



Learn Your World: Bangladesh

Skills and Professional Development



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Economy

GDP (purchasing power parity in USD)

Population
Corruption

\$686.598 billion (2017 estimate)
162,951,560 (2016 estimate)
According to Transparency International's 2016 Corruption Perception Index, Bangladesh ranked 145th "cleanest" (i.e., least corrupt) out of the 176 countries surveyed.
Additional resources
Bangladesh national tourism portal www.parjatan.gov.bd
[*A History of Bangladesh*](#), by Willem van Schendel, a professor of Modern History of Asia at Amsterdam University

Bangladesh lies north of the Bay of Bengal and is surrounded by India, except for a small border with Myanmar. After gaining independence in 1971 from the state of Pakistan, it became a democracy in 1990. Prone to monsoon flooding, the country is sometimes called "the playground of seasons" because it has six — not four — separate seasons, including grismo (summer), barsha (rainy), sharat (autumn), hemanto (cool), sheet (winter), and bashonto (spring).

Bangla, or Bengali, is the official language of Bangladesh. English is the second most prevalent. Communication is determined by how well the parties know each other. For instance, indirect communication is more common with acquaintances. A light handshake in business situations is recommended. Using the right hand is the most important custom to remember when dining or conducting business. When passing a dish, handing over a document, or accepting anything, use only the right hand. Men typically shake hands with other men but should wait for women to greet them and follow their lead. Women often greet with a polite head nod.

Traffic is a customary excuse to be late to meetings, which often open with small talk. Decisions are typically disseminated rather than made. Instead of saying "no," Bangladeshis will use phrases like, "we will try," "that may be difficult," or "we will give it some thought." It is important to ask questions in several ways to ascertain what is meant by a vague response. Conservative attire is required for both men and women in business and formal meetings.

When visiting a Bangladeshi, foreigners should not give alcohol or non-halal meat because most Bangladeshis are Muslim. Sweets or chocolates are preferable and should always be presented with both hands. Many people eat with their hands but it's OK to request utensils. Guests are generally served first, followed by the oldest, which continues in order of seniority. Do not start eating until the oldest person at the table begins. It is best to pace yourself to allow for more servings because guests are constantly urged to take more food.

If time permits, try to catch a cricket match, the most popular sport in Bangladesh.

[Tasnuva Shelley](#)



Barrister at Law, Legal Advisor

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