

nation building in bangladesh

retrospect and prospect

edited by

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bangladesh institute of international
and strategic studies

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FOREWORD

After the International Conference on South Asian Regional Cooperation (SARC) sponsored by the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies in January 1985, the two-day seminar on "Nation Building in Bangladesh : Retrospect and Prospect" held during 13-14 October 1985 was the most important educational event in the programme of the Institute for 1985.

The subject represents an area of critical importance to the developing nations. By and large, it is now well recognized that nation building must not be equated with economic growth. The nation building task is much more complex and vast in its scope and ramifications. It embraces the entire gamut of the dynamics of socio-economic and political growth process.

In sponsoring this seminar, the Institute was actuated by the following reasons among others:

- (i) The traumatic experiences of Bangladesh and many other developing countries have sharply demonstrated that the nation building problems were central to their over-all development;
- (ii) They had proved to be veritable sources of political instability and social upheaval; (iii) Problems like mass poverty, unemployment, social injustice and lack of national cohesion impinged on a nation's security-interests in a degree as to render them to be of strategic concern to a nation; and (iv) The theme of the seminar was of topical and special importance to Bangladesh.

The subject is multidimensional in character. The seminar was, therefore, planned as a multi-disciplinary study with a view to analysing the many interlocking and interacting facets of the nation building task. From this view point this seminar was the first of its kind to be held in Bangladesh.

It was hoped that the scholarly interaction of the participants drawn from various disciplines would throw light on the challenge facing the nation and the path to follow for the peaceful transition of the country to an elected representative government. Hopefully, it would also provide valuable intellectual input for building appropriate political, economic and social institutions necessary to sustain a viable and stable democratic order.

The authors of the learned papers and participants deserve to be lauded for their thought provoking and insightful contributions in extending the frontier of our knowledge and understanding in an area of vital concern to the nation. Thanks are also due to the Director General and the faculty-members of the Institute who bore the brunt of the work in organizing the seminar.

The papers of this important seminar are published in this volume in the hope that they would be of use to scholars, policy-makers and all concerned citizens. My sincere thanks to the editors for the pains they took in compiling the materials for this publication and seeing it through the press.

M. Shamsul Haq
Chairman
Board of Governors
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