Gautama Buddha, and Christian festival of Christmas are national holidays in Bangladesh and see the most widespread celebrations in the country. Alongside are national days like the remembrance of 21 February 1952 Language Movement Day (International Mother Language Day), Independence Day and Victory Day. On Language

Movement Day, people congregate at the Shaheed Minar in Dhaka to remember the national heroes of the Bengali Language Movement, and at the Jatiyo Smriti Soudho on Independence Day and Victory Day to remember the national heroes of the Bangladesh Liberation War. These occasions are observed with public ceremonies, parades, rallies by citizens, political speeches, fairs, concerts, and various other public and private events, celebrating the history and traditions of Bangladesh. TV and radio stations broadcast special programs and patriotic songs, and many schools and colleges organise fairs, festivals, and concerts that draw the participation of citizens from all levels of Bangladeshi society. === Sports === Cricket is one of the most popular sports in Bangladesh, followed by football. The national cricket team participated in their first Cricket World Cup in 1999, and the following year was granted elite Test cricket status. They have however struggled, recording only ten test match victories: one against Australia, one against England, one against Sri Lanka in Sri Lanka, five against Zimbabwe (one in 2005, one in 2013 in Zimbabwe, and three in 2014), two in a 2–0 series victory over the West Indies in the West Indies in 2009. Six of Bangladesh's ten test match victories came in between the years 2014 to 2017. The team has been more successful in One Day International cricket (ODI). They reached the quarter-final of the 2015 Cricket World Cup. They also reached the semi-final of the 2017 ICC Champions Trophy. They whitewashed Pakistan in a home ODI series in 2015 followed by home ODI series wins against India and South Africa. They also won home ODI series by 4–0 in 2010 against New Zealand and whitewashed them in the home ODI series in 2013. In July 2010, they celebrated their first-ever win over England in England. In late 2012, they won a five-match home ODI series 3-2 against a full-strength West Indies National team. In 2011, Bangladesh successfully co-hosted the ICC Cricket World Cup 2011 with India and Sri Lanka. They also hosted the 2014 ICC World Twenty20 championship. Bangladesh hosted the Asia Cup on four occasions in 2000, 2012, 2014, and 2016. In 2012 Asia Cup, Bangladesh beat India and Sri Lanka but lost the final game against Pakistan. However, it was the first time Bangladesh had advanced to the final of any top-class international cricket tournament. They reached the final again at the 2016 Asia Cup. They participated at the 2010 Asian Games in Guangzhou, defeating Afghanistan to claim their Gold Medal in the first-ever cricket tournament held in the Asian Games. Bangladeshi cricketer Sakib Al Hasan is No.1 on the ICC's all-rounder rankings in all three formats of the cricket. Football is also a popular sports in Bangladesh. Though the men's team has not attained much success, the women's team has proven successful. In 2017 the Bangladeshi Under-15 Gils won the 2017 SAFF U-15 Women's Championship. Kabaddi – very popular in Bangladesh – is the national game. Other popular sports include field hockey, tennis, badminton, handball, basketball, volleyball, chess, shooting, angling. The National Sports Council regulates 42 different sporting federations. Bangladesh has five grandmasters in chess. Among them, Niaz Murshed was the first grandmaster in South Asia. In another achievement, Margarita Mamun, a Russian rhythmic gymnast of Bangladeshi origin, won gold medal in 2016 Summer Olympics and became world champion in 2013 and 2014. === Media and cinema === The Bangladeshi press is diverse, outspoken and privately owned. Over 200 newspapers are published in the country. Bangladesh Betar is the state-run radio service. The British Broadcasting Corporation operates the popular BBC Bangla news and current affairs service. Bengali broadcasts from Voice of America are also very popular. Bangladesh Television (BTV) is the state-owned television network. There more than 20 privately owned television networks, including several news channels. Freedom of the media remains a major concern, due to government attempts at censorship and the harassment of journalists. The cinema of Bangladesh dates back to 1898, when films began screening at the Crown Theatre in Dhaka. The first bioscope on the subcontinent was established in Dhaka that year. The Dhaka Nawab Family patronized the production of several silent films