

LECTURE 2

Profile of Bangladesh:
(Introducing Bangladesh)

PROFILE OF BANGLADESH

Location

Approximately 147,570 square kilometers (about 56,980 square miles) in size, Bangladesh is among the most densely populated countries in the world. It is situated across a flat deltaic plain that was created by the gathering of three major river systems: the Ganges (Padma), Brahmaputra (Jamuna), and Meghna rivers.

LOCATION OF BANGLADESH





PROFILE OF BANGLADESH

Location

Most of the country's surfaces are flat and fertile, although the main natural landscape components are the Sundarbans located at the southeastern part of Bangladesh (the largest mangrove forest in the world apart from being a UNESCO World Heritage Site) in the southwest and the Chittagong Hill Tracts on the southeastern border which present greater altitudes than the rest of the country. There's also St. Martin's Island, one of the several offshore islands located within the Bay of Bengal.

PROFILE OF BANGLADESH

Territory

The territory of Bangladesh extends from 20'34N to 26'38N latitude and from 88'01E to 92'41E longitude. Maximum extension is about 440 km in the E-W direction and 760 km in the NNW-SSE direction.

PROFILE OF BANGLADESH

Territory

The Indian States of West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya and Tripura border Bangladesh in the west, north and east respectively. Myanmar forms the southern part of the eastern frontier. The total length of the land border is about 4,246 km, of which 93.9% is shared with India and about 6.1% with Myanmar.

PROFILE OF BANGLADESH

Territory

Bangladesh is bounded in the south by the Bay of Bengal. Although Bangladesh is a small country, the length of the coastline is more than 580 km. The territorial waters of Bangladesh extend 12 nautical miles (22.22 km) and the area of the high seas extending to 200 nautical miles (370.40 km) measured from the baselines constitutes the economic zone of the country.

PROFILE OF BANGLADESH

Territory

The Bay of Bengal is well-known for its cyclones, which whip up its water, sending them crashing onto the coastal plains of the offshore islands, occasionally causing floods. Bangladesh is fringed on the southwest by the huge expanse of mangrove forest known as sundarbans, the abode of the famous Royal bengal tiger.

PROFILE OF BANGLADESH

People

Bangladesh ranks 5th in Asia in terms of population density and is considered the 8th most populous country in the world. The figure of 174.33 million inhabitants corresponds to 1333 persons per sq km. The sex ratio of the population is about 98 males per 100 females. The intercensal growth rate of population is 1.22 per annum and the literacy rate is 76.36 for the population of age seven years and above.

PROFILE OF BANGLADESH

People

There are four ethnic groups in Bangladesh: Dravidian, proto-Australian, Mongolian and Bengali. The Dravidian element of population is represented mainly by the Oraons, a tribe of central Indian origin. This group is - with only a few thousand persons - the smallest ethnic element in the country. The Khasia and Santals, mainly laborers in the tea gardens at Sylhet, belong to the proto-Australian group.

PROFILE OF BANGLADESH

People

The Mongolian group of Bangladesh's population is confined to the hills along the southern spur of the shillong plateau, in chittagong hill tracts and Madhupur forest. The Mongolian group consists of about 500,000 to 600,000. Chakma, Tipra, Garo, Murang and Moghs are the major Mongoloid tribes in Bangladesh.

PROFILE OF BANGLADESH

People

The Chittagong Hill Tracts host 13 tribes, who are divided into nearly a hundred sub-tribes. The Bangalis are by far the largest group of all, constituting about 98% of the total population of the country. This group is non-tribal and heterogeneous in origin. In respect to religion, about 88% of people in Bangladesh are Muslims, 11% Hindus, the rest being Buddhists, Christians and animists.

PROFILE OF BANGLADESH

People

Bangladesh is one of the least urbanised areas of South Asia. According to the Census of January 2001, the percentage of urban population is 23.39 while that of rural population 76.61. There are only four cities (city corporations), although there are more than 100 towns of varying sizes. Dhaka, the capital and the largest metropolis of the country, has a population of 9.91 million.

PROFILE OF BANGLADESH

People

Chittagong, the port city, is the second most important metropolis, having population of 3.20 million. A number of industrial areas have been developed in the city. Khulna, in the southwest, has become a commercial and industrial centre; the mongla port and the growth of Daulatpur industrial area have contributed to increasing its population to 1.23 million. Rajshahi, well-known as a centre of education, is the fourth largest city, having a population of 0.65 million.

