



**U.S. BANGLADESH CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY**  
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USBCCI

# BUSINESS Journal

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**Golden Jubilee of Bangladesh  
&  
U.S.-Bangladesh Relations**





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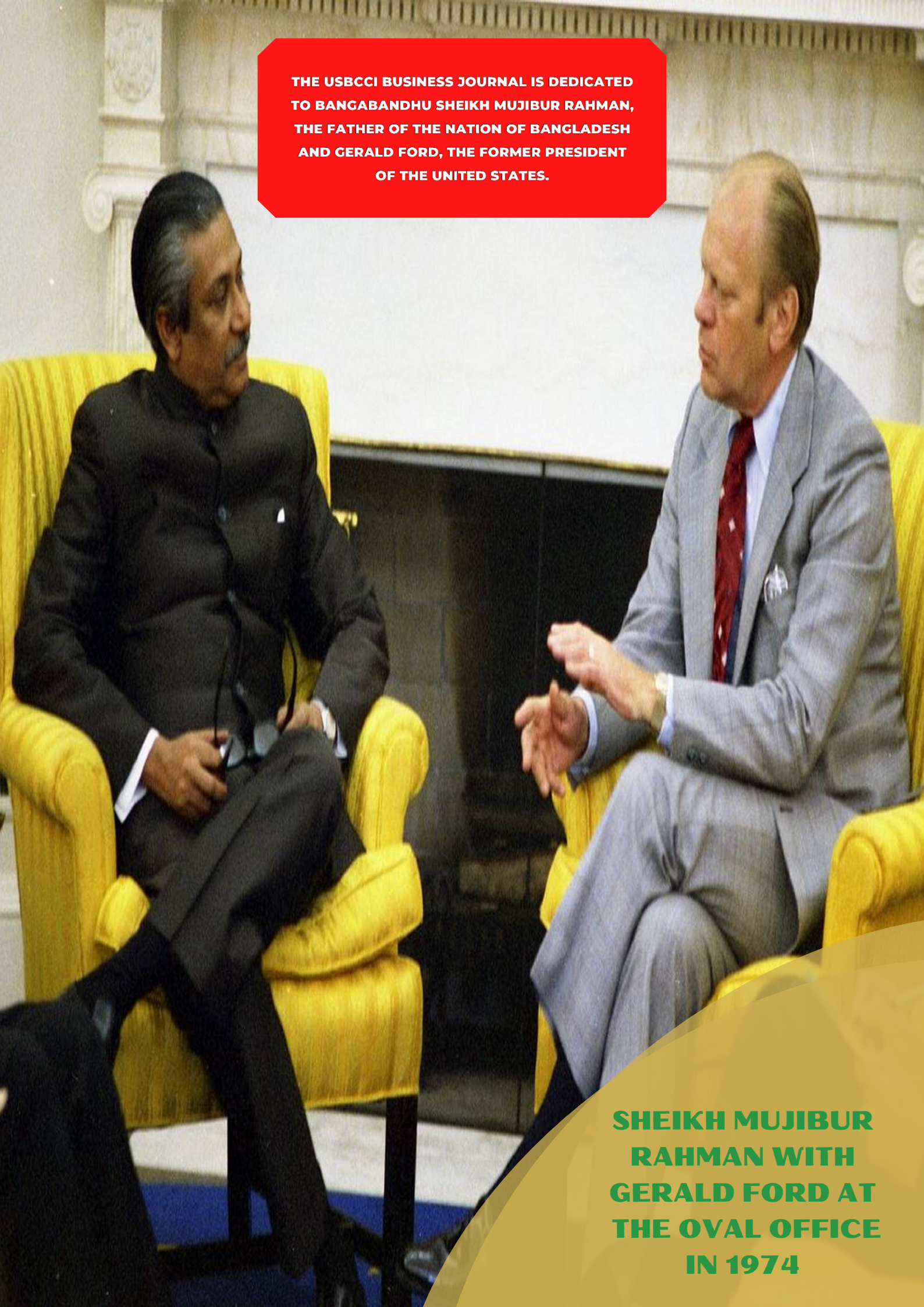


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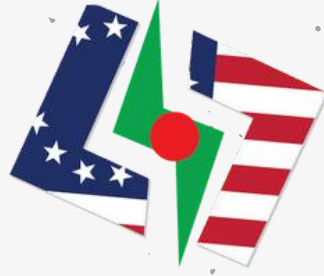






**THE USBCCI BUSINESS JOURNAL IS DEDICATED  
TO BANGABANDHU SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN,  
THE FATHER OF THE NATION OF BANGLADESH  
AND GERALD FORD, THE FORMER PRESIDENT  
OF THE UNITED STATES.**

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RAHMAN WITH  
GERALD FORD AT  
THE OVAL OFFICE  
IN 1974**



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# CONTENTS

01. US PRESIDENT CONGRATULATED THE PEOPLE OF BANGLADESH AS BANGLADESH CELEBRATES ITS NATION'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE.
02. MESSAGE FROM THE HONORABLE PRESIDENT OF PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
03. MESSAGE FROM THE HONORABLE PRIME MINISTER OF PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
04. MESSAGE FROM THE U.S. BANGLADESH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY (USBCCI) PRESIDENT
05. SECRETARY ANTONY BLINKEN'S STATEMENT ON BANGLADESH NATIONAL DAY STATEMENT
06. U.S. SENATOR BOB MENENDEZ CHAIRMAN OF THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE, STATEMENT ON THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF BANGLADESH'S INDEPENDENCE
07. MESSAGE FROM THE HONORABLE FOREIGN MINISTER BANGLADESH
08. MESSAGE FROM THE HONORABLE COMMERCE MINISTER BANGLADESH
09. MESSAGE FROM THE HONORABLE INDUSTRIES MINISTER BANGLADESH
10. MESSAGE FROM THE HONORABLE ADVISER TO THE PRIME MINISTER ECONOMIC AFFAIRS
11. MESSAGE FROM, AMBASSADOR, THE EMBASSY OF BANGLADESH IN WASHINGTON, D.C.
12. MESSAGE FROM THE FBCCI PRESIDENT
13. FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE EDITOR
14. ABOUT, ACTIVITIES & EVENTS - U.S. BANGLADESH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY ( U.S. & BANGLADESH )
15. U.S. BANGLADESH HISTORY
16. PERSPECTIVE PLAN 2041: GOLDEN BENGAL AS A LABEL FOR NATION BRANDING. A.K. ABDUL MOMEN
17. 50 YEARS AFTER INDEPENDENCE, U.S.- BANGLADESH STRONG BONDS CONTINUE TO GROW, AMBASSADOR EARL R. MILLER U.S. EMBASSY DHAKA.
18. 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE U.S.-BANGLADESH PARTNERSHIP: LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT 50 YEAR, PETER D HAAS.
19. 50 YEARS OF BANGLADESH-U.S. RELATIONS: TIME TO CAPITALIZE UNTAPPED POTENTIALS UPLIFTING BILATERAL TRADE AND INVESTMENT - BY MD MAHADEE HASSAN,
20. GOLDEN JUBILEE OF BANGLADESH INDEPENDENCE LT GEN M. HARUN-AR-RASHID, BIR PROTIK (RETIRED).
21. US-BANGLADESH RELATIONS: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE, EX AMBASSADOR FAROOQ SOBHAN.
22. THE GENESIS OF THE USA-BANGLADESH RELATION, DR. NURAN NABI
23. WHERE BANGLADESH WILL BE IN 2041, PROFESSOR DR. ATIUR RAHMAN EX-GOVERNOR OF BANGLADESH BANK
24. BANGLADESH'S SUCCESS STORY: BY ABDUL KADER MIAH
25. 50 YEARS OF BANGLADESH THE PATH TO DEVELOPMENT IS RIDDLED WITH CHALLENGES - DR. SELIM RAIHAN, PROFESSOR OF ECONOMICS AT UNIVERSITY OF DHAKA
26. SELECT USA INVESTMENT FORUM 2021 OPENS DOOR TO BROADER PARTICIPATION AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE, JEFF DIRKS, COMMERCIAL OFFICER, U.S. EMBASSY DHAKA.
27. BANGLADESH TURNS 50, TUNKU VARADARAJAN.
28. UNDERSTANDING FATCA OF USA AND ITS IMPACT MOHAMMAD SHAHJAHAN SIDDIQUI, LEGAL ECONOMIST AND COLUMNIST
29. ISLAM AND BANGABANDHU PROFESSOR DR. MOHAMMAD BAHAUDDIN.
30. THE IMPACT OF INNOVATIVE EDUCATION ON ECONOMIC GROWTH AND POVERTY REDUCTION - PROF. HANA SIDDIQUEE.
31. THE U.S EMBASSY DHAKA ACTIVITIES.
32. BANGLADESHI AMERICANS.
33. THE EMBASSY OF BANGLADESH IN WASHINGTON, DC ACTIVITIES.
34. BANGLADESH SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE ROADSHOW IN USA.
35. U.S ECONOMY CURRENT SITUATION.
36. BANGLADESH ECONOMIC CURRENT SITUATION.
37. US CONGRESS INTRODUCES RESOLUTION COMMEMORATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF BANGLADESH'S INDEPENDENCE.
38. US PRESIDENT SENT A LETTER TO PRIME MINISTER SHEIKH HASINA.
39. 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE U.S.-BANGLADESH PARTNERSHIP - ( ALL ACTIVITIES BY US & BD GOVERNMENTS).



## President of the United States

**US President congratulated the people of Bangladesh as Bangladesh celebrates its nation's 50th anniversary of independence.**



**THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON  
March 23, 2021**

Her Excellency  
Sheikh Hasina  
Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Dhaka

Dear Honorable Prime Minister:

On behalf of the United States, I congratulate the people of Bangladesh as you celebrate your nation's 50th anniversary of independence, Bangladesh is an example of economic progress and a country of great hope and opportunity. I congratulate you and the people of Bangladesh for your remarkable achievements.

Your hosting of one million Rohingya refugees is an example to the world of humanity and generosity. The United States will continue to be a steadfast partner in finding a durable solution to this crisis. I also applaud Bangladesh's commitment on addressing climate change and look forward to my Administration working closely with you on this important issue.

The United States values our friendship with Bangladesh, and we believe that shared commitments to democracy and human rights form the foundation of strong partnerships, I look forward to working with you to strengthen these commitments to build an even brighter future for the people of our nations over the next 50 years and beyond.

I extend my best wishes to you and the people of Bangladesh on this historic day of celebration.

Sincerely,





GOLDEN JUBILEE  
of **BANGLADESH** &  
**U.S.-Bangladesh**  
*Relations*



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**PRESIDENT**  
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH  
BANGABHABAN, DHAKA.

21 Poush 1428  
05 January 2022

## Message

I am happy to know that the U.S. Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry (USBCCI) is publishing their very first issue named 'USBCCI BUSINESS Journal 2021' on the occasion of Golden Jubilee of the Independence of Bangladesh and the 50th Year of US-Bangladesh relations.

I remember with profound respect the architect of our independent Bangladesh, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. I also recall with deep respect the millions of martyrs who sacrificed their lives in the War of Liberation.


Fifty years have passed after the Independence, and after many upheavals and downturns Bangladesh has now embarked upon a remarkable journey towards development and prosperity. Bangladesh is now a prospective country with enormous investment potentiality as a very congenial business environment is now prevailing in the country. Having fulfilled all the criteria, Bangladesh has been elevated to a developing country from a least developed country. Bangladesh has already proved its ability in different fields, especially in the areas of agriculture, ready-made garments, pharmaceuticals, shipbuilding, small and medium enterprises, and other sectors. A multi-pronged program is being implemented in order to increase the business and investment. 100 economic zones are being established to encourage private investment. Hi-Tech Park is being set up throughout the country to promote technology-based industry.

The relationship of Bangladesh and the United States of America has passed 50 years. The current US investment in Bangladesh, so far, is primarily concentrated in energy and power sectors. Bangladesh would welcome the US investment in manufacturing, infrastructure development, service sectors and high-end technologies. I hope the members of USBCCI will play a catalytic role in this regard and promote exchange of information and economic cooperation and further bolster trade between the United States and Bangladesh.

I wish the publication 'USBCCI BUSINESS Journal 2021' a grand success.

Joy Bangla.

Khoda Hafez, May Bangladesh Live Forever.

  
Md. Abdul Hamid



#1

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PRIME MINISTER  
GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF  
BANGLADESH

21 Poush 1428  
05 January 2022

## Message

I am pleased to congratulate the U.S. Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry (USBCCI) as they will publish their first issue of 'USBCCI BUSINESS Journal- 2021' on the occasion of the Birth Centenary of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the Golden Jubilee of the Independence of Bangladesh.

The Bengali nation had fought against the oppression and deprivation of Pakistani rulers for 24 years under the undisputed leadership of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib rebuilt the war-ravaged country and revived its economy in just a mere three and a half years. He transformed Bangladesh into a Least Developed Country. Unfortunately, the anti-liberation forces brutally killed Father of Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and most of his family members on 15 August 1975, halting the development and progress of Bangladesh.

Assuming office in 1996 after 21 years, Bangladesh Awami League took initiatives to establish Bangladesh as a self-respectful country in the world. We made the country self-sufficient in food production and signed the Ganges Water Sharing Treaty with India in 1996 and the historic Chittagong Hills Tracts Peace Accord in 1997. In addition, we started the trial of the case of killing Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib and his family members.

The Awami League government has relentlessly been working to improve people's living standards since 2009. Bangladesh is a self-reliant country in food production. The poverty rate has decreased from 42.5 percent to 20.5 percent in the last 13 years. Our sovereign rights over a vast area in the Bay of Bengal have been established through peaceful settlement of maritime disputes with our neighboring countries- Myanmar and India. The implementation of the Bangladesh-India Land Boundary Agreement has put an end to the protracted inhuman life of the enclave people.

We have started the implementation of 'Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100' for the first time in the world. Today, the benefits of 'Digital Bangladesh' have been expanded from urban to remote village levels. We are building homes for landless and homeless people free of cost. Our government has brought 99.5 percent of the people under electricity coverage. To keep the economy going, offsetting the impacts of Coronavirus, we have so far announced 28 stimulus packages worth US\$ 22.08 billion, which is 6.23 percent of our GDP.

On these auspicious occasions, I urge the countrymen to remain united to foil the ill-designed plots of the anti-democratic and anti-liberation forces against the government and the people. We have been striving hard to establish Bangladesh as a poverty-hunger-illiteracy-free modern Digital Bangladesh by the Golden Jubilee year of our independence through implementing 'Vision-2021' & 'Vision-2041'. I hope that all citizens of our country would engage themselves with their utmost sincerity, honesty, and dedication to build Bangladesh as a prosperous and prestigious country in the comity of nations.

I hope that this publication will brand Bangladesh, particularly in the US, to attract more investment and strengthen the economic and trade ties between the two countries. I wish the magazine, "USBCCI BUSINESS Journal 2021", a grand success.

**Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu  
May Bangladesh Live Forever.**

  
**Sheikh Hasina**





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**MD. LITON AHMED**  
**PRESIDENT & FOUNDER**

## **MESSAGE**



The U.S. Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (USBCCI) takes great pride in presenting the first 'USBCCI Business Journal Issue 2021' on this historic occasion the Golden Jubilee of Bangladesh and "50th Years of U.S.- Bangladesh Relations". I want to congratulate the people of the country on our 50th anniversary of Bangladesh Independence! This year, the nation is celebrating Bangladesh's 50th anniversary. We are even prouder that, within this short span of time since of Bangladesh Independence Day, Bangladesh has recently graduated from the least-developed country (LDC) to a middle-income country and aspires to become a developed country by 2041. As a development partner of Bangladesh, we are confident that The United States of America would continue its cooperation in achieving our "Vision 2041."

Editorial Board, respected contributors, and advertisers of this issue of our journal. I hope you will find it interesting. In this special issue of 'USBCCI Business Journal', besides the contemporary issues, we have tried to feature issues like Branding Bangladesh, multilateral cooperation, and skill development to ensure an efficient workforce of to build Bangladesh better. The journal also includes write-ups on 50 years of economic development and a comprehensive research report on the Bangladesh economy from 1971 to 2021. Furthermore, the journal includes an article by the US Ambassador to Bangladesh on the growth of the US-Bangladesh business relationship. There is also an article on the liberation-on-liberation war. After a nine-month War of Liberation with the supreme sacrifice of three million people and the honor of nearly half a million women, Bangladesh finally achieved its victory on December 16, 1971, under the Father of the Nation's leadership Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Over the past 50 years, Bangladesh has been continuing to flourish. It has progressed along an enviable development arc, rising from a devastating war to become a country with a growing agricultural Bangladesh is currently our 46th largest goods trading partner with \$9.0 billion in total (two way) goods trade during 2019. Goods exports totaled \$2.3 billion; goods imports totaled \$6.7 billion. The U.S. goods trade deficit with Bangladesh was \$4.3 billion in 2019. Bangladesh celebrates the 50th anniversary of its National Day, remembering the valiant freedom fighters who fought and made the supreme sacrifice to free the country from the Pakistani occupation forces. National Day this year coincides with the birth centenary of the country's founding president Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the golden jubilee of the country's independence.

USBCCI, advocating for a strong economic partnership between both countries for more than 50 years, wants to seize the opportunity to celebrate the positive influence. The economic and diplomatic bonding between two friendly countries - Bangladesh and the United States of America will see a smooth and new horizon during the leadership of Joe Biden, the 46th US President.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government had taken every measure possible to curb this pandemic. We successfully controlled the pandemic, and thanks to God, the infection rate is now below 4%. At the same time, we keep our economy in top gear, and the development projects' work has continued unabated. We had to make a balance between life and living. The journal has been focusing on USBCCI activities and its outlook, featuring articles from the prominent personalities of the country on contemporary issues, economy, society, etc.

I would like to extend heartfelt thanks to all Committee, USBCCI Directorate, members of the USBCCI BUSINESS JOURNAL, USBCCI members, the Executive.

Thank you to all the companies that have partnered with us and supported this initiative!

*Md. Liton Ahmed*

**Md. Liton Ahmed**





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**Antony J. Blinken**  
**SECRETARY OF STATE**

## **Secretary Antony Blinken's Statement on Bangladesh National Day**



### **PRESS STATEMENT**

On behalf of the Government of the United States, I warmly congratulate the people of Bangladesh on the momentous occasion of your 50th National Day and Golden Jubilee.

The United States and Bangladesh both undertook courageous struggles for independence. Over the last 50 years, we have cooperated on issues ranging from economic development to peacekeeping, and we have fostered strong people-to-people ties. As a result, our friendship has grown ever stronger.

Today, our people are partnering to promote human rights, address climate change, and combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

Just as in the earliest days of our relationship, we appreciate a shared commitment to democratic values and the prosperity and welfare of our people, who are joined in their aspirations to create a better world for our children over the next 50 years.

As we work together toward a safe and secure region and a healthy and prosperous future, we recognize the remarkable contributions Bangladesh has made to global development.

I wish all Bangladeshis a joyous celebration of your milestone Golden Jubilee.





*"Let's work together for  
Betterment of the Community"*

## Founder & President



Jamaica Bangladesh  
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## President



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## Founder & President



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## Former Asst. General Secretary



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## Managing Director



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**Senator Bob Menendez,  
Chairman of the Senate  
Foreign Relations  
Committee**



## **PRESS STATEMENT**

"On the 50th anniversary of Bangladesh's independence, I extend my best wishes to the Bangladeshi people as you celebrate this momentous milestone. Members of Congress have a proud history of support for Bangladesh's independence: Senator Ted Kennedy's 1971 visit drew international attention to the repression the people of Bangladesh faced, and Kennedy became a champion for the importance of Bangladesh's independence.

Since Bangladesh became independent, the people of the United States and Bangladesh have had a strong relationship rooted in shared democratic values, highlighted by constitutions that enshrine those values in law.

I look forward to strengthening the U.S.-Bangladesh relationship on the basis of those values to address major issues including climate change, human rights and humanitarian challenges.

"I am grateful for the many contributions made by Bangladeshi-Americans to New Jersey and the United States. I wish the people of Bangladesh a happy Independence Day."





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GOVERNMENT OF THE  
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH  
DHAKA

## MESSAGE

I am pleased to know that U.S. Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry (USBCCI) is bringing out its journal titled "USBCCI Business Journal-2021" on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of Bangladesh and 50th year of Bangladesh-USA relations. I appreciate the organizers for taking such a commendable initiative.

This year holds special significance for us as we are celebrating the Birth Centenary of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the Golden Jubilee of our glorious independence. On these occasions, we have opportunities to highlight Bangabandhu and Bangladesh both home and abroad by arranging more meetings, seminars, workshops, screening of films and prove to the world that Bangladesh is 'a land of opportunity' and 'a vibrant economy'. I hope U.S. Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry (USBCCI) will also play a key role in this regard.

Trade and commerce have been playing a very significant role in the global socio-economic development. Accordingly, nation states are devising and pursuing their foreign policy to optimize the international trade preserving their interests. The present government under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has done a remarkable job over the last 12 years- it achieved over 6.6% GDP growth rate for the period, reduced poverty more than half while maintaining moderate inflation rate. It increased women workforce from 6% to 38% and achieved 99% school enrolment and 100% electricity. More importantly, she turned a food-deficit country, Bangladesh into a food sufficient country by increasing food production more than four times. It managed COVID-19 pandemic well while keeping our economy on almost at full functionality. Today the country is often cited by the international community as a 'Role Model for Development'. According to the Center for Economic and Business Research (CEBR), a British economic research organization, Bangladesh will become the 25th largest economy in the world by 2035 if the current trend in economic growth continues. I hope that the Bangladeshi expatriates will participate in the development trajectory of Bangladesh.

United States of America is the home to a large Bangladeshi community. I am happy to note that this vibrant, modern, enterprising, and enlightened community have formed a strong bridge between the two countries and are contributing significantly to the socio-economic development of both Bangladesh and USA. In this context, I firmly believe that U.S. Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry (USBCCI) will go a long way in bringing Bangladesh-USA relationship closer.

I wish U.S. Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry (USBCCI) every success.

Dr. A. K. Abdul Momen, MP



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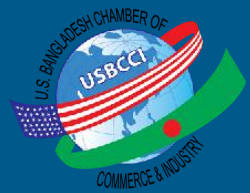
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## Message

I am glad to hear that the "U.S. Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry (USBCCI)" is publishing their very first issue "USBCCI BUSINESS Journal - 2021" on the occasion of Golden Jubilee of the Independence of Bangladesh & The 50th Years of U.S.- Bangladesh relations.

Bangladesh is committed to make speedy economic development and the rising American trade and investment could work as a catalyst for accelerating business both ways. Bangladesh is a land of unlimited possibilities and I believe that the American business people would seize this opportunity through establishing their business houses and making investment in Bangladesh.

The United States is a trusted development partner of Bangladesh. We enjoy remarkable commercial and cultural relationship between the two countries. Our partnership has seen substantial qualitative changes over the period of time and there is huge scope to expand it further.

I strongly appreciate the "U.S. Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry (USBCCI)" to playing a vital role in spearheading the growth of our bilateral trade by contributing & encouraging the people to economic development in Bangladesh and U.S. Truly, the organization is working & investing in building a stronger & more prosperous Bangladesh that is connected to both regional and global trade networks. I also believe that the organization would provide essential inputs for healthy interaction between the business people of the two countries, and thus contribute towards raising trade and investment between Bangladesh and the United States.

I wish a grand success and expect widest circulation of this "USBCCI BUSINESS JOURNAL-2021".

**Joy Bangla, Joy Bangabandhu.**

(Tipu Munshi, MP)





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ঢাকা



Nurul Majid Mahmud Humayun, M.P.  
Minister  
Ministry of Industries  
Government of the People's  
Republic of Bangladesh  
Dhaka



## MESSAGE

I am glad to know that the U.S. Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry (USBCCI) is publishing its very first issue named 'USBCCI BUSINESS Journal-2021' on the occasion of Golden Jubilee of the Independence of Bangladesh and the 50 years of US-Bangladesh relations.

We are observing Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Birth Centenary and Golden Jubilee of the independence of Bangladesh. I remember the greatest Bengali ever, the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman with deep reverence and homage for his tremendous sacrifice for the sake of freedom and economic emancipation of the people of Bangladesh.

Bangladesh has been graduated from Least Development Country (LDC) and has become middle-income country under the dynamic leadership of the Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Bangladesh has been implementing some mega projects such as Padma Bridge, Dhaka Metro Rail, Dhaka-Chittagong Express Railway, Dhaka Elevated Expressway, Ruppur Nuclear Power Plant, Ghorashal Polash Fertilizer Plant etc. which will change the country rapidly.

Ministry of Industries is playing the role of a facilitator with a view to create increased industrial activities in the country. Given the present environment and increasing trend in globalization, the private sector is playing an important role in the industrialization of the country.

Bangladesh is moving to a highvalue, knowledge intensive society. I believe this organization will be able to enhance prosperity for Bangladesh and American business in USA and Bangladesh and to serve the needs of the growing business community.

I wish a grand success and expect widest circulation of this 'USBCCI BUSINESS Journal-2021'.

Joy Bangla, Joy Bangabandhu.  
Long live Bangladesh.

  
(Nurul Majid Mahmud Humayun M.P.)

Dated: 17 January, 2022





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**Adviser to the Prime Minister**  
Economic Affairs  
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

## Message

I am happy to know that the **U.S. Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry (USBCCI)** is launching publication of '**USBCCI Business Journal - 2021**' on the occasion of Golden Jubilee of the Independence of Bangladesh and the 50<sup>th</sup> Years of US-Bangladesh relations.

On this auspicious occasion of Golden Jubilee of the Independence of Bangladesh, I convey cordial and warm greetings to the people and the Government of the United States as well as to the expatriate Bangladeshis living in the United States.

On this day, I pay my deep reverence to the memory of the greatest Bangali of all time, our Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, under whose charismatic leadership Bangladesh emerged as a sovereign country.

Following the dream of the Father of the Nation, Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is steering the country towards a happy, prosperous, and equitable "Sonar Bangla" (Golden Bengal). Bangladesh is now a role model for inclusive development focusing on high and equitable economic growth.

Bangladesh has graduated from the least-developed country (LDC) to a middle-income country and aspires to rise further by 2041. Our aspiration is embodied in "Vision-2041."

Bangladesh is seeking foreign investment which will help raise level of investment, create employment, facilitate technological up-gradation, and diversification of product and export destination. USA is an important export destination and source of investment and technology. It is expected that USA will continue cooperation in our progress towards a just and developed society.

I wish the publication a grand success and expect wide circulation of this '**USBCCI Business Journal - 2021**'.

Joy Bangla,  
Joy Bangabandhu,  
May Bangladesh Live Forever.

(Dr. Mashiur Rahman)



**Mr. Khalilur Rahman claims the US Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award. He is the owner of Khalil Biryani House. The US President cedes this honor to recognize outstanding community services and monumental contributions to society.**



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**Md Khalilur Rahman**

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Ambassador

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## MESSAGE FROM AMBASSADOR

I am very pleased to know that the U.S. Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry (USBCCI) is going to unveil their inaugural publication titled 'USBCCI BUSINESS Journal - 2021' on the occasion of the golden jubilee of the Independence of Bangladesh and the 50<sup>th</sup> year of Bangladesh-U.S. diplomatic relations. On this auspicious occasion, I convey my warmest greetings to the friendly people and the Government of the United States as well as to the expatriate Bangladeshis living in the United States.

On this occasion, I pay my deep respect to the memory of the greatest Bengali of all time, our Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, under whose charismatic and firm leadership Bangladesh emerged as an independent and sovereign country on the global map. Based on the solid foundation laid down by the Father of the Nation, Bangladesh has made significant socio-economic progress, including increased food production, disaster management capacity building, poverty alleviation, improved health and education, and women's empowerment. For more than a decade, under the able leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Bangladesh has remained one of the fastest-growing economies in the world and emerged as a reliable link in the global value chain. The United States has been a longstanding partner in our journey to economic development and democratic institution building, and we believe that our partnership is strong enough to withstand the complex challenges of our times and present new opportunities for both countries.

Trade and investment constitute the key pillar of Bangladesh-U.S. partnership. As we prepare for the celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our diplomatic ties, it is important that we involve our private sector businessmen and investors in this celebration. It is in this context that I commend the USBCCI for bringing together the private sector entrepreneurs and businessmen to celebrate the golden jubilee of the Independence of Bangladesh and the 50<sup>th</sup> years of Bangladesh-U.S. diplomatic relations.

I wish a grand success and expect expansive circulation of this 'USBCCI BUSINESS JOURNAL- 2021'. Long live Bangladesh-U.S. friendship.

Ambassador M Shahidul Islam





**ABDUL KADER MIAH FOUNDATION**

## **Our Mission**

AKM Foundation. 's mission is to partner American and Bangladeshi institutions and individuals towards Bangladesh's socio-economic development. AKM Foundation. began with an integrated focus on the needs of one village, Sandwip, in Chattagram district. It has since expanded to include 5 neighboring villages in addition to projects throughout the country. AKM Foundation. will enable financial contributions towards its projects, facilitate the exchange of interns, professionals and volunteers between the United States and Bangladesh, encourage social entrepreneurs and build partnerships with relevant institutions.



**ABDUL KADER MIAH**

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**President,  
A.K.M. FOUNDATION**

**Chairman,  
Miah Cunstruction USA.**

**General Secretary Bangobandhu  
Foundation, USA.**

Visit Our Official Website: **[akmfoundation.com](http://akmfoundation.com)**

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**Md. Jashim Uddin**  
**President, FBCCI**



## MESSAGE

I am glad to learn that the U.S Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry (USBCCI) is publishing their very first issue named 'USBCCI BUSINESS Journal - 2021' on the occasion of Golden Jubilee of the Independence of Bangladesh & the 50th Years of US-Bangladesh relations.

The USA has always been a great friend of Bangladesh and the two countries share close partnership in the areas like economy, sustainable growth, climate change, health and education etc.

U.S. have invested in Gas & Petroleum, Banking & Insurance, Power, Textiles, Trading and IT sectors in Bangladesh. I firmly believe that the publication will add a new dimension to USBCCI's activities through highlighting new business and investment opportunities in Bangladesh, which will make US investors interested in investing in the country. At the same time, this initiative will be a great resource for policy makers in determining the development plan, policy formulation and implementation strategy of the country in boosting trade and investment.

As the country's apex trade body, the FBCCI has always been a collaborating force of the government in the economic development of the country. As part of this, The FBCCI has been tirelessly pursuing Policy advocacy and establishing strategic business relationships with trade bodies in different countries.

The FBCCI will continue to support USBCCI's efforts to attract foreign investment in Bangladesh.

I wish the 'USBCCI BUSINESS Journal - 2021 a grand success.

Md. Jashim Uddin  
President, FBCCI



*Happy  
Independence Day*



**SHEIKH GALIB RAHMAN**  
FOUNDER & PRESIDENT





## **Executive Editor's Letter**



The U.S. Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry is proudly going to publish their 1st Business Journal 2021 on the occasion of Golden Jubilee of Independence of Bangladesh and also the 50 years relationship of USA and Bangladesh. My heartiest greetings to all my people of Bangladesh on this historic occasion. I like to express my deep gratitude towards all those who have given precious messages for our business journal which has embellishes the journal.

I also express my gratitude towards all article writers for their valuable words to rich our journal. The nine month extreme sacrifice which helped Bangladesh to snatch the great victory under the strong leadership of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Since then, people of Bangladesh have been struggling to develop the devastated country and the success of the struggle is no more a dream now which has become the reality of Bangladesh over 50 years.

This success has given the strength to the people of Bangladesh to move forward with new ventures and made the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the independence more joyful. This tide of joy of Bangladesh is reflected in the words of our journal. This business journal gives a view of the US-Bangladesh relationship over 50 years and tried to up hold the economic development achieved by Bangladesh from the time of its birth to till now. Some articles express the growth of business relationship in between these two countries.

The journal also highlighted the current economic status of Bangladesh and also the opportunities to invest here. USBCCI Business Journal 2021 also reveals the objectives and activities of US Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry. It is my believe that you all will enjoy this very first publication of USBCCI.

I express my deep gratitude towards all committee of USBCCI, USBCCI Directorate, Members, Editorial Board, respected Contributors and Advertisers for joining the journey of the 1st BUSINESS JOURNAL of USBCCI 2021.

---

**Engr. Farzana Abedin, FIEB**  
**Director & Executive Editor**  
**USBCCI**





## U.S. BANGLADESH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY(USBCCI)

U.S. Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry ("USBCCI") is an organization designed to enhance prosperity for Bangladesh and American Businesses in USA & Bangladesh ,also committed to serving the needs of the growing business community. U.S. Bangladesh Chamber prides itself on bringing people together for the purpose of bringing unity to the Bangladesh-speaking community, bridging ties between Bangladesh and American businesses and creating an entrepreneurial environment where companies grow, individuals succeed and the community benefits. Through their continued efforts, U.S. Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry has become the "go to" source for information, support, cultural events, festivals, business referrals, networking, socializing and much more. Due to USBCCI's extensive involvement and dedication to helping people and businesses, many refer to U.S. Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry as the trusted voice in the Bangladeshi community.

### Who We Are?

The U.S. Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry is a 501(c)(6) organization. Dos 5354372 and Tax ID - 83-0904218 was founded in 2018, that connects its members into a global network that provides vital information and facilitates business contacts. Members include manufacturers, distributors, wholesalers, retailers, professional and business service providers, venture capitalists, investment bankers and R&D scientists.

### Our Mission

Provide leadership and bridge ties between Bangladesh and American businesses by implementing advocacy, business development, cultural awareness, networking events and direct services to members which stimulate economic growth and enhance quality of life in USA.

### Our Vision

Bridge ties between Bangladesh and American businesses and create an entrepreneurial environment where companies grow, individuals succeed and the community benefits.

## Activities of USBCCI

- To provide advisory services to the American/Bangladeshi nationals looking for business/investment opportunities in Bangladesh/USA
- To Coordination with the appropriate authorities in Bangladesh and USA for removing any obstacle(s)/impediment(s) for promoting business and investment in both the countries
- To cooperate with appropriate organizations for promoting cultural exchange and friendship between USA and Bangladesh.
- To collect market/economic information of Bangladesh and provide it to the USA people when required.
- To maintain liaison with the media and encourage wide coverage of USBCC activities.
- To look into the difficulties/obstacles members are facing with import/export. Duty structures, transportation, dumping/anti dumping, IPR or other trade related issues.
- To organize USA trade fairs in Bangladesh for promoting bilateral trade and investment. Similarly to organize Bangladeshi Trade fair in USA for the same purpose.
- To organize business forums, seminars, etc. in cooperation with U.S. Chamber and other organizations to share views on impediments related to business and investments and to take up appropriate issues with the government of both the countries.
- To organize appropriate seminars and trading courses for the benefit of the USBCCI member Organizations.
- To follow up reports of the "Bangladesh-American Joint Committee for Commercial and Economic Cooperation" and to help in early implementation of its recommendations.
- To provide information and assistance to Bangladesh and American firms seeking to do business with Bangladesh and American firms who are interested to promote and expand business activities between themselves.
- To receive business delegations and arrange meetings with relevant agencies, organizations, trade bodies.
- To disseminate trade inquiries, market information, news on international trade fairs & exhibitions.
- To provide contacts & assistance to participate in international trade fairs in USA.

## FUTURE PLANS OF USBCCI IN REGARDS OF INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

- To organize Bangladesh Trade show in USA.
- To organize USA Trade show in Bangladesh.
- To organize Bangladesh Investment seminar in USA.
- To send Trade & Investment Delegation from Bangladesh to USA.
- To organics different types of trade fair between two countries.
- USBCCI counsels its members on different business-related subjects and supports them.
- USBCCI exchange views, ideas and expectations among various local and foreign investors, Govt., or self-governed agencies for creating a proper business environment.
- USBCCI collects different information about the socio-economic business-related topics and then analyzes it to prepare report. This report is then distributed through features, bulleting memorandum, weeklies, journals etc.
- USBCCI advises the Govt. while formulating laws related to the import -export, banking, insurance, investment, industrial relations, economies etc. It also pressures Govt. to rectify any law which hampers the development of business of the country.
- USBCCI studies market, collects information, publishes this information for the assistance of the related members.
- USBCCI performs a significant role in the increasing of foreign investment to the domestic market, encouraging the foreign companies to the investment here more.
- USBCCI try to ensure proper business environment in both countries.
- USBCCI works basically a business support unit for NRB's community.
- USBCCI can try to bring Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from America & also different countries. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) plays an important role for development a country.
- USBCCI organize different types of trade fair in home & abroad, and also create a cross border business connectivity between Bangladesh and American society.
- USBCCI try to be making a B2B business collaboration in export and import sector & this collaboration create a best pathway.



# WHY JOIN THE CHAMBER?



# USBCCI Membership Facilities:

Individual Membership \$200/ <del>₳</del> 17,000 (Per Year)	Corporate Membership \$500/ <del>₳</del> 42,500 (Per Year)	General Membership \$300/ <del>₳</del> 25,500 (Per Year)	Honorary Membership \$200/ <del>₳</del> 17,000 (Per Year)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Connected to USBCCI network of resources.</li> <li>❖ Membership privileges for USBCCI.</li> <li>❖ Introduction: US-Bangladesh Business community.</li> <li>❖ Opportunity to advertise in USBCCI newsletter.</li> <li>❖ Event sponsoring option.</li> <li>❖ Chamber newsletter business introduction.</li> <li>❖ You are Identity on Chamber website.</li> <li>❖ Service Discount at USBCCI Business Service Network as like Ticket discount, hotel booking etc.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ All Individual Membership Benefits plus</li> <li>❖ Invitations to all events and lower entrance fee.</li> <li>❖ Highlighted presence in member publications and web presence.</li> <li>❖ Right to reserved seating in all functions. &amp; Corporate affiliation included in membership roster listing.</li> <li>❖ Logo and link to your web site from the USBCCI web site &amp; host an exclusive USBCCI event.</li> <li>❖ Benefit from member rates at U.S. Bangladesh Chamber events through USBCCI.</li> <li>❖ Opportunity to advertise at member rates.</li> <li>❖ Access to help when organizing seminars and special events open to chamber members (must fit with chamber schedule).</li> <li>❖ Referrals and introductions Preferred treatment for business referrals.</li> <li>❖ Access to become a board member &amp; Introduction: Am-Ban business community.</li> <li>❖ Premium access to all Chamber events.</li> <li>❖ Event sponsoring option &amp; Chamber newsletter business introduction.</li> <li>❖ One vote and holding office. Special recognition at events &amp; Company introduction on Chamber's Facebook page.</li> <li>❖ Service Discount at USBCCI Business Service Network as like Ticket discount, hotel booking etc.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Invitations to events and lower entrance fee.</li> <li>❖ When event sponsor – name in web and in all printed material.</li> <li>❖ Benefit from member rates at U.S. Bangladesh Chamber events through USBCCI.</li> <li>❖ Connected to USBCCI network of resources &amp; One vote and holding office.</li> <li>❖ Membership privileges for USBCCI &amp; Introduction: Am-Ban business community.</li> <li>❖ Premium access to all Chamber events &amp; Opportunity to advertise in USBCCI newsletter.</li> <li>❖ Chamber newsletter business introduction &amp; Your logo on Chamber website.</li> <li>❖ Service Discount at USBCCI Business Service Network as like ticket discount, hotel booking etc.</li> </ul>			
All Individual Membership Benefits			

# USBCCI Business Consulting Services





## MEMBERSHIP CERTIFICATE GIVING CEREMONY - 2022 BY USBCCI AT GULSHAN CLUB





## INTRODUCTION AND DISCUSSION SEMINAR - FOREIGN FINANCE AND INVESTMENT- 2021 BY USBCCI AT MOTIJHEEL





## THE E & F COMMERCE BUSINESS SUMMIT AND WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEUR AWARD 2021 BY USBCCI





## Economic Seminar 2021 : 50Y of Independent Bangladesh: NRB's Contribution





## UNGA Business Seminar - 2019

US-Bangladesh Trade & Investment: Role of Bangladeshi Americans" organized By U.S. Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry (USBCCI) in the Hall room of LaGuardia Marriott Hotel, New York, USA on Thursday evening, Sep. 26, 2019.



