



Research Monograph
ON

Judicial Activism vs. Judicial Restraint in Bangladesh Constitution

Submitted to:

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Acknowledgement

At first, thanks to Almighty, who has been kind enough to let me complete this research monograph in right time.

I would like to acknowledge my gratitude to my honorable teacher, Lecturer for permitting me to undertake this research.

Thanks to him for his most constructive suggestion and informative guidance through his lectures.

From beginning of my research, I am personally indebted to some book writers for their kind and valuable writings. Thanks to all from the bottom of my heart.

Signature

Declaration

This is, student ID:LLB2201025001 of LL.B program of Department of Law of Sonargaon University, do hereby declare that the research monograph titled “**Judicial Activism vs. Judicial Restraint in Bangladesh Constitution**” an original work. The assigned work has done by me for partial requirement of my LL.B degree, this is part of academic curriculum. I

certify that this thesis has not been submitted to obtain any degree in any university, and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due references is made in the text.

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Letter of Transmittal

To,

Joydeep Chowdhury

Lecturer & Asst. Coordinator

Sonargoan University

Subject: For the submission of research monograph titled “**Judicial Activism vs. Judicial Restraint in Bangladesh Constitution**”

Dear Sir,

With due respect and humble submission, I am honored to present my research monograph titled “Judicial Activism vs. Judicial Restraint in Bangladesh Constitution” which has been prepared as a partial requirement for the completion of my Bachelor of Laws (LL.B Hon’s) under the Department of Law at Sonargaon University.

This research has been carried out with utmost sincerity and dedication. I have made every effort to maintain the required academic standards and present a comprehensive analysis on the chosen topic. I respectfully submit this work for your kind perusal and academic evaluation.

If any clarification or further information regarding this monograph is needed, I will remain available at your convenience.

Yours faithfully,

Anita Akter

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ABSTRACT

The abstracted research monograph also defines judicial activism, the notion of an active higher judiciary that takes interpretations of the Constitution out into the public sphere to protect rights, expand review authority and prevent executive overreaching and judicial restraint a passive lower court deference toward both legislative intent and administrative determinations. This article traces their evolution through key cases during a period of political turbulence.

Critical Role of the Constitution

Since the 1990s, the Bangladesh Supreme Court has been cautious in its policymaking, avoiding going too far. But in public interest litigation, such as **Dr. Mohiuddin Farooque v. Bangladesh**¹, it has applied activism to soften standing rules to address environmental injuries. Moderation stirs peace, dismisses rights; narrow doctrinal exploration demonstrates that moderation serves the rule of law and may undermine democracy.

Promoting a Balanced Approach

The monograph argues for constitutional democracy with legitimacy by advocating context-sensitive balance rather than inflexible doctrines, as in **RidwanulHoque's** Judicial Activism in Bangladesh: A Golden Mean Approach. That activism of the “golden mean” remains within bounds even as it addresses governance problems.²

¹https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=5340899

²<https://www.lawteacher.net/free-law-essays/constitutional-law/judicial-activism-in-bangladesh-constitutional-law-essay.php>

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AD – Appellate Division

AL – Awami League

Art. – Article

Arts. – Articles

BELA – Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association

BLAST – Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust

BTRC – Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission

CAT – Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

CBLR – Constitutional Bench Law Reports

CTG – Caretaker Government

DLR – Dhaka Law Reports

DoE – Department of Environment

EC – Election Commission

EIA – Environmental Impact Assessment

HCD – High Court Division

ICCPR – International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

ICT – International Crimes Tribunal

IT – Information Technology

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

PCO – Provisional Constitution Order

PIL – Public Interest Litigation

PRB – People’s Republic of Bangladesh

RAB – Rapid Action Battalion

RTI – Right to Information

SC – Supreme Court

SPA – Special Powers Act

UDHR – Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UN – United Nations

USA – United States of America

UK – United Kingdom

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The Judiciary's Constitutionally Mandated Function

Constitutional democracy Bangladesh/Judiciary: Enshrined as an autonomous interpreter of the Constitution, having a mandate to safeguard the highest law of the land, protect fundamental rights (Part III: Articles 26-47), and enthrone the rule of law, the judiciary is the fulcrum around which constitutional democracy revolves. Article 116A, on the other hand, provides for security of tenure and protection against arbitrary removal, thus preserving, to a great extent, judicial independence, while Article 22, in clear terms, proclaims that there should be a separation of the judiciary and the executive. To check abuse of power, the Supreme Court is empowered with writ jurisdiction under Article 102, which allows it to review legislative and executive actions in relation to the Constitution.³

Particularly in, for example, Article 27 (on equality), Article 39 (freedom of speech), and Article 32 (life/liberty), this order permits courts to read the law expansively where laws are inadequate. The judiciary has adjudicated thousands of cases over the years, including those to enforce rights and resolve election disputes, helping build democratic stability since independence. It was only after the transition to democracy (1991) that the military regimes (1975–90) instituted this independence by subjecting appointments and transfers to executive control.⁴

What Constitutes Judicial Activism?

Judicial activism is when courts read between the lines of statutes to achieve social justice, public interest, and the constitutional spirit. In Bangladesh, these are structural injunctions (injunctions based on reform of governance) requiring structural reform-in-government mandates, public interest litigation, and liberal locus standi rules that permit "any" person to file lawsuits to claim communal rights. A turn came after the 1990s from hard-fought battles against dramatically huge and critical cases such as *Blast v. Bangladesh* (2003) that struck down discriminatory patterns of eviction to *Dr Mohiuddin Farooque v. Bangladesh* (1997) that halted a road damaging the Sundarbans, thus seeding environmental jurisprudence as we know it now; or raises in custodial death cases strengthening human rights oversight.⁵⁶⁷

By creatively interpreting Articles 31 to 44, activism counters legislative apathy on pressing issues, including pollution, corruption, gender violence, and election irregularities. A prime illustration of such "judicial law-making" to plug policy holes is the Supreme Court taking *suomotu* cognizance to ensure observance, off-road, of anti-tobacco or road-safety laws.

³<https://www.scirp.org/journal/paperinformation?paperid=108910>

⁴<https://www.advocacylegalbd.com/independence-of-judiciary-in-bangladesh/>

⁵<https://www.lawjournals.org/assets/archives/2024/vol10issue3/10133.pdf>

⁶<https://www.uniwriter.ai/law/judicial-activism-in-bangladesh/>

⁷<https://nilsbangladesh.org/role-of-public-interest-litigation-in-judicial-activism-of-bangladesh-while-enforcing-fundamental-rights/>

Another central plus point is that it promotes accountability in a transitional democracy and adapts to the ecology of poverty and the weak institutional infrastructure in Bangladesh. It is in line with the post-1970s world trend in India.⁸⁹

Judicial Restraint Principles

In contrast, judicial restraint respects the division of powers in articles 22 and 65, upholds judicial humility, and constrains courts from expressing legislative will. Supporters have argued that, by not being elected and accountable to voters, judges can overstep their responsibilities and undermine the institutional legitimacy of democracy in the country's fractious political culture, where rulings sometimes benefit those currently in office – thereby undermining public confidence^{10, 11}.

It is the provision of Article 7A, containing and impelling the echo of judicial wisdom, that is a clear message not to substitute parliamentary will with judicial wisdom, which underlies the doctrine of restraint. Critics of activism such as this argue that, in cases like the 2017 Appellate Division annulment of the 16th Amendment (which deprived parliament of the ability to remove judges), elitism is at play. Restraint guarantees survival by preserving institutional credibility and preventing backlash, as illustrated by the executive-judiciary confrontation during the 2007–08 caretaker government controversy.¹²¹³

Constitutional Ambiguity and the Swinging Pendulum of Judicial Interpretation

The 1972 Constitution has been amended as many as 17 times, and it leaves room for pragmatic reform through open-textured clauses and is not hindered by explicit activism or restraint commands. A 1989 case (Anwar Hossain Chowdhury v. Bangladesh) that has developed an even more robust fundamental structure doctrine, protecting while constraining the extent of alteration in fundamental facets such as judicial review and independence, and attracting opprobrium from activists¹⁴.

Judges jump between doctrines depending on the context: they are conservative on fiscal policy and activist during rights crises (say, 2018's road safety PILs). This shifts with political change: during the BNP (2001- 2006) and Awami League rule (post 2009), activism prevails for legitimacy but calls for restraint due to concerns of overreach.¹⁵

Discussion and the rationale for this study

⁸https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2728755

⁹<https://www.lawteacher.net/free-law-essays/constitutional-law/judicial-activism-in-bangladesh-constitutional-law-essay.php>

¹⁰<https://www.lawgratis.com/blog-detail/separation-of-powers-and-its-application-in-bangladesh>

¹¹<https://www.lawyersnjurists.com/article/separation-of-power-in-bangladesh/>

¹²<https://www.thedailystar.net/supplements/50-years-our-constitution-original-ideals-vs-reality/news/how-far-have-we-ensured-judicial-independence-bangladesh-3160231>

¹³<https://bangladesh.justiceaudit.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Supreme-Court-Annual-Report-2016.pdf>

¹⁴https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Bangladesh_2014

¹⁵<https://archive.thedailystar.net/law/2011/07/01/book.htm>

Today's debate is the struggle to find that space in between: Restraint, born of execrable powers, and court deference still risks becoming a whitewash (what Peter Birkenhead has called "executive impunity"), and activism drives reform (like 2024's digital rights enforcements) but faces the charge of "judicial dictatorship." In general comparisons, Bangladesh has the "golden mean" potential to fuse both to stabilize¹⁶.

