

AGENTS OF CHANGE



Dr. Badiul Alam Majumdar

Founder and Secretary, SHUJAN– Citizens for Good Governance

Chair: Durreen Shahnaz
Adjunct Associate Professor & Head, Programme on Social Innovation and Change
Centre on Asia and Globalisation, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy

Date: Friday, 20 March 2009

Time: 12.15 p.m. - 1.30 p.m.

Venue: Seminar Room 3-1, Level 3
Manasseh Meyer
Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy
469C Bukit Timah Road, Singapore 259772



For those interested in attending, please contact Siti at 6516 4202/ 6134 or email spsrs@nus.edu.sg

This is a brown bag seminar and you are most welcome to bring your own packed lunch

Bangladesh: Civil Society and Rebirth of Democracy

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Dr. Badiul Alam Majumdar is the Founder and Secretary of SHUJAN, a volunteer-based citizens' movement in Bangladesh committed to democracy and accountable governance. Dr. Majumdar is also the Global Vice President and Country Director for Bangladesh of The Hunger Project. Dr. Majumdar has had an extensive academic career, teaching at Dhaka University in Bangladesh, Seattle University, Washington State University and Central Washington University in the United States. He has published several books as well as numerous articles in major international journals. He is also a popular newspaper columnist writing on economic, political and governance issues. Dr. Majumdar received his early education in Bangladesh. He received a Master's degree in Business Economics from Claremont Graduate School and a PhD in Economics from Case Western Reserve University.

SYNOPSIS

In the last few years, groups within the democracy movement of Bangladesh have carried out a relentless advocacy, awareness and mobilisation campaign demanding clean candidates, clean politics and systemic reforms. Notably, The Citizens for Good Governance, or SHUJAN, was central in leading this charge. SHUJAN made significant efforts to energise the democracy movement, developing innovative programs to empower the citizens with information.

The movement for change initiated and led by SHUJAN culminated in a range of substantive electoral reforms, including the reconstitution and reform of the Election Commission, the preparation of electoral rolls with photographs, reform of the electoral process, and the compulsory registration of political parties. Following these reforms, parliamentary elections were held in December 2008, which by all accounts, were free, fair and peaceful. Crucially, many tainted candidates were either not nominated at all or, when nominated, failed in their campaigns. This suggests that SHUJAN's efforts may have played a critical role in ushering in a new beginning for Bangladesh's democracy.