# U.S. BANGLADESH HISTORY

During the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971, American citizens led by the Consul General in Dacca, Archer K Blood, sent a series of telegrams detailing atrocities committed by the Pakistani military against Bengali civilians, students and intellectuals. They dissented with the Nixon administration's policy of ignoring genocide due to the close American alliance with the Pakistani military junta. Within the US, public opinion also turned against Nixon for his policy on Bangladesh. Both Democratic and Republican lawmakers, including Ted Kennedy, Frank Church and William B. Saxbe, denounced the Nixon White House for its silence on the "systematic oppression" in East Pakistan. American cultural figures like the poet Allen Ginsberg (who wrote September on Jessore Road) and the singer Joan Baez promoted awareness of the Bangladesh War. The Concert for Bangladesh was organized in New York City by British, American and Indian musicians; and featured American icons like Bob Dylan. The U. S. Congress imposed an arms embargo on Pakistan; but despite that, the Nixon White House sent secret arms shipments to the junta. When India intervened in December 1971, the White House dispatched an aircraft carrier to the Bay of Bengal. Peace activists blocked arms shipments in several northeastern American ports. Bengali diplomats at the Pakistani embassy in Washington DC defected and operated a mission of the Provisional Government of Bangladesh.



Sheikh Mujibur Rahman with Gerald Ford at the Oval Office in 1974



The Jatiyo Sangshad Bhaban was designed by the American architect Louis Kahn



Bill Clinton with Sheikh Hasina in Dhaka, 2000

After the liberation of Bangladesh in December 1971 and the withdrawal of Indian troops in March 1972, the United States formally recognized the newly independent country on April 4, 1972 and pledged US\$300 million in aid. Herbert D. Spivack was the principal American diplomatic officer in Dhaka at the time. Four days later, the United States and Bangladesh agreed to establish diplomatic relations at the embassy level.[8] The consulate-general was officially upgraded to an embassy on 18 May 1972. Relations between Bangladesh and the American-led Western world dramatically improved in the late 1970s, when President Ziaur Rahman reversed the socialist policies of the first post-independence government and restored free markets. In 1983, military ruler Lieutenant General Hussain Muhammad Ershad was invited to the White House for talks with President Ronald Reagan. President Reagan praised Dhaka for its role in the Cold War, stating "the United States wishes to applaud Bangladesh, a member of the nonaligned movement, for its constructive approach to issues of regional and global concern. To cite only a few examples: Bangladesh clearly manifested its courage and resolve in its unswerving responses to aggression in Afghanistan and Kampuchea. It also took the lead in establishing the South Asian Regional Cooperation Organization, a body designed to build a more prosperous and stable region for the people of South Asia. Bangladesh's foreign policy has exhibited an activism, moderation, and force of moral conviction which has earned the respect of the world".

The United States has been one of Bangladesh's principal development partners since independence, providing over US\$6 billion through USAID since 1972. It has helped set up important infrastructure in the country, including NASA assistance for the Space Research and Remote Sensing Organization (SPARRSO) and a TRIGA research reactor in the Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission.

Bangladeshi Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus has been awarded the US Presidential Medal of Freedom and the US Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian honours of the United States.





Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman addressing the 29th Session of the UNGA on 25 September 1974



Bangabandhu meets UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim



Sheikh Mujibur Rahman with the outspoken supporter of an Independent Bangladesh, US senator Edward Kennedy and his wife on 15 February 1972.



President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama greet Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina during the United Nations General Assembly reception at the New York Public Library in New York, N.Y., Sept. 21, 2011. (Official White House Photo by Lawrence Jackson)



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina poses with US President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama at the Waldorf Astoria hotel in New York. [September 29, 2012]



U.S. Vice President Joe Biden (C) speaks during a high-level summit on strengthening international peace operations on the sidelines of the 69th United Nations General Assembly at U.N. Headquarters in New York, September 26, 2014. REUTERS/Brendan McDermid



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has exchanged greetings with US President Donald Trump as they shared the table at a luncheon hosted by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.



U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo meets with Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on the margins of the United Nations General Assembly in New York City on September 28, 2018.



U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry walks with Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wazed at the Prime Minister's Office in Dhaka, Bangladesh, following a bilateral meeting on August 29, 2016.



# BANGLADESH - US RELATIONS



**The Sears Tower was designed by the Bangladeshi-American architect F R Khan**

Although the U.S. relationship with Bangladesh was initially troubled because of strong U.S. ties with Pakistan, U.S.-Bangladesh friendship and support developed quickly following Bangladesh's independence from Pakistan in 1971.

U.S.-Bangladesh relations are excellent. These relations were boosted in March 2000 when President Clinton visited Bangladesh, the first-ever visit by a sitting U.S. President, when Secretary of State Colin Powell visited in June 2003, as well as when Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld visited in June 2004. A centerpiece of the bilateral relationship is a large U.S. aid program, totaling about \$163 million for 2009. U.S. economic and food aid programs, which began as emergency relief following the 1971 war for independence, now concentrate on long-term development. U.S. assistance objectives include stabilizing population growth, protecting human health, encouraging broad-based economic growth, and building democracy.

In total, the United States has provided more than \$5.5 billion in food and development assistance to Bangladesh. Food aid under Titles I, II, and III of PL-480 (congressional "food-for-peace" legislation) has been designed to help Bangladesh meet minimum food requirements, promote food production, and moderate fluctuation in consumer prices. Other U.S. development assistance emphasizes family planning and health, agricultural development, and rural

employment. The United States works with other donors and the Bangladesh Government to avoid duplication and ensure that resources are used to maximum benefit.

Since 1986, with the exception of 1988-89, when an aircraft purchase made the trade balance even, the U.S. trade balance with Bangladesh has been negative, due largely to growing imports of ready-made garments. Jute carpet backing is the other major U.S. import from Bangladesh. Total imports from Bangladesh were about \$2.6 billion (excluding services) in FY 2005, up from \$2.1 billion in 2002. In 2007 total imports reached \$3.4 billion. U.S. exports to Bangladesh (some \$333 million--excluding services--in 2005, and \$456 million in 2007) include wheat, fertilizer, cotton, communications equipment, aircraft, and medical supplies, a portion of which is financed by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). A bilateral investment treaty was signed in 1989.

Another trade related issue between the two countries involves the export processing zones (EPZs). The government provides several tax, foreign exchange, customs and labor incentives to investors in the EPZs. One such incentive provided in recent years was an exemption from certain labor laws, which had the practical effect of prohibiting trade unions from the zones. The U.S. Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) law requires the beneficiary country to satisfy certain conditions relating to labor rights. On July 13, 2004, the government passed a bill allowing limited trade unionism in the EPZs effective November 1, 2006. Implementation of the law has been slow, however, and a U.S. labor organization has filed a petition with the U.S. Government to suspend Bangladesh's GSP privileges in the absence of progress on labor rights issues.

Relations between Bangladesh and the United States were further strengthened by the participation of Bangladesh troops in the 1991 Gulf war coalition, and alongside U.S. forces in numerous UN peacekeeping operations, including Haiti in 1994, as well as by the assistance of a U.S. naval task force after a disastrous March 1991 cyclone in Bangladesh. The relief efforts of U.S. troops are credited with having saved as many as 200,000 lives. In response to Bangladesh's worst flooding of the century in 1998, the United States donated 700,000 metric tons of food grains, helping to mitigate shortages.

In July 2006, the U.S. Navy's hospital ship Mercy visited Bangladesh and U.S. personnel worked with Bangladeshi medical personnel to provide medical treatment to Bangladeshi patients. Between 2005 and 2008, the United States obligated \$2.2 million in grant aid funding (Foreign Military Financing) to purchase Defender class small boats for the Coast Guard of Bangladesh, and allocated \$934,000 in IMET (International Military Education and Training) for 2007.

In addition to heavy flooding at the end of summer 2007, Cyclone Sidr hit the country on November 15, causing widespread devastation and affecting the lives of millions of people. Following the cyclone, U.S. troops and two U.S. naval vessels assisted in the delivery of relief supplies to cyclone victims. USAID provided approximately \$36.5 million in food and relief items to Cyclone Sidr-affected people and has continued its support through rebuilding houses for people in the cyclone-affected areas. An additional \$80 million will be provided to rebuild livelihoods, strengthen local government, generate economic recovery through income-generation activities, and to plan and construct cyclone shelters in the disaster-prone areas.

Additionally, Bangladesh has become a valuable United States ally in global efforts to defeat terrorism. As part of these efforts, the Government of Bangladesh has begun to address problems of money laundering and weak border controls to ensure that Bangladesh does not become a terrorist safe-haven. Despite porous borders, ungoverned spaces, and poor service delivery, Bangladesh's strong national identity and moderate Islamic tradition help it serve as a key player in combating extremism.

## **U.S. - BANGLADESH RELATIONS:**

The United States and Bangladesh cooperate closely on a range of issues, including economics, security, governance, and development. U.S.-Bangladesh ties go beyond the government-to-government level: our people-to-people and commercial relationships complement and expand upon the work of our officials. At the June 2019 partnership dialogue with Bangladesh, our two governments reaffirmed their enduring partnership, highlighting close cooperation on security, development, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and counterterrorism. The two governments agreed to continue to work closely together to advance a shared vision of a free, open, inclusive, peaceful, and secure Indo-Pacific region.

## **U.S. ASSISTANCE TO BANGLADESH:**

The United States has invested billions of dollars to improve the lives of Bangladeshis and Bangladesh is the largest recipient of U.S. assistance in Asia aside from Afghanistan and Pakistan. U.S. assistance fosters engagement with the Government of Bangladesh – helping to grow more food, build more roads, and train more skilled teachers, health care providers, and soldiers. In addition, the United States is the largest donor to the Rohingya refugee crisis response, providing humanitarian support to over one million refugees from Burma along with host communities. During the 2020 COVID-19 crisis, the United States has provided over \$36 million in assistance to date.

## **BILATERAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS:**

Bangladesh has achieved decades of impressive economic growth, with expectations of 2019 breaking eight percent annual GDP growth. The United States is proud to be a partner in Bangladesh's development success. Its enviable growth and openness to U.S. private sector investment makes this market a standout opportunity for U.S. firms and those of our allies. Bangladesh exported \$5.5 billion worth of products, primarily apparel and textiles, to the United States in 2018, making the United States the single largest market for Bangladeshi goods in the world. In turn, U.S. exports to Bangladesh, which consisted largely of agricultural products (grains and cotton) and machinery, amounted to \$2.1 billion, up 43 percent from the previous year, but still resulting in a U.S. trade deficit of \$4 billion. The United States is also currently the largest source of foreign direct investment in Bangladesh. At the end of 2017, the United States accounted for 23 percent of the stock of foreign direct investment in Bangladesh. Chevron is the single largest foreign investor, producing some 55 percent of Bangladesh's domestic natural gas. U.S. companies are the largest foreign investors in Bangladesh, with \$3.4 billion in investments as of 2018, which accounts for 20 percent of total FDI stock in Bangladesh. The vast majority of these investments are in the oil and gas, banking and insurance, and power generation sectors.

## **TRADE AND INVESTMENT:**

The United States is the largest export market for Bangladesh. The U.S. is also one of the largest sources of foreign direct investment in Bangladesh. The biggest American investment in the country are the operations of Chevron, which produces 50% of Bangladesh's natural gas.[21] Bilateral trade in 2014 stood at US\$6 billion. The main American exports to Bangladesh are agricultural products (soybeans, cotton, wheat, dairy), aircraft, machinery, engines, and iron and steel products. American imports from Bangladesh include apparel, footwear, and textile products; toys, games and sporting goods; shrimp and prawns; and agricultural products.

In June 2013, following the 2013 Savar building collapse that led to over 1,000 deaths, the United States suspended a preferential trade agreement with Bangladesh that allowed for duty-free access to the US market over poor safety standards. The Bangladesh Foreign Ministry then issued a statement that read: "It cannot be more shocking for the factory workers of Bangladesh that the decision to suspend Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) comes at a time when the government of Bangladesh has taken concrete and visible measures to improve factory safety and protect workers' rights."



# **U.S. DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS IN BANGLADESH**

USAID is the principal U.S. Government agency providing development assistance in Bangladesh. USAID has had a full-fledged cooperation program in Bangladesh since 1971. It works closely with the Government of Bangladesh, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and other donors. USAID's yearly development budget for Bangladesh averages \$100 million. In 2009, planned assistance amounted to roughly \$163 million, including help for people living in the Cyclone Sidr-affected regions.

Since 1971, USAID has provided over \$5.5 billion in development assistance, with half of that amount provided in food aid. With USAID assistance, Bangladesh has seen significant improvements in living conditions. Today, Bangladeshis have better access to health care and electricity, increased agricultural productivity and better nutrition. USAID works with communities in disaster preparedness and to improve their ability to manage emergency food supplies. USAID programs assist Bangladeshi organizations and communities in addressing their needs in the areas of health and family planning, income generation, agriculture and food security, disaster management, democracy and human rights, and education. USAID supports the provision of low-cost, quality family planning services, maternal and child health care, and treatment for tuberculosis through a network of nongovernmental clinics and community health workers. USAID promotes the social marketing of contraceptives and selected maternal and child health products through private sector outlets. USAID-supported programs serve 38% of all couples using modern family planning methods. In 2008, USAID programs provided 1 million pregnancy-related checkups, vaccinations for 300,000 children, and essential care for 40,000 newborns. USAID targets the most at-risk populations with messages about the treatment of sexually transmitted infections. Although enrollment in primary school has improved in recent years, an estimated 40% of children still do not complete the second grade. USAID's pioneering work in early childhood education, including its support for 1,800 preschools and learning programs for older children, improves schools' ability to address poor attendance, low achievement, and high dropout rates in primary school. The USAID-funded Sesame Street television program "Sisimpur" is the most widely viewed children's television program in Bangladesh, reaching over 9 million viewers weekly.

Bangladesh is highly vulnerable to natural disasters, including cyclones, floods, landslides, droughts, and earthquakes. USAID's food security, disaster readiness, and humanitarian assistance programs target 3,500 of the most at-risk villages and help to provide a safety net of short-term emergency assistance during natural disasters, as well as long-term solutions that raise incomes, improve health, and enhance food security. Since 2005, USAID has financed various asset protection activities, such as raising the ground of rural homes for 4,400 vulnerable farming households to protect assets such as vegetable gardens and farming animals. USAID has funded the construction of earthen embankments, which protect crops and allow more time to harvest, and walls to stop erosion in low-lying areas. In 11 southern coastal districts impacted by Cyclone Sidr, USAID plans to build 100 schools that will serve as shelters in the event of a disaster. USAID's most significant contribution in Bangladesh has been to help bring electricity to rural areas. In 1971, only 3% of the population had electricity; today, 44% do. To protect natural resources and empower local people who depend on them for their livelihoods, USAID works with communities to establish management systems that encourage the wise use of aquatic and tropical forest resources and restore habitats and ecosystems. USAID also expands access to global markets by assisting key sectors, such as aquaculture and horticulture, to improve the quality of their products, increase sales, create jobs, and promote investment, particularly for the benefit of women, youth, and small and medium enterprise suppliers.

Elected officials and public institutions frequently fail to effectively address citizens' needs, and large- and small-scale corruption is pervasive. To fight these trends, USAID addresses the root causes of corruption by improving the quality of governance by elected leaders, developing fair and open election processes, improving the functioning of political parties, and increasing parliamentary and citizen oversight of the national budget. USAID also works with nongovernmental organizations, local governments, and municipal associations to improve government accountability and the delivery of social services. These efforts have led to direct budget allocations from the national government to local government associations for the first time ever. In addition, these programs have achieved a 50% increase in local revenues in targeted areas. Trafficking in persons is a significant transnational crime in Bangladesh. With USAID's support, the Bangladesh Government made significant progress in dealing with human trafficking, removing the country from prospective U.S. sanctions. USAID has provided assistance to more than 500 trafficking survivors since 2006.

The United States and Bangladesh have been friends and close allies for many years. Through its development assistance programs, the U.S. Government will continue to be a strong and close partner of the Bangladeshi people. By late 2019 Bangladesh was in talks with the United States to buy arms for the country's armed forces. Its aim is to modernize the country's defense system and take the military cooperation between the two countries to new heights through advanced and timely military equipment. In addition, Bangladesh and the United States may conclude two basic defense agreements, the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSMIA) and the Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA). Bangladesh has proposed to the United States to purchase advanced military equipment, including multi-role warplanes, Apache attack helicopters and surface-to-air missile systems. The US authorities have responded positively and assured Bangladesh of all possible military assistance.

## **DEFENSE COOPERATION**

SWADS personnel with the US Navy in 2011

The United States is one of Bangladesh's principal strategic military allies. American defense cooperation is seen as a counterweight to the regional powers India and Russia. Joint exercises are held on a regular basis, particularly in the Bay of Bengal. The U.S. Pacific Command maintains regular engagements with the Bangladesh Armed Forces. The U.S. has also helped set up the elite SWADS marine unit in the Bangladesh Navy, which is modeled on American and South Korean special forces.

## **EDUCATION AND CULTURE**

Bangladesh is the world's largest contributor to UN peacekeeping. The United States has been a vital supporter of Bangladeshi peacekeeping engagements.

There were 7,496 Bangladeshi students in U.S. universities in 2018, making Bangladesh 24th in the world among countries sending students to USA, and 10th in the world for sending Graduate level students.[25] The American Embassy in Bangladesh operates and supports several Education Consultancy Centers in Dhaka, Chittagong, Sylhet and Rajshahi. Besides American Center, US Embassy also support the Edward M. Kennedy Center for Public Service & Arts and operates Archer K. Blood Library in Dhaka. On the cultural front, Sisimpur, a USAID-funded Bangladeshi version of Sesame Street, is the most watched children's program on Bangladeshi television.

## **DISASTER MANAGEMENT**

The United States has assisted Bangladesh during cyclone relief operations in 1991 and 2007 Operation Sea Angel One in 1991 and Operation Sea Angel Two in 2007 saw US Marines joining Bangladeshi troops in providing relief to thousands of people in southern Bangladesh who suffered as a result of the 1991 Bangladesh Cyclone and Cyclone Sidr.

## **BANGLADESHI DIASPORA IN THE U.S.**

The US-Bangladesh relationship is strengthened by the Bangladeshi American community. Fazlur Rahman Khan designed the United States's tallest tower in Chicago. Sal Khan is a prominent educationist. Hansen Clarke was the first U.S. congressman of Bangladeshi origin. M. Osman Siddique served as US Ambassador to Fiji.

Source: US Embassy, Dhaka | US State Dept.





## U.S. – Bangladesh Partnership

**Remarks by John Kerry - Secretary of State**

**Edward M. Kennedy Center,**

**Dhaka, Bangladesh**

**August 29, 2016**

This is a very real personal privilege for me to come to Bangladesh and walk into the Edward M. Kennedy Center. I know that Ted Kennedy holds a very special place in the history of Bangladesh and in the hearts of its people, of you. And the reasons for that are because he was very much a visionary and very clear about his support for the independence of your country back in 1971. And I knew Teddy for many, many years. I first met him when I was 18 years old, fresh out of high school, and I worked all summer – for free, I might add – to try to help get Ted Kennedy elected to the United States Senate in 1962. And it was his first race. He was running to fill the seat of President John F. Kennedy. His brother had just been elected president two years earlier. And it was a great campaign. I learned a lot, enough to be able to get elected to the Senate not too many years later. And I never thought when I was doing that that I would one day become the junior senator, the junior colleague to Senator Ted Kennedy working in the Senate. We spent more than – just in to 29 years, a little less than that that I got to work with him. For the last few years he was gone. He had passed away. But it was a quarter of a century that I worked with him, and I am very honored to visit an institution that bears his name.

And I might add, I think at the time he and I were the longest-serving junior/senior team in the Senate. I thought I was going to be there forever like that. And Strom Thurmond, who used to be the oldest act with Fritz Hollings, he lived to be a hundred years old. So I kept saying, okay, a hundred, that sounds pretty good, I'll take that. There are many, many reasons why I wanted to come to Dhaka and why I appreciate so deeply the gracious reception that I received. And I am particularly grateful to the prime minister. I had a very good discussion with her. But I want to emphasize that the culture of this country is really one of the world's most rich and diverse and beautiful. It is truly shonar bangla, a "golden Bangla." And the prime minister and I had a very in-depth, thorough discussion – Foreign Minister Ali, other senior officials. And over the course of our discussions today, we had the opportunity to highlight how far Bangladesh has come in its four and a half decades since independence, and how much our countries now work together on everything from health care to education to regional and global security. I want you to know that the United States is very proud to have been a partner in Bangladesh's growth, and we welcome this nation's participation in all three of President Obama's signature development initiatives: health care, food security, and the all-encompassing issue of climate change.

Now, I know that at times there have been some who have felt a little tension regarding this relationship, and that came from 1971. But I am proud that not only did Senator Ted Kennedy support that, but as I said, I was just a young – in 1971 I was freshly out of college and just back from the war in Vietnam, and we were all supportive. Massachusetts was supportive of the struggle for independence in Bangladesh, and I'm very proud of that. Now, we know that we are living in a very different and a very complicated time. The areas of the world most vulnerable to climate change are heavily populated, low-lying coastal regions that are also subject to devastating storms such as cyclones and hurricanes. This places Bangladesh near the very top of the countries at risk, with an estimated 15 million people who could be displaced by 2050. And that is why the United States, President Obama, myself, others are working so hard with local partners in order to try to create climate resiliency, to support renewable energy projects, build emergency centers, help with many millions of Bangladeshis who are economically dependent on coastal resources.

And as every one of you knows, the solution to climate change is not a secret. It's right there for the grabbing. It's energy policy. If you make the right energy policy choices, you solve the problem of climate change. Just today I talked with the prime minister and the foreign minister about the challenge of the Montreal Protocol and of being able to transition out of hydrofluorocarbons into the new technologies. And that alone will save us one half a degree centigrade in the warming of the Earth. So there are things we can do, and we need and want Bangladesh to be one of the countries that is at the top of the list of those who are fighting to make this transformation take place. Now, the United States, I promise you, will do all that we can to assist Bangladesh on this issue in the future, just as we have stood by you in so many challenges in the past. Since this country won its independence, the United States has provided billions of dollars to help Bangladeshis train more teachers, to modernize transportation, to improve health care, to promote the rights of workers and women, and produce food more efficiently. Meanwhile, our bilateral commercial ties have expanded so that America is now Bangladesh's largest trading partner, largest export market,

and a primary source of foreign direct investment. The \$28 billion garment industry has played a uniquely important role in this rise, contributed to the annual sustained growth of your country at 6 percent. But growth in its own – growth just for its own sake is not our only goal. You can grow and grow and grow and grow, but you can be growing with the wrong values, you can be growing with the wrong outcomes, you can be growing with people not gaining in their rights or in their income or in their ability to get an education. So growth alone is not the measurement of all that is happening. The Rana Plaza collapse and the Tazreen factory fire before it are just two of the more recent tragedies that underscore a fundamental truth: Bangladesh cannot truly meet the aspirations of its people and share prosperity if its workers are not safe and their rights are not ensured. That is critical. And that is why the United States strongly supports efforts by government, by the private sector, by unions and the international agencies, in order to increase safety inspections, to close substandard factories, and make it easier for workers to be able to report violations without fear of retaliation. But these steps are only part of the story. Enhancing worker safety has to be paired with strengthening workers' rights. The fact is garment factories across Bangladesh actually could benefit enormously from empowering laborers, allowing them to form labor unions, affording them full collective bargaining rights, because no one should ever be compelled to work in hazardous or exploitative conditions. It's really that simple.

Let me just share with you, when I – quite a few years ago, I lived in a community in Massachusetts in the northern part of the state called Lowell. And it had been built up. It was one of the first planned communities in America, and it was based on some of the Industrial Revolution and early development in England. But we had these huge, long factories along the river because the water was necessary to drive the mill, and they would produce textile and so forth. And it was huge for America. But young kids were working in there sometimes, and they couldn't leave and have a lunch break. They couldn't go have a bathroom break. They'd work 16 hours. Until finally, the labor movement insisted on creating rights and better working conditions for those people.

And look at the United States of America today. We have grown to be the most powerful economy in the world. We are still the largest economy in the world. China is obviously growing. China has 1.3 billion people, so someday China will be a bigger economy. But we are still an economy of innovation, of creativity, an economy that gives people more rights, that allows young kids to be able to go to college, their parents do better and the next generation's been able to do better. And it's largely because we created the rights for workers and improved the working conditions, and we grew as a nation that understood that everybody benefits. And when everybody benefits, the nation does better. That's the theory. We know this from our own experience. And so what we're trying to do now is recognize it took a long time for this to happen. It wasn't easy. Some of these changes have even happened in the last 15 years. And thanks to Senator Ted Kennedy and others, I was privileged to be there to vote for health care universally given to everybody in our country, and our country is stronger today because of it.

But we're still fighting for things. So my message to you is don't – don't get mad because it doesn't happen overnight. It takes work and time. Building Bangladesh's prosperity is important for its own sake, yes, and for the well-being of Bangladeshis, but there's another reason as well. We all know that true prosperity is linked to a community's sense of security, and that extremists thrive in places where people feel marginalized – economically, and marginalized politically, and that growth is much harder to achieve and to sustain in the face of violence. Money wants security. If you want to have foreign investors come and invest, you need security, but security also has to be built on the strength of your civil society and the strength of your people's ability to be able to express their views and not feel as if the only place they can turn is to extremism in order to make a point. Now, for each of these reasons, the United States will continue to work very closely with Bangladesh and with partners on every single continent in order to defeat vicious terrorist networks, particularly those of Daesh and al-Qaida. Here in Dhaka, the July 1st attack at the Holey Artisan Bakery was an outrage clearly designed to divide Bangladesh, designed to try to cut off this welcoming society from the outside world. Dozens of smaller-scale attacks have been carried out during the past several years, often directed at members of religious minorities, foreigners, bloggers, and security officials. And the reason for this is obviously they want to divide you, they want to push people apart, they want to create internal strife.

These heinous acts of violence, and too many others worldwide, are a stark, painful reminder that those who aid terrorist groups or perpetrate these acts have no respect for national boundaries, no concern for the rights of others, no regard for the rule of law, and they do not embody the values of the people of Bangladesh or the United States, or the majority of people across the globe. And it is important for us to make that statement. In Iraq, Daesh kills people because of who they are. It kills Yazidis because they are Yazidis. It kills Shia because they are Shia. It kills Christian because they are Christian. It kills people because they aren't who they are and who they want you and will force you to be. They attack culture. They attack history. And that is why I describe the fight against violent extremism as one of the world's most important challenges. And it will take a generation or more to solve it, but let me tell you something: We are defeating Daesh and we will defeat Daesh. We will defeat al-Shabaab and Boko Haram, and we are on the road to achieving that now.



But we have to continue. It's not just the battlefield; it's the minds. And if we have too many young people who can't go to school, or too many young people who are frustrated, or they can't find a job – if we leave those minds out there for extremists to recruit, then it will continue and none of us would be doing our jobs if we allowed that to happen. Remember this: No country is immune from terrorism. It's easy to terrorize. Government and law enforcement have to be correct 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. But if you decide one day you're going to be a terrorist and you're willing to kill yourself, you can go out and kill some people. You can make some noise. Perhaps the media would do us all a service if they didn't cover it quite as much. People wouldn't know what's going on. The fact is we have to stand together, and the United States is standing with Bangladesh in this fight.

Now, just as important, we understand that to defeat terrorists, we have to uphold, not betray, the democratic principles that we cherish and they abhor. There may be no single answer to the question of why somebody becomes a terrorist – there are a lot of reasons. But make no mistake, democracy still provides the most resilient and the most reliable platform that we have for preventing and responding to violent extremism. Why? Because when individuals can address their grievances, when you have an opportunity to come together and speak and not fear that you're going to go to jail, when you have an ability to be able to talk and argue and fight over an issue, build consensus about facts – that's the way that civil society is able to flourish: when people can freely participate in public debate and are less vulnerable to being subverted by lies, by distortions, by a fake presentation of a peaceful religion, Islam. So it's important that people have a stake in building up their society, not being inspired to use violence to tear it down. Now some may argue that it's more difficult to live up to the core values of democracy when countries face a genuine threat. And I understand that. But guess what? You can go in two directions. I believe that when a country faces those kinds of threats, it's even more important to uphold the values of democracy. Because if you don't, you will more quickly feed the frenzy that can come with opposition and panic and hysteria.

My friends, I will leave here today with a very renewed sense of faith in the future of the relationship between our countries. I have no doubt about it. And while I wish I could come and stay for longer, the press of the current conflicts and the business that we have makes it extremely difficult to stay anywhere very long. Just ask my kids and my wife. It's hard. But the energy of your vibrant, dynamic society is something I can feel, it's something I understand. Our ambassador, who does a terrific job, has told me about it. My assistant secretary, Nisha Biswal, keeps talking about it. And they're right. I will leave here with a stronger belief in the importance of this partnership to both of our countries. And I'm not sure that anyone would have predicted a decade ago that our countries would have been consulting closely on regional security, that Bangladesh would be using American cutters to patrol the Bay of Bengal, and that our shared agenda would include everything from counterterrorism to the environmental health and sustainability of our oceans, something we're also working on together.

At the same time, it should be no surprise that the United States and Bangladesh are not just partners in pursuing a common interest, but we are friends, as well. Back in 1971, when I was protesting a war and the men and women of this beautiful land were under murderous attack, some across the globe wanted to just look the other way. As I mentioned to you, there were a bunch of us in the younger generation who were involved in the civil rights movement and the women's movement and the peace movement and the environment movement. It was a beginning of an extraordinary time of getting things done and putting new ideas and possibilities in front of our citizens. And one of the things that made me proud then was the way that Ted Kennedy stood up and fought for Bangladesh, and for what was happening here.

At that time, when the violence was at its height, Senator Kennedy flew to this region. He visited the camps where refugees were gathered. And he returned home to the United States Senate to bear witness to what he called, I quote, "a systematic campaign of terror." Early the next year, Senator Kennedy returned, and he planted a banyan tree at Dhaka University to replace the majestic one that the rampaging soldiers had destroyed. In his remarks to students at that time, Kennedy didn't focus on narrow economic or strategic interests. Instead, he spoke of the connections that are deeper and bigger, more universal. He said, the real foreign policy of America is not just government to government; it is citizen to citizen, friend to friend, people to people. Because in a sense, we are all Bangladeshis, we are all Americans. We all share in the great alliance of humanity. The tree that my former Senate colleague planted remains a living symbol of the blood, sacrifice, and courage that brought this country into being. And it remains a symbol of the strength and of the friendship that the citizens of the United States and the people of Bangladesh share. It was to reinforce that friendship and to strengthen our bonds and our resolve to face the challenges now and in the future that I came to Dhaka today. And I look forward to working with all of you to accomplish that important mission to the benefit of Bangladesh, to the benefit of America. And if we do it right together, it will be to the benefit of the world.

***Thank you very, very much.***

**Source: US Embassy, Dhaka.**



## **Perspective Plan 2041: Golden Bengal as a Label for Nation Branding.**

***Dr. A.K. Abdul Momen***

***Foreign Minister of Bangladesh.***

The government's Vision 2041, which is a continuation of Vision 2021, aims to carry the development journey of Bangladesh that Bangabandhu had dreamed of – to end absolute poverty and to graduate into a higher middle-income status by 2031 and a developed country by 2041. The dream of Bangabandhu's "Sonar Bangla/Golden Bangladesh" is not a myth. Perspective Plan 2041 is the instrument to fast track the nation on the development path. The economy that once was labelled as a "bottomless basket with no hope of survival" has now been globally perceived as a "development miracle". Our government's Vision 2021 and Vision 2041 are two key instruments that have contributed to the country's commendable progress over the past decade.

Eradicating poverty with a view to becoming a developed nation or a "Sonar Bangla" by 2041, Perspective Plan 2041 has been prepared to translate the policies and programmes into development strategies where the main beneficiary will be the people of Bangladesh and they will be the key driving force of growth and transformation. Growth and equity are two most important factors for sustainable development of any country. Rapid growth will have to be balanced with an emphasis on equitable distribution of the benefits of growth for all, especially the poor and the vulnerable.

Harmonising this interdependent relation between growth and equity, we have prepared Vision 2041 for the accomplishment of that dream and a 20-year perspective plan to attain a pro-people, pro-planet, peaceful, sustainable Bangladesh where no one is left behind the goal. Perspective Plan 2041 provides the roadmap for accelerated growth and lays down broad approaches for eradication of poverty, inequality, and human deprivation. In the past decade, we have had remarkable success when it comes to socio-economic development. Over the next two decades, Bangladesh will experience an accelerated pace of change. For instance, Bangladesh will experience a rapid transformation in agriculture, trade and industry, education, healthcare, transportation and communication, etc.

While these goals are pursued with vigour, the Government will ensure that key natural resources like land, water, forestry, natural habitat and air are used in a manner that avoids their depletion and degradation. Human civilisation is facing the catastrophic Covid-19 pandemic which has caused and is still causing unprecedented socio-economic consequences worldwide. The Covid-19 pandemic has affected all countries irrespective of their development status. However, the prudent policy of the government to find the balance between lives and livelihoods ensured that we could absorb the shock. Because of the stimulus package of 14.69 billion dollars till date, which is around 4.4% of our GDP, Bangladesh economy could progress ahead.

In the financial year 2019-2020, because of the Covid-19 pandemic, our GDP growth rate was only 5.2%. Because of the various successful Government policies, in the last financial year, we achieved the growth rate of 6.1%, which is one of the highest in the world in this period. The expected growth rate for the year 2021-2022 is 7.2%. The 8th and 9th Five Year plans will play an important role in implementing the Perspective Plan 2041. The 8th Five Year Plan of the government aligns with different social and economic targets that have been forecast in the second Perspective Plan 2021-41.

It covers the development aspirations of the country incorporating the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals. So, the Perspective Plan 2041 has the perfect synergy between the government priorities and SDGs. Bangladesh is on track in many of the targets of SDGs. Bangladesh is one of the climate vulnerable countries. However, despite having multiple constraints, Bangladesh is the first LDC to establish a "Climate Change Trust Fund" from its own resources. Every year, we ourselves spend about \$5 billion on climate adaptation. We are following a low-carbon development path. Our National Solar Energy Action Plan 2021-2041 predicts generation of up to 40 Giga Watt of renewable energy by 2041.



As the second largest exporter of ready-made garments, we are exploring efficient options of circular fashion and textiles as part of the overall circular economy. Our Delta Plan 2100, a 82-year sustainable development plan focuses on efficient use and preservation of water. The Delta Plan and the Perspective Plan 2041 has a common goal of making Bangladesh an environmentally sustainable nation.

As the president of the Climate Vulnerable Forum and the host to the South Asian office of Global Centre on Adaptation, we are promoting the interest of the vulnerable communities and locally led adaptation projects. Let me also share with you that in spite of all the difficulties, remittance inflow was 10.87% higher in 2019-2020 than the previous year, even during the pandemic.

The Covid-19 situation of course affected Bangladesh's migrants, but the inflow of remittance did not stop. Moreover, the migrant workers have already sent \$20.67 Billion of remittances up to April 2021 which is 13.6% more than the previous year's total remittance. The 2% incentives provided by the government for sending remittance in the legal channel had a strong influence on this trend.

As one of the major migrants sending countries in the world with around 12 million people in about 170 countries, Bangladesh receives more than \$18 billion as remittances annually. The National Action Plan of National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) 2016-21 suggested keeping the social allowance program as a continuous activity for migrant workers and their family members.

Additionally, it kept skill development programmes for youth and women as another key programme under the human development cluster. Bangladesh has also introduced mandatory life insurance for migrant workers since December 2019. These factors are an indication of Bangladesh's quest for development.

Given the performance of Bangladesh's economy in the recent past, present prevailing scenario and projections by the reputed international financial institutions, I can say that all indicate a stronger economic prospect for Bangladesh in the upcoming years. However, the future prosperity and economic growth of Bangladesh will be decided by some key issues. Priorities must be fixed by the sector that already contributes to the development of our country.

Let me touch on the issue of our excellent bilateral relation with Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia has been a trusted partner for Bangladesh since the establishment of our diplomatic relations. We need to enhance our image in Saudi Arabia and the labour centric cooperation also needs to be transformed into a comprehensive partnership where mutual economic interests will be the backbone of our cooperation mechanism.

Once we will be able to establish Golden Bengal as a brand, we will automatically be able to transform the basis of our cooperation from human resources to economy and trade.

I have learned that Saudi Arabia has reformed the business, economic and investment opportunities in the Kingdom. Many of our expatriates there could take this opportunity to become entrepreneurs there. Bangladesh is a market of 165 million people. It has a strategic location between South and South-east Asia.

It also offers attractive investment opportunities for foreign investors including from Saudi Arabia. The Saudi side could tap into our public private partnership investment opportunity. We are expecting to sign a MoU very soon with the Saudi side, which will allow Saudi investors to invest under PPP.

Saudi investors could explore other opportunities here. The Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (Bida) will provide all necessary support for that. In conclusion, let me flag out that a major shift is taking place in the world economy. However, to gain from this change, we have to prepare ourselves with skills, education, infrastructure, good governance and above all goodwill.

We have to work together in partnership and need to be fully prepared to overcome the challenges and to grip the opportunities ahead.

I am confident that through our collective efforts, strong coordination and hard work, we will be able to turn Bangladesh into Sonar Bangla as dreamed by the Father of Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

**Dr. A.K. Abdul Momen, Foreign Minister of Bangladesh.**

# **50 Years After Independence, U.S.- Bangladesh Strong Bonds Continue to Grow**



**Ambassador  
Earl R. Miller  
U.S. Embassy  
Dhaka.**

For weeks I have been working on this article. I couldn't get it right. What is the best way to congratulate the people of Bangladesh on the 50th anniversary of the founding of this remarkable country and the birth centenary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman? I couldn't capture the magnitude, the improbability, the significance of the victory for freedom and the birth of a new nation. So, I am going to turn to the words of another far more eloquent American, the late Senator Edward Kennedy.

Before I do, let me highlight just a few of the innumerable bonds forged between the people of the United States and Bangladesh over the past five decades.

The United States has contributed over eight billion dollars in assistance to Bangladesh, including 73 million dollars in support of Bangladesh's Covid-19 response.

Our economic partnership grows every year with two-way trade reaching a record nine billion dollars in 2019. The United States is the largest single-country export destination for Bangladeshi products, and remains the largest source of stock foreign direct investment. American companies built Bangladesh's first liquefied natural gas import facility, helped dredge the nation's mighty rivers, shared technology that transformed Bangladesh into a digital nation, and now provide world-class airplanes and locomotives to facilitate travel and trade. Next month we will launch together the US-Bangladesh Business Council to inspire even greater economic prosperity for the American and Bangladeshi people.

Bangladesh's generosity and humanity in responding to the Rohingya refugee crisis is an example to the world. The United States is the largest international donor of humanitarian assistance to Bangladeshi host communities and Rohingya refugees. Working with Bangladesh on a durable solution to the crisis is one of my top priorities at the US Embassy. We work together on climate change, peacekeeping, regional security, educational and cultural exchanges and so much more. The friendship between the United States and Bangladesh grows stronger and deeper every year.