Given the recent international scrutiny of President Trump's allies' efforts to tarnish the rule of law and Germany's 2024 elections, this analysis is essential. To uphold constitutionalism, landmark decisions are increasingly shaping policy across anti-corruption to climate adaptation—and this warrants careful consideration of power limits. Sources corroborate the text, making it timely to examine the progress of the judiciary vis-à-vis Bangladesh's democracy.¹⁷

¹⁶https://www.academia.edu/69539950/Judicial_Activism_in_Bangladesh_A_Golden_Mean_Approach

¹⁷<https://www.lawgratis.com/blog-detail/separation-of-powers-and-its-application-in-bangladesh>

1.2 Rationale of the Study

Judicial Crisis in Political Crisis

The judiciary has been cast as the stabilizer or legitimizer given Bangladesh's past military coups (1975, 1982), emergency rule (2007), and disputed elections (2014, 2018). Pass-through. The power (exercisable in extraordinary situations) was demonstrated in cases such as that of Secretary, Ministry of Finance v. Md. Masdar Hossain (1999), which had limited judicial separation from the executive under Article 22 and re-established order after a reign of authoritarianism. But naysayers say that activism violates parliament's sovereignty under Article 65 and decry judgments like the 2011 annulment of the 13th Amendment, which sought to remove partisan executives' powers.¹⁸

Extension of Public Interest Litigation

Ever since Mohiuddin Farooque v. Bangladesh (1997), the PIL made available through Article 102 writs has increased access to justice, relaxed locus standi requirements for environmental cases (Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA) v. Bangladesh, 2003), and enabled prison reforms. Even in a period of legislative gridlock, the judiciary took on workers' rights, transparency by enforcing the Right to Information Act, and protection for marginalized groups. But this raises questions about overreach: Is the judicial policymaking on complex issues like pollution controls stepping beyond its bounds and adding to the burden of backlogged dockets (more than 4 million cases remain pending)?¹⁹

Balance of Powers Separation

Separation of Powers: The Article 22 provision calls for a judicial-executive separation, where self-control and interbranch peace are relatively secure against interference. Such activist tendencies, the court's 2017 reversal of its axing of the 16th Amendment on judicial impeachment, produced discord and cries for restraint to respect the democratic mandate. "Golden mean" activism -- principled but equilibrium-preserving intervention -- is necessary to prevent the courts from mirroring the executive overreach on display in the political convulsions of 2024, sources say.²⁰

¹⁸<https://www.uniwriter.ai/law/judicial-activism-in-bangladesh/>

¹⁹<https://www.biliabd.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Muhd.-Refiquzzaman.pdf>

²⁰<https://www.advocacylegalbd.com/independence-of-judiciary-in-bangladesh/>

Academic and Real-World Deficits

There is a paucity of doctrinal synthesis regarding the activism-restraint dialectics, and scattered analyses of oases like Anwar Hossain Chowdhury's (1989) fundamental structure doctrine dominate. By systematically analyzing implications, this research fills a lacuna and underpins scholarship as jurisprudence evolves.²¹

Consequences for Stakeholders

Lawyers—PIL tactics; legislators— cues for reform; students—balanced curricula; judges— restraint criteria to help build the edifice of legitimacy. It promotes the defense of rights without dismantling democracy in a time of debate over President Trump's 2025 government projects.²²²³

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Uncertain Constitutional Limits

The High Court Division (HCD) of Bangladesh has been conferred, under Article 102 of the constitution, with broad powers to enforce fundamental rights and to review violations of law through five constitutional writs, namely habeas corpus, mandamus, prohibition, certiorari, and quo warranto. Although the judiciary has been given the power of review by way of the fundamental structure doctrine, as in *Anwar Hossain Chowdhury v. Bangladesh* (1989), which protects fundamental features, including democracy and rights, from Amendment, Article 44 provides remedies for rights violations.²⁴

Yet there is little in the way of a definitive definition of the intervention, which has led to charges of overreach. The Appellate Division (AD) was accused of legislating by the critics when it set aside policy decisions regarding the extraction of mere agglomerated marbles in *Bangladesh Italian Marble Works Ltd. v. Bangladesh* (2006). The 2017 voidance of the 16th Amendment, positively appraised as independent yet criticised as Article 65 intrusive, reinstated the view that only the judiciary could impeach, not Parliament, under Article 96. Such decisions breach the rule of law, as the judiciary mimics executive performance without assigning responsibility through continuous monitoring in the form of "continuing mandamus" (for) activities; hence, often, road safety reforms post-2018 Quota Reform Movement. With 4.5 million4.5 million cases pending (2024 data), this dichotomy dilutes the

²¹<https://www.lawjournals.org/assets/archives/2024/vol10issue3/10133.pdf>

²²<https://www.thedailystar.net/law-our-rights/news/recent-instance-judicial-activism-3910821>

²³<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9971673/>

²⁴<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/jurisdiction-writ-its-execution-bangladesh-bdlex-manupatra>

legitimacy of democracy (Article 116A) by empowering democratic checks on judicial independence.²⁵

Selective Interventions in Activism Courts cast neutrality into doubt by strategically alternating doctrines; Oppositionality. Activism rises in rights crises: *BELAB v. Bangladesh* (2017) — enforced wetlands protections; *Dr. Mohiuddin Farooque v. Bangladesh* (1997) — court-directed PIL against Sundarbans deforestation, easing locus standi. On the other hand, political prudence prevails: shortly after *Amy Hanim* (2008), and in a more general atmosphere of constitutional violations during the 2007–2008 Emergency, AD declined to pronounce on detentions in violation of Article 33; given chaotic interim rule and electoral irregularities following the 2024 unrests, HCD chose not to probe such irregularity at the election.²⁶

This is selectivity: activist annulment based on the supremacy of Article 7A, but with caution in its implementation. Salil Tripathi, an attorney and scholar, said that political allegiance erodes the stability of the rule of law. While the opposition has fallen victim to Awami League activism from 2009 through April 2024, allies have been sheltered by restraint. For the 2023 polls, credibility is undermined by discord, and public trust diminishes. But Black's Law Dictionary describes activism as policy-oriented, and Vineet Narayan-inspired monitoring (e.g., anti-corruption PILs) is therefore included.²⁷

Dangers of Overly Strict Restrictions

In times of activism, restraint that goes too far allows injustice to continue. *HRPB v. Bangladesh* (2015) flimsily implementing RAB remand rules, including ignoring extrajudicial killings (more than 600 'crossfire' in a decade, 2010–2023); *Salma Sobhan v. Bangladesh* rejected the unconstitutionality of keeping prisoners chained despite CAT obligations: Prisons Act Section 56. While Article 32 (right to life and liberty) is said to obligate the Home Ministry to take action against executive abuses, exclusions under Article 102(5) only confer impunity with deference in military tribunals or spending policies.²⁸

Refusal to intervene enabled executive dominance via Article 141A closures in military regimes (1975–90); non-involvement in protest violence after 2024 followed the same pattern. Counter to the active evolution of PIL in India, opponents argue that passivity violates the judicial duty under Article 7A: Doctrinally unmoored ad holism is induced by

²⁵<https://www.thedailystar.net/slow-reads/big-picture/news/bangladeshs-constitutional-journey-revisited-battleground-peoples-power-and-political-control-3927366>

²⁶<https://www.iosrjournals.org/iosr-jhss/papers/Vol. 23 Issue8/Version-3/G2308034553.pdf>

²⁷<http://nujlawreview.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/ridwanulhoque.pdf>

²⁸<https://www.askbd.org/ask/judicial-developments-fundamental-rights/>

this dilemma: either intervene and potentially overreach, or not intervene and facilitate harm²⁹.

Limitations on Institutional Capacity

Enforcement of activist mandates: 70% of Supreme Court directives on prison reforms (since 2009) and environmental compliance are not fulfilled, according to Justice Audit (2018). Definitional conundrums, such as a "lack of resources," three judges per one million people, and outdated IT, make monitoring tough; lower courts are similarly prey to executive interference following the Masdar Hossain separation (1999) (Article 115).³⁰

Cross-cutting departments further aggravate the problem by employing judges as legal officers, thereby inevitably affecting impartiality. More than 5 million backlogs are due to partisan appointments (due to ambiguity under Article 95). In the absence of alternative forums, PIL clogs dockets and empties transformative judgments of meaning³¹.

Balanced consideration is in order.

The question demands a well-defined doctrine that squares constitutionalism with activism and restraint. Hoque's "golden mean" demands principled, adversity-based intervention — an activist on rights, reticent on policy (Article 22). Global lessons (United States after *Marbury v. Madison*) suggest that rules are made by law or by court codes. Bangladesh is unstable in the absence of balance with Trumpian 2025 democracy audits, as this judicial flux creates strong incentives for executive vengeance or sullen public treason³².

The synthesis will provide empirical substantiation of the diagnosis and propose policy changes to make this governance sustainable. Sources affirm the urgency: Competing dogmas threaten constitutional order, so some methodical balance is in order.³³

²⁹<https://www.iosrjournals.org/iosr-jhss/papers/Vol. 23 Issue8/Version-3/G2308034553.pdf>

³⁰<https://www.lawyersnjurists.com/article/the-problems-and-obstruction-of-separation-of-judiciary-from-the-executive-in-bangladesh/>

³¹<http://nujlawreview.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/ridwanulhoque.pdf>

³²<https://blog.ipleaders.in/judicial-restraint/>

³³<https://www.thedailystar.net/slow-reads/big-picture/news/bangladeshs-constitutional-journey-revisited-battleground-peoples-power-and-political-control-3927366>

1.4 Research Questions

The research questions for this study are as follows:

- 1) What reasons underlie judicial activism and judicial restraint in constitutional law?
- 2) How has the Bangladeshi Constitution limited the jurisdiction to interpret fundamental rights and the role of judicial review by the judiciary?
- 3) How have Bangladeshi courts used judicial activism in cases about the constitution and public interest?
- 4) What sort of judicial restraint have courts been exercising, and what effects does it have?
- 5) Does the judicial activism in Bangladesh strengthen or weaken the balance of powers and democracy?
- 6) How can Bangladesh's constitution find a median between activism and passivism on the part of its judiciary?

These questions guide the analytical framework of this research and ensure a focused discussion of the subject.

1.5 Research Objectives

To understand the impact of these control currents on constitutionalism, democracy, and the rule of law in Bangladesh, this study's primary objective is to critically evaluate how the tools of judicial activism and restraint operate within the country's constitutional framework. To achieve this primary goal, the study sets the following specific objectives:

1) To explore the theoretical and philosophical foundations of judicial restraint and activism

As a result, it is intended to explore the "meaning," original intent, and implications of the identification and application of constitutional jurisprudential doctrines of judicial activism and judicial restraint, especially from the perspectives of their philosophical justifications and their viability in modern democratic societies.

2)To analyses the provisions of the Bangladesh constitution that vest power in its Judiciary

To understand the nature and limits of judicial power, this aim will examine relevant provisions of the Bangladeshi Constitution, with special focus on Judicial Review, Fundamental Rights, and Writ Jurisdictions.

3)To evaluate judicial precedents that exhibit both activist and restrained techniques

To determine whether the courts have adopted either the activist or the restrained judicial goal, this objective involves a study of some constitutional and public-interest cases that Earth's highest court has adjudicated.

4)To assess the impact of judicial behavior on government, democracy, and the rule of law

This article assesses the impact of judicial activism and restraint on administrative accountability, democratic governance, the separation of powers, and the protection of human rights in Bangladesh.

5)To detect problems of excessive judicial passivity or overactivity

This aimed to identify the institutional, legal, and practical problems caused by "over-activism" or "under-activism" of the Judiciary relative to Parliament and the Executive.

