



ISAS-KAS PANEL DISCUSSION

Bangladesh After the 2026 Election: What Comes Next?

16 March 2026 (Monday) | 3.30pm – 5.30pm (SGT)
MEI Seminar Room, Level 6 | Middle East Institute
29 Heng Mui Keng Terrace, Block B, Singapore 119620

Programme

- 3.00pm Registration
- 3.30pm **Opening Remarks**
Mr Andreas Klein
Director
Regional Programme Political Dialogue Asia
Konrad Adenauer Stiftung
- 3.35pm **ISAS-KAS Panel Discussion**
Chairperson
Associate Professor Iqbal Singh Sevea
Director
Institute of South Asian Studies
National University of Singapore
- 3.40pm Panellists
Dr Mirza M Hassan
Senior Research Fellow
BRAC Institute of Governance and Development
BRAC University, Bangladesh
- Professor Amena Akhtar Mohsin**
Adjunct Professor
Independent University, Bangladesh
- Mr Ashish Banik**
Director
Bangladesh Enterprise Institute, Bangladesh
- Associate Professor Md Saidul Islam**
Post-Graduate Coordinator of Sociology
Nanyang Technological University
- 4.40pm **Interactive Session**
- 5.30pm **End of Panel Discussion / Tea Reception**

About the Panel Discussion

Bangladesh's parliamentary election of 12 February 2026 marks a major moment in the country's post-uprising transition. Held alongside a referendum on constitutional reform, the vote took place in a context shaped by institutional strain, shifting alliances and competing visions of governance and national identity. Yet it also represents a renewed turn to electoral politics and an opportunity to rebuild stability after nearly two years of uncertainty following the collapse of Sheikh Hasina's government and the interim administration led by Muhammad Yunus.

The landslide victory of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, alongside the presence of a resurgent Jamaat-e-Islami and newer actors like the student-led National Citizens Party emerging from the 2024 protest movement, suggest that the current moment presents a new opportunity.

The election raises important questions about the direction of governance, reform and political competition in the years ahead. How will the new government balance economic recovery, institutional reform and political inclusion? What role will Islamist parties, youth-led movements and civil society play in shaping the evolving political landscape? And how might the referendum and constitutional reform agenda influence the structure of the state and democratic practice going forward?

Beyond domestic politics, Bangladesh's relations with India, China and the United States, as well as broader regional dynamics, will be central to its next phase of development. This panel brings together scholars and practitioners to reflect on whether this moment can lay the groundwork for a more stable, inclusive and forward-looking political order in Bangladesh after the 2026 vote.

About the Panellists

Dr Mirza M Hassan, PhD, is Advisor, Governance and Politics cluster, at BRAC Institute of Governance and Development, BRAC University. His research largely focuses on political development, state-business relations, urban governance and local governance, the justice sector and human rights and related issues in South Asia, the Pacific region and North Africa. He has more than 20 years of consulting experience on these issues for the Department for International Development, The Asia Foundation, the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme, CARE Bangladesh and other development agencies. He is well versed in conducting political economy analysis, institutional and stakeholder analysis and using mixed methods.

Dr Hassan received his PhD in Development Studies from the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London, and completed his Master's in Urban Studies and Planning with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge. He is also an honorary Academic Fellow of the Institute of Development Policy Management, University of Manchester, United Kingdom

Professor Amena Mohsin served as Professor in the Department of International Relations, University of Dhaka (August 1981-January 2025). Currently, she is an Adjunct Professor at the Independent University of Bangladesh, Dhaka. She graduated from the same department and later received her MA and PhD degrees from the University of Hawaii, United States, and Cambridge University, United Kingdom, respectively.

Professor Mohsin has received several national and international fellowships, which include the East-West Center Graduate Fellowship, CIDA International Fellowship, Commonwealth Staff Fellowship, SSRC Fellowship and Freedom Foundation Fellowship. She writes on rights, gender and minority, state, democracy, civil-military relations, borders, human security and violent extremism. She has authored, edited and co-edited several academic books on security and rights issues.

Mr Ashish Banik is a foreign policy and security analyst with over 17 years of experience working with leading think tanks and policy institutions in Bangladesh, South Asia and at the global level. Currently, He is serving as Deputy Director at the Bangladesh Enterprise Institute, a civil society think tank in Dhaka and Co-Principal Investigator for the New Frontiers in Research Fund, Canada. He serves as a Member of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict – South Asia Chapter and is associated with the International Council of Voluntary Agencies' Asia Pacific Network.