On February 14, 1972, on the campus of Dhaka University, Senator Edward Kennedy spoke before thousands of jubilant students on the similarities between the birth of the United States and that of

Bangladesh. He spoke of how so many had predicted that America would collapse after independence and how many predicted the same for Bangladesh. Senator Kennedy helped plant a new banyan tree on the university campus, replacing the famous tree destroyed by Pakistani security forces where student independence leaders had once gathered. That tree thrives, a living symbol of the indomitable spirit of Bangladesh and the enduring friendship and ever-growing partnership between our great nations.

I have come to Bangladesh to bring you the prayers and hopes of millions of people of the United States of America, and I'm proud to stand here at Dacca University, long the symbol and focus of the Bengali struggle for self-determination, and the first target of those who have sought to repress that freedom.

It is in the finest tradition of America to embrace the cause of freedom, wherever it may be found.

The American people are proud to stand with those who struggle for liberty, for human dignity and for the noblest aspirations of man.

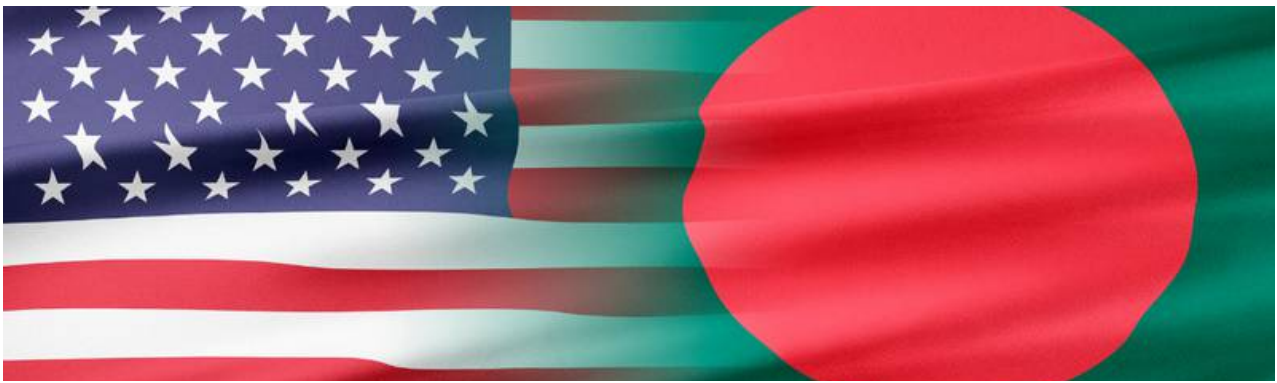
You know while some governments do not yet recognise you, the people of the world do recognise you, and they recognise all you have accomplished here in the name of freedom from tyranny and oppression.

We are brothers in liberty, and no man, no policy, no government can change that fact. I have come to Bangladesh as one who has tried to be with you in your struggle. A few months ago, in August, I walked among the living and the dying in your refugee camps in India. I saw children starving and families destroyed by the ravages of war.

I hoped to come to Bangladesh as well, but I was turned away by the government of West Pakistan, a military government afraid for the world to see inside its borders. I was troubled, as the world was troubled, by the suffering of your people, and now I rejoice, as the world rejoices, at the bright new chapter you have written in the history of liberty on earth. The prayer of Bengal's great poet and philosopher has been answered: "Where the mind is without fear", said Tagore, "and the head is held high", "Where knowledge is free, into that heaven of freedom, my father, let my country awake."

Freedom is yours and the future belongs to the people of a new Bengali nation. For generations to come, the story of Bangladesh will be a lesson to the world. The birth of the Bengali nation will be an inspiration to other people in other lands, a symbol to all who share your love of life and the spirit of your courage, but who do not yet share your freedom.





There are many parallels between the United States and Bangladesh. Two hundred years ago, in America, ten thousand miles from where we are today, there were other people who followed the star of freedom; our beginning was no more auspicious than your ones. Like you, a powerful and established government was determined to deny us freedom. Like you, once the new American nation was born, there were those who said such a weak and impoverished country could not survive in the modern world. They thought our great experiment in freedom would surely fail.

And yet we confounded all their wisdom. We were poor in everything but hope and courage.

We had no wealth, but we had resources far more valuable and important. We had people with the energy and commitment to make our nation strong, and leaders with the vision to see the way, and help the people build their future.

The revolution in America did not end in 1776. It did not die with Washington and Jefferson. It lives today in our efforts to fulfil the goal of liberty and equality for all our citizens, black and white alike. And it lives as well in the hopes we share for those who are oppressed in other nations.

That is why the struggle of the people of Bangladesh has deeply touched the conscience of America. It evokes the greatest memories of our past and demonstrates that our love of freedom transcends all thought of race or colour or religion or nationality.

The people of America were with you in recent months, although our government was not. We are with you now in spirit, and the leaders of America will not be far behind.

The real foreign policy of America is citizen to citizen, friend to friend, people to people, foreign bonds of brotherhood that no tyranny can diminish. For in a sense, we are all Bengalis, we are all Americans, and we all share the great alliance of humanity. For those who doubt that freedom and self-determination are the most powerful forces at work in the world today, let them come to Bangladesh.

I have come here to say that America cares. I have come to learn from the father of your country, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. I have come to talk again with those who suffered so much in the refugee camps and to ask what my fellow countrymen and I can do to cease the pain of those who have survived and have done so much to preserve freedom.

If any words of an American can help to heal the wounds you have endured, to reconcile those who live among you and who now must live together, they are the words that Abraham Lincoln spoke a century ago as we neared the end of our own great Civil War.

"With malice toward none", said President Lincoln, "with charity for all: with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and for his orphan; to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and a lasting peace, among ourselves, and with all nations."

In the spirit of the best in America, in the spirit of our constitution, and our declaration of independence, I salute your great new birth of freedom, and I say Joy Bangla, victory for the nation of Bangladesh.

On behalf of the American and Bangladeshi team at the United States Embassy in Dhaka: Happy 50th birthday, Bangladesh! We celebrate and rejoice with you. We honour the vision of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and salute the extraordinary journey of the Bangladeshi people. We send our best wishes for a bright prosperous future for all Bangladeshis that honours the sacrifices and democratic principles of the nation's founding. As Tagore wrote in one of my favourite poems, Closed Path, let "new melodies break forth from the heart" as every hopeful day for the next fifty years and beyond a "new country is revealed with its wonders."

**Source: US Embassy, Dhaka.**

## 50th Anniversary of the U.S.-Bangladesh Partnership: Looking Forward to the Next 50 Year.



**Peter D Haas,**  
**Ambassador U.S. Embassy in Bangladesh.**



Through its remarkable first five decades of independence, I like to think that Bangladesh has found no better partner than the United States. And we intend to build upon that partnership over the next 50 years. Since we first clasped our hands in friendship on this date in 1972, the United States has provided more than \$8 billion in development assistance. We have partnered with the people of Bangladesh to save lives following deadly cyclones, combat terrorism and human trafficking, and help people lead healthier and more prosperous lives. Most recently, the United States provided more than 61 million COVID-19 vaccines to assist your efforts to combat this pandemic. Bangladesh is the largest recipient of U.S.-donated vaccines worldwide. That is what friends do. Bangladesh's transformation over the past 50 years has been stunning. When it emerged from the dark days of its Liberation War as an independent, sovereign nation, its economy was shattered, its infrastructure destroyed, and countless of its best minds had been murdered. Many thought Bangladesh would never be able to thrive on its own. Many thought Bangladesh would be forever dependent on the assistance of others.

Those days are long gone. Today, Bangladesh is widely admired as a success story. Thanks to the drive, resourcefulness, and innovation of the Bangladeshi people, Bangladesh has made rapid improvements in health and literacy, has achieved 100 percent electrification, and is home to one of the world's fastest growing economies. Indeed, Bangladesh will soon graduate into middle-income status, a remarkable accomplishment. Bangladesh now lends a helping hand to its neighbors. For example, Bangladesh stepped in to support Sri Lanka during its cash crisis and provided COVID assistance to the Maldives. As the largest contributor of UN peacekeeping forces, Bangladesh plays a critical role in ensuring peace around the globe. And Bangladesh, as one of the world's most vulnerable nations to the effects of climate change, has emerged as a powerful voice in urging major emitting countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. It is also a powerful voice in calling for financing for climate adaptation.

Our two countries are peers. While development assistance is still important, our economic relationship is increasingly about trade, not aid. The benefits are mutual – the United States is Bangladesh's largest export destination, and more and more American corporations now identify Bangladesh among their most important trade and investment partners. Our people-to-people ties go back before Independence. In 1952, Dr. Fazlur Rahman Khan was the first Bangladeshi Fulbright scholarship recipient. He went on to receive his doctoral degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His vision shaped architecture around the world, starting in my home state of Illinois. In Chicago, the Willis tower and the John Hancock Center stand as a testament to our two people's long relationship. Similarly, the banyan tree planted at Dhaka University by Senator Edward Kennedy also symbolizes our close friendship.

The United States and Bangladesh have a common historical experience. Both of our countries fought bloody wars for independence, united by a fervent belief in democracy. And both of our countries have learned that democracy is a process, not an end state. In the United States we have witnessed unspeakable acts of violence and racism. Americans are confronting these issues openly, honestly, and sometimes noisily in an effort to hold people accountable and to effect real change. Many in Bangladesh are doing the same, and we applaud their courage. The United States and the people of Bangladesh want the same things: a vibrant, secure, and prosperous democracy, an accountable judicial system, and basic human rights for everyone. Bangladesh can count on our partnership for decades to come to accomplish these shared goals.

**Source: US Embassy, Dhaka.**





## **50 Years of Bangladesh-U.S. Relations: Time to Capitalize Untapped Potentials Uplifting Bilateral Trade and Investment.**

**- By Md Mahadee Hassan**

One of the much talked issues in Bangladesh-U.S. business forums is the largely unexplored or underutilized bilateral trade and investment opportunities between the two countries. For example, in the first ten months of 2021 (January-October) the United States (U.S.) global trade has reached \$3,838 billion (Exports: \$1,439 billion, imports: \$2,399 billion), and while Bangladesh-U.S. trade is merely approaching around \$9 billion during this period, indicating the two countries' bilateral trade is just 0.23% of U.S.'s global trade (U.S. Census Bureau, 2022). Whereas the same phase witnessed a \$558 billion U.S. trade with China, \$96 billion with India, \$31 billion with Indonesia, \$61 billion with Malaysia, \$52 billion with Thailand, and \$97 billion with Vietnam. Furthermore, US Census Bureau statistics reveals that Bangladesh is the 60th largest destination of U.S. exports and 37th largest sources of U.S. imports. Despite that huge trade and investment gaps, the U.S. remains single largest destination of Bangladeshi exports and the biggest source of foreign direct investment (Razzaque et al., 2020). Experts believe that current Bangladesh-U.S. trade figures is just an underperforming evidence of Bangladesh's capabilities considering the size of its economy and domestic markets. The encouraging fact for U.S. side is that Bangladesh is continuously growing as a potential market for their goods and services, and this year i.e., 4th April of 2022 will be the 50th anniversary of Bangladesh and U.S. diplomatic relations. Although, last five decades has observed significant progress of bilateral relations ranges from economic, development, and security issues to cultural and political affairs. However, it is the high time for both the countries to uplift the mutual engagements in the field of trade and investment into a new height.

### **Bangladesh's prospects and potentials:**

Under the great leadership of Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Bangladesh has enjoyed an uninterrupted 12 years of economic growth between 2009 and 2021. As a result, an economy of just \$100 billion in 2009 has secured a 4X GDP in the span of 12 years made a phenomenal jump of more than \$400 billion in 2021 (IMF, 2022; BBS, 2022). This period noticed a per capita GDP increment to \$2,554 from \$928. Growing at a rate of nearly 7% per year during this period, Bangladesh is amongst the fastest growing economies in the world. In other development, Bangladesh moved out from the World Bank-defined list of low-income countries (LIC) to Lower Middle-Income Country (LMIC) in 2015, much earlier than the targeted 2021, and in 2018, it met all the UN criteria to graduate from the list of Least Developed Countries (LDC) to a developing country. Bangladesh is expected to formally graduate from LDC in 2024; this is certainly one of the remarkable achievements for Bangladesh in her post-independence era. Bangladesh's inspiring performance in GDP growth and other economic indicators has led economists and global projections bodies to forecast that the country's economy will recover from the pandemic faster than many other economies. Increased purchasing power spearheads to a broader domestic consumer market. Growth in the Middle and Affluent Class (MAC) is driving larger consumer market in Bangladesh, which has already resulted in a move up with the global value chains (GVCs). As the growth continues, the number of MAC is expected to be nearly triple to about 34 million by 2025, and 63 cities with at least 100,000 MAC each.

### **Unparalleled opportunities:**

Bangladesh offers unparalleled investment opportunities compared with South Asian peers. Bangladesh's broad non-partisan political support for market oriented reforms has made the country most investor-friendly regulatory regime in South Asia with its trainable, enthusiastic, hardworking and low-cost labor force suitable for achieving competitive edge. Therefore, it is the best option to capitalize advantages from Bangladesh's large talent pool and innovation ecosystem. The geographic location of the country is ideal for global trade with very convenient access to international sea and air routes. Bangladesh is endowed with abundant supply of natural gas and water. Bangladesh is exceptionally open for foreign investments with 100% equity. There are wide ranges of investment areas including infrastructure, transportation, pharmaceuticals, tourism, food processing, textile & apparel, footwear, machinery, technical & medical equipment, transport vehicles, light engineering, toys, sports goods, plastic chemicals, banking & insurance, trading, IT & IoT, telecom, food, construction, agriculture & fishing etc. In recent years, Bangladesh has been increasingly integrated with the ICT and Digital economy sectors. For instance, connectivity has increased significantly with more than 120 million internet and 176 million plus mobile phone users. Demands of ICT goods & services are on a continual rise. In addition, E-commerce has shown exponential growth and there is also a good prospect of Fin-tech market also. More importantly, in recent years, Bangladesh has developed a very strong startup ecosystem. In Bangladesh, companies will find significant cost arbitrage of 10%-60% less compared with the peers. They can enjoy first track approvals of their project/business. In economic aspects, they will experience stable domestic currencies and steady exchange rates, tax holidays, 100% capital and profit repatriation, cash incentives etc. Bangladesh has strongly committed to support foreign investment & businesses.

Over the years, Bangladesh has built significant infrastructure with 93 economic zones (EZs), 8 export processing zones (EPZs), and 28 high-tech parks (HTPs). Government is heavily investing in generating power & energy, and has developed sizable rail, road, sea & land ports networks. There are 5 investment promotion authorities (IPAs); Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA); Bangladesh Export Processing Zone Authority (BEPZA); Bangladesh Economic Zone Authority (BEZA); Bangladesh High-tech Park Authority (BHPTA); Public Private Partnership Authority (PPPA), and they are committed for 24/7 one stop services (OSS). Bangladesh's business-friendly policy regime, one of best in South Asia makes it rewarding for the U.S. and other international companies for their straightforward entrance to the domestic market. In addition, foreign companies can capitalize Bangladesh's duty and quota free access to the major global markets including EU, UK, Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, and Switzerland. In a recent development, a vast category of Bangladesh's products has secured lower duty access in the big markets like China, India, the Republic of Korea, Russia, Thailand, Turkey and Taiwan. Trade Agreements Expediting trade with international partners, Bangladesh has secured membership of a number of regional trade agreements and economic cooperation agreements including, South Asian Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA), Asia Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA), South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA), Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral, Technical and Economic Co-operation (BIMSTEC), Cooperation Agreement between the EU and Bangladesh on Partnership and Development. Recently, Bangladesh has signed two significant trade agreements, the Trade Preferential System of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and Bangladesh-Bhutan Preferential Trade Agreement with the OIC and Bhutan respectively and is currently working on their induction. Bangladesh has proposed or considering free trade agreement with Sri Lanka, Turkey, China, Brazil, India, Thailand and Malaysia. The country has signed bilateral investment treaties with a number of countries, including Austria, the Belgium-Luxembourg Economic Union, China, Denmark, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Iran, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Netherlands, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Singapore, South Korea, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Uzbekistan and Vietnam.

#### **The untapped potentials need to explore:**

Bangladesh and U.S. have been working consistently in recent times at government and private sectors level for extension of trade and economic engagements. In 2013 Bangladesh and U.S. signed a Trade and Investment Cooperation Forum Agreement (TICFA) eliminating trade barriers through government level bilateral discussions. In the latest development, U.S.-Bangladesh Business Council (UBBC) unveiled on 6 April 2021 within the framework of U.S. Chamber of Commerce (UCC), and more significantly, UCC has this kind of bilateral councils only with 18 countries. Certainly, this is a great sign of U.S. private sector's growing confidence in doing business with Bangladesh. Although there remain few challenges uplifting the Bangladesh-U.S. trade relation in the next level and both countries firmly believe that opportunities will outweigh the gains to be realized from the challenges.

#### **The next chapters:**

Currently, Bangladesh and U.S. are cooperating closely on a range of issues, including economy, security, governance, and development. Bangladesh-U.S. ties go beyond the government-to-government level: our people-to-people and economic & trade relationships complement and expand upon the work of our government officials. In September 2020, 'Economic Partnership Dialogue' between Bangladesh and the U.S., both governments reaffirmed their enduring partnership, highlighting close cooperation on trade, investment, energy cooperation, ensuring public health safety, framing sound digital policy, exploring blue economy, and enhancing connectivity. The two governments agreed to continue to work closely together to advance a shared vision of a free, open, inclusive, peaceful, and secured Indo-Pacific region. The foregoing bilateral engagements clearly demonstrate that as a fast-growing young nation, Bangladesh has a lot to achieve and a lot to offer to the world. This is where the future opportunities pose themselves to the world. Investing in Bangladesh is one front where anyone may get a multiplied return on their investment. Obviously, there can be risks as well when investing in any other countries. However, these risks can be minimized with well-performed market entry strategies and rewards will outweigh the risks many times and thus justifying the risk. The sectors mentioned earlier are involved in business activities between Bangladesh and U.S. only in limited scales. While these sectors are working their way up for invigorating activities, there are clearly many untapped opportunities where both countries will be significantly benefited should they consider undertaking a few projects. In addition, increased interactions between the Bangladeshi American community and both the Government and private sectors in Bangladesh and U.S. could be vital for bringing new opportunities through collaboration. In this regard, both the Bangladesh and U.S. could seek proposals and innovative ideas from the Bangladeshi American community involving their respective field of expertise. These initiatives could involve spectrum of areas where economic reward could be ensured through capitalizing mutual investment opportunities.

**Writing By:** Md Mahadee Hassan, an additional secretary to the government of Bangladesh currently holds the position of Economic Minister, Embassy of Bangladesh, Washington DC, USA.



## **GOLDEN JUBILEE OF BANGLADESH INDEPENDENCE**

**Lt Gen M. Harun-Ar-Rashid, Bir Protik (Retired)  
Freedom Fighter No 2 Sector & "K" Force**

The greatest achievement of Bengalee Nation throughout the history is achieving Independence in March 1971 and glorious victory over the Occupation Forces in the same year on 16 December. This year 2021 we are celebrating 50 years of our Independence and Liberation. Today we are proud citizen of a free country respected by the International Community. Celebration of Golden jubilee is a happy occasion. At the outset, I would like to convey my heartiest felicitations to all my fellow Bangladeshis on this happy occasion of our golden jubilee. Coincidentally the Gregorian year calendar of 2021 is similar in dates and days of 1971, as such we can easily refer to dates and day of 1971 by reading this year's calendar.

As we celebrate the joyous time of Golden Jubilee, it is imperative for us to look back to history as to how we have come to this stage. The history of Bengalee Race and Nation is about 1000 years old. In this long period of existence Bengalee Race never had an independent state of their own. Though many intellectuals and writers dreamt of it in different forms like Rabindra Nath Tagore as "Sonar Bangla" our national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam as "Bangladesh" and Jibonananda Das as "Rupashi Bangla". Many patriotic leaders and freedom loving Bengalees have fought wars and made supreme sacrifices for achieving Independence. But none succeeded in establishing an independent state for Bengalee Race. During British rule of India, many Bengalees fought against the British and made supreme sacrifices for Independence of India. After tyrannical rule of long 190 years, British left India by dividing India and creating two Nations – India and Pakistan. As a result, present Bangladesh which was known as East Bengal became part of Pakistan. Our forefathers the then Bengalee leaders played pivotal role in creation of Pakistan as an independent state. Unfortunately, immediately after the creation of Pakistan, the leaders as well as the people of East Bengal realized that the independence achieved after huge sacrifices was not for them, rather became a colony of West Pakistan again. Pakistani rule lasted for 23 years from 1947 to 1971. During this period also Bengalees had to struggle for independence again. In this struggle it was our Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who led the Nation to victory and achieved Independence. This glorious victory was achieved through relentless struggle for 23 years finishing with defeating Occupation Forces in a bloody war for nine months. Approximately three million Bengalee people were killed and about half million Bengalee women were abused during the War by the Pakistani Occupation forces and their cohorts. In 23 years of Pakistani rule, Bangabandhu was imprisoned many times and spent long 14 years in Jail. Yet he united the country for relentless struggle through six point program. Finally on 07 March 71, at "Race Course" ground in front of one million people he gave the clarion call - "Struggle this time is for our emancipation, our struggle for independence." In response to this call whole Bengali Nation rose to the occasion and fought against the Occupation Forces unitedly. For the first time in history, all strata of Bengalee population – Politicians, Students, professionals, Security Forces, Workers, Peasants, Old-Young, Women- House Wife's came under one banner and fought against the Occupation Forces. Today when we celebrate our Golden Jubilee, as citizen of a grateful Nation we must not only recall the sacrifices made by our predecessors - we must take a vow to realize their dream of making our beloved motherland "Sonar Bangla" in its true sense.

It is very unfortunate that as legacy of colonial rule some of us are in habit of negating the achievements of our Independence and Freedom. They very often compare our country with those countries who existed on Earth much longer than us. They fail to realize that, the people of those countries have built their nations over a period of time. In our case every one of us want a "Sonar Bangla," but someone else need to make it for us. That can never happen and will not happen. After the liberation our journey started will totally destroyed communication infrastructure, zero treasury and a few sick industries left by the Occupation Forces. Yet we not only survived, today we are a thriving nation as well. In this such short period of our existence, we have graduated from least developed country to a developing country, we are self-sufficient in food. Our exports are reaching all corners of the Globe. We are second largest producer of garments in the World. We have reached near self-sufficiency in energy production. Communication wise every corner of the country can be reached safely in a few hours. Our professionals and workers are working in most developing and developed countries of the World contributing to their economy immensely.



Our Peace Keepers are contributing significantly in maintenance of World Peace and Order. In achieving sustainable development goals (SDG) set by the United Nations we are ahead of many countries. As for social indications are concerned we are ahead of SAARC countries in many respect. We are not only member of most World Bodies/Organizations, we have provided leadership to some of them including General Assembly of United Nations. We could have done better if the Father of the nation was not killed and democracy was interrupted by military rule. Yet these achievements are remarkable by any means. Presently Bangladesh is a role model of development.

Many of our achievements are acclaimed worldwide. Days of “Bottomless Basket” are in history only. Today international community looks at Bangladesh as a nation of opportunity. I am very proud to be a Bangladeshi - so is everyone who loves Bangladesh.

However there is no scope for complacency. We have to go long way for achieving our desired “Sonar Bangla”. To do that, we have to eliminate from the society – religious fundamentalism / terrorism, corruption and drug abuse and above all establish meaningful democracy and rule of law. Development wise we need to upgrade 20-25% people out of poverty who are still living below poverty line. There are still a good segment of people living without shelter. Substantial segment of people are suffering from malnutrition's. We could not provide basic education to all our children; minimum health care is still out of reach of common people. Most of the youths coming out of University, Collages and Technical Institutions cannot find appropriate jobs. Most importantly we are heavily dependent on foreign technocrats and technology for our development. On the other hand we cannot retain our talented young graduates and technocrats as they are migrating to developed countries for better remuneration. This brain drain is hampering our progress tremendously.

I strongly feel today's young generation has to bear the responsibility of realizing the dream of our heroes who sacrificed their present for our today. It is to be understood that independence and freedom we enjoy today has come through the sacrifices of our previous generations. They have given us the country, now it is our turn to make

“Sonar Bangla” a reality. One of the very popular Presidents of the USA – John F Kennedy said “Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country.” I wish all members of the present generation takes avow to play self-role in building “Sonar Bangla” for our future generations.

Again in the words of President John F Kennedy “If not us, who? If not now, when?” In the past we scarified millions unitedly for common goal of achieving Independence. If we put our heart and soul for building the desired “Sonar Bangla”, no one can stop us. We have done it before we can do it again. Let us all be proud Bangladeshi and build “Sonar Bangla” together. Victory will be ours.

Joy Bangla

The writer is a former Chief of staff,  
Bangladesh Army and a valiant Free-  
dom Fighter of Bangladesh War of  
Liberation in 1971



**US-Bangladesh Relations: Past, Present and Future**  
**Ambassador Farooq Sobhan**  
**Distinguished Fellow & Board Member Bangladesh Enterprise**  
**Institute (BEI)**

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In the past five decades, four issues have featured prominently in the relations between the United States (US) and Bangladesh. On the US could determine side, the focus has been on security cooperation and, more recently, enlisting Bangladesh's support for the Indo-Pacific strategy and weaning it away from China's orbit of influence. On the Bangladesh side, the focus has been on gaining duty free access to the US market for its apparel exports, and now on securing American support on the Rohingya issue. These four issues are likely to dominate bilateral relations during the Joe Biden administration. Bangladesh is keen to attract more foreign direct investment (FDI) from the US and strengthen its bilateral cooperation but would also like to maintain its existing close relations with China. It would welcome working closely with the US in multilateral fora, in particular on environmental issues. In the past, issues relating to free and fair elections, human rights, freedom of the press and rule of law have been areas of disagreement between the two countries. Bangladesh's diplomacy could determine whether the focus of relations in the future will be on areas of convergence or divergence.

### **Introduction**

Relations between the US and Bangladesh in the past five decades have experienced many ups and downs. In the early years, the support from the Richard Nixon administration to Pakistan during Bangladesh's Liberation War in 1971 had cast a shadow over the relationship. The feeling of animosity towards the US was further accentuated by Henry Kissinger's oft quoted reference to Bangladesh as a "basket case". The meeting between Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and President Gerald Ford in Washington in 1974 opened the way to a more cordial relationship. The period from the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur in August 1975 until the visit of President Bill Clinton to Dhaka in March 2000 was a time when Bangladesh, for the most part, was not on the US' radar screen. Perhaps the most noteworthy event during this phase was the Microcredit Summit held in Washington in February 1997, which was co-chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and First Lady Hillary Clinton. During the visit, Hasina met the Clintons at the White House, and the meeting paved the way for the US president's visit to Dhaka in March 2000.

### **The US: The Single Biggest Apparel Market for Bangladesh**

On 18 May 2000, the Trade and Development Act was signed into law by Clinton. This trade act provided duty-free and quota-free access to a select group of countries from Africa for their apparel exports to the US. By then, the US had become the single biggest market for Bangladesh's apparel exports which accounted for over 75 per cent of Bangladesh's exports worldwide and 95 per cent of Bangladesh's exports to the US. The Act set in motion a major effort on the part of Bangladesh to secure quota-free and duty-free access for its apparel exports to the US. Although the lobbying efforts for duty-free and quota-free access to the US market during the two terms of George W Bush were unsuccessful, there was nonetheless a significant increase in apparel exports. By the end of 2008, apparel exports had reached US\$3.6 billion (\$4.8 billion). In the meantime, Bangladesh had begun to attract attention in the US due to a spate of terror attacks between 2003 and 2006. This resulted in counter-terrorism and the tackling of extremist groups being placed at the top of the US agenda in Bangladesh.

## Security Cooperation

During the Barack Obama years, counter-terrorism and preventing and countering violent extremism remained at the top of the US agenda in its relations with Bangladesh. When Secretary of State Hillary Clinton visited Bangladesh on 5 May 2012, an agreement was signed by senior officials of the two countries to hold periodic dialogues on diverse subjects, ranging from defence and security cooperation to economic and trade cooperation. During the past eight years, as many as 24 such dialogues or meetings have taken place. These dialogues have added a new dimension to the bilateral relations and created a better understanding on a wide range of issues.

## Three Key Events

During the period 2013-16, three events had a major impact on US Bangladesh relations. The first event was the Rana Plaza tragedy on 24 April 2013 which resulted in the death of over 1,100 persons, mainly garment workers. The tragedy led to extensive adverse publicity for Bangladesh in American media. The issues of labour rights and safety in factories were highlighted. The Rana Plaza tragedy eventually led to the cancellation of trade concessions extended to select export products from Bangladesh under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), whereby a few export items received duty-free access to the US market. It also resulted in the establishment in December 2013 of the Alliance for Bangladesh Worker Safety, a grouping of 29 major companies in the US, for the main part buyers or importers of apparel and 714 apparel manufacturing companies in Bangladesh. The Alliance undertook a programme to improve safety and working conditions in the factories. The five-year programme ended on 31 December 2018 and resulted in significant improvements in the 714 factories.

The second major event was the terror attack on the Holey Artisan Bakery restaurant in Gulshan, Dhaka, on 1 July 2016. The terror attack was staged by a group of Bangladeshi extremists which claimed affiliation with the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). The Bangladesh government rejected the claim that the group was linked to ISIS. According to the government, the attack was carried out by a local terrorist group, Neo-Jamaatul Mujahideen Bangladesh. The attack resulted in the deaths of 22 civilians, two policemen and five terrorists. In the aftermath of the terror attack, the existing security cooperation between the US and Bangladesh was further strengthened, and this remains an area of high priority for both countries in their bilateral relations.

The third event was the military crackdown by the Myanmar army during the last week of August 2017, which resulted in the massacre of thousands of Rohingyas in the Rakhine province, while some 800,000 were forced to seek refuge in Bangladesh. In addition to the Rohingyas who had earlier fled Myanmar, the total number of displaced Rohingyas in Bangladesh today is approximately 1.2 million. The Rohingyas have been living for the past three years in makeshift camps in the border district of Cox's Bazar. The Rohingya issue has been given the highest priority by the Bangladesh government. Mobilising international support for the safe repatriation of the Rohingyas, holding Myanmar accountable for committing genocide, mobilising humanitarian assistance amounting to one billion dollars a year for the Rohingyas and dealing with a host of security related problems in the camps are just some of the problems that currently preoccupy the Bangladesh government. The US has been at the forefront in extending support to Bangladesh on the Rohingya issue. It has provided US\$1.2 billion (\$1.6 billion) in assistance for the Rohingyas during the past three years. This includes a commitment of US\$200 million (\$268.4 million) at the conference on the Rohingyas held at the United Nations (UN) in New York on 22 October 2020.

## Recent US Engagement with Bangladesh

Following the assumption of office by President Donald Trump in January 2017, the US has continued to view Bangladesh as an increasingly important partner in the South Asian region. In 2017, two US acting assistant secretaries of state visited Dhaka while Bangladesh's foreign secretary also visited Washington DC in 2017 for meetings with US State Department officials. In March 2018, Lisa Curtis, Trump's Deputy



National Security Advisor for South Asia, visited Bangladesh and held meetings with both the foreign minister and foreign secretary. She also visited the Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar and reiterated the US' commitment to continue to support Bangladesh in resolving the Rohingya crisis. Curtis' visit was followed by that of the US Agency for International Development Chief, Mark Green, to Bangladesh where he announced US\$44 million (\$59.06 million) aid for the Rohingyas in these camps. As these visits by senior American officials were underway, the US' priority around the Indo-Pacific strategy had already begun to evolve. In July 2018, Bangladesh's Foreign Minister, Mahmood Ali, visited Washington DC to attend a conference on Advancing Religious Freedom, and held meetings with Sam Brownback, Ambassador for Religious Freedom, and US Deputy Secretary of State John Sullivan. Both officials expressed their appreciation to Ali for Bangladesh's humanitarian role in providing refuge to the displaced Rohingyas.

The issue of the repatriation of the Rohingyas in Bangladesh to Myanmar featured prominently in the meeting between Foreign Minister A K Abdul Momen and US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on 8 April 2019 at the State Department. Pompeo assured Momen that the US would stand beside Bangladesh both politically and financially in finding a permanent solution to the Rohingya problem.

Former US Defense Secretary Mark Esper's phone call to Hasina on 11 September 2020, the briefing of the Bangladesh media on the Indo-Pacific strategy by Deputy Assistant Secretary Laura Stone on 15 September 2020, the Partnership Dialogue between the Advisor for Private Industry and Investment to the Bangladeshi Prime Minister, Salman Rahman, and US Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy and the Environment, Keith Krach, on 30 September 2020, and finally, Deputy Secretary of State Stephen Biegun's visit to Dhaka on 14 and 15 October 2020 can collectively be described as a five-week period of unprecedented engagement between the US and Bangladesh. What was the common thread linking these four initiatives on the US side? The answer can be summed up in one word: China. At one level, the US' initiatives can be viewed as a part of the sharp deterioration in Sino-US relations and the decision on the part of the US to mobilise support for the Indo-Pacific strategy to counter China. More specifically, the US, perhaps at the request of India, felt that a special effort was required to enlist the support and active involvement of Bangladesh in the Indo-Pacific strategy and, at the same time, persuade the Bangladesh government not to get too close to China.

The sharp deterioration in Sino-Indian relations in May and June 2020, following the border clashes, perhaps prompted the US to view Bangladesh, and in particular its relations with China, with a certain degree of concern. It was felt that there was a need to ensure that Bangladesh did not grow too close to China in the way that Nepal had done. Bangladesh's geo-strategic importance made it a key player in the evolving Cold War in South Asia. One obvious way of wooing Bangladesh was to intensify high-level interaction between the US and Bangladesh. The second was to try and get Bangladesh to become an active participant in the Indo-Pacific strategy. The third approach was to widen and deepen economic, trade and investment cooperation. The fourth was to try and expand the defence cooperation between the two countries. The fifth possible objective was to bolster support in the region for India against China. In addition to Biegun's visit to Bangladesh later in October 2020, Pompeo, following his visit to India, visited Sri Lanka and the Maldives in the same month. In previous years, such hyper-activity in the region on the part of the US may have been viewed with a certain degree of concern, but the sequence of the visits suggested that the US and India were working in close coordination, unlike, for example, in the case of the election in Bangladesh in January 2014.

Following the meeting with Biegun, Momen said, "[T]he good news is that Bangladesh is getting more attention due to [our] economic growth, stability and geo-political location. We'll have more solid relations achieving more goals." Biegun, on the other hand, said, "[W]e're committed to growing our partnership in this regard to advance a free and open Indo-Pacific. Bangladesh will be a centerpiece of our work in the region." In September 2020, when Momen was asked to comment on the Indo-Pacific strategy, he said, "[W]e're sure we'll be effectively engaged in any future Indo-Pacific alliance if it's found to be purely economic in nature." The essence of the message conveyed to the US by the Bangladesh side was that the

latter wanted good relations with both the US and India but, at the same time, wanted to maintain its ongoing cooperation in diverse fields with China. Bangladesh did not want to get involved in the growing confrontation between the US and China and would support the economic and business aspects of the Indo-Pacific strategy, as distinct from the defence-related aspects of the Indo-Pacific strategy. In fact, in a speech at a conference in Dalian in 2019, Hasina elucidated her thoughts through a five-point proposal where she stated, “Any initiative in the Indo-Pacific should include creation of an environment of peace-harmony-stability of all countries; focusing on entire aspects of sustainable development; engaging countries based on mutual trust and mutual respect for mutual benefit; focusing on wealth creation for all, development must be inclusive; and creating fair competition not rivalries.

Relations between the US and Bangladesh during the four years of the Trump administration can best be described as friendly and cordial. The focus on the Bangladesh side was to seek American support for the Rohingya issue as well as on trade and investment issues. The focus on the US side was on the Indo-Pacific strategy, security and defence cooperation, and at the tail end of the administration, it zeroed in on US’ efforts to wean Bangladesh away from China. For instance, in early November 2020, the US and Bangladesh navies undertook a joint naval exercise in the Bay of Bengal. The US navy stated that such an exercise was a “continuing commitment to work with the Bangladesh military to address shared maritime security concerns in the region and strengthen partnerships to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific region.” While such exercises may bear more significance now due to the US placing a high priority on the Indo-Pacific strategy, the fact remains that such exercises have been a regular part of US-Bangladesh military cooperation for many years. For the most part, this was a relationship of low priority for the US and was conducted at the level of senior officials. During the Obama years, the issue of free and air elections, human rights, freedom of the press, labour rights and

various other governance-related issues could be described as irritants in the bilateral relationship. These issues, although not entirely forgotten during the four years of the Trump administration, did not receive the degree of attention that they had received during the eight years of the Obama administration. It was only in October 2020 that the issue of violation of human rights by the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) surfaced in the shape of a draft bipartisan resolution in the US Senate.

## **US-Bangladesh Relations: Opportunities and Challenges**

There has been a great deal of speculation in the Bangladesh media as well as talk shows on television and in Zoom meetings about US-Bangladesh relations in the wake of the recent presidential election and Joe Biden as the 46th US president. What are Bangladesh’s expectations during the next four years? First and foremost, Bangladesh would like to further strengthen and widen its cooperation with the US and continue the high-level interaction of the past two months. It would like to see the Biden administration continue the strong support extended by the current administration on the Rohingya issue. It would like to continue the ongoing strategic dialogues as well as the training programmes for the armed forces. However, for the present, it appears unlikely that the Bangladesh government will sign any defence-related agreements such as the General Security of Military Information Agreement and the Acquisition Cross-Servicing Agreement, which the US would like to conclude with it. On the geopolitical front, Bangladesh will seek to continue its present policy of “Friendship with all, malice to none”. In other words, it will seek to maintain close relations with India, Japan and the US on the one hand and with China on the other. It will support the Belt and Road Initiative as well as the Indo-Pacific strategy. Much, of course, will depend on the shape and direction of Sino-US relations, Indo-US relations and also Sino-Indian relations once Biden is sworn in. In the event that both relations between China and India and between the US and China remain strained, there is every likelihood that the pressure on Bangladesh to side with the US and India, as well as their partners in the Quad – Japan and Australia – will increase.

For Bangladesh, a big challenge will be the growth and expansion of its exports to the US. Apparel exports to the US in

2019 were US\$5.93 billion (S\$7.96 billion). This constituted a growth of 9.83 per cent compared to 2018 when apparel exports to the US were US\$5.40 billion (S\$7.25 billion). The exports in the first 10 months of 2020 were US\$4.14 billion (S\$5.56 billion). In 2019, the exports in the first 10 months were US\$4.96 billion (S\$6.66 billion). This constituted a decline of 16.54 per cent. Given the economic recession in the US, the prospects for 2021 are not very encouraging. Bangladesh will have to become much more competitive in the US market. It will have to intensify its lobbying efforts to get the GSP restored and, at the same time, continue its efforts to get zero tariff access to the US market or, at the very least, some reduction in the present tariff rates. Bangladesh will also have to give special attention to diversifying its exports to the US. There are strong indications that over the next four years, the US can become an important market for Bangladesh's pharmaceutical products. Some experts in Bangladesh believe that negotiating a free trade agreement with the US should be given the highest priority and this is the only way that Bangladesh can expand its exports to the US.

The US has been a major investor in Bangladesh, particularly in the oil, gas and energy sector. Bangladesh can be expected to make every effort to attract FDI from the US in the next few years. It is keen to attract some of the US companies that are either planning to or are in the process of relocating out of China. In the discussions between Rahman and Krach, the subject of US investment in Bangladesh was discussed in detail. Attracting FDI from the US will be given very high priority by Bangladesh.

