

Professor Dr Biswajit Chanda

Biswajit Chanda joined the University of Rajshahi as a Lecturer in the Department of Law after completing his LLB (Honours) and LLM from the same university. Prior to that he practised law in the High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh. Before he joined the University Grants Commission as a Member on 3rd September 2020, he was serving as a Professor of Law and Land Administration at Rajshahi University.

Previously Professor Chanda served as a Member of Bangladesh Judicial Service Commission; Dean of the Faculty of Law (two consecutive terms), RU; Founding Director of Academic Development and the Centre of Excellence in Teaching & Learning (CETL) at Rajshahi University, a hub for the training of teachers of all public and private universities in North Bengal; founding Chairman of the Department of Law & Land Administration, RU; part-time Coordinator of the Department of Law & Human Rights at Varendra University Rajshahi; a Senator of National University, Gazipur; and a Member of the Board of Directors at Bangladesh Judicial Administration Training Institute (JATI), Dhaka. He has acted as an Expert-Member of the different selection boards for Lecturer to Professor of different public and private universities in Bangladesh; and as a member of Academic Council, Faculty (Executive) Committee, Committee of Courses and Studies, and other committees of Rajshahi University and other universities.

Biswajit Chanda holds a PhD in Law from the renowned School of Oriental & African Studies (SOAS), London. A world famous Professor of South Asian Laws at SOAS, Emeritus Professor (Dr) Werner Menski was his PhD supervisor. The title of his PhD thesis is 'Family Law Reform in Bangladesh: The Need for a Culture-Specific Legal System'. The thesis, based on an extensive empirical research, analyses the different legal theories, the personal law system and the process of legal reforms that might be suitable for South Asian nations, especially for Bangladesh.

Dr Chanda has widely taught in the areas of Family Law, Comparative Constitutional Law, Judicial Independence and Judicial Activism, Human Rights (including Women's Rights, Child Rights, Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Rights of Religious/Ethnic Minorities, Rights of Disabled Persons, Rights of Refugees and so forth), International Humanitarian Law, Women Empowerment, Law of Contract, Research Methodology, and Legal Systems at the University of Rajshahi, Varendra University Rajshahi, Bangladesh Police Academy Rajshahi and Human Rights Summer Schools annually organised by ELCOP, Dhaka.

In London, as a part-time teacher or guest teacher, he has taught law at SOAS, LSE (London School of Economics & Political Science), Queen Mary University of London, and in Berlin, at German Federal Foreign Academy.

Professor Chanda organised some international conferences and a number of seminars in London on human rights, trial of war crimes, women empowerment, gender justice, etc. in London as a Research Assistant at SOAS. As the Dean of the Faculty of Law, Chairman of the Department of Law & Land Administration at Rajshahi University and the Head of Self Assessment Committee (SAC) of the Department of Law at Rajshahi University, he organised and chaired a number of seminars and workshops at Rajshahi University.

As the Dean of the Faculty of Law, he founded a new academic discipline, namely Department of Law and Land Administration, at the University of Rajshahi in 2015. He had been the Chairman of this pioneering department from 1st October 2015 to 3rd September 2020. He introduced 'Community Research', compulsory for all students starting from first year to final year, to let them appreciate the level of consciousness and implementation of the different laws in the community or society, a 'law and society' or 'theory and practice' approach. As a part of this research, students also play the role of street lawyers and make the people aware of different laws.

In a decision-making meeting jointly organised by the UGC and British Council with Vice-Chancellors of the different Public Universities at UGC in 2014, Professor Chanda, as the representative of the then Vice-Chancellor of Rajshahi University, played an important role in establishing the Centres of Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) at six public universities and at a private university in Bangladesh. The University of Rajshahi was selected as the hub for the training of teachers of all the universities in north Bengal. He has acted as the founding Director of Academic Development and CETL at Rajshahi University (hub). He had been the Director of CETL from May 2014 to June 2019. The curriculum he and his Deputy Director prepared for RU CETL was later adopted, with very minor modifications, as the first national level curriculum for all CETLs in Bangladesh at a workshop jointly organised by the UGC and British Council.

Professor Chanda has participated in a number of conferences, seminars, workshops and lectures at SOAS, University of Cambridge, LSE, Kings College London, Loughborough University in the UK, Aarhus University in Denmark, National Law University Delhi and National University of Juridical Sciences (NUJS) Kolkata in India, University of Dhaka, University Grants Commission of Bangladesh, British Council in Dhaka and so forth as a resource person, paper presenter, keynote speaker, discussant or rapporteur.

Dr Chanda published articles and edited book at home and abroad (including Oxford University Press and SOAS). He edited a book jointly with Professor Werner Menski of SOAS Law School titled *Cancer of Extremism in Bangladesh: Proceedings of the European Human Rights Conference on Bangladesh - Extremism, Intolerance & Violence* which was published in 2005 by SOAS, London. It was launched at the House of Lords in London. Lord Eric Aveybury, a doughty campaigner for human rights, chaired this event. He acted as the the Editorial Assistant of the *South Asia Research* published by SAGE in London, the Editor of the *Rajshahi University Law Journal* and is currently an Advisor/Member of Editorial Boards of different journals.

Professor Chanda has performed as a supervisor of his PhD and MPhil fellows in his department and at the Institute of Bangladesh Studies (IBS), University of Rajshahi. Several of these PhD theses have been published as books by his fellows. Further he has supervised over 200 Masters research monographs/dissertations and community research at the University of Rajshahi, Varendra University and Bangladesh Police Academy, Rajshahi. Professor Chanda has completed a couple of a2i projects of Prime Minister's Office, Bangladesh and has undertaken two projects of UGC at Rajshahi University.

Biswajit Chanda practised law in the High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh under a prominent legislature late Advocate Sudhanshu Shekhar Halder and for a few months in Khulna District Judges Court under eminent lawyer late Advocate Manzurul Imam.

Professor Chanda frequently receives requests for writing Expert Reports for British and European courts on Bangladeshi law, politics, religion, society, human rights and so forth. He has provided with those courts over half a century of such reports and a good number of authenticity reports on legal documents.