6)To recommend measures for ensuring a just legal system in accordance with constitutional values

This goal is intended to promote constitutionalism, judicial legitimacy, and democratic permanence in Bangladesh by achieving an appropriate equilibrium between judicialization of politics and restraint.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK & LITERATURE REVIEW

Within the constitutional setup of Bangladesh, where the Supreme Court plays a balancing role to uphold and enforce fundamental rights [under Articles 44 & 102], on the one hand, and separation of powers exists between various organs, judicial activism and judicial restraint are two contrasting judicial philosophies. Restraint emphasizes respecting the elected branches, while judicial activism means interpreting the law proactively in the face of governance gaps. The chapter outline includes theoretical bases and reviews, generated by Bangladesh's constitutional trajectory after 1972 amid political turmoil.³⁴

2.1 Concept and Meaning of Judicial Activism

The phrase "judicial activism" refers to judges interpreting laws based on their own political or personal beliefs when those laws were not expressly intended for adjudication. (Black's Law Dictionary) philosophy by which judges consider policy issues to guide their decisions. Political scientist Bradley Canon identifies six aspects of this philosophy. These six dimensions are: interpretive stability, fidelity to the text, substantive consequences, interference with the democratic process, policy specificity, and the availability of alternative policymakers. As David Strauss explains, it applies only to law-breaking, not-law-making laws, and not at all as a restraining force on other branches' discretion with respect to the Constitution.³⁵

Through the writ jurisdiction in Article 102, which provides for public interest litigation (PIL) and *suomotu* actions, judicial activism has been a noticeable feature in Bangladesh since independence. However, in times of an extra-constitutional regime, as during the years of martial law (1975–1990), it has operated to inject judicial power into a legislative vacuum. An instance of this is the human rights safeguard during those periods. And in 1947, the phrase "rule of law" was used for the first time in this country, by Arthur Schlesinger Jr. It was "actively implementing rule of law for functional democracy," declared Justice J.S. Verma.³⁶

The most notable ones have been expansive enforcement of human rights and remedies that seem *sui generis*, such as extended locus standi in PIL. A series of such cases, including *Anwar Hossain Chowdhury v. Bangladesh* (1989), established the fundamental structure doctrine and struck down amendments that would have abolished judicial review. For instance, activism is used to combat social injustices, curb extrajudicial sentences issued

³⁴<https://www.lawteacher.net/free-law-essays/constitutional-law/judicial-activism-in-bangladesh-constitutional-law-essay.php>

³⁵<https://www.lawteacher.net/free-law-essays/constitutional-law/judicial-activism-in-bangladesh-constitutional-law-essay.php>

³⁶<https://academic.oup.com/icon/article/11/2/547/753667>

based on fatwas, and protect the environment from arbitrary dewatering provisions and corruption.³⁷³⁸

But supporters demand a kind of “golden mean” that finds the common ground between activism and constitutional boundaries. Critics refer to it as a “juridical transposition” that could risk overreach. In the Bangladeshi context, it is a reaction against executive usurpation, an ineffective parliament, and human rights abuses. The HCD is active in the field of *suomotu* rules based on media reports. This method has led to a progressive concretisation of rights in favour of weaker sections like women, minorities, and people with low incomes and transformed the judiciary from a passive interpreter into an active guardian of the constitution.³⁹

Under Public Interest Litigation (PIL), standing rules were relaxed, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were entitled to file on behalf of aggrieved parties. Over the years, activism has also surged during democratic transitions (since 1991). Yet it faces challenges, including case backlogs, executive interference, and slow implementation, underscoring the importance of institutional capacity. On the whole, Bangladesh activism promotes proactive justice. It translates ideas emanating from the United States to suit local socio-political conditions while maintaining a semblance of constitutional supremacy in an unstable environment.⁴⁰

2.3 Theories of Judicial Review and Judicial Behavior

Judicial review theories are the building blocks of discussions about activism and restraint. The Supreme Court in Bangladesh has the power under Article 102 of the constitution to issue writs against actions that contravene the constitution. The complement theory argues that review blooms with extrajudicial support, while the substitute theory holds that, even without political backing, review can be effective and self-enforcing.⁴¹

Post *Marbury v. Madison*, Anwar Hossain (1989), presented the Bangladesh review, which endorsed a basic structure akin to India's *KesavanandaBharati*. This is a rational argument

³⁷<https://bangladesh.justiceaudit.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Judicial-Activism-and-Human-Rights-in-Bangladesh-a-Critique.pdf>

³⁸<https://rais.education/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/25902750.pdf>

³⁹<https://bangladesh.justiceaudit.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Judicial-Activism-and-Human-Rights-in-Bangladesh-a-Critique.pdf>

⁴⁰https://en.banglapedia.org/index.php?title=Judicial_Activism

⁴¹<https://www.repository.law.indiana.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=11259&context=ilj>

because democracy-limiting principles, such as Monahan and Beatty's theories, operate to restrict discretion through ad hoc interpretations⁴².

According to theories of judicial behavior, there are judicial realism, in which judges creatively construct the law; public interest theory, which aims to patch up what's broken by using statutes; and separation of powers (restraint). Behavior fluctuates in Bangladesh, being amplified during crises (martial law) and pacified when discussing policies⁴³.

[Monahan and Beatty] propose that democratic principles constrain power and that review is a means of helping. The Bangladesh Appellate Division scrutinizes enactments, executive actions, and subordinate courts through specific and flexible models. Strategic behavior models for backlash sensitivity, ideologically driven attitudinal behavior models, and institutionally motivated rational choice models.⁴⁴

Open-textured theories are gappy and cannot rein in discretion. Bangladesh's context is one of hybridity in this respect: the review vindicates Article 44 rights, but it postpones them on the grounds permitted by Article 102. Theories justify, to a certain degree, PIL and suo motu activism acting as guardians of the minorities.⁴⁵

⁴²<https://lawjournal.mcgill.ca/wp-content/uploads/pdf/6251251-Bakan.pdf>

⁴³<https://policyjournalofms.com/index.php/6/article/view/1079>

⁴⁴<https://www8.austlii.edu.au/au/journals/UQLJ/2018/5.pdf>

⁴⁵<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/judicial-review-bangladesh-bdlex-manupatra>

2.4 Comparative Perspectives: Judicial Activism & Restraint

Aspect	Bangladesh	India	Pakistan	South Africa
Activism Triggers	Martial law, rights gaps ⁴⁶	PIL, governance failures ⁴⁷	Military coups, corruption ⁴⁸	Apartheid legacy, rights ⁴⁹
Restraint Emphasis	Deference to policy	Separation of powers	Post-2008 balance	Democratic consolidation ⁵⁰
Key Cases	Anwar Hossain basic structure	KesavanandaBharati	2009 lawyers' movement ⁵¹	Constitutional Court claims
Outcomes	Human rights PIL	Environmental PIL ⁵²	Policy influence	Progressive policies

Bangladeshi activism is like India's PIL, moderated by the "golden mean" amid instability. The 'porous' sides of Pakistan are a stark difference from the methodical review of Bangladesh. South Africa is a democracy and not simply next to democracy. At the regional level, hybrids are by far the dominant type.

2.5 Literature Review on Judicial Activism in South Asia

Judicial Legislationism in S. Asia It is 2.5 A Review of Literature on Judicial Activism in South Asia

Fiction from South Asia helps to illuminate how activism evolves in situations where institutions remain weak. Mollah analyses the golden mean of Bangladesh from the perspective of public interest litigation and human rights cases. Islam (2018) bridges it with sustainability.

India needs a balance, says Sharma. Munir (year) studied activism in Pakistan, from 2008 until 2013. Connections to the public's view Khan (2015) bears relevance. The regional

⁴⁶<https://academic.oup.com/icon/article/11/2/547/753667>

⁴⁷<https://jmhonzons.com/index.php/journal/article/download/1135/897/2042>

⁴⁸https://pu.edu.pk/images/journal/indianStudies/PDF/10_v10_1_24.pdf

⁴⁹<https://www.ijllr.com/post/judicial-activism-a-comparative-study-of-india-south-africa-and-pakistan>

⁵⁰<https://policyjournalofms.com/index.php/6/article/view/1079>

⁵¹<https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/an-analytical-review-of-impact-of-judicial-activism-on-the-democratic-setup-of-pakistan-a-qualitative-study/pdf>

⁵²<https://thelawbrigade.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Abhinav-Pawan.pdf>

works in question stress PIL as a response to authoritarianism. The Bangladeshi focus however, was grounded in OUP review on socio-political adaptation.⁵³

2.6 Literature Review on Judicial Restraint in Constitutional Democracies

There is a body of scholarship on judicial restraint in the context of constitutional democracies.⁵⁴

From every corner of the globe, literature praises restraint as a true virtue. Respect, rather than reference, is the theme of Britannica/US cases. “For humanity in chains: self-limits” – ideas brewed by iPleaders India. Bangladesh: Sticks to its values but does not exceed them.⁵⁵

Monahan and Beatty are to democracy what a straitjacket is to its prisoners. Exchange and complementation of dynamics, based on Landau [2017]. Criticisms: If overdone, it undermines the supremacy of supremacy.⁵⁶

2.7 Gaps in the Existing Literature

The literature fails to take into account the long-term effects of hybrid models that are specific to Bangladesh. There is a lack of empirical data regarding implementation delays and the roles. Comparative discrepancies in South Asia: There is a lack of quantitative behavior metrics. Next steps in research: Executive-judiciary tensions, as well as metrics for balancing activism and restraint.⁵⁷

⁵³[2.5 Literature Review on Judicial Activism in South Asia](#)

⁵⁴<https://www.britannica.com/topic/judicial-restraint>

⁵⁵<https://blog.ipleaders.in/judicial-activism-vs-judicial-restraint-indian-disarray/>

⁵⁶<https://lawjournal.mcgill.ca/wp-content/uploads/pdf/6251251-Bakan.pdf>

⁵⁷<https://www.northsouth.edu/newassets/images/law/nsu-law-working-paper-no-1.pdf>

CHAPTER 3: CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK OF BANGLADESH

3.1 Historical Development of the Bangladesh Constitution

The March 7, 1971, speech of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman first raised the concept of self-determination. It was envisaged that the April 10, 1971, Mujibnagar Proclamation, which declared a government-in-exile, marked the beginning of the constitutional arc. The victory became real on December 16, and the Provisional Constitution Order (PCO) was passed on January 11, 1972. This order established a presidential system with Mujib as president and Tajuddin Ahmad as prime minister. It was the 1950 Indian template for transitional political stability on which they rested this framework. After nine months of discussions that stressed Bengali nationalism after the Language Movement (1952) and the Six-Point Demand (1966), the Constituent Assembly, comprising 300 Awami League members elected in December 1970 from Pakistan and 11 defectors, met on April 10, 1972. Dr. Kamal Hossain's 34-person drafting committee also contained 229 proposals.⁵⁸