Bangladesh would both welcome and encourage Biden and his administration to restore confidence in the global multilateral system which had been systematically undermined by the Trump administration. It would like the US to extend its support to the UN and UN peacekeeping operations. It would like the US to take the lead on climate change and in protecting the environment, as well as on promoting food, water and health security, all of which were priority issues under Obama's two terms in office. Bangladesh would welcome the US assuming a leadership role in a multilateral initiative to make the COVID-19 vaccine available free of cost or at a highly subsidised rate to all developing countries.

Some of the potential areas of tension between the Biden administration and the Hasina government could be on issues such as human rights, freedom of the press, free and fair elections, human trafficking, treatment of minorities, labour rights and some of the actions of the police and RAB. It is too early to say the degree of importance these issues will be given by the Biden administration and whether it would prefer to focus on areas of convergence or on areas of divergence.

In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and the four years of the Trump administration, it can be expected that most countries in the world, big and small, developed and developing, will try and reach out to the new administration in Washington. Biden and his team will perforce have to invest a large amount of their time and energy in dealing with domestic issues, in particular, the pandemic, the economy and trying to heal the wounds of a divided nation. As such, much will depend on Bangladesh's ability to establish a good working relationship with Biden and the new administration, as well as with the US Congress. It will soon be 21 years since a US president visited Bangladesh and 24 years since Hasina met with the Clintons in the White House. There can perhaps be no better way for the bilateral relationship to be elevated to a higher level than through a summit-level meeting in either Washington or Dhaka. However, for a summit meeting to take place, Bangladesh will have to press many buttons, leverage its growing diaspora, enlist the support of the private sector and civil society at home and do its best to enhance the image of the country abroad. Bangladesh has earned a lot of kudos for its economic performance and its social indicators. It needs to leverage these through a highly proactive diplomacy, both at home and abroad, based on a demonstrable commitment to the rule of law and good governance.

*Source: Institute of South Asian Studies.*





### **The genesis of the USA-Bangladesh Relation, Dr. Nuran Nabi.**

The relation between the USA and Bangladesh commenced with mixed feelings toward each other. US President Richard Nixon and his defense adviser Henry Kissinger opposed Bangladesh's independence since the beginning of the Liberation War in 1971. They shamelessly supported the war crimes of Pakistanis such as genocide, rape, arson, creating refugee problem in Bangladesh. No attempt was made by them to stop the war crimes though it was within their power. They blindly supported Pakistan. But the American people, the Senate, the Congress, the intellectuals, the newspapers, and the electronic media have condemned the war crimes perpetrated by Pakistan and demanded an end to the war. Even President Nixon's State Department has called on their government to exert influence on Pakistan to stop Pakistani war crimes in Bangladesh.

One such diplomat from the US State Department was Mr. Archer Blood. He was the US Consul General in Dhaka. On the night of March 25, 1971, the Pakistani army launched a vicious attack on the unarmed Bengalis and launched genocide. That night they killed about ten thousand unarmed and innocent people. Consul General Archer Blood was shocked to learn of the news of the massacre. He sent the details of the genocide that took place in Dhaka city overnight to the US State Department.

Mr. Blood said in a confidential telegram entitled "Selective Genocide" "We are speechless and scared to see the Pakistani army's reign of terror in Dhaka." "In addition, non-Bengali Muslims with the help of Pakistani troops are continuously attacking poor slum areas and killing Bengali Hindus and Muslims," he added. (U.S. Consulate, Dacca Cable, Selective Genocide, March 27, 1971). President Nixon and his adviser Kissinger remain silent on the genocide committed by Pakistanis in Bangladesh, ignoring the telegram from Consul General Archer Blood. Observing the Pakistani army's continued Bengali genocide, Consul General Blood and his colleagues in Dhaka sent another telegram to the US State Department on April 6. The second cable is known as the 'Blood Telegraph'. This telegram was harsh criticism against the policy of their own government. This unprecedented and exceptional telegram was signed by 29 employees of the State Department. The telegram from the US Consul General Archer Blood, and his colleagues was a rare event in history where State Department staffers publicly criticized their own government's policies. (The Cruel Birth of Bangladesh-Memoirs of an American Diplomat, Archer Blood, p. 215).

Meanwhile, the telegram took the White House and the State Department by storm in Washington D.C. President Nixon and his adviser Kissinger were so outraged that they considered transferring Consul General Blood from Dhaka overnight to Washington DC. However, Consul General Blood was expected to stay in Dhaka for another year and a half. The blind support of President Nixon and his defense adviser Henry Kissinger to General Yahya Khan, the Pakistani military government, was against American interests. Bengalis are being killed especially with American weapons. The Nixon administration is secretly supplying American weapons to the Pakistani military, despite Senate-Congress sanctions. That is illegal and unjust. America was indirectly a partner in Pakistani war crimes in Bangladesh. Nixon-Kissinger's one-eyed policy was against the national interest of America. So, Consul General Archer Blood wanted to protect America's interests at the risk of his job. However, Mr. Blood fell into Kissinger's wrath and was forced into professional exile. But he is a true friend of Bangladesh. A true friend of humanity.

Why were Nixon and Kissinger so angry at Consul General Archer Blood's 'bloody telegram'? The personal ambition of these two leaders was to establish a diplomatic relationship with China through the secret mediation of Pakistan's military ruler, General Yahya Khan, to become famous in history. That telegram from Consul General Archer Blood became an obstacle to the realization of the ambitions of these two leaders. These two leaders in power were more concerned with their desired ambitions. They had no sense of responsibility for the war crimes of the Pakistanis in Bangladesh. They turned their eyes away from this issue. They became supporters of the misdeeds of the Pakistanis for personal gain. When President Nixon and Kissinger had no sympathy for the plight of the refugees, but rather ruthless indifference and disregard, a young politician stepped forward. He was 39-year-old Senator Edward M. Kennedy. He is the younger brother of former U.S. President John F. Kennedy and a Senator from the state of Massachusetts.

Senator Kennedy visited various refugee camps in India on August 21, 1971, to witness first-hand the plight of the refugees. Senator Kennedy was shocked to see the senseless plight of one million refugees. Based on his personal experience, he submitted a report to the Senate titled 'East Bengal in the grip of the reign of terror'.

Senator Kennedy's report was so emotional that it shook the world's conscience. There was no other way but to take note of his report. He clearly opined that the refugees in Bangladesh desperately need help.

Senator Kennedy concluded by saying, "The strong support of the United States for Islamabad (West Pakistan) is no less than the support for the humanitarian and political tragedy in East Bengal." (Crisis in South Asia, Report to the Subcommittee Investigating the Problem of Refugees and Their Settlement, Submitted to U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, Kennedy, November, 1971, U.S. Govt. Press pp. 6-7). Many newspapers also continued to sharply criticize Nixon-Kissinger's pro-Pakistan moves. On October 22, 1971, an editorial in The Washington Post stated that "America's position is shameful." A few days ago, the State Department gently called on both sides to exercise restraint. This appeal was strange for two reasons. On the one hand, Pakistan alone is fully responsible for the attack on peace and on the other hand, the United States is providing arms, political support, and relief to Pakistan.

Nixon and Kissinger discuss the underlying reasons for their opposition to Bangladesh and their blind support for Pakistan in Kissinger's memoir, The White House Years. Nixon and Kissinger blindly supported General Yahya Khan, the President and military ruler of Pakistan, against Bangladesh, first for personal gain and later for personal ambition. They supported Pakistan in the middle of the war because of the Soviet Union's influence in the international arena against the United States. Though the relation during 1971 war was turbulent, the United States formally recognized the newly independent Bangladesh on April 4, 1972, and pledged significant financial aid. Since then, the relation between Bangladesh and the USA have dramatically improved, especially, under the leadership of current Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. The United States has been one of Bangladesh's principal development partners since independence, providing billions of dollars through USAID since 1972. It has helped to set up important infrastructure in the country. The two countries have extensive cooperation on matters of regional and global security, counter terrorism and climate change.

Bangladesh has been a key participant in the Obama administration's main international development initiatives, including food security, healthcare and the environment. A strategic dialogue agreement was signed between the two countries in 2012. The current relations under Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina are vibrant, multi-faceted, and indispensable. US policy towards Bangladesh emphasizes political stability, human rights and democracy. The USA also views Bangladesh as a moderate Muslim ally among Islamic countries. Although relations are traditionally regarded as excellent, the United States has often been strongly critical of the political administration in Bangladesh for lack of respect of the rule of law, suppressing freedom of the press and human rights abuses by security forces, notably the Rapid Action Battalion. Following a general election boycotted by the main opposition party in 2014, the U.S. gave a cold shoulder to the Bangladeshi government. According to American diplomats, US policy in Bangladesh features the "three Ds", meaning Democracy, Development and Denial of space for terrorism.

As of 2016, Bangladesh is the largest recipient of US assistance in Asia outside Afghanistan and Pakistan. The United States is the largest export market for Bangladesh. The USA is also one of the largest sources of foreign direct investment in Bangladesh. The main American exports to Bangladesh are agricultural products (soybeans, cotton, wheat, dairy), aircraft, machineries, engines, and iron and steel products. American imports from Bangladesh include apparel, footwear, and textile products; toys, games, and sporting goods; shrimp and prawns; and agricultural products. The United States is one of Bangladesh's principal strategic military allies. American defense cooperation is seen as a counterweight to the regional powers India, China, and Russia. Joint exercises are held on a regular basis, particularly in the Bay of Bengal. The USA Pacific Command maintains regular engagements with the Bangladesh Armed Forces. Bangladesh is the world's largest contributor to UN peacekeeping forces. The United States has been a vital supporter of Bangladeshi peacekeeping engagements.

There are thousands of Bangladeshi students in US universities in making Bangladesh 24th in the world among countries sending students to the USA, and 10th in the world for sending Graduate level students. The American Embassy in Bangladesh operates and supports several Education Consultancy Centers in Dhaka, Chittagong, Sylhet and Rajshahi. Besides American Center, US Embassy also support the Edward M. Kennedy Center for Public Service & Arts and operates Archer K. Blood Library in Dhaka. The USA delivers Coronavirus vaccines to Bangladesh as part of the COVAX program in 2021. The United States has assisted Bangladesh during cyclone relief operations in 1991 and 2007. Operation Sea Angel One in 1991 and Operation Sea Angel Two in 2007 saw Marines joining Bangladeshi troops in providing relief to thousands of people in southern Bangladesh who suffered as a result of the 1991 Bangladesh Cyclone and Cyclone Sidr. Now a days the international relations among countries are very complex in nature, and they are guided by self-interest, mutual interest as well as regional and global interest. So, it's obvious that there might be conflict of interest at some points. However, in this kind of situation, the conflict should be resolved through diplomatic channel rather than public rhetoric. Same should be the guiding principle to improve the USA-Bangladesh relation for mutual benefit of the two countries.

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## **Where Bangladesh Will Be in 2041**

**Professor Dr. Atiur Rahman**  
**Ex Governor of Bangladesh Bank**

Bangladesh is an incredible story. This story has been coloured by significant phrases like from 'ashes to prosperity', 'desolation to hope' and 'darkness to light.' This mind boggling development success story of Bangladesh is still unfolding. This story is yet to be told. Its goal is to become a land of prosperity as this part of the world used to be a few centuries back.

This goal was set by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the Father of the Nation, within the framework of achieving 'Sonar Bangla' (the Golden Bengal). This aspiration was the core of his dream that informed his life-long struggle for a separate homeland for the Bengalis. This well chalked-out roadmap was prepared by a farsighted and transformational leader who could 'dream more and become more' while standing on ashes left by the war of liberation.

We are, indeed, impressed to hear him saying that he was impatient to reach his newly liberated Bangladesh to transform it into a land of 'peace, progress and prosperity' back on January 10, 1972 when he was still in Delhi on his way back to Dhaka. This only indicates that intimately he was aware of the immense potential of his people who fought for the liberation of their country with the 'fighting spirit' that was imbued in them by him throughout his political struggle, particularly during March, 1971 leading to his formal declaration of independence of Bangladesh.

He was confident enough to unite the whole nation for reaching his destination of 'Sonar Bangla' defying all the challenges of post-war reconstruction and rebuilding of a war-torn country. He could see for himself how deep was the explosion of expectations among his people who went through the heroic war of liberation. He, therefore, designed his roadmap of Bangladesh's development contour accordingly.

So, his firm commitment for an inclusive and prosperous Bangladesh was aptly reflected in the 1972 Constitution of the Republic which was prepared under his prudent guidance.

Starting with an economy of 8 billion US dollars for a country of seventy-five million people in 1972, his inspiring leadership made a turnaround of the economy focusing on simultaneous development of both agriculture and industry.

He was rightly walking on two legs to reach his developmental destination. Admittedly, society without exploitation was at core of his development philosophy. This was sharply reflected in one of his early speeches in independent Bangladesh.

On December 15, 1973, he said, "This independence will be meaningful to me only when the woes of the farmers, Labourers, and the deprived of Bangladesh end." These words echoed the same spirit which he articulated at the Racecourse Maidan on 10, January, 1972 on the day of his return to independent Bangladesh.





## **Bangladesh's Success Story:**

**Abdul Kader Miah**

**Vice President,**

**U.S. Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (USBCCI)**

Bangladesh has improved its quality of life, economic strength and prosperity, education and research in every field. And that is why in the past Bangladesh was said to follow the developed countries to move forward, today the countries of Africa are being urged to look forward to that Bangladesh. No development in Bangladesh today is a surprise, but the result of systematic hard work. Today Bangladesh is reaping the harvest of thousands of days of suffering of millions of people.

When Bangladesh achieved GDP growth of more than 6 percent for the first time in 2010, it was a surprise. Surprisingly, Bangladesh achieved this even during the global economic downturn.

Due to the global epidemic corona, Bangladesh's growth has slowed down. But where the growth of all the developed countries of the world was negative in these years, the achievement of Bangladesh was also noticeable.

Describing Bangladesh's growth, the BBC said in its analysis that by 2035, we will reach the list of the 25 strongest economies in the world. Bangladesh's economic progress is being compared to that of Singapore and Malaysia in the last century. Shijin Chan, former vice president of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), described Bangladesh as one of the fastest growing economies in the Asia-Pacific region. And GDP growth will be 6.8 percent this year and 7.2 percent next year. On the other hand, the country's per capita GDP growth this year will be 5.5 percent and next year it will increase to 5.8 percent.

In 2015, Bangladesh was hailed around the world as one of the most successful countries in meeting the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Bangladesh did well in all the eight goals. Bangladesh has achieved 13 out of 33 sub-indicators to achieve these goals. One of the main goals of the MDGs is to achieve the goal of poverty alleviation.

The target was to reduce the poverty rate to 29 percent by 2015, while Bangladesh has reduced the poverty rate to 24.6 percent. In addition, education, gender inequality,

infant mortality, maternal health, disease control, and a sustainable environment these are just some of the key indicators to develop.

The matter has been made possible by following Bangladesh's own plan or model. Although it emphasized the return of the digital Bangladesh system, it did mention in each case the economic empowerment of marginalized people. A number of initiatives have been taken to reduce the dependence on city-centric industries, businesses and income systems, ranging from credit assistance, training activities, counseling assistance to the marginal level. At the same time, by spreading ICT education to the marginal level of the country, a skilled population is being formed through technical education.

Even in 2010, Bangladesh, which is in an economic position close to Pakistan, has left Pakistan far behind in terms of GDP per capita and has become a rival to India. At present, the average life expectancy of the people of Bangladesh is 74 years, which is higher than that of neighboring India and Pakistan. The average life expectancy in India and Pakistan is 70 and 68 years respectively.

Bangladesh is now a leader in the export of readymade garments in the world. Other cases are also moving forward. For example, the pharmaceutical industry of Bangladesh is said to be prosperous. There are 300 pharmaceutical companies in the country, which meet 97 percent of the local demand. They are even exporting drugs to the global market.

Export earnings from the pharmaceutical industry have increased eleven times in the last one decade. At present, 47 Bangladeshi pharmaceutical companies are exporting Bangladeshi medicines to about 147 countries of the world including Europe and America. Bangladesh has paid special attention to every aspect of its foreign exchange earnings as a result of which about 13.2 million Bangladeshi workers are currently working in 168 countries of the world.

Bangladesh ranks eighth among the top 10 countries receiving remittances from abroad. In all, from January 1 to December 10, 2020, the country received 20.50 billion dollars, which is about 12 percent more than the entire period of 2019. While the flow of remittances around the world has decreased due to the impact of Covid, the World Bank has expressed the view that the income from remittances of expatriates will increase in Bangladesh this year as well.

A number of initiatives have been taken in the joint efforts of the Ministry of Expatriate Welfare, the Ministry of External Affairs and High commission offices including providing comprehensive assistance to workers abroad and providing them with online passport renewal facilities. The expatriates are getting the benefits. At the same time, the Bangladesh government has created various opportunities for remittances and investment of expatriates through legal channels.

Through which crores of people of the country are benefiting. Not only that, Bangladesh has created new opportunities in the world labor market. Besides ordinary workers, Bangladesh is currently sending skilled workers abroad. At the same time, skilled experts in technology are also getting opportunities in the job market outside the country. About 7 lakh workers were being employed abroad every year, but in the year 2020, 2.2 lakh workers were employed due to Covid-19.

By 2030, Bangladesh wants to establish itself as a middle-income country, and the country's ready-made garment sector is a very effective industry in this regard. The labor-intensive garment sector developed slowly in the eighties. The garment industry is the largest export sector in Bangladesh. 83 percent of the total export income is coming from this sector (fiscal year 2019-20).

ICT is another important sector for receiving remittances in Bangladesh at present. There are more than 42 different projects under the ICT department. Through these projects, the Bangladesh government is helping young people to turn new ideas or technological ideas into business. Hi-tech parks and innovation centers have been set up to create technology hubs like Silicon Valley in the country.

Engineering and public universities are being prepared for research in this regard. Bangladesh is moving from a labor-dependent to a knowledge-based economy for the benefit of technological knowledge, and information technology is accelerating its growth. 100 million people in rural areas are being brought under broadband internet, which will create employment for 20 million people.

In addition, it is estimated that by 2021, the export of ICT products and services will be five billion dollars. The IT sector will emerge as the second largest sector after readymade garments. As a result, gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to grow by more than 1 percent.

The agrarian economy has always been criticized by the Western world as a fragile economy. But today Bangladesh has become self-sufficient in food due to its dependence on agriculture. Achieving self-sufficiency in food is one of the reasons why the global economic downturn and epidemic Corona have not been able to have a major impact on the country's economy. Food production has increased almost five times (4.75) as compared to 1971 and now stands at 42.2 million tons (FY 2018-19).

Bangladesh has imported very little rice in the last few years and exported much. Bangladesh has reduced the price of fertilizer by 4 points to reduce the production cost of the crop. In the last decade, the cost of fertilizers (TSP, MOP, DAP) has been fixed to some extent reduced.

In the 2017-18 financial year alone, it has produced 807.14 million metric tons of food grains. the agriculture budget is being increased day by day. Bangladesh ranks 4th in the world in rice production by inventing 108 high yielding varieties including paddy. It has provided agricultural inputs to 2 crore 8 lakh 13 thousand 46 farmers.

However, agricultural dependence on exports has declined, and the importance of the manufacturing industry and services has increased. After independence, the contribution of the industrial sector to GDP has increased from 9 percent, to about 35 percent in FY 2019-20, of which the contribution of the manufacturing sector is 24.2 percent.

Uninterrupted fuel supply is needed to keep this manufacturing sector of Bangladesh strong. Bangladesh is currently trying to ensure uninterrupted power supply by expanding the supply system through implementing various projects.

Bangladesh is in the top three in the list of countries leading in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Bangladesh is following all the models provided by the United Nations. At the same time, the country has its own goals. Implementation of Digital Bangladesh by 2021 is no longer a reality.

It is not surprising that the milestone of being a middle-income country by 2024 is not normal but it is normal and mega projects like Padma Bridge, Karnafuli Tunnel and Metro Rail starting from the Century Delta Plan show that the dream of Bangladesh to be recognized as a developed country by 2041 is to be realized. Not a very unrealistic thought. But it requires an uninterrupted development environment and strong leadership. And this is why the development management of Bangladesh has become a role model for underdeveloped countries in all development agencies including the United Nations and the World Bank.

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## 50 YEARS OF BANGLADESH THE PATH TO DEVELOPMENT IS RIDDLED WITH CHALLENGES.

**Dr. Selim Raihan**

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As we continue to celebrate 50 years of Bangladesh's independence, there is a need for an elaborate discussion about the development challenges we are about to face in the days to come. Bangladesh's development challenges are associated with its larger development goals. The country aims to become an upper-middle-income country by 2031 and a high-income one by 2041. Also, there are stiff development targets to be achieved by 2030 under the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

If we look back at the past 50 years, Bangladesh has achieved huge progress after coming out of a devastating war in 1971. The country made a significant improvement in per capita GDP from a small base in 1971. Its economic growth performance over the last three decades has been particularly impressive. Bangladesh graduated from the low-income category (as per the classification of World Bank) to the lower-middle-income category in 2015, and is set to graduate from the Least Developed Country (LDC) category by 2026. The remarkable success achieved in RMG production and exports has made the country the second-largest RMG exporter in the world.

There have also been notable improvements in some social indicators. Both maternal and child mortality rates have declined substantially, while life expectancy at birth has increased dramatically. The country achieved universal gross enrolment in primary education. Also, there has been some notable progress in gender parity and women's empowerment. However, given its weak performance in terms of formal institutional capabilities (both economic and political), Bangladesh's achievements so far have prompted many to argue whether Bangladesh was an outlier in the development experience. Some recent political economy analyses, however, indicate that while Bangladesh did act like an outlier in terms of progress in some social indicators, things were different in case of its economic performance.

From the past experiences of development in Bangladesh, we can highlight four areas/lessons that will have an important bearing on the future: (i) the supremacy of pockets of functional informal institutions over weak formal institutions; (ii) the supremacy of a "deals environment" over a coordinated industrial policy; (iii) the challenges of effective regulation; and (iv) the challenges of state capacity.

Against an overall distressing picture of the formal institutions, Bangladesh has been successful in creating some pockets of functional informal institutions. Examples of such pockets include the well-functioning privileges and special arrangements made for the RMG sector, promotion of labour exports, agricultural research and development related to food security, and microfinance. The fundamental question, however, remains whether Bangladesh will be able to achieve its larger development goals with the weaker formal institutions.

Informal institutions can have two distinct roles in various stages of development. If a country can steer informal institutions to make them growth-enhancing at an early stage of development, it can achieve strong economic growth and also some improvements in the social sector. However, for the transition from a lower stage of development to a higher stage, whether the country can maintain a high growth rate and achieve further development goals depends on the dynamics of how informal institutions evolve and whether formal institutions become stronger and functional. Not many developing countries have been able to make this transition.



Certainly, East Asian and most Southeast Asian countries are success stories in terms of using informal institutions efficiently at an early stage of development, as well as achieving some notable successes in the transition to functional formal institutions. Bangladesh's progress in developing formal institutions over the years has, unfortunately, remained weak, and this will certainly act as a binding constraint to its development process in the days to come.

Under the "deals environment" mentioned above, its industrial or—more broadly—development strategies, as well as significant investment or resource allocation choices, are frequently an outcome of agreements or "deals" made between the political and business elites. These arrangements are for specific activities or programmes that are decided on an ad hoc basis, rather than following a well-defined overall strategy. A recent political economy analysis suggests that this "deals environment", rather than any coordinated industrial policy, has been a major feature of Bangladesh's development process. Such an environment is discriminatory and does not allow diversification of the economy. Though the "deals" involving RMG exports resulted in positive outcomes, many other sectors remained excluded and have not benefitted from the "deals environment".

Bangladesh needs to pursue a coordinated industrial policy that is inextricably linked to the government's other policy instruments, such as the macroeconomic policy (e.g. the real exchange rate), public infrastructure, and SEZ management. Transparency and accountability regarding the implications of these policies for industrial development are also hugely important. There is a need to make a substantial improvement in the general business climate too.

The challenge that the government faces in regulating certain key activities to achieve more efficiency and equity in the economy is referred to as the "problem of effective regulation". In some cases, the legal framework for such regulation is an issue, which may be antiquated or otherwise inadequate for the goals pursued, and in which reform attempts have continually failed. In other cases, a framework may exist but there is simply not enough capacity to put it into action. The banking system's weaknesses, the difficulties to ensure ideal Labour conditions in a crucial sector like RMG, or the poor performance of taxation are some of the examples of the latter case. The result is a waste of resources, such as excessive non-performing loans in the banking sector or ad-hoc use of Statutory Regulatory Orders (SROs) in taxation and their misallocation, social damage and lost lives in Rana Plaza-like accidents, and rising inequality, with the culture of violating rules disproportionately benefitting the wealthy and harming the poor.

The economic costs of these violations of rules may be significant, despite how difficult it is to assess them. Effective regulatory reforms in critical economic domains like the financial and taxation sectors will be extremely important in the coming days.

The challenges of state capacity are manifested in a variety of ways in which Bangladesh has to make a substantial improvement to achieve its larger development goals. Some of these challenges are obvious, such as a lack of public resources (e.g. low level of domestic resource mobilization through taxation), resulting in limited provisions and low quality of public goods (e.g. very low level of public spending on health, education and social protection), a lack of public service capabilities, or lack of efficiency in the administrative structure. Other challenges are less obvious, such as corruption in most administrative clusters, which makes public service delivery inefficient and inequitable, cuts revenues, and discourages economic projects. The capacity of the state to implement its mega projects in a cost-effective and timely manner also remains a big challenge.

Now that Bangladesh has reached the mature age of fifty, one expects a serious undertaking based on lessons learnt from the past and guided by well-thought-out plans to get rid of these challenges.



## Select USA Investment Forum 2021 Opens Door to Broader Participation and International Trade

**Jeff Dirks, Commercial Officer, U.S. Embassy Dhaka**

Registration is now open for the preeminent investment forum, Select USA, scheduled for June 7 to 11. This year's Summit will be held virtually, allowing more Bangladesh business leaders than ever before the opportunity to Participate. As in prior years, Select USA 2021 will feature senior U.S. government officials, C-Suite business executives, and industry thought leaders, discussing global conditions and trends in trade agreements, shipping and logistics, and how international businesses are building resilience in supply chains, in addition to investment and business opportunities in the United States. Bangladesh business seeking to expand trade with the United States also can push plans forward with the help of more than 100 virtual sessions, a virtual exhibition hall with Economic Development Organizations from around the United States, and a robust networking and meeting platform to enable side meetings and networking in much the same way as in-person attendance. While virtual event enables larger participation, the U.S. Department of Commerce will continue to screen applications as it has in the past. This helps ensure those joining networking events and workshops are qualified business representatives. Cost of registration is \$750 if application is made before May 1 when the price rises to \$850. Visit [www.selectusa.gov](http://www.selectusa.gov) for complete information.

The Summit at its core will spotlight investment opportunities in the United States. But anyone doing international business can benefit through Investment Academy sessions and Plenary discussions examining trends in global trade. Senior U.S. government officials, executives of multinational corporations, and industry experts will shed light on pressing topics such as the future of work, the innovation economy, supply chain optimization, and implications of multilateral trade agreements. To accommodate participants from around the world, daily sessions are offered in the morning (7 a.m. to noon Eastern / 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. Dhaka) and the evening (7 p.m. to 11 p.m. Eastern / 5 a.m. to 9 a.m. Dhaka).

After registration, participants can select which keynotes, plenary sessions, and workshops best fit their interests. Sessions of note for Bangladesh entrepreneurs include:

- **Trade Agreements and Investment Regulations:** Global trade policies continue to evolve with changes in commerce, digital trade, and market priorities. Companies need to constantly evaluate business decisions as these changes manifest in labor policy, trade agreement negotiations, and regulations. This session will discuss how business investors can adapt to and benefit from the changing environment.
- **Shipping and Logistics:** Getting products from the factory floor to store shelves is one of the fundamental aspects of doing business. Companies face shipping and logistical challenges related to storage weight, distance, transportation mode, customs, tariffs, supply chains, assembly points, and more. The United States, like every country and region, has its own rules, regulations, and unwritten norms dictating how business is done. This session will cover the many factors that one must consider when planning out logistics and supply chains in the United States.
- **Supply Chain Optimization:** Supply chains are becoming ever more complicated due to changing technology, fluctuating supply costs, unpredictable economic factors, and the global pandemic. As companies form and expand, there is demand for strategy and understanding of supply chains. Panels and webinars will provide knowledge on how to improve the performance and competitive position of a company, and information from international companies having successfully adapted supply chains to the ever-changing economic landscape.

Interactive workshops facilitated by experts will provide deep dives into areas of interest to international companies:

- Learn about building brand presence in American markets through media with a session explaining the process for creating a media plan that powerfully tells a story.
- Raise capital and think like an investor through a workshop providing insights into what concerns venture capitalists often have when investing in foreign startups.
- Successfully selling and marketing to enterprise-level companies can be a long journey for many entrepreneurs. Joining forces with established players offers benefits when entering new markets. This session explains the challenges involved in selling to large enterprises and how to devise strategies to efficiently meet them.

Any Bangladeshi business leader seeking to enter international trade or expand sales and opportunities in the United States will benefit from participating in Select USA Investment Summit 2021. We look forward to seeing you there.

**Jeff Dirks is an Economic/Commercial Officer at the U.S. Embassy Dhaka, facilitating trade in goods and services between the United States and Bangladesh and representing the interests of U.S. businesses. He can be reached at [Dirksj@state.gov](mailto:Dirksj@state.gov).**

## **Bangladesh Turns 50**

### **Five decades after independence, it has much to be proud of.**

#### **Tunku Varadarajan**



Americans today are much better informed about Bangladesh than they were when Henry Kissinger described it (not without reason) as a “basket case” in 1971, the year it achieved independence. That label stuck to Bangladesh like a malign limpet, and proud Bangladeshis have for decades resented the shadow it cast over their resilient and entrepreneurial land.

Friday marks the 50th anniversary of the independence of Bangladesh—formerly East Pakistan. On March 26, 1971, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the wildly popular secessionist leader of the Bengalis, declared independence from the Punjabi-dominated Pakistan of which it was an incongruous part. (A country of two wings—West and East—Pakistan was separated by 1,300 miles of India.)

After the declaration of independence, a brutal civil war ensued. The number of Bengali civilians killed is a matter of dispute: the Central Intelligence Agency estimates 200,000, while Bangladeshis assert three million were murdered. Bangladesh was not, in fact, rid of Pakistan until Dec. 16, 1971, when the Pakistani army surrendered. Yet in choosing March 26 as their Independence Day, Bangladeshis made a very Bengali choice: elevating their state of mind over their objective reality.

Bangladesh today is a country transformed. Twice decolonized—first from Britain, next from Pakistan—it is a rare example of a constitutionally secular Muslim-majority nation. Most Bangladeshis adhere to a relatively tolerant form of Islam, born of centuries of cohabitation with Hindus, and it is one of the few Muslim countries that are winning the fight against radicalization. With the erosion of secularism in neighboring India, it's possible to argue that Bangladesh is the most secular country in South Asia.

The government of Sheikh Hasina, Rahman's daughter, is committed to stamping out Muslim fundamentalism. Yet its methods often come at the expense of democracy. Sheikh Hasina, in her third consecutive term as prime minister, is widely accused of rigging the last election, in 2018. Her actions were driven by hubris and paranoia: Neutral observers believe she would have coasted to victory without resorting to fraud.

If the West is squeamish about having to suppress its criticism of an authoritarian leader because her regime curbs Islamism, it should have no trouble appreciating the many areas in which Bangladesh has made progress. In human-development indexes,

Bangladesh has not only outstripped Pakistan but effectively reached parity with India. In just one example—key in a poor and overpopulated country—the fertility rate in Bangladesh (2.04 births per woman) has fallen below India's (2.22). Even on its own terms, Bangladesh has made remarkable strides: its infant-mortality rate is 25.6 deaths per 1,000 live births, as compared with 148.2 at independence; life expectancy, 72.3 years today, was 46.6 in 1971.

Bangladesh is the world's second-largest exporter of ready-made garments, and its economy is more robust—and open to business with the outside world—than India's. The International Monetary Fund estimates that Bangladesh will surpass India in output per capita in 2021. (India had a lead of 25% five years ago.) Not quite an Asian tiger, Bangladesh is a tiger cub, and it has sought to pull its weight globally in the ways open to it. In 2020 it was the largest contributor of peacekeeping troops to the United Nations, even as it shelters three quarters of a million Rohingya refugees from Myanmar.

As Bangladesh turns 50, its people are happier, healthier, wealthier, better-educated and more optimistic than at any time in its short history. Even Mr. Kissinger would say so.

Mr. Varadarajan, a Journal contributor, is a fellow at the American Enterprise Institute and at New York University Law School's Classical Liberal Institute.





## **Understanding FATCA of USA and its impact**

**Mohammad Shahjahan Siddiqui , Legal Economist and columnist**

Once money transferred to other countries, the revenues departments in all the countries of the world faces difficulties to assess whether the income of citizen correctly reported. The United States and many other nations have utilized numerous approaches to combat siphoned of money and tax evasion, in particular, offshore tax evasion. Another goal was to require US taxpayers to report global income in order to reduce illegal and intentional tax avoidance. The Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act, 2010 (FATCA) of USA enacted to prevent offshore tax abuses by US persons, includes a new withholding regime that is designed to achieve intent by imposing a 30 percent withholding tax on certain foreign entities that refuse to disclose the identities of these US persons and enhanced Know Your Client (KYC) requirements. The law came into effect on 1 January 2013.

Interestingly, USA has different treatment of transfer of money into USA from any other countries. US operates as the largest tax haven in the world for individual wealth and that US tax policy for individuals is directed to encourage capital inflow and discourage capital outflow. The US Qualified Intermediary (QI) regime was introduced by the Internal Revenue Services (IRS) serve as agent to locate overseas investors to invest in USA. QI promote and encourage transfer of money USA from other countries. The government even don't want to know the name of investors and not oblige to disclose the name of those investors to any other government or any agency. The QI policy is in contrast to FATCA.

The implications of FATCA, and in particular its withholding and reporting regimes, are wide-ranging for financial institutions, investment entities, and many other global organisations of USA or any other origin. Under FATCA, "Foreign financial institutions" (FFIs) include: Banks, Private equity funds, Hedge funds, Institutional investment funds, Retirement funds & trusts, Insurance companies, Securities brokers and dealers, irrespective of where it is headquartered in anywhere in the world. Therefore, any such non-U.S. organisation that holds or manages customers' money is considered an FFI subject to FATCA. FATCA applies to a Financial Account which is a United States Account or account hold by an American, whatever the source (U.S. or foreign) of the income earned in that Financial Account.

US Government pursuant to a written agreement in providing to the US government specific information annually about US persons. These institutions will have to significantly revamp their KYC & Anti Money Laundering (AML) procedures in order to comply with the FATCA compliance. They will also need to adjust their underlying IT infrastructure in accordance with those changes, which is a potentially difficult, time consuming and expensive process.

FATCA would impose a US withholding tax of 30 percent on US source "withhold able Payments" on foreign financial institutions for not complying of FATCA. The term "withholding Payment" is defined as (A) "any payment of interest (including any original issue discount), dividends, rents, salaries, wages, premiums, annuities, compensations, remunerations, emoluments, and other fixed or determinable annual or periodical gains, profits and income, if such payment is from sources within the United States and (B) any gross proceeds from the sale of any property of a type which can produce interest or dividends from sources within the United States (as determined in the U.S. Internal Revenue Code), except income effectively connected with the conduct of a trade or business in the United States.

This 30 percent withholding tax does not apply, if the Foreign Financial Institution or Non-Financial Foreign Entity, as the case may be, agrees with the US Treasury to determine whether each account at the institution (or the institution's affiliates) is a "United States Account" and to report annually to the United Sates information about that account: (1) the name, address and U.S. taxpayer identification number (TIN) of the account holder who is a US citizen.

The FATCA requirements apply in certain cases to the "Expanded Affiliated Group" of the FFI. FATCA defines the term "Expanded Affiliated Group". That is, a Foreign Financial Institution could not avoid FATCA by not investing any of its own funds or its clients' funds in U.S. source income, but by having a separate subsidiary or affiliate, which is part of the Expanded Affiliated Group with Financial Accounts of U.S. Persons.

However, if (a) a Foreign Financial Institution which is not part of an Expanded. Affiliated Group does not have any withhold able Payments, or (b) a Non-Financial Foreign Entity does not have any withhold able Payments, then FATCA would not apply. Therefore, the Foreign Financial Entity or the Non-Financial Foreign Entity, as the case may be, would not be required to report to the U.S. Government any information about Financial Accounts of U.S. Persons. This might result in foreign Financial Institutions or Non-Financial Foreign Entities having U.S. Accounts but not investing its funds or its clients' funds in the United States in order to avoid the 30% US withholding tax.

In order to achieve the target, FATCA intended to FFI to disclose their U.S. account holders or pay a steep penalty for nondisclosure. Unlike a conventional withholding tax which actually intends to collect tax, FATCA is an interim measure intended as a highly coercive penalty regime to force foreign financial institutions to disclose private financial information to the US Internal Revenue Service (IRS) unilaterally and submit to governmental control.

This law is to force US capital held offshore to return to the United States financial system. Its main purpose ostensibly to act as an additional tax revenue source to offset additional spending. FATCA was passed on the unsubstantiated basis that “each year, the United States loses an estimated \$100 billion in tax revenue due to offshore tax abuses (Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, Tax Havens Banks and U.S. Tax Compliance). A Joint Committee on Tax, Estimated Revenue Effects Contained in Senate revealed that the total amount of the offset revenue was projected to be for the ten year period from 2010 to 2020 equal to \$8.714 billion.

Person and in the case of a Financial Account owned by a foreign entity which is a United States Owned Foreign Entity, the same information about each Substantial United States Owner; (2) the account number; (3) account balance or value; (4) receipts (U.S. source and foreign source) in the Financial Account; and (5) withdrawals/payments from the Financial Account.

FATCA often confronts the issue of secrecy/ confidentiality laws in the other jurisdiction where the FFI maintains the Financial Account. Bangladesh and many other countries imposed restriction on disclosing information of account holders. In any case of any foreign law would prevent the reporting to the U.S. Government of any required information of United States Account maintained by such FFI must attempt to obtain a valid and effective waiver of such law from each holder of such account, and if such a waiver is not obtained from each such account holder, the Foreign Financial Institution must close such account.

FFIs aware of the potential affect and identify the potential changes that may need to be made to processes and controls (i.e., customer on boarding, know-your-customer, etc), technology and systems and determine the data that will be needed to comply with the due diligence and reporting requirements. However, the Foreign Financial Institutions may rely on a No objection certification from an account holder as to whether the account is a United States account. If neither the financial institution nor any entity which is a member of the same expanded affiliated group as such financial institutions knows, or has reason to know, that any information provided in such certification is incorrect. That certification procedure could result in compliance problems.

Additionally, apart from agreement with FFI, US government enter into Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) for compliance with the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) tax provisions. Bangladesh not yet sign any such IGA. But Bangladesh Bank instructed Banks for registering and signing ‘Participation Agreements’ with the IRS. The National Board of Revenue (NBR) also consented on registering with the IRS if a bank has U.S. taxpayer accounts in its books. The banker’s general duty of confidentiality under prevalent Bangladeshi laws including the Bankers’ Books Evidence Act 1891, banks are to obtain written consents from their customers before reporting the requested information to IRS.

