

## Folk and the Formula-Pathways to Capable States

Public lecture by Professor Lant Pritchett

After fifty years of development efforts, 80 per cent of states are still at low, stagnating or failing levels of capabilities. Why? What could be done better?

'Development needs a state that can carry out its responsibilities -formulating effective policies; delivering the mail, educating children, enforcing the law, and collecting taxes. But most developing country states are still failing or stagnating.

The Weberian civil service [meritocratic, neutral and highly competent bureaucracy of the economically advanced nations] as the backbone of state capability can work well. But this formula has failed when transplanted to many countries. Increasingly a crisis exists: postal workers don't deliver the mail, teachers don't teach, police don't police, and the taxman does not collect taxes.

If the current formula was sound, it should have worked by now. The reality is that success in building state capability typically comes from a struggle to replace bad institutions with good ['folk practices'/local practices], based on learning from experience – and not from imposing a rigid formula unsuited to local conditions.'

**Lant Pritchett** is currently Professor of the Practice of International Development Harvard Kennedy School of Government. Prior to returning to the Kennedy School in 2007, he was Lead Socio-Economist in the Social Development group of the South Asia region of the World Bank, resident in Delhi, 2004–07. In 2011 Pritchett was featured in Foreign Policy's Top 100 Global Thinkers.

## Brief presentation on Politics of Economic Growth

by Professor Kunal Sen

Why do most countries follow boom and bust economic growth, and why is economic growth not sustained? What role do politics and governance play in initiating and maintaining economic growth?

The presentation will outline a new global comparative project on the politics of economic growth, and discuss what this project may imply for understanding Bangladesh's growth experience.

**Kunal Sen** is Professor of Development Economics in IDPM, the University of Manchester, UK, and Associate Director of the Brooks World Poverty Institute.

His current research is on the political economy determinants of inclusive development, and much of this research is being undertaken as part of the Effective States and Inclusive Development Research (ESID) Centre of which he is a Joint Research Director.