The Preamble, which was declared and took effect on November 4 and November 16, respectively, and was confirmed on November 11, committed to "a society in which the rule of law, fundamental human rights, freedom, equality," among others, would be ensured for "all citizens." Nationalism (Article 9: Bengali nationalism), socialism (Article 10 : non-communal and exploitation-free society), democracy (Article 11: democracy and human rights), and secularism (Article 12: independent, sovereignty of the republic) are the four fundamental principles of the state.⁵⁹

History of Amendments: Handed over chronologically, the amendment reads as follows: Act No. XVIII was adopted on July 15, 1973, which inserted Article 47(3) for the trial of genocide offences of 1971 violating the immunities guaranteed under Article 47, and authorising the International Crimes Tribunal (2010). Second, on September 22, 1973, Act No. XXXVI, which introduced Part IXA (Articles 141A-D) for imposition of the suspension of rights (Articles – and Articles) referring to the "famine" in 1974 and the 'unrest' intolerance. Third Amendment, issued on January 28, 1974. Fourth Amendment-mitigating Act No. II of BAXLO, one-party president, amendment of the 51 (parliament), Ans-e-1 (Prime Minister),

⁵⁸<https://www.bdlawpost.com/2023/01/background-scheme-and-features-of.html>

⁵⁹<http://bdlaws.minlaw.gov.bd/act-367.html>

and Mir-and-AI election areas, including primary competition, Major-to be eligible for... The adversaries called this provision a "constitutional dictatorship."⁶⁰

Mujib's assassination on August 15, 1975, was followed by a military coup and the imposition of martial law (the Proclamation of Martial Law) on August 20, which suspended the Constitution. Due to Ziaur Rahman's invention, the Fifth Amendment of April 6, 1979, Act No. XXXVIII, the Preamble/Bismillah (Article 2A) was amended; the acts adopted between 1975 and 1979 were legalised, multipartyism was enacted, and secularism was diminished to promote Islam. On July 2, in the year 1979, atheists took out BAKSAL and, on November 11, 1986, legalized the Ershad coup of (1982–1986) with its seventh amendment. Eighth permanent HCD benches (re ones under Article 100(3)) were nullified for breach of basic structure (judicial unity, independence) as in Anwar Hossain Chowdhury v. Bangladesh (1989, 41 DLR (AD) 165), the first time consistent with that doctrine was used.⁶¹

The ninth amendment, which abolished benches on July 7, 1989; the tenth amendment, which retained seats on June 12, 1990; and the eleventh amendment, which re-declared secularism on August 13, 1991. Thirteenth (Act No. 13 of March 28, 1996) I temporary government Articles 58A-H, neutral election administrator securing 1991/1996/2001 successions; twelfth nullified; thirteenth is nullifying the twelfth. Women's quotas for the fourteenth occasion (May 16, 2004). Fifteenth (June 30, 2011) Act No. XIV has repealed the caretaker (amidst the September 11, 2007 crisis) as well as Article 7A ("treason to abrogate"), removal of restrictions on religio-political parties(2A), ban on military trials(Article 63A), and indefinite version of religion⁶².

Removal of a parliamentary judge for the sixteenth time (on September 22, 2014) (Article 96 amendment); challenged in Bangladesh Italian Marble v. Government (validated in 2017). Seventeenth (July 8, 2018) Women to be given 25 percent of the seats till 2028. The inflexibility of Article 142, which required a two-thirds majority and the president's approval, led to it being amended 17 times by 2025, on average every three years. These modifications included four military validations (the second through fourth) and five rights-focused amendments (the first, ninth, and eleventh through thirteenth). The fifth, seventh, and eighth were blows, while, aside from them, in 2005-2011, by way of Siddique Ahmed, the activism of the Bangladesh judiciary reached its peak. But moderation on the fifteenth and sixteenth kept the democratic will ... prevalent. This journey from messianic liberation to ennobling

⁶⁰<https://www.lawyersnjurists.com/article/amendments-of-bangladesh-constitution-and-their-impact-in-legal-history/>

⁶¹<https://www.thedailystar.net/law-our-rights/news/50-years-bangladesh-constitution-nutshell-3160281>

⁶²https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitution_of_Bangladesh

resilience serves to moor judicial equilibrium against executive hegemony, fostering a hybrid democracy.⁶³⁶⁴

3.2 Structure and Features of the Constitution

The inflexible, written Constitution, as it is composed with a Preamble, 11 Parts containing 153 Articles, and 7 Schedules in total, proclaims Bangladesh as a unitary sovereign republic (Article 1). Article 7 (The Republic shall also be a) This Constitution is, as the fundamental law of the people living in what we call Zambia with all members and organs of Government deriving their authority from it; therefore, any other law or act to the extent that such law or act contradicts any provision of this Constitution or anything having been done contrary to this Constitution has no force of law and is invalid (2013), which considers violations of the Constitution as treason, is not amendable.⁶⁵

In the beginning, the Republic is a unitary state with Dhaka as its capital. Articles 15-25 in Part II (Directive Principles) are non-enforceable and part of equality, work, and education directives. Rights-containing provisions in Part III (articles 27-47A) dominantly cover: equality(27-28), dignity (35), life (32), movement (36), expression (refer articles 39-41), religio(article 41) property(echewing article 42) and culture(article23). Article 26 is made up of 102 remedies, breaches, and laws that are rendered void.⁶⁶

Part: IV -- (President, Articles 48-55): A president of India is the actual head of State, while the King or Queen is a nominal and ceremonial head of State. Art. 65 provides that the Part V (Parliament) should have 350 members (300 general + 50 reserved), for a five-year tenure, and that it should be a sovereign legislature. 2.0 According to the chapter on the judiciary, the following are in Part VI (94-117)—independent (22), Supreme Court (94)--HCD under Article 101 and Appellate Division [103]. XI (Miscellaneous), Part VII (Elections, 118-126), Part VIII (Local Government, 59-60), Part IX (Services, 133-155), Part IXA (Emergencies, 141A), and Part X (Amendments, 142)⁶⁷.

⁶³<https://www.lawyersnjurists.com/article/amendments-of-bangladesh-constitution-and-their-impact-in-legal-history/>

⁶⁴<http://bdlaws.minlaw.gov.bd/act-details-367.html>

⁶⁵https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Bangladesh_2014

⁶⁶<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/fundamental-rights-bangladesh-constitution-bdlex-manupatra>

⁶⁷<https://www.scribd.com/doc/2024100/Feature-of-the-Constitution-of-Bangladesh>

1, oaths; 2, forms property; 4, choice of leader (with no rival options yet in sight for any court faction to accomplish anything); 5, languages; 7, values. Some of the features are Parliamentary (article 56 of the PM), no decentralisation like that in the case of a federal Government, adult suffrage (article 122), single citizenship, bill of rights, rigidity of amendments, and judicial review. Socialism counterbalances capitalism, and secularism post-2010 does away with communalism. Enables activation (expansion of rights) and restraint (policy deference). Oversaturation and politicization are two other problems.⁶⁸

3.4 Judicial Review under the Constitution

The High Court Division (HCD) has parallel jurisdiction, per Article 102(1), to issue five prerogative writs against 'any person or authority' that acts without or in excess of legal authority. The same is the grand design of the Constitution for it to be a supreme (Article 7/7A) one. The jurisdiction to review legality not merits—ultra vires (substantive/judicial), procedural impropriety (natural justice: *audi alteram partem*, no bias), irrationality (Wednesbury unreasonableness: so outrageous no sensible person could arrive) or proportionality (developed post-2000)—was inherited from English common law in the 1861 Codes and codified in 1972.)⁶⁹

Applications and Taxonomy of Writing:

Habeas corpus (Article 102(1)(a)): Release from illegal detention; e.g., *Aruna Sen v. Govt* (1973, first post-72 writ), challenged preventive detention under the Special Powers Act 1974.

Mandamus (102(1)(b)): Compliance of public duties, e.g., enforcing the minimum wage as in *BLD Legal Aid v. Govt* (1995).

Prohibition (102(1)(c)): prohibition of Tribunals exercising specific jurisdiction, etc.

In such situations, as in *Bangladesh Italian Marble PLC vs. Govt* (1981 HCD 51 DLR 109; affirmed 1989 AD), **certiorari** (102(1)(d)) quashes arbitrary nationalization without compensation (a contravention of Article 42).

⁶⁸<https://www.lawteacher.net/free-law-essays/administrative-law/bangladesh-constitution-and-basic-structure-doctrine-administrative-law-essay.php>

⁶⁹<https://www.lawgratis.com/blog-detail/high-court-divisions-power-of-judicial-review-under-article-102>

Quo Warranto (102(1)(e)): Challenges the validity of public office, such as how unauthorized appointments are opposed.⁷⁰

Review is a "right itself which cannot be suspended even in an emergency" (Art 141C), because half of Article 44's survival force stems from harmonizing it with the enforcement of fundamental rights. Anwar Hossain Chowdhury v. Bangladesh (1989, 41 DLR (AD) 165) introduced the basic structure doctrine encompassing ordinances (Article 93), secondary legislation, administrative decisions and constitutional amendments: Similar to India's KesavanandaBharati (1973), the permanent benches of the Eighth Amendment undermined independence and unity of judiciary as unamendable principles alongside democracy, rule of law, fundamental rights and review power⁷¹.

Expansions and Evolution:

Conservative, strict locus standi (only aggrieved) until 1990.

Theisms unique to the Bangladesh supreme court include PIL liberalization post-1991, including suomotu (court-initiated) proceedings (the 2001 fatwa ban emanating from Abdul Kadir v. Bangladesh), NGO standing (e.g., Dr Mohiuddin Farooque v. Bangladesh 1997 CBLR (HCD) 1: environmental-PIL; on river pollution), and epistolary jurisdiction ("letters as petitions").⁷²

Basic structure applications: the Seventh Amendment (Ershad) held 2010 invalid; Fifth Amendment (1975-79) martial law struck 2005 HCD (appeal AD 2025); eight strikes in seeD March of 1989; Sixteenth Amendment upheld by 2017 AD as not violative of independence also.

Doctrines of Limits and Restraint:

There are examples of alternative remedies (Article 102 proviso), laches, res judicata, mootness, and political issues (foreign policy deference in Abdul Latif Mirza v. Govt, 1996) of discretionary refusal.

⁷⁰<https://www.lawgratis.com/blog-detail/high-court-divisions-power-of-judicial-review-under-article-102>

⁷¹https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judicial_review_in_Bangladesh

⁷²<https://www.lawgratis.com/blog-detail/high-court-divisions-power-of-judicial-review-under-article-102>

And, in non-illegality, it deserves non-review; no advisory opinions.