USA with its financial authority and active involvement in the global financial market are a position to enforce the FATCA on Banks of other countries. Bangladesh and many other countries are not in such position to enforce own law in other countries. Bangladesh may sign mutual information exchange agreement with other countries to combat evasion of tax and illicit transfer of money.



## **Islam and Bangabandhu**

### **Professor Dr. Mohammad Bahauddin**

Father of the nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (1920-1975) is the dreamer and founder of Bangladesh nation-state. This undisputed great leader of the Bengali nation not only made the country independent; rather, he has dedicated his life to establish Bangladesh on the world-map as a self-respecting, developed and prosperous country. His contribution in composing Bengali heroic stories and building new history is undeniable. He was trying to build this country with a wonderful combination of education-philosophy, cultural heritage, science and technology and boundless patriotism. That is why he is recognized as the greatest Bengali of all time and the father of the nation.

Bangabandhu was a pious man in his personal life. He adhered to the precepts of Islam and made a great contribution to the propagation and spread of Islam. The welfare provisions of Islam have a special effect on the daily life of Bangabandhu. This is what he inherited from his lineage. If we look at his father, we find him in the form of a pious man with a long beard. If we look at the higher side of this lineage, we find the saint Sheikh Awal (R.), who was a preacher of Islam and who came to Bengal from distant Iraq. Bangabandhu was a subordinate descendant of Sheikh Awal (R.). Besides, the word sheikh also represents Islam; because those who came to this area only for the purpose of propagating Islam are called Sheikhs. So we see that Islam is closely associated with Bangabandhu in terms of names, titles and lineage.

If we review Bangabandhu's life and works, if we read his the unfinished memoirs, we will see that Islamic consciousness existed in him from his childhood and he has held it throughout his life. He said, we Bengalis have two aspects. One is that we are Muslims and the other is that we are Bengalis. Being exposed to the combined nature of Muslimism and Bengaliness is the essence of the religious consciousness of Bangabandhu's life. You see, Bangabandhu was imprisoned many times in his life, but he was imprisoned for the first time in his life for religious and communal reasons. In his student life, Bangabandhu preferred devout students, paid special attention to those who were performing namaz and sincerely cooperated with pious students in various activities. The letter to his beloved wife contained religious beliefs such as unwavering faith in Allah, dedicating one's life to Islam; Allah does what He does for good and accepting everything as part of one's destiny. In addition, we see some things in his life and works that we can understand his love and interest in the holy Islam. He loved religious scholars, expressed interest in performing Hajj, used 'Insha'Allah' in his daily speeches and discourses, listened to the recitation from the Qur'an and arranged for it to be broadcast on radio and TV, removed obstacles to writing and publishing on religious matters, devoted himself to the service of humanity, protested against oppression and stood up against all injustices.

These are all great teachings of Islam; which we see reflected in the life of Bangabandhu.



As a child, I used to hear from time to time that if the Awami League came to power, the country would become India, the Azan of prayer would be stopped in the mosques and uludhwani would be heard. Some people used to say, the man prays and doing Awami League, some people used to say that the man of Muslims but doing Awami League again! But the reality of the country that Bangabandhu has made independent is completely different. The Awami League has been ruling the country for several terms, but the country has not become India, the azan in mosques has not stopped but the number of religious institutions including mosques and madrasas has increased in the country. It was Bangabandhu who laid the foundation of this reality in the devout Muslim inhabited Bangladesh. During his three-and-a-half years of rule, Bangabandhu has made a significant contribution to the propagation of Islam at the institutional level. He took and implemented a number of institutional initiatives to establish Islamic values in Bangladesh. In a speech at Dhaka Alia Madrasa Bangabandhu said that many anti-Islamic activities had taken place in our country during the Pakistan period. I am Muslim, I love Islam; please help me, anti-Islamic activities will never happen in this country. Bangabandhu has not only spoken about Islam, he has also taken effective steps in this regard. Bangabandhu established the Islamic Foundation for the propagation, research and publication of Islam at the institutional level; such a large state-sponsored and government-funded Islamic organization is rare in the world.

The Islamic Foundation established by Bangabandhu is recognized as one of the most significant institutions in the country for the teaching, research and propagation of Islam. Bangabandhu reconstituted and reformed the Madrasah Education Board with the aim of modernizing Islamic education in the country. In this way, the government-controlled madrasah education system gets a touch of modernity and gets the same status as the general education systems of the country. Bangabandhu had close relations and contacts with the madrasas of the Qaumi sect of the country. Bangabandhu had the closest relationship with the Khanka's of the noble Pir-Mashayekhs. He allotted space in Kakrail for the construction of the main mosque of Tabligh Jamaat and set aside a large area in Tongi for the World Ijtema of Tabligh; every year millions of people from different parts of the world come together for religious gatherings and discussions, teachings and practices on various aspects of Islam.

Bangabandhu attended the OIC conference and delivered a historic speech in defense of the larger interests of the Muslim Ummah, which also brightened the image of Bangladesh as a Muslim country. He banned alcohol and gambling in the country, revoked the licenses of Bingo game and banned horse racing. In honor of the holy Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), he organized Sirat Mahfil at the national level and arranged for the celebration of holy Eid-e-Miladunnabi (PBUH). He gave necessary instructions so that religious meetings and waz mahfils could be held in all parts of the country without any hindrance. He sent representatives of the Tabligh Jamaat to Russia and urged each of them to play the role of diplomat for the country and Islam. Bangabandhu's reign was short, but he did much for the welfare of Islam; especially the institutional initiatives he took and implemented in the interest and service of Islam will make him forever remembered.

The current controversy over the sculpture of Bangabandhu in the country is completely unwelcome. Sculpture is related to art, history, memoir or civilization and Statues are for worship or devoutness. The government of the country is not making Statues for worship. You know, Mujib year is going on, so the installation of the sculpture of Bangabandhu is a relevant issue for the government. We want to say without hesitation, respecting the great architect of the independence and the father of the nation is one of the civic responsibilities for every Citizen. So we say in the light of reality, there is no need to heat the field with everything! There is a lot more going on in the country outside of Islamic principles! We have to remember, the country is not an Islamic republic; this is the People's Republic of Bangladesh! Islam is instructed to adopt a strategy without being aggressive in some matters! There is an instruction in Islam to call people to the great Allah through wisdom and good advice! In contrast, creating social unrest and disaster is a bigger crime than murder! And this is the guidance of the Holy Quran. So we can say, it is not desirable for Islam to be damaged due to someone's ignorance and bigotry!

#### **Professor Mohammad Bahauddin, Ph.D**

Chairman, Department of Persian Language & Literature.

Author, Theologian, Educationist and Spiritual Researcher University of Dhaka, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh.



**Prof. Hana Siddiquee**

## **The Impact of Innovative Education on Economic growth and Poverty Reduction**

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Agile in Education USA (AiEUSA) is delighted to have become a member of US Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (USBCCI). We are looking forward to collaborating with USBCCI to fulfill various educational and social needs of our global community.

As per the priority of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the global society has committed to end poverty in all its forms everywhere in the world. Although, the decline of global poverty continues, progress has been decelerated, and the gaps between poverty and inequality amongst rich and poor, remains significantly alarming in different parts of the world. In order to eradicate poverty in Bangladesh, conclusively-once and for all, vigilant actions out of poverty must be taken.

“Growth theory has often been perceived by development economists as being orthogonal to their main concern, namely, that of understanding the sources of persistent poverty and stagnation in households and villages, and of designing policies aimed at overcoming them.”

Bangladesh is a country of tremendous potentials. “It has shown in the past that it can grow rapidly, and that it has deep reserves of capable” talented people. “Greater stability and openness has contributed to more rapid development in a variety of economies, including those of Pakistan’s giant neighbors. And yet far too many countries have implemented macro reforms but failed to see the expected acceleration in investment, growth, and poverty reduction.”

Education is the foundation for developments and growth in any nation: Bangladesh will achieve sustained and faster economic growth only if it succeeds in improving the quality of its labor force and skill development. Quality Education will avail the opportunity and inclusiveness of that growth.

The challenge of improving educational outcomes is greatest for the education levels of the poor, those in rural areas, and especially girls. Reducing the gender education gap yields greater impacts, in which Bangladesh have achieved tremendous success: According to the latest report released by World Economic Forum (WEF), Bangladesh has secured the top position among South Asian countries in ensuring gender equality for the seventh consecutive year since 2014. However, the country has slipped 15 notches to 65th position among 156 countries on the WEF Global Gender Gap Report 2021. In fact, the country's overall gender gap has widened by 0.7 per cent, said the report published on March 31. Still, Bangladesh is the only South Asian nation in the top 100 countries which closed 71.9 percent of its overall gender gap so far.

Lastly, there are well-defined innovative reforms in educational institutions and policy—that have been proved methods whether in Bangladesh or in other countries, that could spur innovation, improve the quality of education, and strengthen personal development, hence, spur the economic force.

## U.S. - BANGLADESH PARTNERSHIP IS BROAD AND ONGOING. DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE BIEGUN MET WITH PRIME MINISTER SHEIKH HASINA

The long-standing U.S. - Bangladesh partnership is broad and ongoing. Deputy Secretary of State Biegun met with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to discuss our bilateral relationship built on shared democratic principles and a vision for a free and secure region. USA - Bangladesh's long-standing partnership is wide and ongoing. Deputy Secretary of State Biegun met Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to discuss our bilateral relations established on democratic foundation and our vision or vision to establish a free and safe zone. The long-standing U.S. - Bangladesh partnership is broad and ongoing. Deputy Secretary of State Biegun met with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to discuss our bilateral relationship built on shared democratic principles and a vision for a free and secure region.



Deputy Secretary of State Biegun met with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina



Deputy Secretary of State Biegun met with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.



### Deputy Secretary of State Stephen Biegun, Foreign Minister Abul Kalam Abdul Momen, Press Meet at Padma:

It is my first visit to Bangladesh, but I have to say that this is a country that for me, like for many Americans, has been one of great interest and even great fascination for most of our lives. I am pleased to be here to celebrate yet the latest chapter of cooperation between the United States and Bangladesh, a relationship that dates back many decades and has bound the Bangladeshi people and the American people most closely together over these many years. The Foreign Minister and I, as he said, had a very productive meeting today over the course of almost two hours of discussion. I also had a lengthy meeting yesterday evening with members of the Foreign Minister's team where we discussed in even greater depth the number of these issues of current and future cooperation. The United States sees Bangladesh as a key partner in the Indo-Pacific region and we're committed to growing our partnership in this regard to advance a free and open Indo-Pacific. Bangladesh will be a centerpiece of our work in the region. The United States looks forward to Bangladesh participating in the upcoming Indo-Pacific Business Forum, an opportunity for us to continue our discussions on economic cooperation on a bilateral and multilateral basis. We know that Bangladesh places a strong emphasis on the importance of private sector led growth. We have each appointed a representative to lead our governments' engagement. The Honorable Prime Minister's representative, Mr. Rahman, and in the United States of America our Under Secretary for Economics Keith Krach. Together they have started a process of developing a work plan that as we execute it will only deepen our economic relationship between the United States and Bangladesh.



**AMBASSADOR MILLER JOINED MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AK ABDUL MOMEN AND THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN DHAKA TO RECOGNIZE THE COURAGE AND DEDICATION OF JOURNALISTS BRINGING US THE NEWS DURING THE COVID19 PANDEMIC. THEY REMIND US A FREE PRESS IS VITAL TO A HEALTHY DEMOCRACY.**



Ambassador Miller joined the Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) webinar today with Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen, Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen, Bangladeshi Ambassador to the United States Shahidul Islam, Former Ambassador Farooq Sobhan, and the Prime Minister's Private Industry and Investment Advisor Salman Rahman to discuss U.S.-Bangladesh cooperation on addressing climate change, advancing economic prosperity and human rights, and reinvigorating democratic institutions.



P&G Bangladesh on opening its first contract manufacturing facility in Bangladesh by teaming up with PRAN-RFL Group. With nearly \$3.6 billion in total foreign direct investment in Bangladesh as of 2019, U.S. businesses are helping drive the Bangladesh economy forward. Ambassador Miller commemorated the occasion with Private Industry and Investment Adviser to the Honorable Prime Minister Salman F Rahman, MP and Bangladesh Investment Development Authority - BIDA Chairman Sirazul Islam.



PRAN has set up a new facility to manufacture razors for P&G at the Habiganj Industrial Park, which will be operated by Advanced Personal Care Limited (APCL), a sister concern of the leading Bangladeshi conglomerate. The new facility was virtually inaugurated by Salman F Rahman, private industry and investment advisor to prime minister. Salman said at the event that one of the cornerstones of Bangladesh government's economic policy is to really develop the private sector. "I am very happy about P&G's investment in Bangladesh, and it sends a very strong signal not only to other US companies but all over the world. That's because P&G's size, reputation and position as a successful global company."

Virtually addressing the event, US Ambassador Earl R Miller said, "Today marks a new day in the history of United States and Bangladesh's economic cooperation as P&G joins other US firms and grasping massive potentials Bangladesh has as a major manufacturing base."



Beximco Group on opening its protective equipment facility for the global healthcare industry. With three large health services providers in the United States as clients, this \$100 million dollar investment is a major step forward to diversify the global supply chain, as well as a milestone in the diversification of the Bangladesh export economy beyond ready-made garments. Ambassador Miller joined Beximco CEO Naved Husain to inaugurate the new production plant.

Ambassador Earl R. Miller surveys the Beximco Health clean room where workers fabricate protective gowns for healthcare workers in the United States, one of the facilities in the new Beximco production plant inaugurated Wednesday.



Ambassador Miller participated in the virtual EMK Day and Spring Festival 2021 to celebrate friendship between the , the 49th anniversary of U.S. Senator Edward M. Kennedy's visit to University of Dhaka and the arrival of spring. When Senator Kennedy visited Dhaka University in 1972 and planted the great banyan tree by the Kala Bhaban, he said, "The real foreign policy of America is citizen to citizen, friend to friend, people to people, forming bonds of brotherhood that no tyranny can diminish." Watching the banyan tree grow each year symbolically represents the strength of our relationship. Growing larger stronger and more stable each year. Thanks to Dhaka University's Dance Department, performers from Shurer Dhara, and the entire EMK Center team make the festival possible. the Foreign Service Academy, Bangladesh, which U.S. Ambassador Earl Miller and U.S. Embassy Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer Khadija Mohamud visited today. In dialogue with the diplomats, Ambassador Miller shared his personal journey in public service, discussing the bright





U.S.-Bangladesh bilateral relationship. "I extend our hands in friendship, in camaraderie, and once again in congratulations to you for taking up the cause of advancing diplomacy and working with purpose for the peace and prosperity of Bangladesh and nations across the world." He thanked the diplomats for taking up the noble call of public service and advancing diplomacy for Bangladesh and nations across the world. Ambassador Miller also appreciated the Rector's hospitality and the tour of the historic facility: "It was uniquely memorable to visit President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's old office, especially as we remember his contributions as we draw closer to the 50th anniversary celebrations of the birth of Bangladesh," he reflected.



Ambassador Miller laid a wreath at the Shaheed Minar at midnight on Mother Language Day to commemorate those who lost their lives during the Language Movement.





The Bangladesh Institute of Peace Support Operations Training (BIPSOT) inaugurated two training sheds, funded by the U.S. Government. These training sheds were built by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and will help train Bangladesh's U.N. Peacekeepers deployed around the world. We applaud Bangladesh's role as the largest provider of United Nations Peacekeepers, signifying its role and dedication to sustaining global peace. U.S. Embassy Dhaka looks forward to our continued relationship with BIPSOT and the government of Bangladesh for the next 50 years!



### **U.S. Embassy Partners with Rajshahi Fire Service and Civil Defense to Build Capacity of Medical First Responders**

U.S. Embassy Dhaka conducted its second Medical First Responder Seminar (MFRS) of 2021. Ten Fire Service and Civil Defense (FSCD) Officers from the Rajshahi FSCD Division participated in the four-day seminar. Participants conducted practical exercises, and each received an emergency first-aid kit with medical supplies sourced from Bangladesh. In addition to strengthening the capacity of local first responders from Bangladesh agencies to respond to emergencies and natural disaster situations, these seminars highlight U.S. commitment to Bangladesh's national security and reflect the important security relationship between the United States and Bangladesh.



International Womens Day, Ambassador Miller and Michelle Adelman inaugurated a U.S Embassy Dhaka-funded a year-long program to promote STEM Education for women and girls in Bangladesh. Thanks to U.S. Department of State exchange alumna (ILEP) Nasrin Siddiqua, ECS - Education & Cultural Society, Dr. Haseena Khan and Dr. M. Shamsheer Ali for today's inspirational event. Ambassador Miller encouraged Bangladeshi women and girls to pursue careers in STEM and stated:

*"As Bangladesh approaches the 50th anniversary of its independence, there is no better time to invest in the education and professional development of women and girls who continue to persist and defy all odds in advancing scientific research and innovation. You are the future leaders and changemakers who will transform the way we understand our world and seek to solve its problems."* - **Ambassador Miller**

The "Strengthening U.S.-Bangladesh Sustainable Relationship by Developing Student-centered STEM Education" project is one of U.S. Embassy Dhaka's many initiatives to strengthen and expand people-to-people ties and educational linkages between the United States and Bangladesh.



The people of Bangladesh on the 101st anniversary of the birth of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. As we approach Bangladesh's 50th anniversary, we are ever prouder of the historic relationship Bangabandhu helped forge between our two nations.

In 1972, Senator Edward Kennedy met with Bangabandhu and planted a banyan tree at Dhaka University. Today, Ambassador Earl Miller followed in Kennedy's footsteps by joining DNCC Mayor Md. Atiqul Islam and other dignitaries to plant 101 saplings in celebration of this special day





Ambassador Miller met with President Rizwan Rahman of the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry and Board members to highlight our shared commitment to a healthy business environment in Bangladesh. "On the eve of Bangladesh's 50th anniversary of independence, on behalf of the U.S. Embassy, congratulations on your golden jubilee. I know you must be extremely proud of the incredible advances Bangladesh has made in the past five decades, and of DCCI's contribution to those advances. We look forward to continuing to work with Bangladesh's business community to make even greater progress in the years to come, to the benefit of both our peoples."

- Ambassador Miller.



Ambassador Miller joined Foreign Minister Abdul Momen and Dhaka North Mayor Atiqul Islam to commemorate Bangladesh's Golden Jubilee of Independence and mark the 101st birth anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the opening of an exhibition on Bangladeshi foreign policy. The United States and Bangladesh have been strong enduring partners for the past five decades, working together to address some of the most pressing global challenges - from #climatechange to #COVID19. As we celebrate Bangladesh's many great achievements, we join you in looking forward to an even brighter future.





Deputy Chief of Mission JoAnne Wagner offers her congratulations to the 2021 recipients of the 'Women of Inspiration' award from JCI Bangladesh. Bangladesh's future development depends on developing opportunities for Bangladeshi women. "It is inspiring to see so many Bangladeshi women lead, innovate, and develop to make Bangladesh – and our global community – better." - Deputy Chief of Mission JoAnne Wagner



First Bangladesh Congress on Epidemiology and Public Health Highlights U.S.-Bangladesh Cooperation and Vital Role of Field Epidemiologists

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Institute of Epidemiology Disease Control & Research - IEDCR, CDC Bangladesh, our #FETP fellows, and other partners for organizing the First National Congress on Epidemiology and Public Health! Ambassador Miller joined Ministry of Health and Family Welfare Secretary Mannan, CDC Director Dr. Friedman, & representatives from Bangladesh medical community and medical education sector, and the donor community for Bangladesh's 1st National Congress on Epidemiology and Public Health. Ambassador Miller shared his experiences over the past year finding the right balance between maintaining essential embassy work while also ensuring the health and safety of the 800-member embassy community and highlighted U.S.-Bangladesh cooperation to combat COVID-19 response efforts. Ambassador Miller and IEDCR Director presented awards and certificates of completion to the fellows of the two-year CDC Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP).

"I am here today not only to support this conference...I am here to support the efforts of many to give greater focus to the fields of epidemiology and public health both globally and here in Bangladesh ... The COVID-19 pandemic has taught the world epidemiologists are vital. We need epidemiologists and public health leaders if we are to successfully address the many other emerging health issues in Bangladesh and around the world. Epidemiologists and public health experts are our frontline of defense – the first responders – working around the clock to combat COVID-19. They are true heroes. They have sacrificed much, dedicating their efforts over the past year to stopping the spread of the pandemic. They have been incredibly valiant, and their work is not finished yet." - Ambassador Miller



## Former U.S. Ambassador to Bangladesh Mary Ann Peters' Message in Commemoration of Bangladesh's 50th anniversary

Since winning their independence in 1971, the people of Bangladesh have earned the world's respect. They have preserved their language and culture, reduced poverty, and improved education and healthcare. The lives of women and girls have gotten better, with near-universal access to primary education, declines in maternal mortality, access to microfinance (invented in Bangladesh), and jobs in the textile sector. Bangladesh is leading in protecting its water resources; in 2019, the Supreme Court delivered a landmark decision declaring all rivers in Bangladesh to have legal protection. Bangladesh has taught the world that human development can lead, rather than follow, economic development. And it has shown the world its generosity, providing safe haven for Rohingya refugees fleeing Myanmar. That is a lot to be proud of in just 50 years but it is just the beginning for Bangladesh. - **Ambassador, Mary Ann Peters**

**Ambassador Mary Ann Peters** was U.S. Ambassador to Bangladesh from 2000 – 2003. She was the CEO of the international nonprofit founded by former President Jimmy Carter and Mrs. Carter to alleviate suffering and promote human rights from 2014 – 2020. Ambassador Mary Ann Peters is currently a professor at the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies at Georgia State University.





## **U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE LAUNCHES U.S.-BANGLADESH BUSINESS COUNCIL**

"The United States has remained a strong partner in our journey towards democracy and development. It is important that both countries provide adequate policy support to further expand bilateral trade. We are constantly improving our physical, legal and financial infrastructure to facilitate foreign investment," said Bangladesh Prime Minister Her Excellency Sheikh Hasina. "Bangladesh's sustained economic growth, rapidly expanding domestic market and growing connectivity with a vast regional market of four billion people makes Bangladesh a promising destination for U.S. business and investment. I hope the U.S.-Bangladesh Business Council will help expand the economic partnership between our two countries." The U.S. Chamber of Commerce has a long-standing record of work to support the trade relationship with Bangladesh. "The United States is one of Bangladesh's most important trading partners, and over the past decade we've seen an impressive growth trajectory that we are confident will create new opportunities for U.S. companies. Our launch of the U.S.-Bangladesh Business Council reflects the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's commitment to advance efforts to deepen trade and investment ties between the two countries. We believe the Council will serve as the premier bridge between business and government leaders in both countries," said Myron Brilliant, Executive Vice President and Head of International Affairs for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. The Council will be led by Nisha Biswal, President of the U.S.-Bangladesh Business Council and U.S. Chamber of Commerce Senior Vice President for South Asia, and Sidhanta Mehra, Director of the U.S.-Bangladesh Business Council. "Under the leadership of Bangladesh Prime Minister Her Excellency Sheikh Hasina, Bangladesh has seen tremendous growth and so too has its partnership with the United States," said Biswal, who served as Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs under President Barack Obama. "The U.S.-Bangladesh business Council will work to strengthen trade and investment between our two countries, promote transparency, inclusion and market-based reforms so that we can ensure that the coming decades continue to build prosperity and opportunity for the people of Bangladesh." The Council will be guided by a newly constituted U.S.-Bangladesh Business Council Board of Directors. "The U.S.-Bangladesh Business Council is a reflection for the need of a dedicated platform to understand and partner with the Bangladesh of the Future," said Jay R. Pryor, Vice President, Business Development for Chevron and the Inaugural Chair of the Council's Board of Directors. Reflecting on Bangladesh's growth, Pryor noted its future will be "one that is sustainable, helps Bangladesh reach its economic development goals and by doing so, creates a business environment that empowers Bangladeshi women, enables small business growth, and strengthens communities through better access to healthcare, employment, and also energy." U.S. and Bangladeshi corporate leaders speaking at the launch event included Uber CEO Dara Khosrowshahi, MetLife Executive Vice President and CFO John F. McCallion, Walmart International President and CEO Judith McKenna, Excelerate Energy President and CEO Steven Kobos, bKash Founder and CEO Kamal Quadir, GE South Asia President Mahesh Palashikar, Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry President Sheikh Fazle Fahim, Visa Senior Vice President for Global Government Engagement Ambassador Demetrios Marantis, MetLife Senior Vice President for Strategic Growth Markets in Asia Elena Butarova, and ShopUp Co-Founder and CEO Afeef Zubaer Zaman.



The former Secretary of State is no stranger to Bangladesh as she visited the country in 1995 as being the only U.S. First Lady with daughter Chelsea and in 2012 as Secretary of State. During her visit Former secretary Clinton sat down with up-and-coming youth leaders from across Bangladesh for "A Conversation with Bangladesh", which was televised on ATN News and web streamed live! In 1995, The U.S. First Lady and daughter Chelsea visited the village of Moishahati, about 156 miles (251 km) from Dhaka, the capital, to see women who have achieved a working life through the Grameen Bank's credit program. The program teaches women self-reliance and helps them to join the workforce. Mrs. Clinton also visited a school run by Bangladesh's Rural Advancement Committee; a non-governmental organization lauded for its innovative primary education for girls. She said she hoped to learn more about Bangladesh's program to eliminate poverty and help women and children achieve their full potential.



## U.S. Climate Envoy Visit Underscores Cooperation on Climate Leadership

Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry met with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Moten, Environment Minister Md. Shahab Uddin, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Md. Shahriar Alam, MP, Special Envoy of the Vulnerable Forum Presidency Abul Kalam Azad, Parliament Member Saber Hossain Chowdhury, and international partners to discuss cooperation to partner with Bangladesh and other vulnerable countries in their efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change. The trip laid the groundwork for President Joseph Biden's Leaders' Summit on Climate on April 22-23, where Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will be recognized for Bangladesh's leadership of countries especially vulnerable to climate impacts. As the Chair of the Climate Vulnerable Forum and the Vulnerable Twenty Group of Finance Ministers, Bangladesh plays a vital role in international efforts to combat climate change and adapt and build resilience to climate hazards.

The visit underscored U.S. commitment to strengthen implementation of the Paris Agreement on climate change designed to limit global warming. Special Presidential Envoy Kerry's discussions focused on cooperation to promote prosperity through climate policy, investment, innovation, and sustainable economic growth. Special Presidential Envoy Kerry also participated in a climate finance roundtable with international partners hosted by U.S. Ambassador Earl Miller at his official residence. The United States will work closely with the international community and private sector to mobilize investment to support mitigation and adaptation to stem the climate crisis and support prosperity. "Secretary Kerry's visit underscores the importance the United States places on our partnership with Bangladesh, a vital leader in international efforts to address climate change," U.S. Ambassador Earl Miller said.

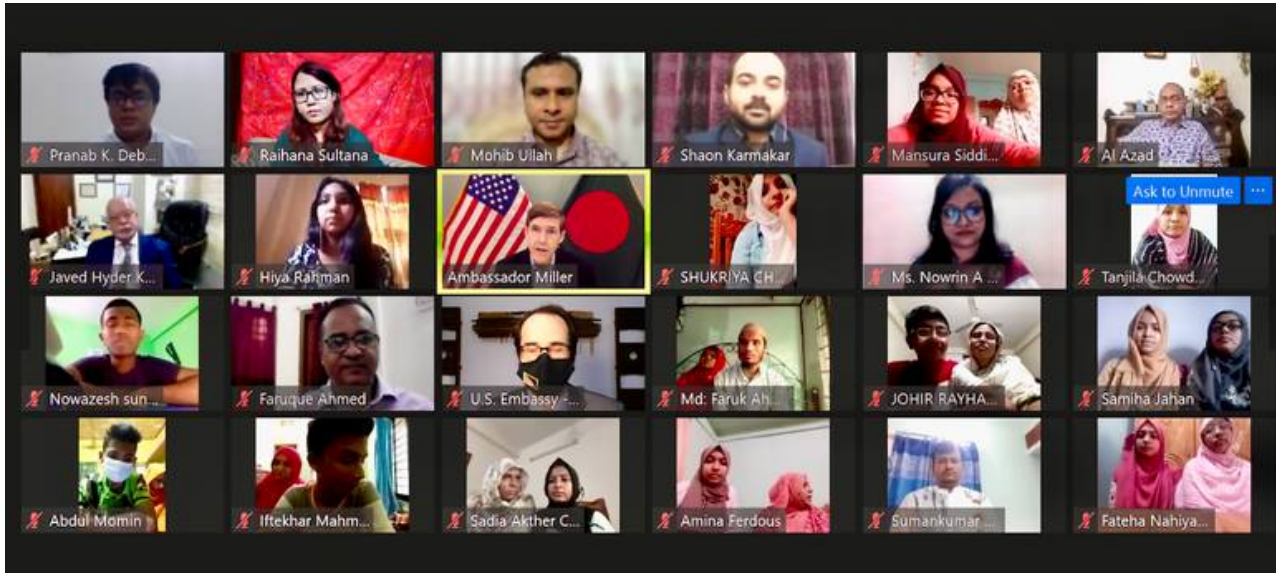
Special Presidential Envoy Kerry's trip also included stops in Abu Dhabi and New Delhi to raise global climate ambition ahead of the 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in November.

"You have seen and will continue to see [the United States] weaving climate change into our most important bilateral and multilateral conversations at all levels. In these conversations, we're asking other leaders: how can we do more together?" said Secretary of State Antony Blinken in a February statement when the United States officially rejoined the Paris Agreement.





The U.S. Department of State English Access Microscholarship Program from Sylhet! During s virtual graduation ceremony Ambassador Miller praised the 10 young women and 10 young men from Sylhet for their hard work in completing the rigorous two-year course during the pandemic and encouraged them to continue to develop their English, leadership, and critical thinking skills to help improve their community, country, and . He reminded all to do their part to stop the spread of COVID-19 by wearing a mask, practicing social distancing, and complying with all government recommendations.



U.S. Embassy Dhaka's top priorities is supporting the American business community and today during a town hall, Ambassador Miller exchanged ideas with members of the American Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh . Embassy Dhaka looks forward to continuing our partnership on advocacy for the improved business environment essential to furthering economic progress!





## **U.S. Government Deploys Emergency COVID-19 Supplies to Protect Health Workers in Bangladesh**

**Critical COVID-19 Supplies Enroute to :** The U.S. Government, through USAID Bangladesh, stands with Bangladesh as they fight the COVID-19 pandemic. Ambassador Islam of Bangladesh Embassy, USA watched the Travis Air Force Base team load critical lifesaving COVID19 supplies bound for Bangladesh. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin said, "I deeply value our partnership with Bangladesh, and I hope this support is a testament to our robust and growing ties." Thank you to the United States Air Force and Travis Air Force Base for their hard work to support the people of Bangladesh!



**From the American People to the People of Bangladesh:** Emergency medical supplies including personal protective equipment and other medical kits from USAID have arrived in Bangladesh to help battle the most recent surge in COVID-19 cases. Thank you to the United States Air Force for operating and supporting the flight! Since the beginning of the pandemic, the United States has provided more than \$84 million in assistance to Bangladesh to fight COVID19.



Ambassador Earl Miller and USAID Bangladesh Mission Director Kathryn Stevens welcomed the arrival of one million Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine doses to Bangladesh, a gift from the American people. Senior Secretary of the Health Service Division Lokman Hossain Miah, Director General of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) Professor Abul Bashar Mohammad Khurshid Alam, and other Government of Bangladesh officials joined Ambassador Miller and USAID Mission Director Stevens to receive the shipment of vaccines at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport.

The Pfizer vaccines were donated by the United States and the delivery was facilitated through COVAX, as part of President Biden and the U.S. Government's commitment to purchase and gift 500 million doses of Pfizer vaccines globally. This builds on earlier donations of Moderna vaccines for a total of 6.5 million doses donated by the U.S. government and the American people to date – on top of \$96 million in assistance to help Bangladesh fight the pandemic. The United States is also supporting the Government of Bangladesh in rolling out the national vaccination campaign, providing training for thousands of healthcare providers and volunteers to administer injections safely and efficiently, and has also provided emergency medical supplies, including ventilators and PPE, and other support to bolster Bangladesh's efforts to stop the spread of the virus.



American products in Bangladesh? Well now you can! Today, U.S. Ambassador Miller and ACI Managing Director Dowla launched the "American Shelf" in ten SHWAPNO retail outlets throughout Bangladesh, highlighting over 100 high-quality U.S. food and beverage products, including dried fruits, tree nuts, cereals, chocolates, and much more. Check out the 'Taste of America' promotion today! "I am excited to see U.S. products become increasingly available in Bangladesh. I know food is very important to the people of Bangladesh, and I am confident consumers will find U.S. food items to be flavorful and of the best quality. I look forward to further encouraging agricultural trade between the U.S. and Bangladesh and hope one day soon I will be able to enjoy some of the great cheeses, apples, cherries, and other great food items from my home state of Michigan in Bangladesh. I also hope U.S. consumers can one day enjoy some of Bangladesh's great food items, like mangos and lychees, in the United States." - **Ambassador Earl Miller**







Ambassador Miller, USAID Mission Director Brown, and ERD Joint Secretary Kabir Ahmed launched the publication of a photography book, "Golden Jubilee of Golden Bengal," to commemorate Bangladesh's 50th year of independence. The photo book illustrates the partnership between the United States and Bangladesh to improve health and education, strengthen resilience, and help millions of Bangladeshis lead more prosperous lives over the past five decades. With the launch of the book, we are also kick-starting a social media campaign -- "50 Stories in 50 Days," where we will post the photos and the stories

behind the photos from the book. Stay tuned on our Facebook page to learn more about the great success stories of Bangladesh.

USAID - US Agency for International Development Administrator Samantha Power in Washington, D.C. to become the next USAID Bangladesh Mission Director. Ambassador Miller and the Bangladesh Ambassador to the U.S. M Shahidul Islam delivered remarks during the ceremony. We look forward to welcoming Mission Director Stevens to Bangladesh!





the 50-year friendship between the United States and Bangladesh, the United States donated 20 vessels to the Bangladesh Navy and Bangladesh Coast Guard; a total of \$7.5 million in military equipment. During the virtual handover ceremony, Ambassador Earl Miller highlighted the United States' steadfast commitment to our partnership with Bangladesh in support of their national security and maritime



The first time ever, visuals of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman were displayed in Times Square to celebrate Bangabandhu's life and legacy on the iconic billboard in commemoration of National Mourning Day. This initiative was started by a Bangladeshi expatriate and entrepreneur.

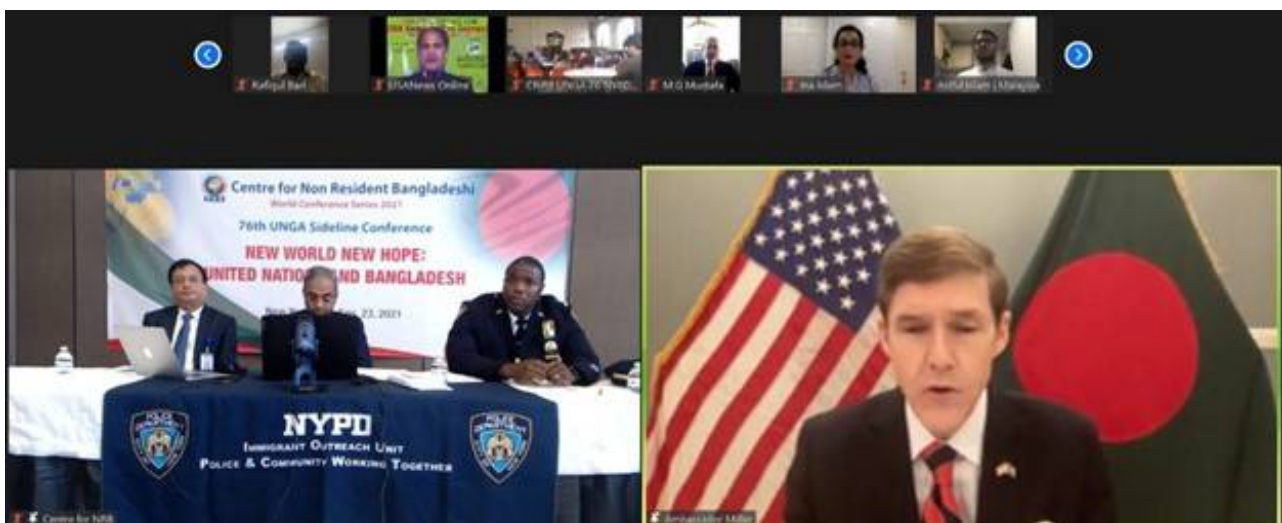
Did you know Times Square in New York City draws an estimated 50 million visitors annually while over 460,000 people walk through the intersection on its busiest days?



Ambassador Miller and USAID Bangladesh Deputy Mission Director Ali joined Ministry of Health and Family Welfare Minister Zahid Maleque to inaugurate the country's first one-stop service center for TB patients in Dhaka. With USAID support, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's National TB Program has transformed the 250-bed TB hospital in Shyamoli, equipping the facility with state-of-the-art testing and laboratory equipment, and training a specialized pool of doctors to detect and diagnose the disease more quickly and more accurately.



Ambassador Miller spoke at the “New World New Hope: United Nations and Bangladesh” sideline conference at the 76th United Nations General Assembly held by the Centre for Non-Resident Bangladeshis. The Ambassador spoke of the contributions of Bangladeshi-Americans which have enriched the United States and added to the vibrancy of our bilateral relationship. Participants included Foreign Minister MA Momen; Dr. Mashiur Rahman, Economic Advisor to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina; Abdul Kalam Azam, Bangladesh’s Special Envoy to the Climate Vulnerable Forum; Mia Seppo, UN Resident Coordinator in Bangladesh; and representatives from academia, NGOs, and the business community in the U.S., Egypt, Qatar, UAE, Brunei, Turkey, Australia, UK, and Malaysia. The conference focused on Bangladesh’s challenges and opportunities as the world addresses global issues, including the fight against COVID-19 and other diseases, climate change, and rapidly changing economic environments that offer the promise of a more prosperous future for Bangladeshis around the world.





the 50-year friendship between the United States and Bangladesh, the U.S. Embassy Dhaka's Special Operations Command Pacific (SOCPAC) Civil Affairs team donated COVID-19 personal protective equipment to the Kamalapur Railway General Hospital. The gift from the United States to Bangladesh's front-line medical workers is part of the ongoing commitment of both nations to combat the COVID-19 Pandemic



### **U.S. Embassy Dhaka and Ministry of Commerce Launch Bangladesh Trade Facilitation Initiative**

U.S. Ambassador Earl R. Miller joined Minister Munshi at the inauguration ceremony held at the Hotel InterContinental Dhaka. Honorable Minister of Commerce Tipu Munshi launched the "Bangladesh Trade Facilitation", a new agriculture and economic development project funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service. The \$27 million project supports the Government of Bangladesh to implement the World Trade Organization (WTO) Trade Facilitation Agreement in the areas of simplifying and automating import and export processes, strengthening risk-based clearance processes, improving notification provisions, developing the capacity and testing procedures of laboratories, and enhancing the cold chain system for facilitating trade of perishable goods.

