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“Critical, insightful and thought-provoking, *Islam and Democracy in South Asia* is a real masterpiece on religion and politics uncovering the critical nexus between Islam, political Islam, and democracy in Bangladesh. Rigorous methodologies, thought-provoking debates, and convincing arguments are among the hallmarks of the book.” — Emajuddin Ahamed, Political Scientist & former Vice-Chancellor, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh “*Islam and Democracy in South Asia* is the sophisticated discussion of the political life of Islam that the world needs. Simplistic views of Islam-or-the sword, jihadism, and Islamic anti-modernism die a well-deserved death here. Muslims have a kaleidoscope of political options that have to balance realpolitik and dreams of social fairness.” — Samuel Cohn, Professor of Sociology, Texas A&M University, USA “A must read for all scholars, politicians, and diplomats who want to have a bird’s eye view of Islam as a political ideology and a worm’s eye view of its interplay with democracy in the context of Bangladesh.” — Mohammad A. Auwal, Professor of Communication Studies, California State University, Los Angeles, USA Grounded in the Weberian tradition, *Islam and Democracy in South Asia: The Case of Bangladesh* presents a critical analysis of the complex relationship between Islam and democracy in South Asia and Bangladesh. The book posits that Islam and democracy are not necessarily incompatible, but that the former has a contributory role in the development of the latter. Islam came to Bengal largely by Sufis and missionaries through peaceful means, and hence a moderate form of this religion got rooted in the society. Both militant Islam and militant secularism are equal threats to democracy and pluralism. Like democracy, political Islam has many faces. Political Islam adhering to democratic norms and practices, what the authors call “democratic Islamism,” unlike “militant Islamism,” is not anti-democratic. The book shows that the suppression of democracy and human rights creates avenues for the consolidation of militant Islamism, orthodox Islam, and “Islamic” terrorism, while the “fair play” of democracy results in the decline of anti-democratic form of political Islam. Md Nazrul Islam is Professor of Political Studies, Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Bangladesh. Md Saidul Islam is Associate Professor of Sociology, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.
