

The Real Politics of Bangladesh: *The Inside Story of Local Power Brokers*

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Politics and Governance

- Since 1991 Parliamentary form of government
- Bangladesh's performance (economic & social indicators) has been impressive
- Governance has been poor – corruption, weak rule of law, institutional weaknesses, politicization & growing violence/impunity
- Political economy analysis is inadequate – need to undertake micro-level studies to formulate appropriate policies

Overview of Research

- Understand local power structures
- Focus on *mastaans* ('mafia') – local power brokers
- Try to understand corruption, political violence and distribution of benefits from economic growth using a variety of methods
- Research analyses a variety of data – economic interests & criminal activities; perpetrators & victims; process (violence & negotiation); election violence.

Politicians, Mastaans & Governance: A Survey of Journalists on Local Power Structures

Research Design

- Survey of journalists
- 7 constituencies, 1 randomly selected for each division of Bangladesh
- Variety of contexts: peri-urban, rural, border town, coastal

Top forms of economic crimes: land grabbing and drug dealing

	Case Name by Division	Description	Forms of Crime for Profit
1.	Dhaka Constituency	Peri Urban	Land grabbing (95.8%) Drug Dealing (79.2%) Extortion (45.8%)
2.	Sylhet Constituency	Semi Rural	Land grabbing (90.4%) Drug Dealing (69.2%) Theft (69.2%)
3.	Chittagong Constituency	Semi Rural/ Border	Land grabbing (92.2%) Drug Dealing (78.4%) Drug Smuggling (72.5%)
4.	Rangpur Constituency	Rural	Drug Dealing (76.3%) Drug Smuggling (71.0%) Land grabbing (54.8%)
5.	Rajshahi Constituency	Rural	Drug Dealing (94.7%) Drug Smuggling (68.4%) Theft (68.4%)
6.	Khulna Constituency	Rural/ Coastal	Land grabbing (87.2%) Drug Dealing (61.7%) Extortion (57.4%)
7.	Barisal Constituency	Semi Rural	Land grabbing (74.1%) Drug Dealing (72.2%) Theft (59.3%)

Top individuals involved in land grabbing include politicians and mastaans

	Case Name by Division	Description	Types of People Involved
1.	Dhaka Constituency	Peri Urban	Politician (87.5%) Youth leader (62.5%) Mastaan (58.3%)
2.	Sylhet Constituency	Semi Rural	Politician (86.3%) Community leader, youth leader, mastaan (49.0%)
3.	Chittagong Constituency	Semi Rural/ Border	Politician (80.4%) Mastaan (70.6%) Community leader (49.0%)
4.	Rangpur Constituency	Rural	Politician (73.9%) Mastaan (54.3%) Gov't official (43.5%)
5.	Rajshahi Constituency	Rural	Politician (78.9%) Mastaan (63.2%) Police (36.8%)
6.	Khulna Constituency	Rural/ Coastal	Politician (93.6%) Mastaan (61.7%) Gov't official (48.9%)
7.	Barisal Constituency	Semi Rural	Politician (85.2%) Mastaan (66.7%) Gov't official (61.1%)

Variation in the level of *mastaan* power, correlated with local economies

	Case Name by Division	Description	Average Score (1-5)
1.	Dhaka Constituency	Peri Urban	4.08
2.	Sylhet Constituency	Semi Rural	3.12
3.	Chittagong Constituency	Semi Rural/ Border	3.67
4.	Rangpur Constituency	Rural	2.89
5.	Rajshahi Constituency	Rural	2.74
6.	Khulna Constituency	Rural/ Coastal	4.09
7.	Barisal Constituency	Semi Rural	3.80

Thank You

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