Land O'Lakes Venture37, a U.S. based not-for-profit economic and agricultural development organization implements the project, bringing together the agencies supervising and providing trade services including: the WTO Cell and the National Trade Facilitation Committee of the Ministry of Commerce; National Board of Revenue; Ministry of Agriculture; Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock; Department of Fisheries and Department of Livestock Services of the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock; Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution of the Ministry of Industries; Plant Quarantine Wing of Department of Agricultural Extension and Department of Agricultural Marketing of the Ministry of Agriculture; Bangladesh Food Safety Authority; Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission; and key private sector stakeholders. The goal is to increase Bangladesh's ability to expand and diversify its exports, ensure safety and quality of imported food items, and to improve its institutional systems for agricultural trade. Minister Munshi attended the event as the Chief Guest, and he emphasized the government's "commitment to ensure self-sufficiency in food production, supply safe and nutritious food as well as commercialize the agriculture sector, making it a profitable venture for poor farmers." Noting the investment from the American people, Ambassador Miller, in turn, confirmed the U.S. Government's support for Bangladesh's reform measures and promotion of a business-friendly trade environment. "This project will facilitate and incentivize investment, construction, and the operation of new cold storage facilities to improve and expand on Bangladesh's refrigerated logistics network," Ambassador Miller said.



The Ministry of Commerce coordinates TFA implementation for the Government of Bangladesh, and Secretary Tapan Kanti Ghosh explained that the WTO Cell of the Ministry of Commerce would work closely with Land O'Lakes Venture37. Mr. Tapan Kanti Ghosh stated that he expected the government's trade agencies will also collaborate to implement the important WTO TFA measures and that the USDA project will help integrate systems to do so. He emphasized partnerships, saying, "I also expect that the project will focus on building partnerships between public and private sector and other development partners."

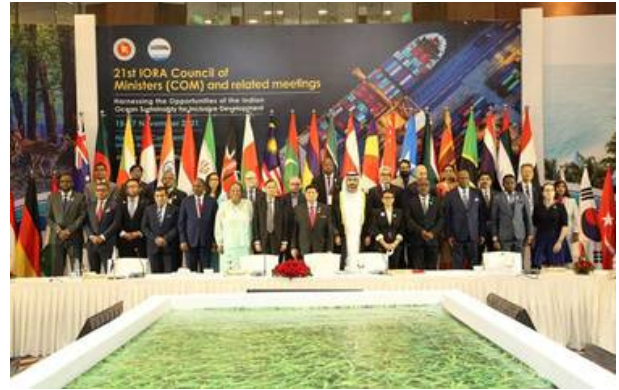
Recognizing the strong economic ties between the United States and Bangladesh, Abdul Kasem Khan, Chairperson, Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD) congratulated Minister Munshi and Ambassador Miller for creating opportunities for agro-food industries. Mr. Khan stated that importing and exporting businesses stand to gain a lot from more efficient trade procedures. "Businesses demand predictable and harmonized processes and highly value transparency. Global trade opportunities and investments in strategic industries will play a significantly important role in Bangladesh's further growth aspiration to become an upper-middle income and a developed country," he said. The Bangladesh Trade Facilitation Project is a five-year initiative that will promote policy reform, and provide technical, logistical, and technological assistance to Government of Bangladesh agencies and agricultural and food industry stakeholders. The goal is to make importing and exporting agricultural products more efficient. Each project activity addresses one or more WTO TFA measures and the objectives are aligned with the country's Eighth Five-Year Plan, Promoting Prosperity and Fostering Inclusiveness.



Mr. Earl R. Miller, U.S. Ambassador to the People's Republic of Bangladesh provides remarks during the closing ceremony for the Bangladesh Disaster Response Exercise and Exchange (DREE) 2021, hosted by The Bangladesh Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR), Bangladesh Armed Forces Division (AFD), and the United States Army Pacific (USARPAC), at Dhaka, Bangladesh on Oct. 28, 2021. (Photo by Master Sgt. John Hughel, Oregon Military Dept.)



The United States welcomes Bangladesh as the new IORA chair. We look forward to their leadership in helping develop a free, open, inclusive, and resilient Indian Ocean region. Deputy Assistant Secretary Kelly Keiderling with Salman F. Rahman, Private Industry and Investment Adviser to Prime Minister H.E. Sheikh Hasina.



Ambassador Miller visited the Bangladeshi Embassy in Washington, DC. He met with Ambassador M Shahidul Islam, Deputy Chief of Mission Ferdousi Shahriar, and Political Minister Md. Rashedujjaman, and discussed deepening cooperation and exchange during the upcoming 50th anniversary of U.S.-Bangladesh relations.



The U.S.-Bangladesh Business Council shared their perspectives on business prospects in Bangladesh with Ambassador Miller, Assistant Secretary of State Donald Lu, and Deputy Assistant Secretary Kelly Keiderling during a Town Hall discussion.







**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**BANGLADESH**



- USAID contributed to a 60 percent reduction in under-5 child mortality between 1993 and 2011.
- By expanding the use of fertilizer technology and seed varieties, USAID has helped increase rice production for small-scale farmers in Barisal, a formerly rice deficient district in southern Bangladesh.
- USAID was instrumental in helping communities co-manage forests and wetlands with the Government of Bangladesh, thereby protecting critical natural resources.

Photo credit: USAID/Bangladesh

## USAID Bangladesh Profile

The United States and Bangladesh enjoy a warm and wide-ranging friendship, driven by common interests and shared values. As a moderate, secular and tolerant democracy that is at peace with its neighbors, Bangladesh is a role model for less developed countries in the South Asia region. Bangladesh is committed to becoming a middle-income country by 2021, its 50th year of independence. USAID assistance supports this goal by promoting democratic institutions and practices, economic opportunity, effective health and education services, food security, responsiveness to climate change, and preparedness and response to natural disasters.

## USAID Bangladesh WORK

With a population of more than 154 million in a low-lying, riverine area the size of Iowa, Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated and vulnerable countries to climate change. Yet, Bangladesh's economy has sustained average annual growth rates of about 6 percent over the past 15 years, helping the country cut its poverty rate in half. The country has become the world's second largest exporter of ready-made garments and has achieved self-sufficiency in rice production. Between 2001 and 2010, maternal mortality declined by 40 percent, and since 1990, female literacy has doubled. Despite these advancements, more than 45 million people still live in poverty, Bangladesh still has an overall food deficit, and thousands of preventable deaths of mothers and young children occur each year. Due to climate change and rapid urbanization, Bangladesh is losing up to 1 percent of its arable land every year. And, as a young democracy, the country faces highly centralized and weak governance, corruption, adversarial politics and lack of women's empowerment. Bangladesh is a partner country for the U.S. Government's three major development initiatives: Feed the Future (addressing global food insecurity), Global Climate Change and the Global Health Initiative. In addition, USAID provides assistance to improve local government, conduct free and fair elections, address gender-based violence and empower women, and combat trafficking-in-persons. USAID has been a development partner in Bangladesh since the country's independence in 1971.

## AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY

Despite recent gains in rice production, Bangladesh remains food deficient with diets lacking in diversity, resulting in 41 percent of children being stunted. USAID has helped more than 1.5 million small-scale farmers increase the efficiency of their rice production by introducing a new fertilizer technology and higher yielding seeds. In addition, in 2012, USAID programs helped farmers increase sales of fish and vegetables by more than \$40 million and \$23 million, respectively. USAID also helps improve child nutrition by promoting exclusive breastfeeding for infants up to 6 months of age, a balanced diet for older children and better hygiene practices such as hand-washing.

## GLOBAL HEALTH

Despite gains in child survival, each year about 80,000 infants die during the first month of life and Bangladesh has one of the highest tuberculosis rates in the world. Through a network of private sector clinics, USAID provides more than 20 million total maternal, child and family planning consultations a year. In 2012, USAID also helped Bangladesh detect and treat 20 percent more cases of deadly multidrug-resistant tuberculosis. Since 1990, USAID has helped Bangladesh reduce maternal and child mortality by more than 60 percent as well as dramatically increase the use of family planning services.



## ENVIRONMENT AND GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

Dense population and intense agriculture have put extreme pressure on natural resources. As a result, Bangladesh has one of the lowest percentages of remaining forest lands worldwide. USAID helps Bangladesh conserve its biodiversity by helping people who live in or near 26 forests and wetlands find employment so they will rely less on exploiting natural resources. In addition, USAID is improving the local management of more than 1.7 million acres of wetlands and forests.

## DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND GOVERNANCE USAID

promotes responsive governance in Bangladesh by strengthening the parliament and political parties, improving the accountability and transparency of the national audit authority and other key institutions, and building the capacity of local governments to deliver health and other social services. In 2012, USAID helped the government implement legislation to reduce domestic violence as well as enact a law against trafficking-in-persons and develop its national implementation plan.

## HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

USAID's Food for Peace program targets more than 600,000 food-insecure households with interventions to improve nutrition, agriculture, incomes, maternal and child health, and disaster preparedness. USAID is constructing 100 multipurpose cyclone shelters to protect people and their livestock during storms and to serve as schools during other times.

## CONTACTS

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USAID promotes the use of quality seeds and organic fertilizer to produce higher yields and get better prices for crops. Photo credit: USAID/PRICE



USAID trains women in forest-dependent communities to weave baskets as an eco-friendly, alternative income source. Photo credit: USAID/IPAC

USAID/Bangladesh Country Profile 2

A.B.M. Sarwer Sarker Jeebon, Assistant Press Secretary to the Prime Minister, gifted Ambassador Miller photos of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Tufts University on a U.S. Department of State Foreign Leaders Exchange program in 1958.







**Team Mohakash** from Khulna for becoming the world champion in the best Mission Concept Category of the NASA #SpaceApps Challenge. The team beat 4,534 other teams from 162 countries. The "ARSS-Advanced Regolith Sampler System," a tool invented by Team Mohakash, will enable astronauts to control the dust that flies freely during missions to alien surfaces. In past human missions to the moon, for example, astronauts faced trouble working amid surface dust. Team Mohakash consisted of Barnita Basak Trisha and Md. Momenul Haque from BAUET (Bangladesh Army University of Engineering and Technology) and Sumit Chanda, Samir Imtiaz, Shishir Kairy, and Alvi Rownok from KUET (Khulna University of Engineering & Technology).  
NASA Space Apps Challenge - Bangladesh @sumit.kuet

Bangladesh Navy and U.S. military personnel recently concluded the nine-day maritime exercise, Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT). In this engagement, they worked to improve a variety of skills and raise cooperation in order to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific. The bilateral navy exercise concluded with the USS Tulsa docking in Chattogram; the first U.S. Navy ship visit to Bangladesh since 2015



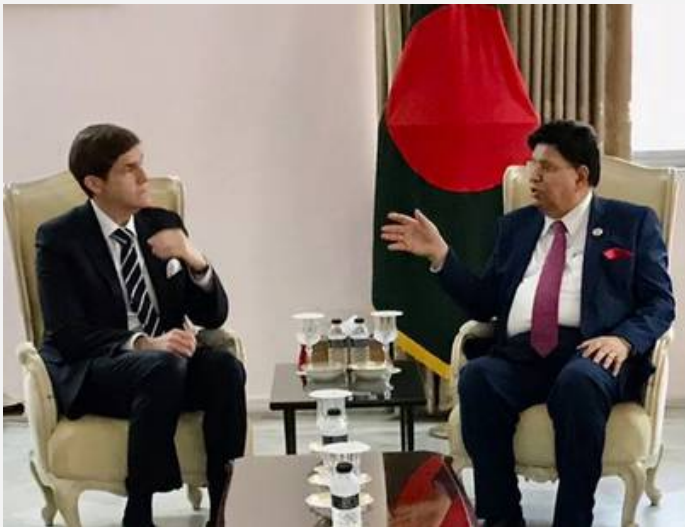
Bangladesh in remembering & honoring the sacrifices made by so many to create this remarkable nation. Victory Day reminds us freedom must not be taken for granted. It must be cherished, safeguarded, & celebrated. Shubho Bijoy Dibosh!

Ambassador Miller visited the Martyred Intellectuals Memorial at Rayer Bazar yesterday, paying tribute to those who died during Bangladesh's struggle for liberation.





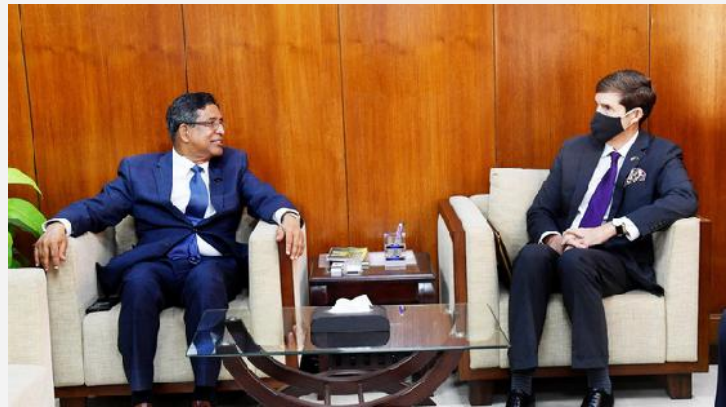
**EARL R. MILLER, THE US AMBASSADOR TO DHAKA, IS LEAVING BANGLADESH AFTER MORE THAN THREE YEARS IN OFFICE.**



"In my farewell meeting with Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen we discussed the strong long-standing U.S. – Bangladesh partnership, the importance of human rights and the rule of law, and enhancing cooperation on development, economic growth, security and global challenges including the Rohingya refugee crisis and climate change. 2022 is the 50th anniversary of U.S. – Bangladesh relations. I have great optimism for an even stronger partnership the next fifty years and beyond.

"Rewarding final meeting with Minister of Agriculture, Dr. Abdur Razzaque, a proud Purdue University grad! We discussed growing expansion of agricultural trade which has almost doubled the past five years. Our partnership is ensuring sustainable livelihoods for farmers in both our nations."

**- Ambassador Earl R. Miller**



"Good candid conversation, as always, with Law Minister Anisul Huq recalling and affirming strong - ties as I begin my farewell calls after three wonderful years in this remarkable nation."

**- Ambassador Earl R. Miller**

"In my final meeting with International Affairs Adviser Gowher Rizvi, distinguished historian & friend, we spoke of the importance of our nations' ideals and strengthening our historic - partnership built on innumerable people to people ties and unbreakable bonds of affection."

**- Ambassador Earl R. Miller**





Honorable Speaker of Parliament Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury has been an invaluable partner, counselor and friend. She is a role model and inspiration for women leaders in government. Greatly enjoyed our farewell discussion on enhancing engagement between Parliament & Congress."

**- Ambassador Earl Miller**







## **Peter D Haas, The New Ambassador of U.S. Embassy in Bangladesh.**

***USBCCI, WELCOME THE NEW AMBASSADOR OF UNITED STATES  
OF AMERICA.***

### **Peter D Haas**

THE NEW U.S. AMBASSADOR TO BANGLADESH, PETER HAAS, PRESENTED HIS CREDENTIALS TO THE PRESIDENT OF BANGLADESH, MD. ABDUL HAMID. AMBASSADOR HAAS IS HONORED TO REPRESENT THE UNITED STATES IN BANGLADESH AS WE CELEBRATE 50 YEARS OF BILATERAL RELATIONS. HE LOOKS FORWARD TO DEEPENING OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP THROUGH PARTNERSHIP ON HUMAN RIGHTS, MUTUAL TRADE, GOOD GOVERNANCE, THE RIGHTS OF LABOR, AND COMMITMENT TO MITIGATING THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE.





The U.S. Department of State's Under Secretary Nuland met with Foreign Minister Momen, and participated in the 8th U.S.-Bangladesh Partnership Dialogue. Both countries want to tackle climate change, end the pandemic, grow our economies with all our people, for all our people, and support Rohingya. We're also looking to protect human rights and expand democratic space. Looking forward to the next 50 years of partnership!



**Welcome to Bangladesh, Under Secretary Victoria Nuland! The U.S. Department of State Under Secretary is leading a delegation for the U.S.-Bangladesh Partnership Dialogue. She participated in the launch of Teach For Bangladesh Youth Development Initiative. She spoke with journalists on deepening the U.S.-Bangladesh bilateral relationship in the next 50 years.**





Good to see COTTON USA back in Bangladesh!  
America is the biggest market for Bangladeshi ready-made garments? Last year, Bangladesh imported \$310 million of U.S. cotton, making Bangladesh a top-5 market!

**U.S. Department of Agriculture**





A Bangladeshi Army soldier performs a roadside sweep for any other improvised explosive device[s] (IED) during an IED scenario at Exercise Tiger Lightning 2022, on March 19, 2022.



The U.S. Department of State's Under Secretary Nuland visited the Kurmitola General Hospital in Dhaka to witness the U.S. partnership with Bangladesh in action - vaccinating the public, helping Bangladeshis protect themselves from COVID. With donations of over 61 million doses and \$131 million of total assistance to date, the United States will support Bangladesh in its fight against the pandemic.



## Bangladeshi Americans

February 21 is International Mother Language Day, a day celebrating the diversity of languages around the world and commemorating the 1952 Bengali Language Movement. Pride in the Bengali language spreads far and wide, including on a mural in Detroit, Michigan! Here at the U.S.



### United States :

The census in 2000 found up to 95,300 were born in Bangladesh. It was until the 1990s when Bangladeshis, many from Dhaka, Chittagong, and Sylhet, started to move to the United States, and settled in urban areas such as New York, Paterson in New Jersey, Philadelphia, Atlantic City, New Jersey and Washington D.C.. Although recent findings claim that Bangladeshis started arriving during the late 19th centuries from the southern part of current Bangladesh. In some parts of Queens and Manhattan in New York City, there are Bangladeshi restaurant owners of Bangladeshi, Indian, and Pakistani restaurants. The Baishakhi Mela celebration of the Bengali New Year is also held by the Bangladeshi American communities in New York, Paterson, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., Atlantic City and other cities annually. The street of 3rd Street, Los Angeles has a large history of Bangladeshis and has officially been dubbed as "Little Bangladesh". However, some Bangladeshis residing in New York have settled in newer areas, such as Hamtramck, Michigan, Buffalo, New York, Paterson, New Jersey, and many other nearby states due to lower living costs and better job opportunities. Many Bangladeshis in New York City are often Taxi Drivers, Fast-Food Chain Workers, Restaurant Workers, software developer, computer scientists, medical doctors, attorneys, accountants, business owners etc. In Atlantic City many work in casinos.

A 2020 estimate puts the number of Bangladeshis in the United States at 800,000.

### Bangladeshi Americans (বাংলাদেশী মার্কিনী):

are Americans of Bangladeshi descent. The majority of Bangladeshi Americans are Bengalis and form the largest group of Bengali Americans. Bangladeshi immigrants have arrived in the United States in large numbers since the early 1970s to become among the fastest growing ethnic communities since that decade. New York City, home to two-thirds of the Bangladeshi American population; Paterson, New Jersey; Atlantic City, New Jersey; Buffalo, New York; as well as Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Los Angeles, Boston, Atlanta, San Francisco, Detroit, Chicago, Florida, Dallas, Houston, Charlotte, Austin, Hamtramck, Michigan, and Reno, Nevada are home to notable Bangladeshi communities.

## HISTORY:

Immigrants from present-day Bangladesh have been in the United States since at least the 1880s.

Bangladeshis have been migrating to the port cities of the United States since 1974 when 154 Bangladeshis arrived in United States leaving behind the hard economic and political times of the still developing Bangladesh who got independence from Pakistan in 1971. Most were workers on the various ships docking from Chittagong, Bangladesh. Immigration to the United States from Bangladesh grew slowly but steadily through the 1970s and 1980s. Over ten thousand Bangladeshis have immigrated to the United States annually.[4] Many of the migrants settled in urban areas. New York City is home to two-thirds of the Bangladeshi population in the United States. Other cities including Paterson and Atlantic City, New Jersey, Buffalo, New York, as well as Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, Boston, Chicago, and Detroit. In New York, it was estimated that 15,000 Bangladeshis resided in the city in the early 1980s. During the late 1970s, some Bangladeshis moved from New York City to Detroit, and Atlantic City for jobs. Homes to prominent communities of other Muslim Americans, in search of better work opportunities and an affordable cost of living, but most have since returned from Detroit to New York and to New Jersey, in hope of starting a new community and a peaceful life. The Los Angeles Bangladesh Association was created in 1971, and there were 500 members of the Texas Bangladesh Association in 1997. In Atlantic City, Bangladeshis created an association. The Bangladeshi population in Dallas was 5,000 people in 1997, which was large enough to hold the Baishakhi Mela event. Baishakhi Mela events have been held in major American cities such as New York City, Paterson in New Jersey, Atlantic City, Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles, as the Bangladeshi population continues to increase in these cities.[10] The third and largest wave of arrivals came in the 1990s and 2000s. Because of the Diversity Immigrant Visa Program, professional and educational criteria were not used. Most entered blue-collar jobs, such as taxi driving, and restaurant help.

## NEW YORK CITY:

New York City is home to the largest Bangladeshi community in the United States, receiving by far the highest legal permanent resident Bangladeshi immigrant population. The Bangladeshi-born immigrant population has become one of the fastest growing in New York City, counting over 74,000 by 2011 alone. The city's Bangladeshi community is spread out in the Jackson Heights neighborhood within the New York City borough of Queens. 74th Street has most of the Bangladeshi grocery stores and clothing stores in Jackson Heights. The Bangladesh Plaza hosts numerous Bangladeshi businesses and cultural events. Recently, one part of Jackson Heights has become the open platform of all sorts of protests and activism. The neighboring communities of Jackson Heights, Woodside, and Elmhurst in Queens also similarly have become attractive areas to live for Bangladeshi Americans.

Since the 1970s, thousands of Bangladeshis were able to legally migrate to the USA through the Diversity Visa Program/ lottery. Many initiated a migration to Jamaica, Queens.

Continuous movement of Bangladeshis to Jamaica and Jackson Heights, Queens has made some neighborhoods extensively Bangladeshi. Centering on 169 street and Hillside Avenue, the neighborhood has become a popular zone due to the large number of restaurants and groceries. Sagar Restaurant, Gharoa, Deshi Shaad, Kabir's Bakery, and other stores in Queens are attractions for the Bangladeshi communities all over New York City. The largest numbers of Bangladeshi Americans now live in Jamaica, Jackson Heights, Hollis, and Briarwood in Queens. There is also a large Bangladeshi community in Parkchester, Bronx. Bangladeshi enclaves in Queens and Brooklyn have been increasing as Bangladeshis in NYC continue to grow rapidly. Bangladeshis form one of the fastest growing Asian ethnic groups in NYC as new enclaves in areas such as City Line and Ozone Park have sprung up.

Wealthier Bangladeshis have been moving to Long Island, New York City, as a particular reason for popular settlement in the area is the pharmaceutical companies existing on Long Island; there are quite a large number of Bangladeshi-owned pharmaceutical companies in Nassau County and Suffolk County on Long Island employing many people of Bangladeshi origin. However, there have been a relatively small number of cases where Bangladeshis living in New York City moved out, specifically to places such as Buffalo, New York and Hamtramck in Michigan, mainly due to low living costs. New York statistics:



### **1970 census:**

Total population: 4,955 (5,406 in New York City and 11,838 in total in the United States).

Highest concentrations: Queens—2,567 people, and Brooklyn—1,313.

In Manhattan Bangladeshis formed a small enclave in 6th Street. High numbers of people lived in the Astoria area in Queens.

### **2000 census:**

Total population: 28,269

Highest concentrations: Queens—18,310 people (65%), Brooklyn—6,243 (22%), Bronx—2,442 (9%), Manhattan—1,204 (4%), Staten Island—70 (0.2%)

Population growth rate from 1970 to 2000: 471%

Foreign-born population: 23,157 (85%)

Limited English proficiency: 14,840 (60%)

Median Household Income: \$31,537

People Living in Poverty: 8,312

Percentage of people in poverty: 31%

### **2010 census:**

Total population: 50,677

Highest concentrations: Queens (60%), Brooklyn (19%), Bronx (17%), Manhattan (4%), Staten Island (0.4%)

Population growth rate from 2000 to 2010:

Foreign-born population: 74%

Limited English proficiency: 53%

Median Household Income: \$36,741

Percentage of people in poverty: 32%

Bangladeshi neighborhoods in NYC include Jamaica, Jamaica Hills, Briarwood, Jackson Heights, Woodside, Elmhurst, Hollis, Queens Village, Hunters Point, Long Island City, East Harlem, Bayside, Hillcrest, West Maspeth and Astoria in Queens; Kensington and City Line in Brooklyn.[14] Parkchester and Castle Hill in The Bronx is also home to an increasing Bangladeshi population[16][17] Other, smaller Little Bangladesh communities can be found in Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., Detroit, and Los Angeles.

### **Politics:**

Bangladeshi Americans tend to favor the Democratic Party, influenced in part by Republican President Richard Nixon's support of Pakistan during Bangladesh's struggle for independence. In the last few decades, Bangladeshi Americans have become solid Democratic voters. In the 2016 presidential election, 90% of Bangladeshi Americans voted for Hillary Clinton. In the 2020 presidential election, most Bangladeshi Americans favored Joe Biden. A exit poll conducted by AALDEF showed that a majority (91%) of Bangladeshi Americans backed Joe Biden in the 2020 presidential election. In recent decades, the Bangladeshi American community has become more active in local and national politics, with many Bangladeshi Americans seeking office or forming political organizations to better represent those within or outside the community who share similar goals.

### **Culture:**

Bangladeshi Americans are well represented in the fields of medicine, engineering, business, finance and information technology. Bangladeshi Americans have brought Bengali cuisine to the United States. There are many Bangladeshi markets and stores in the United States. Some of the largest are in New York City, Paterson, New Jersey, Central New Jersey, Washington, D.C., Atlantic City, and Los Angeles.

### **Languages:**

Bangladeshi Americans often retain their native language Bengali and run many programs to nourish their mothertongue. Many also speak Bengali dialects or other languages related to Bengali, the most common being Sylheti which is spoken by Bangladeshis from the Sylhet Division, and Chittagonian which is spoken by Bangladeshis from the districts of Chittagong and Cox's Bazar.

## Religion:

Before the colonization of India by Great Britain, folk religion across villages in the Bengal region incorporated practices from Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam to varying degrees. Leading up to the modern era, Bengali families increasingly began identifying with a single religious community. In North America, Bangladeshis outside of metropolitan areas often practice their faiths at home and make special trips during community holidays like Ramadan and Durga Puja. In cities like Detroit and New York, Muslims in the Bangladeshi American community hold religious services within mosques in their own communities. There are major Hindu temples in the United States where Bangladeshi Americans have played an important part in the leadership of congregations. Many Bangladeshis also incline towards humanism, owing to the cultural impact of Brahmoism, Sufism, and Buddhism, and will identify as non-religious, secular, atheist, agnostic, or spiritual.

was designed by Fazlur Rahman Khan. It was the tallest building in the world for over two decades.

**Mir Masoom Ali** – George and Frances Ball Distinguished Professor of Statistics, Ball State University

**Arianna Afsar** – former Miss California; placed in the Top 10 of the 2011 Miss America pageant

**Saif Ahmad** – World Series of Poker winner

**Sanjoy** - Bangladeshi-American musician, electronic music producer and DJ.

**Maqsudul Alam (d. 2014)** – scientist and professor at University of Hawaii

**Jalal Alamgir (d. 2011)** – political scientist and professor at University of Massachusetts

**Rais Bhuiyan** – shooting survivor and activist

**Hansen Clarke** – United States Congress in 2010, from Michigan's House of Representatives

**Hasan M. Elahi** – interdisciplinary media artist

**M. Zahid Hasan** – scientist and professor of quantum physics at Princeton University- known for seminal discoveries in quantum physics. Fellow of American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

**Fazle Hussain** – professor of mechanical engineering, and earth science at the University of Houston

**Abul Hussam** – inventor of the Sono arsenic filter

**Omar Ishrak** - business executive, chairman of Intel and Medtronic

**Abdus Suttar Khan** – chemist and jet fuels inventor

**Badrul Khan** – founder of modern e-learning

**Fazlur Rahman Khan** – pioneer of modern structural engineering

**Salman Khan** – founder of Khan Academy, a nonprofit educational organisation Jawed Karim co-founder of YouTube; designed key parts of PayPal

**Imran Khan (businessman)** – Tech investor and entrepreneur. Chief Strategy Officer of Snap Inc, Leading Alibaba Group IPO, leading Snap IPO

**Shuvo Roy** – Co-invention of artificial kidney, medical MEMS, Bangladeshi-American scientist and engineer.

**Mohammad Ataul Karim** – electrical engineer

**Sumaya Kazi** – founder of Sumazi, recognised by BusinessWeek as one of America's Best Young Entrepreneurs.

**Sezan Mahmud** – award-winning novelist

**Shomi Patwary** – designer and music video director

**Iqbal Quadir** – founder of Grameenphone, Bangladesh's largest mobile phone company; headed the MIT Legatum Center

**Kamal Quadir** – entrepreneur; founded two of Bangladesh's key technology companies, CellBazaar and bKash

**Anika Rahman** – CEO of Ms. Foundation for Women

**Badal Roy** – tabla player, percussionist, and recording artist

**Reihan Salam** – conservative American political commentator; blogger at The American Scene; associate editor of The Atlantic Monthly

**Shikhee** – singer; auteur of industrial band Android Lust

**Sanjoy, Bangladeshi** – American musician, electronic music producer and DJ Jai Wolf, electronic music producer

**Asif Azam Siddiqi** – space historian; assistant professor of history at Fordham University

**M. Osman Siddique** – former US ambassador

**Palbasha Siddique** – singer

**Narasingha Sil** – professor of history at Western Oregon University

**Supreme Understanding** – author, publisher, activist and outspoken member of the Nation of Gods and Earths

**Marjana Chowdhury** – Bangladeshi-American model, philanthropist and beauty queen Miss Bangladesh USA

**Monica Yunus** – Bangladeshi-Russian-American operatic soprano

**Anik Khan** - Bangladeshi-American rapper.

## **Bangladeshi Diaspora In USA**

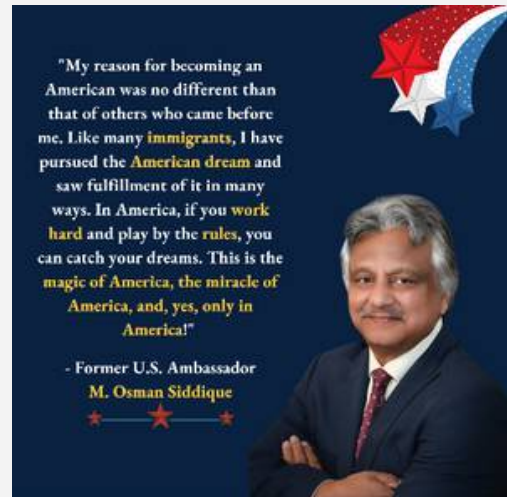


Congressman Hansen Clarke was born to a Bangladeshi immigrant father from Sylhet and a black American mother in Detroit, Michigan in 1957. He represented the 13th District of Michigan and was the first American of Bangladeshi heritage in Congress. During his tenure, he supported legislation to alleviate the financial crisis in Detroit. Congressman Clarke felt that government was for the people, saying "You must be mindful that elected officials come and go, but people, not politicians, always have the power."

Born in East Pakistan M. Osman Siddique is the first #AmericanMuslim and #BangladeshiAmerican to be appointed as an U.S. Ambassador and Chief of Mission o Fiji , Nauru , Tonga , and Tuvalu from 1999 to 2001?

Seeking the promise and opportunity of the United States, he left Bangladesh to complete his academic studies at Indiana University in the heartland of America. After a stint with a Fortune 500 company, he became a prolific entrepreneur and, most proudly, an American citizen. With his wife, Siddique lives in Virginia where he remains intricately involved in the political, economic, and social discourse in the community.

"My reason for becoming an American was no different than that of others who came before me. Like many immigrants, I have pursued the American dream and saw fulfillment of it in many ways. In America, if you work hard and play by the rules, you can catch your dreams. This is the magic of America, the miracle of America, and, yes, only in America!" - Former U.S. Ambassador M. Osman Siddique



## **Bangladesh-origin Shahana Hanif elected to NYC Council**



Bangladesh-origin American Shahana Hanif has become the first Muslim woman to have been elected to the New York City Council.

Shahana, a former City Council employee, won her election on Tuesday in a Brooklyn district that covers Park Slope, Kensington and parts of central Brooklyn, reports The New York Times. She was one of two history-making South Asian candidates to win as well. The other, Shekar Krishnan, won a seat representing Jackson Heights and Elmhurst in Queens.

Shahana, who was born and raised in Brooklyn, said in a tweet, "I'm humbled to be the first Muslim woman elected to the New York City Council and the first woman to represent my district.

"We are building an anti-racist, feminist city. We deserve a city that guarantees equitable education, invests in climate solutions, and makes our immigrant neighbors heard and safe. I'm ready to move our city forward in service of our progressive vision every day," she wrote.

## **First Bangladeshi Mayor Elected in the US**

**The mayor of Millbourne Borough, adjacent to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Mayor, Mahabubul Tayub**







## **Bangladeshi-American Sheikh Rahman became the first immigrant ever elected to the Georgia Senate of United States**

Sheikh Rahman of Bangladesh origin has been elected as Georgia state senator for the second term in the United States election 2020. He was elected unopposed from the Democratic Party.

## **Bangladeshi Nina Ahmed Auditor General of Pennsylvania.**

Nina Ahmed, a US citizen of Bangladeshi origin, has been elected Auditor General of the US state of Pennsylvania.



## **Bangladeshi-origin Soma Syed to become Queens County civil court judge**

Bangladeshi-American Soma Syed is all set to become a civil court judge in Queens County, New York City. Syed has worked as an attorney for over 17 years, volunteering hundreds of hours to help Queens residents with housing, immigration, unemployment, and other issues.

She is the chairperson of the NYSBA Lawyer Referral and Information Service and the immediate past president of the Queens County Women's Bar Association.

She moved to New York City from Bangladesh when she was 12 years old, dreaming of one day being an attorney. Syed attended IS 238, Jamaica High School, and City College of New York before getting her JD from Albany Law School.



## **Bangladeshi origin Abul B Khan elected State Representative in New Hampshire**



Bangladeshi origin American Abul B Khan has been elected House of Representative at New Hampshire State in USA under the ticket of Republican at the 2020 national elections.

Abul B Khan was born at Vandaria of Pirojpur in Bangladesh. He set for USA in 1981.

In addition to the presidential election in the United States, elections for various positions have been held. Four candidates of Bangladeshi origin have taken part in it.

Among them is Abul B Khan of the Republican Party of Bangladeshi descent in the state of New Hampshire.

## **Durreen Shahnaz, a Bangladeshi-American investment banker-turned-entrepreneur, professor, and speaker, for making it on the Forbes 50 Over 50 list!**

Born in Bangladesh and educated in the U.S., Shahnaz started her career on Wall Street in the late '80s and saw firsthand how the financial markets can change lives and how vast wealth were not reaching the world's women and decided to do something about it. She went on to win the Asia Game Changer Award in 2016 and received the Oslo Business for Peace Award in 2017.



## BANGLADESHI-AMERICAN GETS KEY ROLE IN BIDEN ADMINISTRATION



Bangladeshi-American, Kazi Sabeel Rahman, has been appointed to a key position in the administration of US President Joe Biden. Sabeel has been named Senior Counselor at the Office of Information & Regulatory Affairs in the Biden administration.

### Bangladeshi-American Zayn Siddique senior aide to White House deputy chief of staff.

He has also served as a law clerk to Justice Elena Kagan of the US Supreme Court, Judge David Tatel of the US Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, and Judge Dean Pregerson of the US District Court for the Central District of California.



### Khandakar Abdullah has become the first Bangladeshi to be promoted to the post of captain in the New York Police Department (NYPD).



**Captain, Khandakar Abdullah,**

America, the Dreamland – ‘of liberty and justice for all.’ The less fortunate regardless of race and religion, wealthy or poor, and the People from around the globe; everyone gets their fair share in United States of American. New ‘American History’ being written everyday one way or other. Immigrants are betting life to reach America just for the dignity of life- enjoy freedom, economic emancipation through hard work, ensuring better future for children. All are contributing to the society-building ‘America’ through their hard work with dignity and respect. None but the one and only America yet is the country people embrace- the ‘land of the free and the home of the brave.’ Communities being built, the rainbow of hope shines in society. Bangladeshi community is growing as well and much faster here in US than expected. Their nameplate has been earned in every field of the society. Science & technology, Business or Politics- they have footsteps everywhere. Even in the White House key position.

Currently, Three Bangladeshi Americans are serving as Captain in the New York finest. Captain Khandakar Abdullah, Captain Parul Ahmed and Captain Karam Chowdhury proudly serving the New York City Police department along with around 500 Bangladeshi American New York city Police officer and near about 2000 traffic agent, school safety agent and other civilian members of the department.



**Captain Karam Chowdhury**

Captain Karam Chowdhury has distinguished himself during his 15 years of law enforcement career. He was born in Bangladesh and immigrated to the United States in 1993 at an early age. Capt. Chowdhury knew that with hard work and dedication, anyone can achieve the American dream. Capt. Chowdhury knew that being a minority would have its challenges in school and in the career he chose. He graduated from Newtown High School in 1998 and graduated from Brooklyn College with a Bachelor degree in Science in 2002



**Lt. Shamsul Haque** for becoming the first South Asian and first Bangladeshi to achieve the rank of Lt Commander in the Detective Squad of NYPD. He was promoted during a ceremony at NYPD's Police Academy in Queens, New York last week. We thank you for being a part of history and strengthening ties between our two great nations!



### Sergeant Nessa,

NYPD PSA 4's Sergeant Nessa, the first Bangladeshi female sergeant. At the age of 21, she immigrated to the U.S. from Bangladesh. Eventually she joined the NYPD and became the first #BangladeshiAmerican female Sergeant.



# The Embassy of Bangladesh in Washington DC

Bangladesh Embassy in Washington DC Celebrates 50th Anniversary of Independence and National Day

## **US President Biden and Secretary of State Bilken issue congratulatory messages**

The Embassy of Bangladesh in Washington DC has celebrated the 50th Anniversary of Independence and National Day of Bangladesh with due respect and enthusiasm. At the beginning of the day's program, Bangladesh Ambassador to the United States M. Shahidul Islam, along with the Guest of Honour, State Department's Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs, Ervin Massinga, officially hoisted the national flag of Bangladesh. Later, the Ambassador and the Guest of Honour placed a floral wreath at the bust of the Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. After playing of the national anthems of Bangladesh and the United States, a video message by the Prime Minister Shaikh Hasina was screened. Afterward, the Ambassador and the Guest of Honour delivered their speeches.

Ambassador Shahidul Islam paid deep homage to the architect of independent Bangladesh, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, and to the valiant freedom fighters who gave their lives for the cause of Independence. He expressed deep appreciation for the sustained humanitarian assistance and political support of the United States to the persecuted Rohingya population of Myanmar. He urged the United States to lead the international community to find a durable solution to the long-standing Rohingya crisis before it becomes a security threat for the entire Indo-Pacific region.

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Ervin Massinga extended greeting to the government and people of Bangladesh. He said that the USA sees Bangladesh as an important economic and security partner in the Indo Pacific. He added, "Bangladesh has established itself as a leading voice on how climate change solutions must protect the most vulnerable. This leadership will contribute to a successful COP26."

In the second part of the program, the messages from President Md Abdul Hamid, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Foreign Minister Dr. A.K. Abdul Momen, and State Minister for Foreign Affairs Md Shahriar Alam were read out. The day's program ended with a pleasant cultural program participated by the members of the Embassy family.

On this auspicious occasion, the US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken has issued a Press Statement congratulating the people of Bangladesh. "As we work together toward a safe and secure region and a healthy and prosperous future, we recognize the remarkable contributions Bangladesh has made to global development," Blinken said in the statement.

Earlier, the US President Joe Biden sent a congratulatory message to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Biden said that Bangladesh's hosting of one million Rohingyas is an example to the world of humanity and generosity. He also said that the United States would continue to be a steadfast partner in finding a durable solution to the crisis.