Supervision of the Appellate Division (Article 103 leave appeals), blunted by precedent, is mandatory under Article 111.

Judicial Conduct in Context: Growing Activism in Times of Crisis — The 2013. Policy constraints include parliamentary privileges (Article 78 immunity) and economic regulation, listening device warrants (delaying Article 102(2)(f) "sufficient interest"). Obstacles include insufficient resources, executive refusal (contempt; art. 108), and a backlog of 4 million-plus matters (2025). Academic views: Mollah (2013) praises the "middle ground" for its failure to fully legitimize or intervene. The review is, all in all, a record of dynamic equilibrium amid the strain of hybrid democracy flux.⁷³

3.5 Fundamental Rights and Judicial Remedies

Part III (Articles 27–47A) contains a lengthy Bill of Rights – 22 rights or justiciable guarantees. The primary substantive, and overlapping with ordinary laws (26: inconsistent acts after 1972 are void to the extent of repugnancy), credible by way of Article 44(1) HCD jurisdiction, concurrent with lower courts (44(2)). The listing of rights reconciles positive (positive obligations) and negative (state abstention) obligations, expressive of the influences of the UDHR and the ICCPR.⁷⁴

Comprehensive List of Rights:

Article 27 (equality before the law); Article 28 (no discrimination on grounds of religion, race, varna, caste or sex and place of birth); Article 29 (access to areas of public entertainment) and Article 30 (access to public places).

32 (liberty), 33, and 35 are life/sexuality.

34 (slavery/forced labor) and 35(b) (human traffic) outlaw exploitation.

⁷³<https://www.lawgratis.com/blog-detail/high-court-divisions-power-of-judicial-review-under-article-102>

⁷⁴<https://www.lawgratis.com/blog-detail/high-court-divisions-power-of-judicial-review-under-article-102>

36 (movement/abode), 37 (peaceful assembly), 38 (association/union), 39 (thought/conscience/speech/press—reasonable restrictions public order/decency/morality/state security), and 40 (profession) are our freedoms.

Religion/Culture: 41 (state neutrality, religious practice/propaganda), 41A (rights of Sunni/Shia), and 23(cultural preservation by minority/tribal).

Socioeconomic: 42 (compensation purchase of property), 44 (relief).

Special: 45 (tribal laws), 46 (minor property protection), and 47 (religious conviction not to be enforced).⁷⁵

Framework for Judicial Remedies:

Controller And Writs (Article 102): Does not stand alone, must be combined with rights or other writs such as habeas (32/33) and Mandamus (duty via 44).

Declaratory/Equitable: Restitution (e.g., custodial death awards), injunctions.

Wide-ranging Meanings (Activism):

Right to shelter: Article 15(1) Directive + 31 in *BLAST v. Govt* (2004, 56 DLR 363).

Privacy: Deductions from Article 43 in *Justice Shahadat Hossain vs BTRC* (2010).

Sanitation: Life Article 32, *Dr Mohiuddin* (1997).

Education: Enforcement of Art. 17 in *Helal Uddin v. Govt* (1999).

Extensions of equality: Bangladeshi women vis-à-vis foreign laborers (*Farida Khan*, 1994, article 28).

PIL Revolution – Class, Continuous (monitoring committee like 2010 river encroachment) & Public injury - they had relaxed standing.

Restrictions and Limitations: Reasonable bounds (e.g., 39 speech: morality/state security).

Article 141C: Emergencies: Suspension of (a) the Articles, or Section 31-35, 37-44, and Article 59

Immunities from article 47(Work of the President and the Parliamentary Practice).

No positive rights without legislation (restraint: respect for policymaking).⁷⁶

Guidelines (Part II), which are not judicially reviewable other than a right issue.

Important Cases and Developments:

⁷⁵<https://www.lawyersnjurists.com/article/constitution-of-bangladesh-1972-article-102/>

⁷⁶<https://www.lawgratis.com/blog-detail/high-court-divisions-power-of-judicial-review-under-article-102>

Sheikh Para v. Bangladesh (1989): Non-retroactivity under Article 31, subtype of judicial review on retrospective laws.

2016) 15th Amendment Siddique Ahmed v. Bangladesh: Sustained without a breach of the basic structure.

Mahmudur Rahman v. Bangladesh (2011): Contempt and enforcement.

Gaps: Rights of indigenous peoples (Chittagong Hill Tracts not covered), backlog, gender discrimination (Article 28 incomplete), and delays in acts (non-compliance).⁴ Academic critique: Islam(2003) explains that challenges of economic and societal nature restrain 'transformative constitutionalism'.

By blending activism (rights evolution) and restraint (no policymaking), remedies reinforce accountability and preserve the stability of the rule of law in a turbulent political setting.⁷⁷

⁷⁷<https://www.lawyersnjurists.com/article/fundamental-rights-in-the-constitution-of-bangladesh/>

CHAPTER 4: JUDICIAL ACTIVISM IN BANGLADESH

4.1 Meaning and Scope of Judicial Activism

Judicial activism, as described by Arthur Schlesinger Jr. in *Fortune* (1947) as "departure from due process in law," occurs when judges prioritize the public good over technical procedure and add their policy preferences to decisions outside of strict textualism or precedent.

Bangladesh's iteration is most activist; 4-6 have rather maximal readings in it: NGO/citizen stand-in for laggard regulators, very little deference, conditional legislative sclerosis, and rights maximalist based on PIL (according to Bradley Canon taxonomy, consisting of (1) majoritarian stuff); (2) derivatives from texts). Bangladesh's score is the highest across this axiology of regulatory legitimacy/fidelity⁷⁸.

Article 102(1) of the Constitution HCD as "excess of jurisdiction" (Purposively interpreted post-1991 with tools such as class actions, continuous mandamus (aka court-monitored compliance committees), epistolary jurisdiction, per Dr. Kamal Hossain, practices relaxed LP). It includes (a) environmental and public health (Article 32 life extensions); (b) human rights (Articles 27-47A enforcement); (c) good governance: transparency, anti-corruption; and d) administrative accountability: ultra vires quashing.⁷⁹

Historical path: post-Ershad liberalization, Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA) cases; conservative 1972–90 (submitting to martial law). According to RidwanulHoque's (2013) "golden medium" argument, calibrated activism is activist in crises and passive in policy terms. This is based on the Indian PIL (HussainaraKhatoon 1979), modified for local conditions, e.g., a weak legislature (there are numerous ordinances under Art 93), executive overweening, and the vibrancy of NGOs. Instead, Bangladesh in 4 unites the rights of Part III with the imperatives of Part II (see discussion regarding harmonious construction) and the principle of Article 27, which is appliedticle 27 differently from what would be a "strict scrutiny" standard in the U.S.⁸⁰

⁷⁸<https://academic.oup.com/icon/article/11/2/547/753667>

⁷⁹<https://academic.oup.com/icon/article/11/2/547/753667>

⁸⁰<https://www.lawteacher.net/free-law-essays/constitutional-law/judicial-activism-in-bangladesh-constitutional-law-essay.php>

Empirical Reach: suomotu 100+ (fatwas, crossfires), PILs 500+1997-2025 (BELA data).
Limits: laches, political questions (foreign policy), and Art. 102 proviso (other remedies).
Permits "judicialization" to fill gaps but can lead to "government by judge."⁸¹

4.2 Landmark Cases of Judicial Activism

By chronological landmarks, the doctrinal leaps are recorded:

Anwar Hossain Chowdhury v. Bangladesh (1989, 41 DLR (AD) 165): Held that permanent HCD benches under Article 100(3) of the Eighth Amendment were incongruous to canons of independence of judiciary, oneness and democracy (cf Kesavananda), with respect to limits on Article 142 amendments for the first time⁸².

The Bangladesh Italian Marble PLC v. Government, 51 DLR (1989) AD 109, redefined the substantive review by annulling the arbitrary nationalization of vested property without payment under Article 42 42, instead of applying it to anybody for having recourse to a fundamental remedy.⁸³

The PIL precedent in the environmental case in Dr. Mohiuddin Farooque v. Bangladesh (1997, CBLR (HCD) 1; BELA v. DEPZ 2001) has restrained and prohibited pollution of the Buriganga river, recognised 'right to environment' under Article 32 (life), enforced Environmental Clearance Certificates' compliance (EC Act 1995).⁸⁴

Secretary, Ministry of Finance Vs. Masdar Hossain (1999 HCD; 2000 AD, 57 DLR 364): This established police-magistrate fusion was met by the constitutional principle of Article 115 on judicial-executive separation, which led to the Judicial Administration Rules 2007 and an independent Secretariat.⁸⁵

BLAST v. Bangladesh (2003, 55 DLR (HCD) 363): Article 15(1) 31 that provides for housing of the urban poor is the source of RTS.⁸⁶

⁸¹<https://bangladesh.justiceaudit.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Judicial-Activism-and-Human-Rights-in-Bangladesh-a-Critique.pdf>

⁸²<http://dspace.ewubd.edu:8080/handle/123456789/4693>

⁸³<https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/unstable-constitutionalism/judicialization-of-politics-in-bangladesh/A357AB410B8E391BE2C14499F92D9EA3>

⁸⁴<http://dspace.ewubd.edu:8080/handle/123456789/4693>

⁸⁵<https://www.uniwriter.ai/law/judicial-activism-in-bangladesh/>

⁸⁶ BLAST v. Bangladesh (2003, 55 DLR (HCD) 363)

Abdul Korim & Ors v. Bangladesh (2001 HCD)- prohibition of suomotu fatwa as being contradictory to Article 41/27 protecting minorities and women from spontaneous decrees at the behest of villages.⁸⁷

Justice Shahadat Hossain v. BTRC (HCD 2010). Read into the Constitution (Article 43), implicit privacy, punishment without trial , and phone tapping were struck down.⁸⁸

Despite political backlash, it could be argued that Siddique Ahmed v. Bangladesh (2011 HCD; 2017 AD upheld the 15th Amendment) held that the caretaker under the Thirteenth Amendment constituted an "undemocratic basic structure breach."⁸⁹

After 2013: crossfire inquiries (BLAST 2009-), Shahbagh quota PIL (2013). By 2025, they are on track to generate at least 50 PILs per year, due to over 20 precedents that expanded Article 102 from personal injuries to public remedies.⁹⁰

4.3 Judicial Activism in Protecting Fundamental Rights

Part III gets implemented by the Living Constitution method of activism:

Equal rights (Articles 27–30): The HCD decision of 2024 in X v. Govt. under Article 28, and advocated for discriminatory hiring. Article 29 reservations were carried forward in quota matters.⁹¹

Life/Liberty (32–35): Crossfire PILs (2004–2025) mandated Article 33 probes, cut RAB killings; pollution prohibitions (Article 32).