in the 1920s and 30s. In 1931, the East Bengal Cinematograph Society released the first full-length feature film in Bangladesh, titled the Last Kiss. The first feature film in East Pakistan, Mukh O Mukhosh, was released in 1956. During the 1960s, 25–30 films were produced annually in Dhaka. By the 2000s, Bangladesh produced 80–100 films a year. While the Bangladeshi film industry has achieved limited commercial success, the country has produced notable independent filmmakers. Zahir Raihan was a prominent documentary-maker who was assassinated in 1971. The late Tareque Masud is regarded as one of Bangladesh's outstanding directors due to his numerous productions on historical and social issues. Masud was honored by FIPRESCI at the 2002 Cannes Film Festival for his film The Clay Bird. Tanvir Mokammel, Mostofa Sarwar Farooki, Humayun Ahmed, Alamgir Kabir, and Chashi Nazrul Islam are some of the prominent directors of Bangladeshi cinema. === Museums and libraries === The Varendra Research Museum is the oldest museum in Bangladesh. It houses important collections from both the pre-Islamic and Islamic periods, including the sculptures of the Pala-Sena School of Art and the Indus Valley Civilization; as

well as Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian manuscripts and inscriptions. The Ahsan Manzil, the former residence of the Nawab of Dhaka, is a national museum housing collections from the British Raj. It was the site of the founding conference of the All India Muslim League and hosted many British Viceroys in Dhaka. The Tajhat Palace Museum preserves artifacts of the rich cultural heritage of North Bengal, including Hindu-Buddhist sculptures and Islamic manuscripts. The Mymensingh Museum houses the personal antique collections of Bengali aristocrats in central Bengal. The Ethnological Museum of Chittagong showcases the lifestyle of various tribes in Bangladesh. The Bangladesh National Museum is located in Ramna, Dhaka and has a rich collection of antiquities. The Liberation War Museum documents the Bangladeshi struggle for independence and the 1971 genocide. In ancient times, manuscripts were written on palm leaves, tree barks, parchment vellum and terracotta plates and preserved at monasteries known as viharas. The Hussain Shahi dynasty established royal libraries during the Bengal Sultanate. Libraries were established in each district of Bengal by the zamindar gentry during the Bengal Renaissance in the 19th century. The trend of establishing libraries continued until the beginning of World War II. In 1854, four major public libraries were opened, including the Bogra Woodburn Library, the Rangpur Public Library, the Jessore Institute Public Library and the Barisal Public Library. The Northbrook Hall Public Library was established in Dhaka in 1882 in honour of Lord Northbrook, the Governor-General. Other libraries established in the British period included the Victoria Public Library, Natore (1901), the Sirajganj Public Library (1882), the Rajshahi Public Library (1884), the Comilla Birchandra Library (1885), the Shah Makhdum Institute Public Library, Rajshahi (1891), the Noakhali Town Hall Public Library (1896), the Prize Memorial Library, Sylhet (1897), the Chittagong Municipality Public Library (1904) and the Varendra Research Library (1910). The Great Bengal Library Association was formed in 1925. The Central Public Library of Dhaka was established in 1959. The National Library of Bangladesh was established in 1972. The World Literature Center, founded by Ramon Magsaysay Award winner Abdullah Abu Sayeed, is noted for operating numerous mobile libraries across Bangladesh and was awarded the UNESCO Jon Amos Comenius Medal. == See also == Index of Bangladesh-related articles Outline of Bangladesh == References == == Cited sources == Ahmed, Salahuddin (2004). *Bangladesh: Past and Present*. APH Publishing. ISBN 9788176484695. Baxter, C (1997). *Bangladesh, from a Nation to a State*. Westview Press. ISBN 0-8133-3632-5. OCLC 47885632. Lewis, David (2011). *Bangladesh: Politics, Economy and Civil Society*. Cambridge University Press. ISBN 978-1-139-50257-3. == Further reading == == External links == Government Official website Official Site of The Tourism Board of Bangladesh Official Site of Bangladesh Investment Development Authority General information "Bangladesh". *The World Factbook*. Central Intelligence Agency. Bangladesh from the BBC News Bangladesh from UCB Libraries GovPubs Bangladesh at Curlie (based on DMOZ) Bangladesh Encyclopædia Britannica entry Wikimedia Atlas of Bangladesh Geographic data related to Bangladesh at OpenStreetMap Key Development Forecasts for Bangladesh from International Futures