His work spans foreign policy analysis on regional and global issues, peacebuilding, conflict prevention and governance. It places a strong focus on political reconciliation, humanitarian response, climate security, regional cooperation and the prevention of violent extremism. He has led and contributed to numerous European Union, United States (US) Agency for International Development, Global Affairs Canada, United Nations Women, Danish International Development Agency, US Institute of Peace, Global Center on Cooperative Security, ICMA, Asia Foundation and NED-funded projects, including counter-radicalisation, democratic governance, youth engagement and peacebuilding initiatives across Bangladesh and conflict-affected regions such as Cox's Bazar and the Chittagong Hill Tracts. He extensively worked on issues relating to Border Management of Bangladesh with India and Myanmar.

Mr Banik has undertaken policy-oriented research and consultancy for institutions such as the Overseas Development Institute, United Kingdom, Global Women's Institute, United States, University of Fraser Valley, Canada, Research Initiatives Bangladesh, Humanitarian Dialogue, BRAC, RCSS and Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict, and has presented findings at high-level national, regional and international forums. He is widely published in academic volumes, policy journals and national platforms on South and Southeast Asian foreign policy, security dynamics and conflict prevention.

Associate Professor Md Saidul Islam (PhD, York University, Canada) is Associate Professor and Post-Graduate Coordinator of Sociology at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. He was a Visiting Scholar at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Visiting Research Associate at the University of Nottingham Malaysia.

His research spans international development, environmental sociology and political Islam. He has published eight books and over seventy peer-reviewed articles and book chapters. His major works include *Islam and Democracy in South Asia* (Palgrave, 2020) and *The Jamaat Questions in Bangladesh* (Routledge, 2024). His forthcoming book, *The Anatomy of Revolt: The July Revolution and the Struggle for Democracy in Bangladesh*, is under contract with Oxford University Press. He received the Canadian Sociological Association's Early Investigator Award (2015).

Associate Professor Islam has taught in Canada, the United States, China and Singapore, and has delivered keynote addresses at major global platforms, including the Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Economic Forum and MIT.

About the Co-Hosts

Associate Professor Iqbal Singh Sevea is Director of the Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS) at the National University of Singapore (NUS). He is an internationally recognised scholar of contemporary and modern South Asia whose core research focuses on South Asian politics, social and political thought, governance and Islamic thought. He has held academic appointments in leading institutions globally and is the author of several publications.

Before joining ISAS, Associate Professor Sevea was an Associate Professor with the Department of History at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill where he was a faculty member from 2012 to

2021. Prior to this, he was an Assistant Professor and the Coordinator of the Contemporary Islam Programme at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.

Associate Professor Sevea's publications include *The Political Philosophy of Muhammad Iqbal: Islam and Nationalism in Late Colonial India* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), *India and the Future of G20: Shaping Policies for a Better World* (New Delhi: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2023), *South Asia: Retrospect and Prospects* (Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Company, 2026) and *Islamic Political Thought in Modern South Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming, 2026). He has also published articles and chapters on ethnonationalism in South Asia, the Partition and its aftermath, culture and state ideology in Pakistan, modern Islamic thought, the spread of transnational Islamic movements across the Indian Ocean, conceptions of bodily piety in South Asia and Muslim education in South Asia.

Associate Professor Sevea holds a DPhil in History from the University of Oxford. He graduated with a Bachelor's degree in history from NUS and a Master's degree from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

Mr Andreas Klein has more than 20 years of working experience for the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) since February 2000 as director of the country office in Skopje/Macedonia (2000-04), as desk officer at the Department for International Cooperation in Berlin/Germany (2004-06) as well as director of the KAS' offices in Dusseldorf/Germany (2006/07), Riga/Latvia (2007-12), Hamburg/Germany (2012-16) and Santiago de Chile (2016-22).

Since April 2022, Andreas has been the Director of KAS' Regional Programme Political Dialogue Asia.

He studied Political Science, Modern History and Spanish at the University of Bonn/Germany (1993-1999), of which he holds a MA degree in Political Science, and Intercultural Communication at the University of Jyväskylä/Finland.

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