Expression/Assembly (37–39): Hartal restrictions, expansion of media freedom (Bangladesh Online 2022).

Socio-economic: Food security (Article 15+32, PIL on Famine 2008); free education (Article 17); Helal Uddin versus Bangladesh (1998, 50 DLR (AD) 445).⁹²

⁸⁷<https://www.lawjournals.org/assets/archives/2024/vol10issue3/10133.pdf>

⁸⁸ Justice Shahadat Hossain v. BTRC (2010 HCD)

⁸⁹<https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/unstable-constitutionalism/judicialization-of-politics-in-bangladesh/A357AB410B8E391BE2C14499F92D9EA3>

⁹⁰<https://www.thedailystar.net/law-our-rights/news/recent-instance-judicial-activism-3910821>

⁹¹<https://ohrh.law.ox.ac.uk/judicial-activism-in-protecting-the-right-to-equality-in-bangladesh-reflections-on-high-court-divisions-verdict-on-redefining-parental-identity-in-student-information-forms/>

⁹²<https://ohrh.law.ox.ac.uk/judicial-activism-in-protecting-the-right-to-equality-in-bangladesh-reflections-on-high-court-divisions-verdict-on-redefining-parental-identity-in-student-information-forms/>

PILs: class actions for slum dwellers and acid victims, 80% NGO-run (BELA /BLAST/Asish of Salish). Suo motu 50+ custodial deaths. Impacts: Over 100 environmental shutdowns, over 200 fatwa convictions overturned. Tried emergency powers (141C) but suspended a few rights after 2011.⁹³

4.4 Judicial Activism in Administrative and Public Law Matters

In Bangladesh, activist judges in administrative and public law focus their activism on the control of maladministration, the discipline of executive authorities, and the promotion of "good governance" where institutions have been politicized or are weak. It's when, academics say, the court will transition from being a passive dispute resolver to an active "agency" that enforces accountability, justice, and legality in public administration.⁹⁴

The following are three key features of this administrative/public law activism:

Extended grounds for review

In Bangladesh, the Wednesbury unreasonableness, natural justice, and increasing proportionality, in addition to traditional ultra vires, are used by Bangladeshi courts to quash or modify administrative actions.

The HCD has examined licensing decisions, land acquisition, service issues, environmental clearances, and government inaction under Article 102 when these actions impacted vulnerable communities.⁹⁵

Combining PIL with administration

PIL has enabled NGOs and civil society activists to challenge systemic administrative failures, such as police excesses, unsafe work environments, environmental pollution, and deficiencies in municipal and health services, without having to prove personal injury.

Under the rubric of "judicial agency to achieve good governance," an article in the Dhaka University Law Journal details how the court, through a PIL, compelled agencies to implement transparency measures, publish rules, and rationalize discretion⁹⁶.

⁹³<https://nilsbangladesh.org/role-of-public-interest-litigation-in-judicial-activism-of-bangladesh-while-enforcing-fundamental-rights/>

⁹⁴<https://rais.education/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/25902750.pdf>

⁹⁵<https://nilsbangladesh.org/role-of-public-interest-litigation-in-judicial-activism-of-bangladesh-while-enforcing-fundamental-rights/>

⁹⁶<https://bangladesh.justiceaudit.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Judicial-Activism-and-Human-Rights-in-Bangladesh-a-Critique.pdf>

Examples of intervention domains

Environmental regulation: PILs brought by groups such as BELA have compelled the Department of Environment and other regulatory bodies to regulate industrial effluents, protect water sources and wetlands, and ensure compliance with EIA norms, treating the mismanagement of resources as a violation of Article 32 (right to life).

Police and magistracy control: A.H. MonjurulKabir and others observe that executive-controlled magistracy and torture in police remand led to no bail and torture in custody; the courts reacted by issuing directions on procedures for remands as well as on habeas corpus.

Urban governance and public health: PILs have facilitated orders on hospital waste management, traffic regulation, road safety standards, and eviction procedures through repeated mandamus and consecutive compliance hearings⁹⁷.

Methods of "managerial" activism

Instead of deciding the case once and for all, courts are making structural decisions that will continue (for example, requiring regular reports, appointing monitoring committees, setting further implementation dates).

The court has, at times, managed to create policy blueprints (such as those on anti-pollution or police remand), making it difficult to distinguish between adjudication and administration," reports the Dhaka Law Review and other studies.

While this trajectory of activism has undoubtedly resulted in (greater) transparency and (more rights-conscious) administrative law, it has also raised questions about democratic accountability and institutional capacity. Academics stress that courts lack the bureaucratic tools to manage complex programs in perpetuity, and that overuse of mandamus can wear down judicial resources while masking fatal flaws in the executive branch⁹⁸.

4.5 Judicial Activism amid Political Challenges

Bangladesh's troubled democratic history and persistent constitutional instability have ushered in what is referred to as the "judicialization of politics", in which the Supreme Court has been repeatedly drawn into highly politicized areas. In these instances, courts are the

⁹⁷<https://bangladesh.justiceaudit.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Judicial-Activism-and-Human-Rights-in-Bangladesh-a-Critique.pdf>

⁹⁸<https://journal.library.du.ac.bd/index.php/DULJ/article/view/1569/1478>

ultimate forums for determining regime legitimacy in matters such as constitutional amendment challenges, electoral management, emergency-era measures, or politically motivated prosecutions⁹⁹.

Political context: The key elements of political context activism are:

Constitutional Amendments and Martial Law

The court had to determine whether declarations and amendments that made coups and extra-constitutional governance legal after the imposition of martial law were valid.

As Kawser Ahmed and others have studied, the Court's activism during these periods was two-fold: it protected civil liberties within a regime of martial law, while at the same time defending its own institutional autonomy.¹⁰⁰

Fundamental regime engineering and structure

The literature cites the judicial invalidation of the Fifth and Seventh Amendments (which affirmed martial-law actions) and its review of caretaker arrangements under the 13th Amendment as classic instances where that occurred in one direction, from below-ground to above-the-courts constitution."

However, decisions about the caretaker government directly impacted the electoral terrain and party competition" in a Cambridge volume on Bangladesh's "judicialization of politics," showing "courts as 'constitutional architects' rather than mere interpreters."¹⁰¹

Judicial involvement in current political controversies

The scope of judicial review has widened to encompass cases challenging anti-corruption crusades, parliamentary boycotts, and election violence. Courts have adjudicated 'fair' polling, the role of the Election Commission, and also whether detentions made during emergencies are valid.

Given that courts now rule on regime-vital issues, this study can also provide insight into the politicization of (de-)selections of judges and into how political actors vie for control over judges¹⁰².

⁹⁹<https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/unstable-constitutionalism/judicialization-of-politics-in-bangladesh/A357AB410B8E391BE2C14499F92D9EA3>

¹⁰⁰<https://www.northsouth.edu/newassets/images/law/nsu-law-working-paper-no-1.pdf>

¹⁰¹<https://dhakalawreview.org/publiclecture/lecture-2>

¹⁰²<https://dhakalawreview.org/publiclecture/lecture-2>

Pros and cons of an "unstable democracy."

When political branches acted beyond the Constitution, engaging in extra-constitutional behavior, activism was necessary to re-center constitutionalism and to check authoritarian excess.

But legal scholars say courts come under attack by partisans when they're the ones repeatedly determining high-stakes political outcomes. This phenomenon erodes their independence and the perception of impartiality.¹⁰³

Overall, political context activism has been involved in making the Court a "major player in the power game of Bangladesh." Still, scholars stress that this role must be employed judiciously to avoid unduly substituting judicial preferences for democratic deliberation. This golden mean means showing moderation in the management of our day-to-day political affairs while being resolute, even ruthless where necessary, in defending fundamental rights and vital structures.

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4.6 Criticisms and Limitations

The encroaching legislature is illegitimate (the interim ruling was unconstitutional) and overreaches. Sloppy application and backlog (4M+ cases) undermine effectiveness. Concerns that NGOs may be biased and that interference from the president (Article 95 on appointments) compromises neutrality. Selective activism. These forms of protest emphasize environmental and urban, not rural, issues¹⁰⁵.

RSI, the political question doctrine, and discretionary refusals are limitations. Hoque describes the perils of "injudicious passivity"; too much stimulus invites scrutiny. There is a need for reforms in both capacity and compliance. We were all born in the wrong country. For all its flaws, activism is necessary for rights in the absence of strong institutions¹⁰⁶.

¹⁰³<https://bangladesh.justiceaudit.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Judicial-Activism-and-Human-Rights-in-Bangladesh-a-Critique.pdf>

¹⁰⁴https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2728755

¹⁰⁵<https://cambridgescholars.com/product/978-1-4438-2733-1/>

¹⁰⁶<https://www.uniwriter.ai/law/judicial-activism-in-bangladesh/>

CHAPTER 5: JUDICIAL RESTRAINT IN BANGLADESH

5.1 Concept and Significance of Judicial Restraint

Favoring textualism, stare decisis, and a requirement of minimal frustration of democratic majority processes, the doctrine counsels courts to make only "as-applied" decisions necessitated by particular controversies before them and not general as-applied constitutional rules and allows judges to delegate questions of constitutional policy that do not rise to an extreme showing of unconstitutionality. Unlike activism's policy infusions, Britannica characterizes it as self-imposed limitations, yet following precedents and the status quo. [from above] Analysis from the Daily Star on Bangladesh's self-restraint tells us that the reserve prevents "judge-made law" and is in tune with Art 7A supremacy, minus judicial supremacy.¹⁰⁷

Importance: Avoids backlash compared with threats to impeach the 16th Amendment and maintains institutional credibility in hybrid democracies. Hoque's "golden mean" claim asserts that moderation reduces the likelihood that activism will exceed bounds and enhances predictability. Post-martial law, it was restraint that kept judicial survival alive in times of emergency (Art 141A). It makes the elected accountable by ensuring parliamentary immunity under Article 78—empirical value: Clears non-justiciable claims, cutting the backlog by more than 4 million. And, broadly, restraint guards the public's confidence by balancing comity and Article 22 freedom.¹⁰⁸

5.2 Judicial Restraint and Constitutional Interpretation

For restraint, Bangladeshi courts deploy literalism, originalism, and harmonious construction. The Appellate Division (AD) refused to construe Article 8(2) widely in *Khondaker Modarresh Elahi v. Govt* (2002, 54 DLR (HCD) 47). It ruled that Part II directives were not justiciable, even if there was an express claim of supremacy under Article 7(2). In Siddique Ahmed's review (2024), originalism kept us out of policy rewriting by sustaining the 15th Amendment based on what framers really did "intend."¹⁰⁹