**Independence and National Day of Bangladesh**  
**ERVIN MASSINGA, SENIOR ADVISOR**  
**BUREAU OF SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIAN AFFAIRS**  
*As Prepared*



It is an honor to speak to you today on this momentous occasion of Bangladesh's 50th anniversary of independence. On behalf of the U.S. Department of State, I would like to extend my best wishes on Bangladesh's Golden Jubilee.

The United States and Bangladesh both asserted their independence through hard-fought struggles, and the United States has been a friend to Bangladesh for nearly 50 years. We have worked together to deliver greater prosperity to both our nations and expand our relationship on multiple fronts including democracy, development, trade, and security. From the very beginnings of Bangladeshi independence, our countries invested in people-to-people and humanitarian ties that bind us to this day. We are proud of the partnership we have built over decades of collaboration.

As we shared commonalities in our earliest days, we will continue to build upon our commitment to democratic values and human rights as we work together to address some of the most challenging regional and global issues, from the Rohingya humanitarian crisis to maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific region. As demonstrated by President Biden's letter to Prime Minister Hasina and the early calls from Secretary Blinken and Special Envoy Kerry to Foreign Minister Momen, we see Bangladesh as an important economic and security partner in the Indo-Pacific Region. Over the last year, our economic and security ties have deepened, and we look forward to continuing to strengthen our partnership in key areas of cooperation such as energy, information technology, and infrastructure.

We also look forward to working together to address the challenge of climate change. As the president of the Climate Vulnerable Forum and the "Vulnerable Twenty" Group of Finance Ministers, Bangladesh has established itself as a leading voice on how climate change solutions must protect the most vulnerable. This leadership will contribute to a successful COP26.

We celebrate Bangladesh's many great achievements as an independent nation, and we look forward to an even brighter future. **Thank you.**



## **"Bangladesh: A Development Success Story" CSIS holds Webinar in Washington DC**

Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), a leading think tank based in Washington DC, hosted an event titled "Bangladesh: A Development Success Story" on 25 October 2021. CSIS invited Ambassador of Bangladesh M. Shahidul Islam to deliver the keynote speech on the development theme of the event. Daniel F. Runde, Senior Vice President of CSIS, former U.S. Ambassador to Bangladesh Ambassador Dan Mozena, former Foreign Secretary Ambassador Farooq Sobhan, former President of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) Rubana Huq and Managing Director, BRAC Enterprises Tamara Hasan Abed took part as panel discussants at the event.

Ambassador M Shahidul Islam highlighted in his speech the most remarkable economic and social transformation taken place during the last one decade under the prudent leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. He added that Bangladesh has successfully translated economic growth into social progress and the country has notably advanced its human and social development indicators including health, education, and demographic outcomes. He appreciated the role of the USA for being a consistent development partner in the development journey of Bangladesh.

Ambassador Farooq Sobhan noted that a country that is roughly the same size as Iowa, Bangladesh has attained self-sufficiency in food production and feeding its 180 million people. Bangladesh was 98% dependent on foreign aid in 1971 that has gradually decreased to 3%, he noted. Referring to the recent IMF report that said Bangladesh will have a \$500 billion plus economy by 2025, the former foreign Secretary attributed these increases to: A robust private sector; the growth of the garment industries; a thriving NGO network; and the improvement of female education and employment.

Former BGMEA President, Rubana Huq, described Bangladesh as akin to a phoenix, in that it always rises from the ashes. She noted the resilience of the private sector, the thriving NGO network, and good governance as the reasons behind the success of the country. BRAC MD Tamara Abed mentioned that Bangladesh's population density was an asset for the country, as it has aided in the delivery of social programs, mobile intervention, financial inclusion, and microfinance.

Former US Ambassador to Bangladesh Dan Mozena shared his firsthand experience of working with the dynamic people who are the driving force of the economy. He observed that the people-driven success was led by the government of Bangladesh and supported by partners like the U.S. He also appreciated the hardwork of the Bangladeshi people, where he believed women and girls contribute in a big manner.

The panel members agreed that Bangladesh has been inordinately successful in facilitating economic and social progress, especially when compared to other South Asian nations and highlighted the sound government policies, increased rates of literacy, increased involvement of women in the workforce, and the growth of the garment district as contributors to this progress. Vice President of CSIS Dan Runde expressed hope that he would continue to work with the Embassy in disseminating the positive stories of Bangladesh as many countries can learn from this example. A big number of participants joined the webinar and discussed various development aspects of Bangladesh.







Prime Minister's Private Industry and Investment Adviser Salman Fazlur Rahman has sought the US Senators' support to further strengthen Bangladesh-US relations. He made the urge at a meeting with Chairman of the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations Senator Bob Menendez at Senate Hurt Office Building, Washington DC, The advisor briefed the senator on the impressive socio-economic development that has taken place in Bangladesh during the last 12 years under the dynamic and visionary leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Senator Menendez noted with appreciation Bangladesh's economic growth and social progress under the leadership of Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. The senator also underscored the importance of upholding labor rights and workers' safety side by side economic progress.

Salman apprised the senator about various new initiatives taken at the behest of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to further improve labor rights and workers' safety. The meeting was also attended by Senior Secretary of Finance Division Abdur Rouf Talukder and Bangladesh Ambassador to the United States M Shahidul Islam. Rahman is currently visiting the USA as the leader of a high-level delegation in connection with the Bangladesh Investment Roadshow in major US cities.



BGMEA President Faruque Hassan and Vice President Miran Ali met with Marcia Stephens Bloom Bernicat, Senior Official for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment of the U.S. Department of State and Acting Assistant Secretary for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, in Washington D.C.

Ambassador of Bangladesh to the USA M Shahidul Islam and Director of Giant Group Sharmeen Hassan Tithi were also present on the occasion.

The BGMEA President thanked Marcia Bernicat for her role in strengthening the relations between Bangladesh and the USA during her tenure as the Ambassador of the USA to Bangladesh.

Terming Marcia Bernicat as a good friend and well-wisher of Bangladesh, Faruque Hassan requested her support and cooperation to change the narrative of Bangladesh readymade garment industry in the USA as she was closely involved with the development and transformation of Bangladesh garment industry into a safe and sustainable one.

She was also requested to share the positive development and stories about the RMG industry she witnessed during her stay in Dhaka with key personnel in the US government and relevant stakeholders.

The BGMEA President expressed hope that Marcia Bernicat would continue her support to promote Bangladesh and its interests in the US.



## Bangladesh stands out in economic progress despite COVID-19 and Rohingya crisis, say speakers at a Webinar in Washington DC

At a Webinar in Washington, D.C., speakers praised the impressive economic growth that Bangladesh has registered in recent years despite various challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic and the Rohingya crisis. The Webinar titled “Bangladeshi perspectives on regional economic cooperation” was organized by the leading U.S. think tank Atlantic Council on 18 November 2021, in partnership with the Bangladesh Embassy in Washington, D.C.

Bangladesh Ambassador to the United States M Shahidul Islam delivered a keynote speech on the theme of the event and took part in a moderated discussion and a Q&A session. Senior advisor of Atlantic Council's South Asia Center and former U.S. Ambassador to Fiji, Mr. Osman Siddique, moderated the event.

Ambassador M Shahidul Islam, in his remarks, stated about the Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's vision for transforming the country into a connectivity hub in South Asia to foster economic cooperation and people to people contact in the region. He also highlighted Bangladesh's proactive role to support cooperation among the regional countries in areas such as power and energy, COVID-19 collaboration, and climate change. The Ambassador also shared his thoughts about the possible role and relevance of the U.S. to promote economic integration of South Asia.

During the Q&A, Ambassador Shahidul Islam responded to questions from the Moderator and the audience about Bangladesh perspectives on QUAD, RCEP, free-trade zone among the Asian countries, sharing of Teesta water, and border killings in the Bangladesh-India border, among others. In this regard, the Ambassador mentioned that Bangladesh welcomes any regional initiatives that support her development aspirations and bring greater good for the region and beyond. He also stated that Bangladesh maintains friendly relations with all countries of the world, including its neighbors, and believes in resolving any bilateral issues through dialogues and negotiations. During the discussion, the Ambassador termed the Rohingya crisis as a big challenge for the region that has stood in the way of greater integration of South and Southeast Asian economies.

In his closing remarks, Moderator Osman Siddique highlighted the tremendous socio-economic development that Bangladesh has achieved since her independence by comparing some of the economic indicators between the past and the present.

Bangladesh Ambassador Shahidul Islam participated in a similar Webinar on the Rohingya issue organized by the Atlantic Council on 27 October 2021.



## Embassy of Bangladesh in Washington D.C launches e-passport services

The Embassy of Bangladesh in Washington D.C has introduced the electronic passport (e-passport) services today for catering to the needs of Bangladeshi diaspora in the USA. Ambassador of Bangladesh M Shahidul Islam and Secretary of Security Services Division of the Home Ministry Md. Mokabbir Hossain jointly inaugurated the services at the Embassy in Washington.

Secretary of Security Services Division Md. Mokabbir Hossain while speaking in the event, stated that e-passport being the latest technology leaves no chance of fraudulence and hence it will be appreciated by all countries. He highlighted that many developed countries have not yet been able to implement this e-passport system and Bangladesh is the first in South Asia to do so. The Secretary also mentioned that synchronizing with the e-passport system, the government has already established e-Gates in the international airports of Dhaka, Chittagong, and Sylhet which will ease the immigration procedures of passengers.

Bangladesh Ambassador to the USA underscored the visionary leadership of the Honorable Prime Minister for successful implementation of e-passport service as another landmark event of her attaining “Digital Bangladesh”. He hoped that the introduction of e-passports, in the year of 50th anniversary of our independence and Birth Centenary of our Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, would reduce the sufferings of Bangladeshi diaspora living all over the world. He also stated that as pledged by the Government, the progression of this service from hand-written to electronic took a short span of time. He emphasized the effective coordination between the Department of Immigration and Passport (DIP) and the missions abroad for rendering optimum services to the Bangladesh diaspora. The Ambassador thanked the Security Services Division and Department of Immigration and Passport (DIP) for considering the commencement of e-passport services at the Embassy of Bangladesh in Washington D.C as well as two Consulate General offices in New York and Los Angeles at the initial phase of introducing the new system.

Project Director of e-Passport project, Brigadier General Mr. Saidur Rahman Khan noted that after the inauguration of the e-passport system by the Honorable Prime Minister on 22 January 2021, Department of Immigration and Passport (DIP) has already distributed 10 lakh e-passports in the country. He also mentioned that all the passport offices of the country were brought under the e-passport system at the end of June 2021 and now the system is being extended to Bangladesh missions abroad.

The electronic passport (e-passport) system was officially launched by receiving two application forms by two applicants. It may be mentioned that the e-passport system was earlier inaugurated in the New York Consulate on 10 September and the Embassy of Bangladesh in Washington is the fourth in line after introducing it in Berlin and Athens.



## The US praises Bangladesh's Peacekeeping Forces and Humanitarian Operations

The Embassy of Bangladesh in Washington DC hosted a reception to celebrate the Armed Forces Day on 22 November 2021. Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Shaikh Abdul Hannan, who is now on an official visit to the USA was present as the Chief Guest at this event. The US side was represented by Secretary of the Air Force Frank Kendall.

Ambassador of Bangladesh to the USA M Shahidul Islam paid deep tribute to the architect of Bangladesh, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, and recalled the bravery and supreme sacrifice of the valiant freedom fighters - both military and civilians. He highlighted the role Bangladesh Armed Forces has played in the Government's efforts to fight the Covid-19 pandemic. Ambassador Islam noted with satisfaction the multifaceted cooperation between the armed forces of Bangladesh and the United States – in terms of UN peacekeeping operations, sharing of knowledge and experiences, training, procurement and exchange of visits, etc.

Speaking as guest of honor at the 50th Armed Forces Day reception at the Bangabandhu Auditorium of Bangladesh Embassy in Washington, DC, US Air Force Secretary also praised Bangladesh Army's peacekeeping and humanitarian operations that have earned global acclamation. He also remarked that the US and Bangladesh shared similar views on global norms regarding access to space, exploration, and research. Air Chief Marshal Shaikh Abdul Hannan underscored the friendly and cooperative relationship between the US Armed Forces and Bangladesh Armed Forces that is reflected in their regular engagements in various bilateral and multilateral fora. He expressed hope that his visit would further strengthen the long-lasting ties between the two countries.

Defence Attaches from a number of countries, Diplomats, senior officials from the Pentagon, Department of State, and other US organizations, Bangladeshi diaspora and Embassy officials attended the event. Defense Attaché Brigadier General Md Shahedul Islam welcomed the guests at the reception and thanked the USA for the support and cooperation extended that is mutually beneficial for the two countries.





## **Worker's Safety Remains Top Priority of Bangladesh Government: Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi**

Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi, MP said that vaccination of the workers is the top priority of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government. He said this in a meeting with Walmart Vice President Paul Dyck at the Embassy of Bangladesh in Washington DC.

The commerce minister, who led the Bangladesh delegation to the Magic Las Vegas 2021 trade show, made a brief stopover at Washington DC to participate in a trade roundtable organized by McLarty Associates.

The commerce minister said that the government and the factory owners were working hand in hand to vaccinate the garment workers each day. He added that the government hopes to vaccinate 5 million workers in the ready-made garment sector within a month and a half. He highlighted the government's efforts and the factories' preparedness to ensure safety of the workers in the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic. He also expressed hope that in the next six months, more than 60 percent of the total population of Bangladesh will be vaccinated.

The Walmart Vice President said that with the improvement of the COVID 19 situation in the USA, Walmart is now ready to explore and source more from abroad. Apart from the ready-made garment products, the Minister encouraged Walmart to buy leather goods, pharmaceuticals, light engineering items including bicycles, and plastic products from Bangladesh.

Over the luncheon roundtable, Chairman of Bangladesh Shrimp and Fish Foundation Syed Mahmudul Huq highlighted the need to position the black tigers as a premium shrimp in the US market by ensuring that modern production capabilities are in place and that overseas markets' food safety and traceability requirements are consistently met. The meeting highlighted the need for retaining long-term demand of Bangladeshi tiger shrimps by ensuring that our aquaculture products are third-party certified as being responsibly produced. It was decided that Bangladesh Shrimp and Fish Foundation and the Embassy of Bangladesh in Washington DC will work together to retain and enhance market share of Bangladeshi tiger shrimps in the USA.

Among others, Bangladesh Ambassador to the USA M. Shahidul Islam, Senior Adviser of McLarty Associates Ambassador Teresita Schaffer, Senior Director of Walmart Ms. Sarah Thorn, and other officers from Commerce Ministry and Embassy of Bangladesh in Washington DC were present at the meeting.

Earlier, the commerce minister placed floral wreaths at the bust of the Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, at the Embassy of Bangladesh in Washington DC.



## Bangladesh Encourages US Companies to Invest in Offshore Oil and Gas Explorations

Bangladesh Prime Minister's Adviser for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Dr. Tawfiq-E-Elahi Chowdhury, BB, held a meeting with the Senior officials of American multinational oil and gas corporation ExxonMobil on 30 July in the Embassy of Bangladesh in Washington DC.

The Adviser highlighted the crucial role of the US companies in the energy sector in Bangladesh and welcomed their further contributions in these areas. In the meeting, He encouraged the officials to invest in oil and gas explorations in the country, particularly the offshore ones. He highlighted the need for investment in building storage facilities for renewable energy in Bangladesh. He mentioned that having a balanced mix of energy sources is critical for Bangladesh and its development.

The Adviser acknowledged that the companies like ExxonMobil, who are looking for LNG businesses in Bangladesh, require guarantying hedges against the price volatilities. He asked ExxonMobil to expedite deep-sea exploration and to invest in upgrading transmission networks and land-based facilities.

ExxonMobil expressed keen interest in working with Bangladesh to support Bangladesh's current development pace and ensure access to energy. Bangladesh Ambassador to the USA M Shahidul Islam and senior officials from Bangladesh Embassy and ExxonMobil were present.

Later, an MOU was signed between Summit Oil and Shipping Co. Ltd and Commonwealth LNG at the presence of at the Bangabandhu Auditorium of the Embassy of Bangladesh in Washington DC in the presence of Adviser Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury. The Advisor welcomed the signing of the MOU as an important step towards further expanding the existing energy cooperation between Bangladesh and the United States.

Earlier in the morning of 29 July, the Adviser visited the Embassy of Bangladesh in Washington DC and placed floral wreaths at the bust of the Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.





## BD Finance signs MoU with US-based Sovereign Infrastructure Group

### Washington DC: 08 April 2021

Today, Bangladesh Finance and Investment Company signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with US-based Sovereign Infrastructure Group (SIG), a global financing company that works with project sponsors and Multilateral Development Banks, and national and local governments.

Among others, Bangladesh Ambassador to the US M. Shahidul Islam and Chairman of BD Finance Manwar Hossain witnessed the signing of the MoU in the Embassy auditorium. The MoU is expected to mobilize up to US\$2 bn for infrastructural projects in Bangladesh in the next two years. This development took place following the launching of the US-Bangladesh Business Council by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on 06 April.

Kyeser Hamid, Managing Director and CEO of BD Finance, and Lerry J. Knox, Co-Founder and CEO of SIG, signed the memorandum on behalf of their respective parties. According to the MoU, SIG will invest, in both debt and equity, in government and PPP projects, SEZs, and EPZs in Bangladesh, while BD Finance will work as representative of the SIG in Bangladesh.

In the signing ceremony, SIG CEO Lerry Knox said, "Bangladesh is currently on track to invest an impressive \$417 billion in infrastructure by 2040. Through our engagement with BD Finance, SIG hopes to play a leading role with our partners to support the country's tremendous growth." In his remarks, BD Finance Chairman Manwar Hossain said, "this is the largest foreign investment effort by a financial institution in Bangladesh. This is our way of celebrating the 50th anniversary of Bangladesh's Independence."

Ambassador Shahidul Islam expressed hope that the MoU, by setting a purposeful collaboration framework, would benefit Bangladeshi clients as well as both SIG and BD Finance.

DMD of Anwar Group of Industries, Waez Hossain, Vice President of SIG Benjamin Levine and Professor Michael McDermott of Georgetown University also spoke on the occasion.





## **Uphold the spirit of Liberation War while pursuing the national interest: says Minister for Liberation War Affairs**

**Washington D.C.  
26 November 2021**

The Minister for Liberation War Affairs AKM Mozammel Haque, MP emphasized upholding the spirit of the war of independence while pursuing national interests of Bangladesh. He made this call while speaking at an Interaction Session with the officials of the Embassy of Bangladesh in Washington, D.C. today (26 November 2021). Bangladesh Ambassador to the United States M. Shahidul Islam presided over the Session.

Minister Mozammel Haque elaborated the long history of struggles by the people of then East Pakistan and highlighted the leadership role of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in all phases of struggle, which ultimately led to the emergence of an independent Bangladesh. He recalled Bangabandhu's great statesmanship and diplomatic acumen in positioning the newly independent Bangladesh as a sovereign, peace-loving, non-aligned country in the global arena. The Minister also highlighted various initiatives and measures undertaken by the Government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to ensure welfare of the freedom fighters and their family members.

Ambassador M Shahidul Islam, in his remarks, paid deep homage to the Father of the Nation and recalled Bangabandhu's great leadership roles in every struggle of the Bengalee nation. The Ambassador provided a brief account of the Embassy's engagements with Bangladeshi diaspora to enhance people-to-people contact between Bangladesh and the USA and also to let the new generation of Bangladeshi Americans know more about the glorious history of Bangladesh's independence.

Earlier, the Minister for Liberation War Affairs laid a floral wreath at the bust of the Father of the Nation at the Embassy premises. He also handed over a cheque for gratuity payment to a retired Embassy official Delwar Hossain, a valiant freedom fighter who actively took part in the war of liberation.

Minister AKM Mozammel Haque, MP is currently visiting the USA to attend the FOBANA Conference as the Chief Guest.



## **Bangladesh is a regional leader and an economic force in South Asia' - says U.S. State Department's senior official Washington D.C.**

' The Embassy of Bangladesh in Washington DC has celebrated the 50th Victory Day of Bangladesh with due respect and enthusiasm. The day's program started at 05:00 am by joining the live telecast of the oath-taking ceremony administered by the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. The Embassy officials also took the oath together with the prime minister and the whole nation.

Bangladesh Ambassador to the United States M. Shahidul Islam, along with the Bangladeshi diplomats and members of the staff of the Embassy, officially hoisted the national flag of Bangladesh in the Embassy premises. Earlier, the Ambassador placed a floral wreath at the bust of the Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The messages on the occasion of the victory day from President Md Abdul Hamid, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Foreign Minister Dr. A.K. Abdul Momen, and State Minister for Foreign Affairs Md Shahriar Alam were read out by the senior officers of the Embassy.

In the second part of the program held in the evening, after playing the national anthems of Bangladesh and the United States, Bangladesh Ambassador and the Guest of Honour, Dean Thompson, US State Department's Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, delivered their speeches.

Ambassador M Shahidul Islam, in his welcome remarks, recalled with profound reverence the greatest Bengali of all time and the founding Father of Bangladesh Bangabandhu, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who led the entire nation in the emergence of an independent and sovereign Bangladesh. He also paid deep homage to three million martyrs for their supreme sacrifices and two hundred thousand women dishonored during the Liberation War.

"We share the same vision for a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific region. The Government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is willing to work closely with the Biden administration by setting aside any differences – if there is any. I believe our countries will be able to strengthen and advance the relationship further in the spirit of friendship and partnership," Ambassador Shahidul Islam said.

The U.S. State Department's Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Dean Thompson, said, "in the coming year 2022, the USA and Bangladesh will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of formal diplomatic ties. As we look forward to that important milestone, I am pleased and proud of the progress US-Bangladesh relationship made over the last 50 years." "A regional leader and an economic force in South Asia, as Bangladesh continues an impressive journey, let us work together to realize many opportunities in the next 50 years our partnership will surely bring," he also said.

The day's program ended with a pleasant cultural soiree. The Embassy family members, Bangladesh community members and State Department representatives performed at the event.





Foreign Minister Dr. A.K. Momen MP inaugurated ' Bangla Corner ' at the Queens Public Library in New York on the occasion of Mujib Year and the Golden Jubilee of Bangladesh's Independence

' Bangla Corner ' has been installed at the Queens Public Library in New York with the initiative of Bangladesh Consulate General, New York and in cooperation with the Queens Public Library as part of the celebration of ' Mujib Year ' and the Golden Jubilee of Bangladesh's Independence. Foreign Minister Dr. A.K. is currently visiting New York for the 76th session of the UN General Assembly. Abdul Momen, MP inaugurated the corner by being present as a chief guest at the event organized on the occasion of installation of 'Bangla Corner'. At this time, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs (Senior Secretary) Masud Bin Momen, New York State Senator John C were present at the event. Lou, Queensborough President Donovan Richards and Queens Public Library President and CEO Dennis M. Walcott. Also, members and journalists of Bangladeshi-American community including the heroic freedom fighters attended the program.



Foreign Minister visits Bangladesh Consulate General New York: Advice to maintain public friendly consular services

Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr. AK Abdul Momen visited Bangladesh Consulate General, New York today and witnessed the standards of various types of consular services. At this time Shamim Osman, a member of parliament of Narayanganj-4 seat was present.

After arriving at the consulate, all the officials and staff of the consulate including Consul General Sadia Faizunnesa welcomed her. During the inspection he gave directions to the consulate officers. As part of the current government's expatriate friendly diplomacy, he advised the consulate officials to ensure high quality service to the expatriate Bangladeshis.





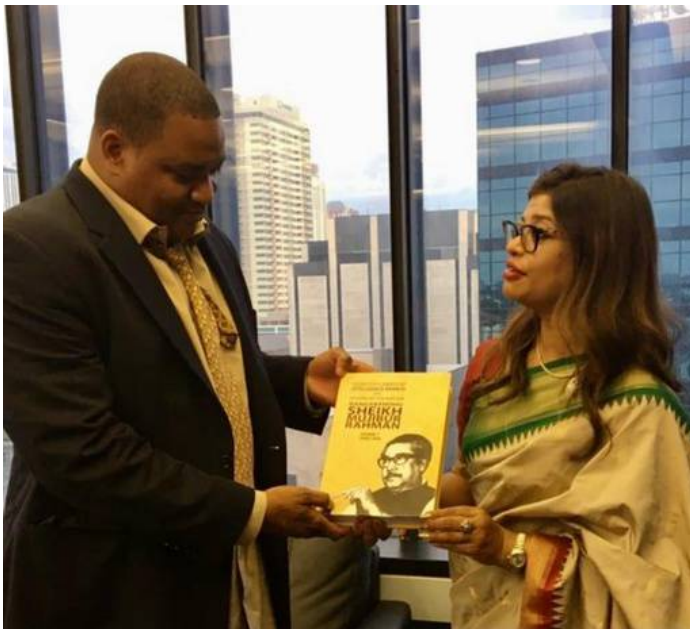
## Bangladesh Consulate General in New York visited Land Minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury.

The Minister of Land Ministry of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Saifuzzaman Chowdhury visited the Bangladesh Consulate General, New York today. Consul General Sadia Faizunnesa along with other officials and staff of the Consulate welcomed her.



Atlantic City Mayor pays deep respect to Bangabandhu in " Mujib Year ".

In a meeting with Mayor Marty Small Sr at Atlantic City Hall on 2 June 2021 Consul General highlighted the outstanding contribution of the father of the greatest Bengali nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the fighter and sacrificial life history of Bangabandhu in the establishment of independent and sovereign Bangladesh. The Consul General also said that the world renowned leader Bangabandhu, who is dedicated to achieving the rights of the exploited, deprived and oppressed people, has come to the dignity of Vishwabandhu today.



The Golden Jubilee of Independence Celebration with utmost respect and deep love at the New York Bangladesh Consulate General. The Golden Jubilee of Independence was celebrated today on 26th March 2021 with utmost respect and deep love at the Bangladesh Consulate General of New York. Consulate organized a virtual golden jubilee ceremony with the participation of Bangladeshi-American community including ambassadors / consul general and heroic freedom fighters in New York as social distancing activities continue in the context of COVID-19 outbreak. On this occasion, US Congresswoman Grace Meng in her speech noted that she will continue to work towards strengthening Bangladesh-US friendly relations and reiterated her commitment to protecting the interests of Bangladesh-Americans in New York that she is a true friend of Bangladesh.

New York State Senator John Lu remembers father of the nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman with deep respect in a video message. Commemorating the visit to the Father of the Nation's residence two years ago, Senator John Lu refers to the brutal murder of all the martyrs including Bangabandhu on 15 August as a barbaric chapter in history. On the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of Independence, he felicitated the Bangladeshi-Americans living in New York by wishing all Bangladeshis.

Bangladeshi-American dignified Queensboro President Donovan Richards respectfully remembering the father of the nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on the golden anniversary of Bangladesh's independence, said that because of Bangabandhu's strong political wisdom and sensible leadership, Bangladesh has made a place on the map of the world as an independent sovereign country through the nine months bloody liberation war. Referring to the brutal murder of Bangabandhu in 1975, he said Bangabandhu had established the war-crushed Bangladesh on a firm foundation in a short time. He pays respect to the great freedom fighters. He called the social, cultural and economic contributions of the Bangladeshi-American community living in Queens very important.

Assemblywomen Catalina Cruz and International Affairs Commissioner of New York City Mayor's Office Penny Abewardana greet Bangladesh's Golden Jubilee of Independence in separate video message.

Apart from Bangladesh, the Consul Generals of New York India, Sweden, Estonia, Columbia and Thailand gave their greetings through video messages on the Golden Jubilee of Bangladesh's Independence. Famous US filmmaker Lair Levino, who received " Friends of Liberation War Honor " by the government of Bangladesh for his extraordinary contribution to the freedom war, also addressed at a virtual event. In addition, heroic freedom fighters, including Bangladeshi-American communities, residing in New York and the surrounding states gave speech at the event.

In addition, the charming cultural program was presented with the participation of the Bangladeshi-American community in the virtual program.





The Consulate General of New York Bangladesh and India celebrated the 101th birthday of the father of the nation in New Jersey with the sound of " Joy Bangla, Joy Bangabandhu. The 101th birthday and ' Mujibur Rahman's father of the nation was celebrated with the slogan " Joy Bangla, Joy Bangabandhu " at the Anand Mandir premises of New York with the joint participation of Bangladesh and the Consulate General of India on 17 March 2021 At the beginning of the program Consul General Sadia Faizunnesa and Consul General of India Randhir Joshwal jointly presented bouquets in the portrait of the Father of the Nation. After that the national anthem of Bangladesh, India and the United States was presented. The Consul General of Bangladesh and India jointly planted a cherry tree in Anand Mandir premises to pay tribute to his memory on the occasion of the birth centenary of the father of the nation.

As a result of the visionary political leadership of Hon ' ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Bangladesh is today one of the first five fastest growing economies in the world, the Consul General said Bangladesh has achieved unprecedented growth in all indicators of development including the economy. Consul General Sadia Faizunnesa said Bangladesh is moving forward under the leadership of Hon ' ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the daughter of Bangabandhu, the development of infrastructure including education, health, women empowerment, poverty alleviation, increase in average and ongoing mega projects.

Consul General of India Randhir Joshwal pays deep tribute to the father of the nation on the occasion of the 101th birth anniversary of the father of the nation and 'Mujib year'. He praises the recent economic-social development of Bangladesh. He seriously addressed the recent visit to Dhaka by state / government heads of South Asian countries including India on the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of Independence in Bangladesh and the birth centenary of the Father of the Nation. On the golden jubilee of Bangladesh's independence and on the 50th anniversary of Bangladesh-India bilateral relations, the Consul General of India congratulated. He ended his speech with the slogan " Joy Bangla, Joy Bangabandhu





17 March by Bangladesh Consulate General, New York on the occasion of 101th birth anniversary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.  
The first episode program organized on 2021 in the morning.



'Historical 7th March' celebration at Bangladesh Consulate General in New York. The Bangladesh Consulate General of New York celebrates 'Historic 7th March' today with due dignity. Today is an unforgettable day in the history of the freedom fight and freedom of the Bengali nation.

At the beginning of the event, Consul General Sadia Faizunnisa performed the National Anthem with all the officers and staff of the Consulate to honor the National Flag. On this occasion, a minute of silence was observed in the memory of all the martyred freedom fighters including the father of the nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in the program organized by the Consulate. Consul General Sadia Faizunnisa and other members of the consulate presented the book in the portrait of the father of the nation. On this occasion, the words of His Excellency President and Hon ' ble Prime Minister sent from Dhaka were recited and discussed on the importance of the day and the importance of the historic 7th March speech. At the end of the discussion, the video of the historical speech given by Bangabandhu on 7th March was shown. Also wishing for the forgiveness of the souls of the father of the nation, other martyred members of his family and martyred brave freedom fighters and special prayers and prayers for the continued prosperity of the country.





Great Martyr's Day and International Mother Tongue Day " celebrated at Bangladesh Consulate General in New York The Bangladesh Consulate General of New York celebrated " Great Martyr's Day and International Mother Tongue Day " with due dignity. The day was observed at the consulate in view of the situation of the global epidemic Corona Virus in New York and following the rules and regulations of the welcome country.

At the beginning of the ceremony, Consul General Sadia Faizunnisa offered flowers to all the officers and staff of the Consulate in memory of the language martyrs and a minute of silence was held to pay tribute to their memory. On the occasion of the day, the words of His Excellency President, Honorable Prime Minister, Honorable Foreign Minister and Honorable Foreign Minister were recited. The event showcases a documentary and video message of Hon ' ble Foreign Minister on the Great Martyr's Day and International Mother Tongue Day. Consul General and other members of the Consulate participated in the discussion organized on the occasion of the day.





## **Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Roadshow in USA**

'The Rise of Bengal Tiger: Potentials of Trade & Investment in Bangladesh' on Investor Summit: "Bangladesh Capital Markets at New York"

Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission organized a day-long 'Investor Summit: Bangladesh Capital Markets' at the Intercontinental New York Barclay hotel, New York. It is a part of the ongoing roadshow on Bangladesh Economy and Capital Markets titled 'The Rise of Bengal Tiger: Potentials of Trade & Investment in Bangladesh' in the USA. It was the beginning program of the roadshow demonstrating Bangladesh Capital markets and Trade & Investment opportunities globally. After successful completion in Dubai earlier this year, BSEC is conducting the roadshow in the USA now.



### **The Rise of Bengal Tiger: Potentials of Trade & Investment in Bangladesh' on Stakeholders Meeting at Washington DC.**

Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission organized a 'Stakeholders Meeting' at The Ritz-Carlton hotel at Washington DC, the capital city of USA. It was the 2nd visiting city of the ongoing roadshow on Bangladesh Economy and Capital Markets titled 'The Rise of Bengal Tiger: Potentials of Trade & Investment in Bangladesh' in the USA. BSEC organized the meeting to showcase Bangladesh Capital markets and Trade & Investment opportunities where prominent stakeholders of Bangladesh residing in the USA participated.





## The Rise of Bengal Tiger: Potentials of Trade & Investment in Bangladesh' Investor Summit: "Bangladesh Capital Markets at Los Angeles"

Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission organized 'Investor Summit: Bangladesh Capital Markets' at the Intercontinental Los Angeles Downtown, Los Angeles, California. It is the 3rd visiting city of the ongoing roadshow on Bangladesh Economy and Capital Markets titled 'The Rise of Bengal Tiger: Potentials of Trade & Investment in Bangladesh' in the USA. BSEC is organizing a series of roadshows to demonstrate Bangladesh Capital markets and Trade & Investment opportunities globally. After successful completion in Dubai earlier this year, BSEC is conducting the roadshow in the USA now.



The Rise of Bengal Tiger: Potentials of Trade & Investment in Bangladesh' on US-Bangladesh Tech investment Summit at the Silicon Valley, USA.

Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission organized 'US-Bangladesh Tech Investment Summit' at the Intercontinental Hyatt Regency Santa Clara, Silicon Valley, Santa Clara. The summit was the concluding event of the 8-day long roadshow on Bangladesh Economy and Capital Markets titled 'The Rise of Bengal Tiger: Potentials of Trade & Investment in Bangladesh' in the USA that started on 26th July. BSEC is organizing a series of roadshows to demonstrate Bangladesh Capital markets and Trade & Investment opportunities globally. After successful completion in Dubai earlier this year, BSEC has also successfully completed the roadshow in the USA with this summit on investment in the ICT sector.



# U.S ECONOMY CURRENT SITUATION

The U.S. is a country of 50 states covering a vast swath of North America, with Alaska in the northwest and Hawaii extending the nation's presence into the Pacific Ocean. Major Atlantic Coast cities are New York, a global finance and culture center, and capital Washington, DC. Midwestern metropolis Chicago is known for influential architecture and on the west coast, Los Angeles' Hollywood is famed for filmmaking.

BEA produces some of the most closely watched economic statistics that influence decisions of government officials, business people, and individuals. These statistics provide a comprehensive, up-to-date picture of the U.S. economy. The data on this page are drawn from featured BEA economic accounts.

- **Gross domestic product:** 20.94 trillion USD (2020) World Bank
- **Unemployment rate:** 5.2% (Aug 2021)
- **Currency:** United States Dollar
- **GDP growth rate:** -3.5% annual change (2020) World Bank
- **GDP per capita:** 63,543.58 USD (2020) World Bank
- **Gross national income:** 21.69 trillion PPP dollars (2019) World Bank
- **GNI per capita:** 66,060 PPP dollars (2019) World Bank

## U.S. ECONOMY AT A GLANCE

### Perspective from the BEA Accounts

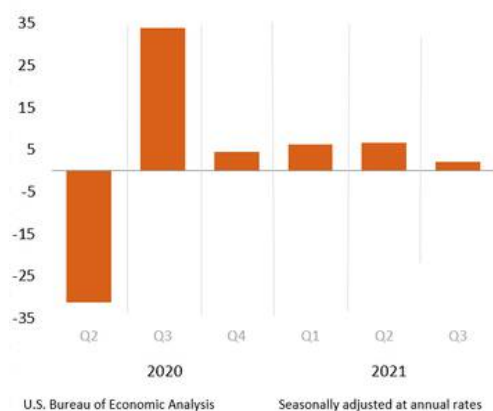
BEA produces some of the most closely watched economic statistics that influence decisions of government officials, business people, and individuals. These statistics provide a comprehensive, up-to-date picture of the U.S. economy. The data on this page are drawn from featured BEA economic accounts.

**Gross Domestic Product, Third Quarter 2021 (Second Estimate);  
Corporate Profits, Third Quarter 2021 (Preliminary Estimate)**

**Q3 2021 (2nd) +2.1% | Q2 2021 (3rd) +6.7%**

Real gross domestic product (GDP) increased at an annual rate of 2.1 percent in the third quarter of 2021, following an increase of 6.7 percent in the second quarter. The increase was revised up 0.1 percentage point from the "advance" estimate released in October. The deceleration in real GDP in the third quarter was led by a slowdown in consumer spending. A resurgence of COVID-19 cases resulted in new restrictions and delays in the reopening of establishments in some parts of the country. In the third quarter, government assistance payments in the form of forgivable loans to businesses, grants to state and local governments, and social benefits to households all decreased.

Real GDP: Percent change from preceding quarter

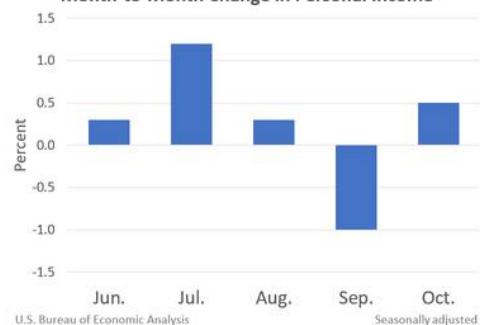


### Personal Income and Outlays, October 2021

**Oct 2021 - 0.5 % | Sept 2021 - (-1.0 %)**

Personal income increased \$93.4 billion, or 0.5 percent at a monthly rate, while consumer spending increased \$214.3 billion, or 1.3 percent, in October. The increase in personal income primarily reflected an increase in compensation of employees. The personal saving rate (that is, personal saving as a percentage of disposable personal income) was 7.3 percent in October, compared with 8.2 percent in September.

Month-to-Month Change in Personal Income





## Industry Economic Accounts: International Economic Accounts

### U.S. International Transactions, Second Quarter 2021

Q2 2021	-\$190.3B
Q1 2021	-\$189.4B

The U.S. current account deficit widened by \$0.9 billion, or 0.5 percent, to \$190.3 billion in the second quarter of 2021, according to statistics from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. The revised first quarter deficit was \$189.4 billion. The second quarter deficit was 3.3 percent of current dollar gross domestic product, down from 3.4 percent in the first quarter.

Current Release: September 21, 2021

Next Release: December 21, 2021



### U.S. International Investment Position, Second Quarter 2021

End of 2nd quarter 2021:	-\$15.42 trillion
End of 1st quarter 2021:	-\$14.30 trillion

The U.S. net international investment position, the difference between U.S. residents' foreign financial assets and liabilities, was -\$15.42 trillion at the end of the second quarter of 2021, according to statistics released by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). Assets totaled \$34.20 trillion and liabilities were \$49.62 trillion. At the end of the first quarter, the net investment position was -\$14.30 trillion.

Current Release: September 28, 2021

Next Release: December 30, 2021



### U.S. International Trade in Goods and Services, October 2021

October 2021	-\$67.1B
September 2021	-\$81.4B

The U.S. monthly international trade deficit decreased in October 2021 according to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and the U.S. Census Bureau. The deficit decreased from \$81.4 billion in September (revised) to \$67.1 billion in October. as exports

\$80.9

services surplus and trade deficit in October to \$67.1 billion.