PROFILE OF BANGLADESH

Resources

Because of a different geological environment, important mineral deposits of Bangladesh are natural gas, coal, limestone, hardrock, gravel, boulder, glass sand, construction sand, white clay, brick clay, peat, and beach sand heavy minerals.

PROFILE OF BANGLADESH

Resources

Tertiary Barail shales occurring within the oil and gas windows have generated natural gas and oil found in Bangladesh. After generation, gas and oil have migrated upward through multi-kilometre rock layers above, to reach and accumulate in suitable sandstone reservoirs in the Neogene Bhuban and Bokabil rock units.

PROFILE OF BANGLADESH

Resources

Geologically, Bangladesh occupies a greater part of the bengal basin and the country is covered by Tertiary folded sedimentary rocks (12%) in the north, north eastern and eastern parts; uplifted Pleistocene residuum (8%) in the north western, mid northern and eastern parts; and Holocene deposits (80%) consisting of unconsolidated sand, silt and clay.

PROFILE OF BANGLADESH

Resources

Most of the rivers in Bangladesh are either tributaries or distributaries of the Ganga, or the Brahmaputra, or the Meghna River. An imaginary line from the Chhotonagpur Highlands to the Garo Hills, through the North Bengal, separates the entire Bengal Plain into two, the upper one and the lower one.

PROFILE OF BANGLADESH

Resources

The upper one to the northwest and north has all the tributaries of Ganga and Brahmaputra rivers. The lower one towards south has the distributaries of those two rivers. But towards east of this lower plain has the tributaries of Meghna River. The Bengal plain has some independent rivers to the west originating from the Chhotonagpur Highlands, and to the east originating from the Lushai Hills, and falling directly to the sea.

PROFILE OF BANGLADESH

Resources

Bangladesh is endowed with plenty of surface and groundwater resources. The surface water resources comprise water available from flowing rivers and static water bodies as ponds, beels and haors. Surface water inflows of the country vary from a maximum of about 140,000 m³/s in August to a minimum of about 7,000 m³/s in February.

PROFILE OF BANGLADESH

Resources

Two main rivers, the Brahmaputra and the Ganges account for more than 80% of streamflows. The alluvial aquifer systems of Bangladesh are some of the most productive groundwater reservoirs. The aquifer system generally consists of three lithological units, an upper silty clay and silt layer, a middle layer of fine to very fine sand, and a lower layer of fine to coarse sand constituting the main aquifer. The upper layer is usually 30 to 60 m thick, the middle layer is about 20 m thick and lower aquifer is about 100 m thick.

PROFILE OF BANGLADESH

Administrative Units

There are 8 divisions in the administration of Bangladesh including, Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, Rajshahi, Barisal, Sylhet, Rangpur and Mymensingh. There are 64 districts, 495 upazilas and thana 652 thanas, 4578 unions, 87,362 villages and 12 City Corporations as of 2022.

PROFILE OF BANGLADESH

Administrative Units

The City Corporations include Dhaka North City Corporation, Dhaka South City Corporation, Chittagong city corporation, Khulna city corporation, Rajshahi city corporation, Sylhet city corporation, Barisal city corporation, Rangpur City Corporation, Mymensingh City Corporation, Narayanganj city corporation, Comilla city corporation and Gazipur City Corporation.

PROFILE OF BANGLADESH

Structure of Government

Any modern state stands on three basic pillars: executive, judiciary and legislature. Most of the newly independent states, while adopting their constitutions, have been vigilant about giving attention to the type, nature, and powers of the executive branch of the government. Several models are there to fashion the details of the executive.

PROFILE OF BANGLADESH

Structure of Government

Several models are there to fashion the details of the executive. Bangladesh followed in turn the presidential and the parliamentary models of executive. The legal basis of the Bangladesh provisional government, established on 10 April 1972, was provided by the proclamation of independence which was to take effect from 26 March 1971.

PROFILE OF BANGLADESH

Structure of Government

Jatiya Sangsad (parliament) of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Jatiya Sangsad is vested with the legislative powers of the Republic. Jatiya Sangsad consists of 300 members elected in accordance with law from single territorial constituencies by direct election.

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Structure of Government

Members of Jatiya Sangsad are elected for five years. Unless dissolved earlier constitutionally by the President, Sangsad stands dissolved on the expiry of the period from the date of its first meeting. President can dissolve the Sangsad anytime under special circumstances. The term of the Sangsad can be extended for a maximum period of one year in a state of war.

PROFILE OF BANGLADESH

References

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