Postpones harmonious construction: Masdar Hossain (2000 AD) confined the separation under Article 115 initially to judicial functions (and not to independent functioning while discharging duties). Verbal nicety: International law, when it enters the domestic domain

¹⁰⁷ <https://www.thedailystar.net/law-our-rights/restraints-the-judge-made-law-1225219>

¹⁰⁸ [http://www.hrpb.org.bd/public/images/judgement/Writ Petition No 9989 of 2014 16th amendment about removal of judges of S C.pdf](http://www.hrpb.org.bd/public/images/judgement/Writ%20Petition%20No%209989%20of%202014%2016th%20amendment%20about%20removal%20of%20judges%20of%20S%20C.pdf)

¹⁰⁹ [express claim of supremacy under Article 7\(2\). In Siddique Ahmed's review \(2024\), originalism kept us out of policy rewriting by sustaining the 15th Amendment based on what framers really did "intend"](#)

without the process of domestication, is repelled (*Ershad v. Bangladesh*). The absence of merits review in economic policy (rational basis deference) is at least one illustration of restraint's tamed activism. Doctrinal tools: The doctrine applies only to foreign policy and financial questions. Ensures that the liberalisation of interpretation is not frustrated by interpreting in all rigour with reference to the Article 142 amendment".¹¹⁰

5.3 Instances & Cases Reflecting Judicial Restraint

Important examples of restraint include:

" In *H.M. Ershad v. Bangladesh*, the court refused to consider Article 13 of the Universal Declaration against domestic law.¹¹¹

The 16th Amendment Case (2014 HCD; AD, 68 DLR 9) was dismissive of the panache of executive overreach as it pertained to ethanol, and upheld the process by which judges can be impeached by parliament (Article 96).

AD in *Siddique Ahmed v. Bangladesh* (2011/2017) left it to the wisdom of the legislature to abolish the caretaker regime under the Fifteenth Amendment, declaring that it did not violate the basic structure.¹¹²

To sidestep micromanagement, the *Khamarbari Shoe Factory Fire PIL* (2013) was dismissed on the grounds of alternative remedies or laches.¹¹³

In *ModarreshElahi*, AD constrained the judge-made expansions of law in HCD. Some have also had their ordinances validated by the emergency-era deference. These are the applications of Article 102 proviso, which rejects 60% of writs annually.

5.4 Judicial Restraint in Political & Policy Issues

Confined in political matters: There is insipid consideration and application of the principle of trammel in respect of shoring up the temple which ensures, save fraud, autonomy

¹¹⁰ [express claim of supremacy under Article 7\(2\). In Siddique Ahmed's review \(2024\), originalism kept us out of policy rewriting by sustaining the 15th Amendment based on what framers really did "intend](#)

¹¹¹ <https://www.thedailystar.net/law-our-rights/law-analysis/perceived-tension-between-judiciary-and-executive-bangladesh-1402672>

¹¹² <https://www.icconnectblog.com/abusive-originalism-and-the-paradox-of-the-unconstitutional-original-provision-the-bangladesh-supreme-courts-siddiqui-review/>

¹¹³ <https://www.thedailystar.net/law-our-rights/restraints-the-judge-made-law-1225219>

Election Commission (article 118), by judicial⁵⁸ review; deferment on relational concerns on foreign policy development *Abdul Latif Mirza v. Govt.*, 1996. Policy: A moderate economic policy (property vests once the Italian Marble caps are lifted) is in effect—the Hartal ban on executive security assessments¹¹⁴¹¹⁵.

Shahbagh Quota Violence (2013) Government Draft: Court-monitored, but stay on government implementation. Crisis 2007: Tried to maintain neutrality by not participating in CTG struggles. Doctrines: The strictures of ripeness, mootness, and standing do not apply to policy PILs. Moderation steers clear of "judicialization overload," according to a Cambridge examination of the subject. It has been decided on this balance between hands-off-the-daily-grind politics and activist crisis¹¹⁶.

5.5 Judicial Deference to Legislature and Executive

Orders issued under Article 93 are valid unless they are ultra vires; parliamentary proceedings are protected by Article 78. Respect: enforced 17th Amendment (Article 142 two-thirds compliance rate). Executive: Reasonable basis for taxation and land-taking (no strict scrutiny)¹¹⁷.

Article 115 was no barrier to (pre-2007) lower judiciary transfers, and the review post-Masdar has been narrow. Appointments are infrequently challenged (Article 95-administered). [from previous] Comity: AD restrains to reverse activist HCD (Modarresh Elahi). Preserves distance, as when budgetary allocations can't be tampered with¹¹⁸.

5.6 Criticisms and Challenges

Restraint, say the critics, amounts to "injudicious passivity" (executive abuses ravage all before PIL). 'Selective restraint,' Hoque contends, prioritizes policy over rights. Discharging continues to add up, and in emergencies, the public loses confidence¹¹⁹.

Obstacles: fears of impeachment (16th); executive dominance (Article 95). NGO-dominated activism masks the gaps in rural areas when it comes to access. [Read a previous] Reforms

¹¹⁴<https://www.thedailystar.net/law-our-rights/law-analysis/perceived-tension-between-judiciary-and-executive-bangladesh-1402672>

¹¹⁵<https://bdlawdigest.org/constitutional-interpretation-and-our-supreme-court-a-critical-appreciation.html>

¹¹⁶<http://nujlawreview.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/ridwanulhoque.pdf>

¹¹⁷https://www.scirp.org/pdf/blr2024154_93302194.pdf

¹¹⁸<https://journal.library.du.ac.bd/index.php/DULJ/article/view/1569/1478>

¹¹⁹[Restraint, say the critics, amounts to "injudicious passivity" \(executive abuses ravage all before PIL\). 'Selective restraint,' Hoque contends, prioritizes policy over rights. Discharging continues to add up, and in emergencies, the public loses confidence](#)

range from fast-tracks to clearer political question tests. But there is a void which demands not excess, but calibrated restraint¹²⁰.

¹²⁰[Obstacles: fears of impeachment \(16th\); executive dominance \(Article 95\). NGO-dominated activism masks the gaps in rural areas when it comes to access. \[Read a previous\] Reforms range from fast-tracks to clearer political question tests. But there is a void which demands not excess, but calibrated restraint](#)

CHAPTER 6: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

6.1 Comparative Overview: Judicial Activism vs. Judicial Restraint

One is Anwar Hossain's fundamental structure doctrine (1989), which limited the Amendment of the constitution, taking away judicial independence, and BELA environmental cases are two instances where PIL and suomotu actions under Art 102 play an essential role in Bangladeshi judicial activism. This is akin to the virile PIL expansion in India post-HussainaraKhatoon 1979 and the 1973 KeshvanandaBharati basic structure judgment, in which courts militantly pronounced specific policies unconstitutional on human rights grounds. The US, by contrast, relies on activists through the testing precedent in landmark rights cases like *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), a product of the judicial review system established by *Marbury v. Madison* (1803)¹²¹.

Bangladesh will not respect merits review in policy areas – it uses appellate deference to support the likes of s. 15th and 16th amendments. [Previous] In cases like *State of Rajasthan v. Union of India* in 1977, a political question case about courts not involving themselves in internal party disputes, India shows selective restraint. The USA mirrors Chevron deference, as under Chevron deference in 1984, the agency was only required to give a reasonable interpretation of an ambiguous statute unless it clearly violated the law. By confining review to procedural Wednesbury unreasonableness without annulling primary legislation, the UK imposes a strict constraint on parliamentary sovereignty.¹²²

A broad overview of Bangladesh mirrors a balanced spectrum: the write refusal rate hovering over 60% falls within the US/UK acceptable range wrt procedure, and the activism thrust equals that of India (500+ PILs vs thousands in India). Post-martial law Bangladesh is a higher-stakes situation than the USA/UK stable ones, requiring more daring interventions. Still, Hoque views this as an even "golden mean" that precludes criticism of overreach like India's. Comparative tensions highlight universal dilemmas — restraint prompts governance vacuums, activism threatens legitimacy — and position Bangladesh as a flexible hybrid¹²³.

¹²¹[http://www.ijhssi.org/papers/vol10\(5\)/Ser-2/E1005022430.pdf](http://www.ijhssi.org/papers/vol10(5)/Ser-2/E1005022430.pdf)

¹²²<https://blog.ipleaders.in/judicial-activism-vs-judicial-restraint-indian-disarray/>

¹²³<https://ijirl.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/JUDICIAL-ACTIVISM-VS-JUDICIAL-RESTRAINTS-A-COMPARATIVE-STUDY-BETWEEN-INDIA-AND-USA.pdf>

6.2 Lessons from Other Constitutional Democracies (India, USA, UK)

While another 2015 case striking down the NJAC acts as a cautionary tale of post-6th Amendment, Bangladesh-style impeachment pressure, namely when it struck down such an amendment in Bangladesh to hold that such amendments never occurred, creating PIL-like rights (such as encouraging action like Bangladeshi public interest suits brought by BELA on environmental issues) Rather than let standards for PIL change with the court's mood. Anwar Hossain (1989), where the basic structure theory of Kesavananda was held to apply so far as restrictions on Amendment were concerned. India's post-2010 policy interventions (e.g., giving away 2G spectrum) have exposed the imperative for limiting activism in Bangladesh to rights gaps, not economic micromanagement¹²⁴.

Strict scrutiny is parallel to Article 32's life-expanding protections against pollution (especially in light of Chevron's administrative deference, which teaches hands-off regulatory expertise necessary for Bangladesh's ordinance-heavy governance under Article 93). Background review in the United States – Marbury v. Madison case underpins Bangladesh Article 102 writs. Without this focus on federalism, the scale-up provisions for 1989 HCD benches echo those of US state courts in promoting institutional consistency¹²⁵.

Bangladesh's natural justice reviews need to be studied through the magnifying lens of British proceduralism. In contrast, Council of Civil Service Unions v. Minister 1984 suggests that the legislative primacy under Article 65 is subject to substantive axe but not gloss. To maintain sovereignty against the backdrop of paramountcy after the 15th Amendment, interpretative developments are required rather than striking down, which is also fitting for Article 26 repugnancy clauses in Bangladesh.¹²⁶

Like with Anand CJI, who was worried about a "judicial tyranny") to maintain equilibrium, all these democracies counsel Bangladesh to adopt the United States' graded scrutiny for rights rigour; India's NGO activism for institutional weakness, and the United Kingdom's minimalism¹²⁷.

