

Bangladesh Development Initiative

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Press Release

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2013 BDI Lifetime Achievement Award

The Bangladesh Development Initiative (BDI), a non-partisan research and advocacy group of independent scholars based in the United States, is pleased to announce that Professor Nurul Islam, Research Fellow Emeritus, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), is the recipient of the 2013 BDI Lifetime Achievement Award.

The award established in 2012 is designed to “honor outstanding individuals who, through their scholarly and/or policy and civic engagements, have contributed significantly to understanding the challenges, and pursuing the ideals that would lead to the development of Bangladesh and improving the quality of life for its citizens.”

Through the award, the Executive Committee of the BDI would like to recognize and celebrate the work of a scholar of high reputation and integrity whose work has inspired others to develop ideas through rigorous research and apply these for the betterment of the people of Bangladesh.

Throughout his long and distinguished career as an economist, researcher, social scientist and public intellectual, Professor Islam has worked tirelessly to uphold the welfare and interest of Bangladesh. Through his many books, articles and speeches, he has contributed to a corpus of knowledge that has improved our understanding of economic theory and planning, poverty, the process of economic growth, and the role of politics in a society.

As an academic, Professor Islam had a brilliant career, and has earned a reputation as one of world’s leading development planners. He received his B.A. and an M.A. in economics from Dhaka University (ranked first in first class), and an M.A. and a Ph.D. in economics from Harvard University. He was a Nuffield Foundation Fellow at the London School of Economics and at Cambridge University. He served as a Rockefeller Fellow at the Netherlands School of Economics, and was a Fellow at St Anthony's College, Oxford University. He has served as a professor of economics and as the Chair of the Department of Economics at Dhaka University. Among his twenty nine books are: *Development Planning in Bangladesh: A Study in Political Economy*, published by UPL in 1979 with reprint in 1993; and *Making of a Nation: Bangladesh — An Economist’s Tale*, Dhaka, Bangladesh: University Press Ltd., 2003.

BDI is a non-profit corporation promoting socio-economic development in Bangladesh.

Professor Islam has played an active role and has made many contributions outside the world of academe. He has served as the Assistant Director-General, Economic and Social Policy Department, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); as the Deputy Chairman/Minister, Bangladesh Planning Commission Ministry, Government of Bangladesh, 1972–75; as the Chairman of the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS); as the Director of the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics. He served as a member and Chairman of the UN Committee of Development Planning Policy; Member, UN Committee on Development Planning, 1974–77; Member, Executive Committee, Third World Forum, 1974–77; Member, Executive Committee, International Economic Association (IEA), 1968–74; Treasurer, IEA, 1974–75. He also served on the editorial board of *The World Economy* (1977–80) and on the advisory committee of *World Development* (1977–97).

His role as the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission of the newly established nation was critical and historic. Along with a distinguished cohort of fellow planners and economists, he led the group in planning to rebuild the nation after the massive and sustained destruction during the nine-month long liberation war. He was also a key player and possibly the youngest member of the team of economists who advised Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on their analysis and recommendations (*Two Economies Thesis: The Road to Six Points*) which became known as the *Six Point Movement* that eventually culminated in the liberation of Bangladesh. He is the only surviving member of the original group which first put forward the thesis.

Professor Islam has received a number of awards, including the Bangladesh Bank Award (2009) for his original contributions to theoretical and applied development economics in the domestic, regional and international arena.

The BDI Lifetime Achievement award will be formally presented at BDI's International Conference organized with the Institute for South Asia Studies on the UC Berkeley campus, tentatively scheduled for November 2015. As the winner of the award, Professor Islam will have the opportunity to present a lecture on a subject of his choice. For more information on the planned BDI International Conference 2015, please visit www.bdiusa.org or contact Dr. Munir Quddus, President BDI; muguddus@pvamu.edu.