

Public Lecture on 51 years of Bangladesh's Development Achievements held at NSU

[Dr. Niaz Asadullah](#) (PhD, Oxford), Professor of Development Economics, University of Malaya and the [Global Labor Organization](#) (GLO) Lead of South Asia delivered a public lecture titled “Bangladesh at 51: Achievements, Contradictions, and Challenges”, at [North South University](#) (NSU) on April 19, 2022.

The event was jointly organized by the [Department of Economics, School of Business & Economics](#) (SBE), NSU, and GLO, an international network and virtual platform on labor. [NSU Young Economists' Forum](#) (YEF), a student club of NSU affiliated with the Department of Economics, was the youth engagement partner of the event.



In his intriguing and thought-provoking lecture, Professor Niaz demystified Bangladesh's development achievements since 1970s revisiting trends in a range of indicators across different sectors. He explained that Bangladesh's social achievements in female schooling, fertility reduction, immunization coverage, contraception usage, and weakening of son preference in fertility are truly exceptional when compared with Pakistan and India. These cases of positive deviance point to a 'development miracle' i.e. systematic social progress achieved before Bangladesh's recent surge in GDP growth.

Professor Niaz however cautioned that the public spendings on education and health as ratios of GDP in Bangladesh are among the lowest in the world. If Bangladesh is to emulate the East Asian model of economic growth of South Korea and Singapore, then drastic increase in education and health spending is necessary – mega infrastructure projects must be complemented with human capital development for sustainable development. Among other issues, Professor Niaz commented on the sustainability of our current economic progress, highlighting some worrying

trends in data on FDI, exports, inequality, military expenditure and state capacity as well as the rise of plutocracy.



The public lecture was followed by a lively Q&A session where participants actively engaged with the speaker asking questions about the future of Bangladesh's economy. The event was attended by over 200 students. NSU faculty members, the Chair of the Department of Economics [Dr. Asad Karim Khan Priyo](#), the Dean of NSU [SBE Dr. Abdul Hannan Chowdhury](#), and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor of NSU [Dr. M Ismail Hossain](#) were all present in the lecture.