6.3 Relevance of Comparative Findings to Bangladesh

¹²⁴<https://ijirl.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/JUDICIAL-ACTIVISM-VS-JUDICIAL-RESTRAINTS-A-COMPARATIVE-STUDY-BETWEEN-INDIA-AND-USA.pdf>

¹²⁵<https://rsisinternational.org/journals/ijriss/articles/existing-court-system-in-bangladesh-india-uk-and-usa-a-comparative-study/>

¹²⁶https://ijirt.org/publishedpaper/IJIRT182625_PAPER.pdf

¹²⁷<https://www.whiteblacklegal.co.in/public/details/judicial-review-a-comparative-analysis-between-u-s-a-and-india-by---rishav>

It is recommended that Bangladesh should follow, by way of locus standi, at least to curb the salient abuse that accompanies loose epistolary jurisdiction, as PIL liberalization in India from Mohiuddin Farooque (1997) onwards has the potential for misuse sans standing-filter. To lift the mandamus burdens now crushing HCD (USA gets 4M cases backed up), USA: principles of Chevron deference in spending & environmental actions. Having also reversed the HRA for compatible reading techniques, the UK sovereignty model reinforces immunity under Article 78, essential to protecting against Parliament's overreach post-15th Amendment¹²⁸.

Like the Kesavananda and Marbury legacies, UBS applicability also strengthens Anwar precedents set on Article 142 Amendment limitations. Bangladesh must blend the UK proportionality model and the USA attitudinal neutrality model, transforming Wednesbury standards to combat the politicization of appointments and minimize the perils of hybrid democracy. Real-world changes include the USA's express political question doctrines, which distinguish justiciable rights from policy, India-invented fast-track PIL benches , and UK compliance declarations sharpening teeth without fracas.

These findings buttress Bangladesh's strategy — advocacy to bridge rights and governance gaps, moderation to safeguard democratic space — as a golden mean for long-term constitutionalism amid instability.¹²⁹

¹²⁸<http://lrdjournal.com/index.php/lrd/article/view/224>

¹²⁹<https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/unstable-constitutionalism/judicialization-of-politics-in-bangladesh/A357AB410B8E391BE2C14499F92D9EA3>

CHAPTER 7: IMPACT & IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Impact on Rule of Law

Rule of law: Judicial activism ensures rule of law by operationalising Article 44 fundamental right through PILs like in Dr Mohiuddin Farooque's (1997) –environmental protection under Article 32 life, 'dragging the executive with force' and 'filling legislative vacuum'. " Restraint on judicial rule-making, complemented by the restraint of "not less than a prominent 40%; each court year or tones down six percent of Writs to afford preference for egregious contraventions against vs. policy deineaments. Together, these bolstered constitutionalism: legal certainty was re-established post-1975 crises;³ the basic structure doctrine⁴ (Anwar Hossain 1989) struck down martial law amendments¹³⁰.

Empirical progress include fatwa bans (2001), which limit extra-judicial penalties, and crossfire mechanisms that require Article 33 protections to reduce impunity. But the Ruthless Red Tape regime dilutes swift justice, and operational gaps – 70% non-compliance "Justice Audit" wise – erode efficacy. Finally, all things combined, in the context of weak institutions, activism fosters a liberal substantive rule of law; and restraint ensures procedural legitimacy: hybrid equilibrium¹³¹.

7.2 Effect on Democratic Governance

While PILs create accountability on the lines of elections and anti-corruption, activism stands in as a substitute for governance. Masdar Hossain (2000) divorced the judiciary (Article 115), strengthening the separation of powers. In affirming Article 78 immunity and the 15th and 16th Amendments, restraint has its way by protecting democratic space in consenting to legislative deference after caretaker invalidation. General effect: «At least 10 thousand people on the streets to support the sentence and its complete overturn SC imposed judicialization without seizure of state power.-Judicialization opposes authoritarianism (Shahbagh 2013 monitoring reduced violence)¹³².

Challenges loom: 2011's Caretaker ruling altered the election landscape as its legitimacy discussion trickles into '13; ongoing mandamus clogs some courts and holds up business as usual. Comparative perspectives between South Asian countries show that activism in Bangladesh effectively checks executive overreach, more so than in Pakistan, but there is also

¹³⁰ <https://www.lawteacher.net/free-law-essays/constitutional-law/judicial-activism-in-bangladesh-constitutional-law-essay.php>

¹³¹ <https://journal.library.du.ac.bd/index.php/DULJ/article/view/1569/1478>

¹³² <https://www.uniwriter.ai/law/judicial-activism-in-bangladesh/>

the risk of policy intrusion, as seen with India. Transparency requirements (eg hospital waste regulations) enhance governance while executive response undercuts stability¹³³.

7.3 Judicial Behavior and Public Trust

By protecting the dispossessed (women in fatwa bans, tribal citizens under Article 45), activist interventions (suomotu, NGO PILs) enhance public confidence; surveys affirm that 65 per cent of litigant-individuals favour rights pronouncements. AD HCD reversals of overreaching display institutional discipline and command self-restraint to lead toward neutrality (ModarreshElahi 2002). “Trust is something that the golden mean preserves despite politics,” Hoque notes¹³⁴.

Erosion risks: Appointment bias (Article 95) fuel perceptions of elite capture; trust falls to 45% in 2020 polls; partial urban focus ignores rural concerns. Delays and non-enforcement do come at the mistrust reducing, but successes such as (BLAST shelter 2003) restore trust. Behavior changes: Since the CTG in 2007, ‘Monitor Thyself’ was key for survival during emergencies. Consistency of enforcement is key to trust¹³⁵.

7.4 Implications for Constitutionalism

This dialectic between strict activism and regulated moderation buttresses constitutionalism. The public trust theory (2010 Gas case) stretches article 32 by importing comparatives, while the doctrine of basic structure places tab on revision of Article 142. The consequences are, inter alia, the application of Article 7A treason clauses— with a clear guarantee of supremacy against hybrid threat¹³⁶.

The Middle Way pans out over the longer term: it maximizes a golden mean, an Indian zeal for PIL mixed with British deference; overreach attracts backlash (threat 16); passivity allows abuses. Allotment and free movement are among those reforms that make for durability and ensure the judicial plays its role of “guardian without governor.” Fast-tracks and compliances procedures follows them. Balanced evolution strengthens constitutionalism¹³⁷.

¹³³<https://jmhorizons.com/index.php/journal/article/download/1135/897/2042>

¹³⁴<https://www.northsouth.edu/newassets/images/law/nsu-law-working-paper-no-1.pdf>

¹³⁵<https://bangladesh.justiceaudit.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Judicial-Activism-and-Human-Rights-in-Bangladesh-a-Critique.pdf>

¹³⁶<https://academic.oup.com/icon/article/11/2/547/753667>

¹³⁷<https://journal.library.du.ac.bd/index.php/DULJ/article/view/1569/1478>

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

8.1 Summary of Findings

From theoretical perspectives, there have been restraints as textual deference regarding the separation of powers; activism as a diminutionist reading remedying deficiencies in rights (Canon features); and Bangladesh's post-martial law recourse to Hoque's golden mean. Article 78 immunities need policy constraints, but (500+ cases) Art. 102 writs enable PIL surges, and basic structure (Anwar, 1989) constrains changes.¹³⁸

Fatwa bans, Masdar Hossain 2000 split, and Mohiuddin's 1997 jurisdiction are building blocks of activism to maintain rights/power; the lean and spare necessitated by the 15th/16th Amendments' restraint and the rule of 60% written refusals guard against overreach. By comparison, USA/UK proceduralism instructs policy deference; India's PIL activism warns against excess. Impacts: Constitutionalism enhanced by supremacy enforcement; governance checks on executive dominance; confidence varies (65% of the populace supports rights, 45% are worried about politicization); and the rule of law advances (crossfire pressure). Hybrid tensions persist, particularly amid backlog and non-compliance¹³⁹.

8.2 Key Conclusions

The judiciary in Bangladesh is a calibrated balance: Activism is essential to assert rights within weak institutions, but restraint is vital for legitimacy and to avoid Pakistan-style chaos or India-style overreach. The golden mean works—basic structure upheld, PIL plastic (based on rights to environment and shelter) —but the achievements are eroded by gaps in implementation (70% non-compliance).¹⁴⁰

Judicialization aids democratic governance in resisting authoritarianism (Shahbagh, 2013) — but it can also lend itself to overreach into policy; faced with Article 95 biases, public confidence requires objectivity. 7A supremacy, of the kind which makes the Supreme Court a guardian and not just a ruler, is indispensable to constitutionalism. Ultimately, an activist-restrained hybrid democracy preserves the rule of law through a mix of activism and restraint¹⁴¹.

¹³⁸ <https://www.uniwriter.ai/law/judicial-activism-in-bangladesh/>

¹³⁹ <https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/unstable-constitutionalism/judicialization-of-politics-in-bangladesh/A357AB410B8E391BE2C14499F92D9EA3>

¹⁴⁰ <https://bangladesh.justiceaudit.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Judicial-Activism-and-Human-Rights-in-Bangladesh-a-Critique.pdf>

¹⁴¹ <https://journal.library.du.ac.bd/index.php/DULJ/article/view/1569/1478>

8.3 Policy and Legal Recommendations

Increase enforcement: Article 102 orders need to include mandatory compliance dates and an escalation of contempt, and Indian-style fast-track PIL benches are reducing the 4 million pending cases. Getting better: The USA Chevron bows to economics and procedural screens to prevent wasteful litigation¹⁴².

Strike the golden mean by narrowing Article 95 executive influence and by putting the political question doctrine into rules and an independent nominations panel. [Preceding] Capacity building and digital monitoring for continued mandamus / judicial academies for rural access. (PM/A) Legislative synchronisation: In a bid to arrest judicial over-dependence, it commends the PIL do's and don'ts to Parliament. These promote long-term equilibrium¹⁴³.

8.4 Areas for Future Research

Empirical desiderata include longitudinal trust surveys after 2025 and quantitative PIL effect evaluations (e.g., compliance rates, socioeconomic outcomes) beyond anecdotal evidence. Comparative extensions: robust optimal dose of golden mean efficiency in Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Sri Lankan hybrids¹⁴⁴. [Previous]

Doctrinal development: advancing climate constitutionalism via Article 32 innovations and judicial conduct in the age of AI. Behavioural economics: consider incentives under pressure from the government (Articles 95/96). Imbalance of Rural-Urban: Federalism 17/09. With the absence of Article 1 unitarism, Federalism simulations and activism access imbalances. [Read all of our classical music coverage here.] These take a long-term view of sustainability¹⁴⁵.

¹⁴²<https://www.whiteblacklegal.co.in/public/details/judicial-review-a-comparative-analysis-between-u-s-a-and-india-by---rishav>

¹⁴³<https://journal.library.du.ac.bd/index.php/DULJ/article/view/1569/1478>

¹⁴⁴<https://scipg.com/index.php/103/article/download/848/667>

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