Current Release: December 7, 2021

Next release: January 6, 2022



## Regional Economic Accounts

### Gross Domestic Product by State, 2nd Quarter 2021

Real gross domestic product (GDP) increased in all 50 states and the District of Columbia in the second quarter of 2021, as real GDP for the nation increased at an annual rate of 6.7 percent. The percent change in real GDP in the second quarter ranged from 9.7 percent in Nevada to 1.8 percent in Alaska.

Current Release: October 1, 2021

Next Release: December 23, 2021



## Personal Income by State, 2nd Quarter 2021

State personal income decreased 21.8 percent at an annual rate in the second quarter of 2021 after increasing 56.9 percent in the first quarter. In the second quarter of 2021, the decrease in transfer receipts was the leading contributor to personal income declines in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The percent change in personal income across all states ranged from -10.1 percent in the District of Columbia to -34.0 percent in West Virginia.

 Current Release

Curr





## BANGLADESH ECONOMIC CURRENT SITUATION

Bangladesh has an impressive track record of growth and poverty reduction. It has been among the fastest growing economies in the world over the past decade, supported by a demographic dividend, strong ready-made garment (RMG) exports, and stable macroeconomic conditions. Continued recovery in exports and consumption will help growth rates pick up to 6.4 percent in fiscal year 2021-22.

Bangladesh tells the world a remarkable story of poverty reduction and development. From being one of the poorest nations at birth in 1971 with per capita GDP tenth lowest in the world, Bangladesh reached lower-middle-income status in 2015. It is on track to graduate from the UN's Least Developed Countries (LDC) list in 2026. Poverty declined from 43.5 percent in 1991 to 14.3 percent in 2016, based on the international poverty line of \$1.90 a day (using 2011 Purchasing Power Parity exchange rate). Moreover, human development outcomes improved along many dimensions.

- **Gross domestic product:** 324.2 billion USD (2020) World Bank
- **GDP per capita:** 1,968.79 USD (2020) World Bank
- **GNI per capita:** 5,310 PPP dollars (2020) World Bank
- **GDP growth rate:** 2.4% annual change (2020) World Bank
- **Gross national income:** 875 billion PPP dollars (2020) World Bank
- **Internet users:** 12.9% of the population (2019) World Bank
- **Currency:** Bangladeshi Taka

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### General:

- Bangladesh, like many other countries of the world, was struggling with the number of infections and a fear of new COVID-19 wave during the quarter under review. However, reducing coronavirus incidence gradually made majority
- Businesses hopeful about the recovery of the economy. Despite the recovery trend in the economy, there are emerging challenges to be faced due to recent price rise of essential commodities, decreasing remittances, any new COVID wave, and slow vaccine rollout.

### Agriculture:

- Full data on agricultural production for the first quarter of the current fiscal year (Q1 of FY22) are not available yet, as the harvesting of the three major crops – aman, aus and boro - will be spread over the coming months of the fiscal year. However, the sector employed about 39 per cent of Bangladesh's labor force and accounted for about 13.47 per cent of GDP in FY21. The favorable natural factors and strong government support in terms of timely availability of inputs and finance notwithstanding, the sector achieved a lower rate of growth of 3.45 per cent in FY21 compared to 4.59 per cent in FY20.
- To tackle the economic losses caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the government has created a refinance scheme of Tk.50.0 billion for the agriculture sector. Accordingly, the Bangladesh Bank (BB) on 14 April 2020 launched a Tk.50.0 billion stimulus fund for agricultural farmers (small and medium) in rural areas, including that of poultry, dairy sector and livestock sector. The BB later extended loan disbursement limit to 40 per cent for a single sector which was 30 per cent in the previous instruction. According to the latest data from the BB, Tk.42.95 billion or 85.90 per cent of loan was disbursed and the tenure of the scheme ended in June 2021.

### Industry:

- Data on the country's industry sector are yet to be available for the quarter under review (Q1 of FY22). However, due to ongoing COVID-19 pandemic though it is decreasing now, the sector registered a growth of 6.12 per cent in FY21, which was 3.25 per cent in FY20. Besides, the share of the industry sector in GDP increased slightly by 0.21 percentage points to 34.99 per cent in FY21 from 34.78 per cent in FY20. In the broad industry sector, the manufacturing sub-sector registered a growth of 5.77 per cent in FY21, compared to the previous fiscal year's 1.80 per cent. Within manufacturing, the large and medium scale industries sub-sector performed comparatively better than in the previous fiscal, growing at 6.56 per cent in FY21, compared to 1.39 per cent in FY20. The small scale manufacturing industries grew very lower rate at 1.73 per cent in FY21 against 3.96 per cent in FY20. However, the share of the manufacturing sub-sector in GDP increased to 23.66 per cent in FY21 from 23.59 per cent in the previous fiscal year. Within manufacturing, the share of the large and medium scale industries sub-sector in GDP rose to 19.92 per cent in FY21 from 19.72 per cent in FY20, and the share of small scale industries sub-sector in GDP, however, decreased to 3.73 per cent from 3.87 per cent. Initially, the central bank provided

Tk.300 billion of the first phase for large industries and service sector business entities on 5 April 2020. Additional Tk.30 billion was added to this package to pay wages of workers for July 2020. Then working capital facilities were enhanced further to Tk.400 billion from the previous Tk.330 billion as the second phase. The second phase started after 98 per cent implementation of the first phase as on 30 June 2021, according to BB. Implementation process of the second phase of the stimulus package has started with the inclusion of foreign-owned companies operating in Bangladesh. The central bank has already sent limits to all scheduled banks, like the previous year, for execution of the second phase to help revamp the coronavirus-hit economy.

#### **Power:**

- The power supply situation improved in the quarter under review but the demand for power shot up, too. The countrywide electricity generation on 30 September 2021 was 8,827 megawatt (MW) during the day peak and was 10,254 MW during evening peak. However, the installed and the derated (present) capacity were 22,031 MW and 20,934 MW, respectively. The demand for electricity was 12,623 MW and load shedding remained zero.

#### **Services:**

- Full data are not yet available to enable an understanding of how the broad service sector has fared in the quarter under review (Q1 of FY22). However, many of these have already started their activities during COVID-19 pandemic and have contributed to boost Bangladesh economy except education. Services play a key role in increasing productivity, efficiency and effectiveness in the economy. The sector, however, recorded a higher growth of 5.61 per cent in FY21, compared to 4.16 per cent in the previous fiscal year. Also the share of the services sector in GDP increased to 51.53 per cent in FY21 from 51.48 per cent in FY20.

#### **Money and Capital Market:**

- Broad money (M2) recorded a lower growth of 11.20 per cent at the end of September 2021 compared to 13.92 per cent growth achieved at the end of September 2020. Domestic credit, on the other hand, grew by 10.20 per cent at the end of September 2021, while a higher rate of growth of 12.65 per cent was recorded at the end of September 2020. Among components of domestic credit, private sector credit registered 8.77 per cent growth during the period between September 2020 and September 2021, compared with a higher growth of 9.48 per cent during the period between September 2019 and September 2020. Public sector credit recorded a growth of 17.42 per cent at the end of September 2021, compared with a much higher growth of 32.04 per cent at the end of September 2020. Within public sector credit, credit to government (net) recorded a growth of 19.45 per cent, and credit to other public sector recorded a growth of 4.29 per cent, during the period under review.
- Total liquid assets of scheduled banks stood lower at Tk.445,566 crore at the end of September 2021, compared with Tk.449,088 crore at the end of June 2021. The minimum liquidity requirement of the scheduled banks was Tk.225,883 crore at the end of September 2021. The scheduled banks thus held an excess liquidity of Tk.219,683 crore as of end September 2021.
- The interest rate spread between the weighted average interest rate on lending and deposits of all banks decreased slightly to 3.16 per cent in September 2021 from 3.19 per cent in the previous month (August 2021) as banks' lending rates remained the same as 7.24 per cent in these two months but deposit rate increased to 4.08 per cent in September from 4.05 per cent in August 2021.
- Data on industrial term loans are available up to the fourth quarter (April-June) of the just concluded fiscal year (FY21). According to BB data, the disbursement of industrial term loans during April-June of FY21 stood at Tk.19,431 crore, which was 11.81 per cent higher than the amount of Tk.17,379 crore disbursed during the immediate previous quarter (January-March) of FY21. On the other hand, the recovery of industrial term loans decreased by 12.77 per cent to Tk.14,735 crore during April-June of FY21, compared to Tk.16,893 crore recovered in the previous quarter (January-March of FY21).
- Data on cottage, micro, small and medium enterprise (CMSME) loans are not available beyond April-June of FY21. According to BB data, disbursement of CMSME loans by all banks and non-bank financial institutions (NBFIs) increased by 48.91 per cent to Tk.41,788.73 crore during April-June of FY21 from Tk.28,063.71 crore in April-June of FY20. On the other hand, recovery of CMSME loans during April-June of FY21 increased, year-on-year, by 47.03 per cent to Tk.42,000.03 crore from Tk.28,565.96 crore. The outstanding position of CMSME loans by all banks and NBFIs was higher by 9.64 per cent at the end of June of FY21 compared to that of end June of FY20. Outstanding CMSME loans as percentage of total outstanding loans stood at 20.39 at the end of June of FY21 which was 22.60 of end June of FY20. Under one of the stimulus packages, CMSMEs get loan of Tk.200.0 billion as working capital. Until 30 June 2021, the banks and NBFIs disbursed only Tk.153.87 billion or 76.94 per cent of the total Tk.200.0 billion among 97,814 COVID-19 affected CMSMEs. This package mainly helps the agroprocessing industries, fisheries, poultry, and dairy farms.



- The disbursement of agricultural credit and non-farm rural credit by all scheduled banks in July-September of FY22 stood at Tk.5,211 crore, an increase of 11.23 per cent from Tk.4,684 crore in July-September of FY21. On the other hand, the recovery of agricultural credit and non-farm rural credit decreased by 11.02 per cent to Tk.5,586 crore in July-September of FY22, compared to Tk.6,278 crore in the corresponding period of the previous fiscal year.
- Capital markets in both Dhaka and Chattogram performed well on 30 September 2021, the last trading day of the quarter under review. Stocks extended the rally for the fourth straight sessions to hit a fresh high with turnover crossing Tk.25 billion-mark, thanks to the increased optimism among investors.

#### **Public Finance:**

- The tax revenue collection by the National Board of Revenue (NBR), year-on-year, grew by 16.72 per cent in JulySeptember of FY22, thanks to economic reopening after the COVID-19 pandemic induced lockdown. The NBR collected Tk.583.51 billion in Q1 of FY22 compared to Tk.499.91 billion in Q1 of FY21. However, the revenue collection lagged behind by Tk.63.44 billion or 9.81 per cent against the strategic target of Tk.646.95 billion set for Q1 of FY22.
- During the corona-induced primary slowdown, the implementation rate of the Annual Development Programme (ADP) was slightly better in the first quarter (JulySeptember) of FY22 compared to the corresponding quarter of the previous fiscal year. According to the Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED) recent data, 58 ministries and divisions could spend Tk.195.59 billion or 8.26 per cent of the total allocation of Tk.2,367.93 billion in July-September of FY22 compared to 8.06 per cent or Tk.173.01 billion in the total outlays of Tk.2,146.11 billion in July-September of FY21.

#### **Export and Import:**

- Export earnings (merchandise) in July-September of FY22 increased by 11.37 per cent to US\$11.02 billion from US\$9.90 billion in the corresponding months of the previous fiscal year, thanks to the highest ever single month export earnings of US\$4.17 billion in the last month of the first quarter (September 2021). Export earnings in September 2021 year-on-year registered a 37.96 per cent growth riding on the ready made garment (RMG) amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The September earnings also surpassed the target (US\$2.99 billion) set for the month by 39.46 per cent. Overall export earnings in July-September of FY22 also surpassed the strategic target (US\$10.43 billion) by 5.66 per cent.
- Import payments (C&F) during July-September of FY22 stood at US\$18.72 billion, which was 47.55 per cent higher than import payments during the corresponding three months of FY21 amid restoration of business and economic activities in the country's major export destinations due to vaccination drives in those areas. Moreover, in the last three months i.e., July, August and September 2021, imports increased year-on-year by 21.59 per cent, 72.96 per cent and 50.35 per cent, respectively.

#### **Remittances:**

- The inflow of remittances in July-September of FY22 decreased significantly by 19.45 per cent to US\$5.41 billion from US\$6.71 billion in the corresponding months of the previous fiscal year. This decline in remittances is a reflection of the second wave of COVID-19 pandemic situation when many Bangladeshi migrants lost their jobs, some migrants were laid off by their companies. Besides, many others returned home and couldn't go back due to suspended international flights and unmet vaccination requirements.

#### **Foreign Aid:**

- The disbursement of foreign aid increased by US\$0.50 billion or 34.72 per cent to US\$1.94 billion in July- September of FY22 compared to US\$1.44 billion in July-September of FY21. On the other hand, development partners' commitments of foreign aid however decreased by 88.21 percent to US\$94.03 million in July-September of FY22 from US\$797.46 million in July-September of FY21.

**Foreign Aid:**

- The net foreign direct investment (FDI) in July-September of FY22 increased by 49.34 per cent to US\$339 million from US\$227 million in the corresponding three months of the previous fiscal year (FY21), according to the BB's balance of payments data. On the other hand, the gross inflow of FDI during the period under review also increased year-on-year by 9.01 per cent to US\$847 million from US\$777 million. FDI inflow in Bangladesh is low compared to that in many countries at similar level of development.

**Balance of Payments (BoP):**

- The country's trade deficit widened over threefold in Q1 of FY22 for higher import-payment pressure, casting its cascading impacts on the economy. Country's trade imbalance with the rest of the world increased by US\$4.46 billion to US\$6.50 billion during July-September of FY22 from US\$2.04 billion in the corresponding period of FY21. Meanwhile, country's current account deficit deteriorated further in Q1 of FY22 following higher import payment obligations and lower inflow of remittances. However, the financial account's surplus improved further following higher inflows of medium-and long-term loans as well as aid flows, according to the BB data. The financial account's surplus stood at US\$1.93 billion in Q1 of FY22 from US\$0.51 billion deficit in Q1 of FY21. Higher inflow of net foreign direct investment (FDI) also helped achieve higher growth of the financial account surplus, the net FDI rose year-on-year by 49.34 per cent during the period under review. The balance of payments (BoP) posted a negative balance of US\$810 million in the first three months of the current fiscal year against a positive balance of US\$3.10 billion in the corresponding three months of the previous fiscal year.

**Exchange Rate & Foreign Exchange Reserve:**

- Between end-June of FY21 and end-September of FY22, the value of Taka depreciated by 0.82 per cent in terms of US dollar. 23.
- Amidst the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, Bangladesh Bank's gross foreign exchange reserves stood at US\$46.20 billion (with ACU liability of US\$887.13million) as of end September 2021, compared to US\$39.31billion (with ACU liability of US\$672.36million) as of end September 2020.

**Inflation:**

- The point-to-point inflation over the last couple of months increased as per the latest BBS data. The general point to point inflation rate rose by 0.05 percentage points to 5.59 per cent in September 2021 from 5.54 per cent in the immediate past month (August 2021) and the inflation in August also increased by 0.18 percentage points from July 2021. A year ago, in September 2020, the inflation rate was higher at 5.97 per cent.
- Both food and non-food inflation rates increased in September 2021 compared to the previous month (August). Food inflation increased by 0.05 percentage points to 5.21 per cent in September 2021 from 5.16 per cent in August 2021. Year-on-year, food inflation was higher at 6.50 per cent. On the other hand, non-food price inflation increased by 0.06 percentage points to 5.19 per cent in September 2021 from 5.13 per cent in the previous month. Year-on-year, non-food price inflation, however, was lower at 5.12 per cent.



# **US Congress Introduces Resolution Commemorating the 50th anniversary of Bangladesh's independence**

**“Sheikh Mujibur Rahman declared Bangladesh's independence from West Pakistan on March 26, 1971,” says US Congress Resolution**

**Washington DC, March 18, 2021.**

A resolution (H. Res. 239) titled “Commemorating the 50th anniversary of Bangladesh's independence” has been introduced in the US House of Representatives on 16 March 2021. Democratic Congresswomen Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (New York) submitted the resolution in the first session of the 117th Congress. The resolution has been referred to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. Three democratic representatives Rashida Tlaib (Michigan), Jimmy Gomez (California), and Chair of House Committee on Foreign Affairs Gregory W. Meeks (New York) co-sponsored the resolution.

The House of Representatives, through the resolution, congratulated the people of Bangladesh on the 50th anniversary of their independence; hailed the courage of our valiant freedom fighters in the struggle for independence and democracy, and lauded the contributions of Bangladesh for hosting Rohingyas fleeing genocide in Myanmar.

The resolution mentioned that “on March 26, 1971, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman declared Bangladesh's independence from West Pakistan.”

The Congress resolution cited Senator Edward Kennedy's speech on February 14, 1972, at the University of Dhaka, where he said, “the struggle of the people of Bangladesh...evokes the greatest memories of our past.”

The resolution highlighted the history of Bangladesh's long struggle for self-determination, culminating in the War of Independence in 1971.



**Gregory W Meeks**



**Jimmy Gomez**



**Alexandria**



**Rashida Tlaib**

**US President Joe Biden has expressed his optimism that the Dhaka-Washington partnership would flourish in the next 50 years and beyond.**



In a letter to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, he said Bangladeshis and Americans alike share the ideals of democracy, equality, and respect for human rights; and these elements are the foundation for healthy, secure, and prosperous societies.

"I am confident our partnership will continue to flourish for the next 50 years and beyond," he said in the letter, marking a 50-year milestone in the bilateral relationship between Bangladesh and the US.

The US president said the drive, resourcefulness, and innovation of Bangladeshis - rebuilding after the 1971 War of Liberation and now forging a path of economic growth and development - serve as a model for the rest of the world.

"We are proud of our partnership on development, economic growth and counterterrorism," Biden said, adding that the two countries work together to address the climate crisis, help the Rohingya survivors of genocide and support UN peace keeping worldwide.

He mentioned the two nations are connected through familial, academic and commercial ties since 1958, when Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman participated in a 30-day exchange programme in the US.

"Our defense cooperation is stronger than ever," the US president said, adding that the Bangladesh Coast Guard and Navy are invaluable partners in ensuring a free and open Indo-Pacific region, contributing to the regional effort to end the trafficking of people and illicit drugs.

Biden said the US and Bangladesh together met the challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic while Washington has donated more than 61 million vaccine doses and provided over 131 million US dollars in assistance to Dhaka.

Blinken Writes Momen

Meanwhile, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has said the relations between Bangladesh and the United States will reach new heights in the next 50 years.

In a letter sent to Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen, Secretary Blinken described the celebrations of 50 years of diplomatic relations between Bangladesh and the United States as a milestone in the two countries' growing partnership.

The close cooperation between the two countries in protecting people from the scourge of terrorism, human trafficking and illicit drug trafficking is commendable, Blinken said. Highlighting key issues in the Biden administration's foreign policy, Blinken welcomed the continuation of the dialogue on labor rights, religious freedom, human rights and good governance, highlighting key issues in the Biden administration's foreign policy.

The United States and Bangladesh will continue to work closely on strengthening economic ties, investing in development, addressing the challenges of climate change, regional security, peacekeeping operations, and finding a lasting solution to the Rohingya crisis, he mentioned in the letter.

Ties Grow Deeper, More Intertwined. Meanwhile, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has said the ties between Bangladeshis and Americans grow deeper and more intertwined with every generation as the two countries celebrate five decades of friendship.

"I look forward to seeing what our people will build together in the decades ahead as we continue to follow that star of freedom," he said in a video message celebrating five decades of diplomatic ties between Bangladesh and the United States.

Secretary Blinken thanked Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen, who is now in Washington to have a bilateral meeting with his US counterpart; and Bangladesh Ambassador to the US M Shahidul Islam "for being the latest stewards of this crucial" relationship. For generations, Secretary Blinken said, Bangladeshis have made tremendous contributions to the United States. He cited the example of the iconic Sears Tower to refer to what the Bangladeshis and Americans can achieve together.



In 1952, Fazlur Rahman Khan was the first Bangladeshi to receive the Fulbright Scholarship to study in the US, completed his PhD and two master's degrees in structural engineering and mechanics, the US Secretary of State mentioned. Later, he joined an architecture firm in Chicago where he designed an office building for Sears Corporation.

"In 1973, just a year after our countries established diplomatic relations, the iconic Sears Tower was finished in downtown Chicago. Since then, the tower has defined a classic American skyline and it represents just one manifestation of what Americans and Bangladeshis can build together," Blinken said. 50 years later, he said the two countries collaborate virtually on every issue that matters to their people.

Secretary Blinken said the two countries have forged partnership to improve public health, strengthening local health systems, bringing down maternal mortality in Bangladesh by two thirds over the last two decades and fighting Covid-19 with 61 million doses of safe, effective vaccines provided by the United States to Bangladeshis. In 2021, Secretary Blinken said, the US bought more Bangladeshi products than any other country did, representing some US\$ 8.3 billion. "We encourage Bangladesh to make progress on workers' rights to deepen our robust economic partnership."

He mentioned about joint efforts in tackling climate crisis, Bangladesh's contributions to peacekeeping and Rohingya crisis noting that the Rohingyas have fled genocide and crimes against humanity committed by the military in Myanmar.





"We commend Bangladesh for hosting nearly 1 million refugees and for continuing to offer support for those efforts as we have since the crisis started," Secretary Blinken said.

He also said, "We are tackling the climate crisis together, strengthening the resilience of the communities that are already affected by the rising sea level and more severe storms, investing in clean energy and protecting wetlands and forests in Bangladesh for future generations."

Blinken said the US and Bangladesh address humanitarian conflicts and crises together, from responding to natural disasters to supporting Bangladesh's role as one of the largest contributors to the UN peacekeeping operations.

He recalled that in February 1972, Senator Ted Kennedy visited Bangladesh and spoke to the students at University of Dhaka and the values that tied the peoples of the two countries – the similar struggles for independence, love for liberty and journeys to follow the star of freedom.

The United States recognized Bangladesh on April 4, 1972, in a press statement from Secretary of State William Rogers.

In addition, Herbert Spivack, the principal U.S. officer in Dhaka, delivered a message from President Richard Nixon to Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman informing him that the United States government wished to establish diplomatic relations at the ambassadorial level.



## Secretary of State Blinken, Foreign Minister Momen agree to enhance bilateral ties for next 50 years

**ANTONY J. BLINKEN, SECRETARY OF STATE  
THOMAS JEFFERSON ROOM, WASHINGTON, D.C.**



Foreign Minister Dr A K Abdul Momen MP and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken held bilateral meeting yesterday in Washington DC, on the very day of the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of bilateral relations between two countries. Two sides discussed the whole gamut of US-Bangladesh bilateral relations.

The Bangladesh Foreign Minister thanked the United States for providing more than 61 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine so far, the highest received by any country from the US. Referring to the congratulatory letter from US President Joe Biden to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, he appreciated that the warmth of the message. Stating that Bangladesh has made huge socioeconomic progress in the last 50 years, Foreign Minister Momen termed the US as an all-time friend of Bangladesh in its journey towards development as the largest trading partner as well as the largest investor in accumulated term. He appreciated that the US has finally determined that genocide took place in Myanmar in 2017, and opined that the US should suspend GSP and reimpose sanctions on Myanmar in order to put pressure so that Myanmar resolves the crisis.

Dr Abdul Momen opined that the US need to diversify investment portfolio, and can consider investing in the infrastructure sector in Bangladesh. He depicted Bangladesh's potential in terms of young population including around 700 thousand IT professionals; and also proposed that there may be joint investment proposals in pharmaceutical sectors. He also urged for assistance from the US in developing blue economy, opining that this may enable two countries to work together in building a secure Indo-Pacific region.

US Secretary of State Blinken underscored also on looking forward for next 50 years, with tremendous potentials. He appreciated Bangladesh's leadership in climate actions, generosity towards the Rohingyas, and role in the UN Peacekeeping Mission. He also expressed satisfaction about the cooperation two countries are having in combatting the pandemic. He expressed his satisfaction about the Partnership Dialogue held last month and the upcoming Security Dialogue, and opined that a new momentum has been created. He also thanked Bangladesh for voting in favour of the humanitarian resolution on Ukraine in the UN General Assembly. Regarding the sanctions on RAB, he recognized the agency's important counterterrorism role, but stated that lifting sanctions, resuming training might take time. Secretary Blinken appreciated that Bangladesh is reexamining the Digital Security Act (DSA). Appreciating



ongoing works of the tripartite group on labour rights, he underscored that labour rights issue is an important determinant of Biden Administration's foreign policy. Noting that Bangladesh is not getting development finance from the DFC due to the labour rights issues, he stressed upon resolving all impediments. He positively responded to the proposal of deepening maritime cooperation as two countries have shared goal of free and secure Indo-Pacific.

On labour rights issues, Foreign Minister Momen informed that Bangladesh has formulated a roadmap with the ILO and the EU, and sought for US participation in the process. He also underscored that Bangladesh has done a lot on the safety, resulting that 7 of the top 10 eco-friendly factories are in Bangladesh. Regarding the human rights related issues, he stressed upon the fact that there are some noticeable developments in last four months. He emphasized that Bangladeshi law enforcers need training from the US on rules of engagements, and informed that there is an inbuilt system of inquiry in the RAB, which tracks all allegations; and number of personnel have been penalized. Depicting the context of the creation of RAB in 2004, he underscored that the RAB has played pivotal role in Bangladesh's counter-terrorism efforts; which may be undermined by the sanctions. He also sought for US Secretary of State's attention and assistance for realizing the deportation of Rashed Chowdhury, the convicted killer of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Foreign Minister Momen, during the meeting, declared Bangladesh's acceptance of US proposal to deploy Peace Corps in Bangladesh again. He also requested Secretary Blinken's assistance in expediting the matter of opening Dhaka-New York direct flight. Bangladesh Foreign Minister briefed US Secretary of State on Bhasan Char and requested US assistance for the Rohingyas there. He also underscored the fact that Bangladesh is still a young democracy compared to the US, and wishes work closely with the US in further strengthening the democratic process. Foreign Minister Momen invited Secretary Blinken to visit Bangladesh in near future.



Earlier, Foreign Minister Momen met USAID Administrator Samantha Power. During the meeting, both sides discussed about issues of mutual concern. Bangladesh Foreign Minister thanked the USAID Administrator for agreeing to his request to assist in the project of strengthening the coastal embankments in Bangladesh. Mentionable, a joint feasibility study by the USAID and Bangladesh Government on this would commence soon. The USAID Administrator emphasized that Bangladesh should resolve outstanding labour issues to become eligible for the development finance from the DFC. In this regard, Foreign Minister Momen stressed the implementation of the Roadmap undertaken with ILO and EU. He also emphasized on a stronger consultative mechanism between Bangladesh Government and the USAID on how funds are disbursed. He requested USAID's assistance in establishing forensic labs in Bangladesh, so that litigation time of pending cases reduce. Two sides also discussed in details the political and humanitarian aspects of the Rohingya crisis, and Administrator Power assured of continued US assistance. Regarding Bhasan Char, Foreign Minister Momen requested the US to join the humanitarian assistance there. They also discussed the climate change cooperation and on possible adverse effect of Ukraine crisis.

The USAID Administrator offered more Covid 19 vaccines for Bangladesh which the Foreign Minister appreciated.

The Bangladesh Foreign Minister also met US Senator Chris Van Hollen, President of National Democratic Institute (NDI) Ambassador Derek Mitchell, and Director of New Lines Institute Mr. Azeem Ibrahim. He also attended, as the Chief Guest, in the Reception hosted by the Bangladesh Embassy in Washington DC on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations. USAID Deputy Administrator Isobel Coleman was the Guest of honour.

Isobel Coleman had a separate bilateral meeting with Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen before the reception. During the meeting, Foreign Secretary Momen requested for more US cooperation in combatting human trafficking and illegal migration, as well in in agricultural sector. They also discussed the Rohingya issue in details.



# Bangladesh Embassy - Washington DC

Independence Day, 50th anniversary of Bangladesh-US bilateral ties celebrated in Washington DC.

## PRESS RELEASE



The 52nd Independence and National Day of Bangladesh and the 50th anniversary of bilateral relations between Bangladesh and the USA were celebrated on 4th April in a befitting and festive manner.

The Bangladesh Embassy in Washington D.C. hosted a grand reception to celebrate these historic occasions.

Bangladesh Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen was present at the reception as the Chief Guest, while U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Deputy Administrator Ambassador Isobel Coleman spoke as the Guest of Honour.

Awami League Joint General Secretary Mahbub-ul Alam Hanif, MP, Member of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Nahim Razzaq, MP, were present at the function as the special guests.

The ceremonial part of the program began with playing of the national anthems of Bangladesh and the United States. A video message delivered by US Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken on the 50th anniversary of Bangladesh-US bilateral ties was screened.

In his video message, the US Secretary of State said: "I'm delighted to join you in celebrating the five decades of diplomatic relations between Bangladesh and the United States." Blinken noted that on April 4, 1972, President Richard Nixon sent a letter to Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, establishing diplomatic ties, predicting that the ties and goodwill between our people would grow for the years to come. Secretary Blinken expressed his hope that the ties between Bangladesh and the US would grow deeper in the coming days through enhanced collaboration in the areas of mutual cooperation and stronger people to people connections.



Foreign Minister Dr Abdul Momen, in his speech, reaffirmed that Bangladesh deeply values its partnership with the United States and the two countries share the similar values and principles for upholding democracy and human dignity and adherence to global peace and security. He said the government led by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is committed to create a stronger, durable and ever-flourishing friendship with the USA. Dr Abdul Momen said Bangladesh-USA economic relationship now stands on a sound footing, and Bangladesh nurtures strong trade and business ties with the United States. He said Bangladesh firmly believes that its relationship with the USA will further flourish in the next 50 years. Foreign Minister Dr. Momen thanked the US government for extending support to Bangladesh during the COVID-19 pandemic and for their persistent commitment and continued efforts towards a durable solution of the Rohingya crisis.



USAID Deputy Administrator Isobel Coleman, in her remarks, highly praised Bangladesh's tremendous socioeconomic development and said the people of the country have made it clear that they are capable of reaching the next milestone. Ambassador Isobel Coleman said she looks forward to visiting Bangladesh soon and congratulated the people of Bangladesh who revealed to the world the wonders of a magnificent country. Bangladesh Ambassador Shahidul Islam, in his welcome remarks, stressed on undertaking mutually beneficial programmes, actions and initiatives in the year of 50th anniversary to exhibit the strength of Bangladesh-US relationship and to advance this very important partnership.

The Reception was attended by the members of a high-level delegation from Bangladesh including Foreign Secretary Ambassador Masud Bin Momen and Principal Staff Officer of the Armed Forces Division Lt. Gen. Waker-Uz-Zaman, high representatives of the US government including White House National Security Council Sr. Director Sumona Guha, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Ambassador Kelly Keiderling, USAID Deputy Assistant Administrator Ms. Anjali Kaur, members of diplomatic community, think tanks, business and media representatives, academia and prominent members of Bangladeshis diaspora in the US.

The Chief Guest, the Guest of Honour, the special guests and high representatives of the Bangladesh and the US government joined in a cake cutting at the end of the Reception. A short cultural event with traditional Bangla song, dance drama and poetry was performed at the end of the Reception.



## ISOBEL COLEMAN

**DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR FOR POLICY AND PROGRAMMING  
U.S. Embassy of Bangladesh**

### **DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR ISOBEL COLEMAN ON THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF U.S.-BANGLADESH RELATIONS**

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Deputy Administrator Coleman: Good evening! As-Salaam Alaikum and Ramadan Kareem to those of you celebrating. It is such an honor to celebrate 50 years of partnership between Bangladesh and the United States this evening.

Thank you, Ambassador Islam, for the invitation to speak on this historic occasion. It's great to be together in person to further deepen the important bond between our nations and people. I had the pleasure of serving as one of the U.S. Ambassadors at the UN first with Ambassador Abdul Momen and then with Ambassador Masud bin Momen. It is great to reconnect with both of you again here, in this format, to celebrate this great occasion. The scale of human suffering around the world weighs heavy today. But at the same time, there is extraordinary progress being made in countries such as Bangladesh, and it's important to take moments like this to reflect on and celebrate that progress.

Just a year ago, Bangladesh celebrated its Golden Jubilee of Independence. Fifty years of remarkable achievements for the Bangladeshi people, who've worked and sacrificed to create a strong foundation for lasting peace, prosperity, and the democratic principles that our two countries hold dear.

Bangladeshis are no stranger to adversity: having endured centuries of colonial rule and then a war for liberation marked by atrocities; and devastating natural disasters that have exacerbated extreme poverty and hunger. Yet time and again, the people of Bangladesh have shown a remarkable capacity for resiliency and renewal, and a sense of purpose as challenges arise. Today, Bangladesh is a model for emerging countries worldwide and a critical strategic partner for the United States.

At USAID, we are committed to building on 50 years of development progress for the Bangladeshi people. Over the past five decades, USAID has contributed more than \$7 billion in development and humanitarian assistance to support Bangladesh's development journey. Our assistance—from the American people to the Bangladeshi people—has provided critical support to your efforts to alleviate poverty, drive rapid economic growth, improve food security, cut maternal and child mortality, electrify rural populations, bolster disaster risk reduction, combat climate change and foster development and growth through clean energy, renewable energy and energy efficiency. All of this has helped Bangladesh progress beyond Least Developed Country status.

Over the past several decades, I have written extensively about women's economic empowerment, returning again and again to examples of success from Bangladesh—from the groundbreaking microfinance work of Grameen and BRAC, to the remarkable success in upskilling women in the garment industry. Between 1990 to 2020, Bangladesh's female labor force more than doubled and women as a proportion of the Bangladeshi workforce has grown steadily year after year. Bangladesh recognized early on that investing in women is investing in your country's success.

USAID is proud to provide leadership skills and development training for tens of thousands of women in ready-made garment factories, where women make up the majority of factory workers but still struggle to



attain higher promotions. USAID is supporting greater opportunities for these women to elevate their career paths from working on the factory floor to management and leadership roles. When the COVID-19 pandemic first tore through the world, devastating communities and breaking the capacity of health systems, USAID and our Bangladeshi partners were able to draw upon decades of progress in the health sector. With nearly \$140 million in funding from the United States to fight the pandemic—and end-to-end logistics support for its national vaccination campaign—Bangladesh has been able to rapidly scale the planning and infrastructure needed to protect its people and strengthen health systems for future pandemics.

This pandemic still looms large, and our work is far from over. Over the past year, USAID has supported the delivery of more than 61 million U.S.-donated vaccines, assisting the Government of Bangladesh to fully vaccinate over 95 million people, over half the country's population, and provide a first dose to over 95 percent of the eligible population. Our decades-long partnership to improve public health is especially remarkable, as we recall that Bangladesh has cut maternal and child mortality by two-thirds over the last 50 years. And we're hard at work to protect these gains, taking advantage of this moment to expand access to health care, improve quality of service delivery, and deliver more modern technology to health facilities.

The U.S.-Bangladesh commitment goes beyond public health to address the world's most pressing development issues, including climate change, widespread gender disparities, and a lack of economic opportunity. In some cases, like that of Tahmina Begum, a wife and mother of 6, we are tackling all three at once. Tahmina's northeast village of Birnagar experiences annual rain storms and monsoons that erode the very ground her community inhabits, leaving little to no land to grow food. More than half of the people living in these low-lying areas surrounded by water are classified as poor or extreme poor with high malnutrition.

When her husband fell ill, Tahmina took advantage of a USAID-supported project that promotes gender equity and aims to address malnutrition; she received training to develop a business plan and leverage her skills in sewing and textiles to generate income for her family of seven. With a grant of 3,000 taka and some of her savings, Tahmina bought a sewing machine, which she uses to make and sell clothes. She invests her profits in the cattle-raising and poultry business, and today, she is a leader in her village's savings and loan association, helping other women pool money and take out loans to start business.

Tahmina is one of nearly 384,000 people in Bangladesh to receive financial support and training from USAID and our implementing partner, CARE. More broadly, Bangladesh has facilitated the employment of over three million women in its ready-made garment sector, the country's largest export industry. These kinds of programs and investments contribute to the rapid and widespread economic growth that Bangladesh has seen in recent decades, resulting in the country's selection to progress beyond Least Developed Country status and putting it on track to become an upper-middle income country by 2031—truly astonishing achievements. As you progress to the next stage of your development, we will be right alongside you - ready to overcome new challenges and seize new opportunities together. The people of Bangladesh have made clear: they are capable of reaching this next milestone. Bangladeshis have proven that they can thrive when they are supported by their leaders, which is why USAID is proud to support the government of Bangladesh as it seeks to become even more responsive to their needs.

As you heard Secretary Blinken say, it's the person-to-person relationships between Bangladeshis and Americans that form the unshakeable partnership between our nations. I am honored and thrilled to experience that with you all tonight and I look forward to visiting your country soon.

Let me close by congratulating the people of Bangladesh. You've revealed to the world the wonders of a magnificent country, through trials and renewal, and through your enduring generosity.

USAID, and I, look forward to continuing to build on this strong foundation for decades to come.

## **Bangladesh Embassy, Washington DC**

### **Foreign Minister Momen reiterates Bangladesh's willingness to build close partnership with USA.**

#### **Press Release**



Foreign Minister Dr A K Abdul Momen spent another busy day yesterday (5 April 2022) in his official visit to Washington DC, as he met a couple of US lawmakers and spoke in a number of think tanks in Washington DC. He is accompanied by, among others, parliament members Mahbubul Alam Hanif and Nahim Razzaq, and Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen.

In the morning, Foreign Minister Momen met Senator Chuck Schumer (D-NY), the Majority Leader of the US Senate. During the meeting, he raised the issue of extradition of Rashed Chowdhury, the self-confessed killer of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and sought the Senate Majority Leader's assistance in this regard. The Bangladesh Foreign Minister also called for increased trade and investment of the US in Bangladesh and proposed the Senator to revitalize the Bangladesh Caucus.

Foreign Minister Momen also met Congressman Steve Chabot (R-OH), member of House Foreign Affairs Committee, during which similar discussion took place. He also expressed Bangladesh's expectations that the sanctions on RAB would be withdrawn soon.

The Bangladesh Foreign Minister also attended few events organized by Washington DC-based think tanks. This includes United States Institute of Peace (USIP), Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), and National Bureau of Asian Research (NBR).

During his deliberations, he highlighted the impressive socio-economic progress Bangladesh has made under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, and expressed optimism that US-Bangladesh economic and political relations would further flourish in next 50 years. He also elaborated Bangladesh's efforts to promote and protect human rights and democratic principles, and urged the US government to lift sanctions on RAB and related individuals.

Foreign Minister Momen also joined a meeting with U.S. Chamber of Commerce's US-Bangladesh Business Council on business cooperation. The business meeting was joined by over 20 US company executives engaged in commercial, trade and investment with Bangladesh.

The discussion centered around the growing economic relationship between the two countries, that will set the foundation for the next 50 years of the bilateral relationship as Bangladesh transitions from an "aid-dependent" economy to an "investment-driven" economy.



Pointing out the importance of the US-Bangladesh relationship, Foreign Minister Momen noted that there are key areas of growth where US companies can support Bangladesh. The areas include telecom infrastructure, digital economy, pharmaceuticals, blue economy, information and communication technology, financial technology, and digital payments, he said.

He highlighted that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has allocated a special economic zone for American companies and welcomed their investment to Bangladesh. The Bangladesh Foreign Minister was accompanied by a high-level business delegation from Bangladesh.

The Bangladesh Foreign Minister joined a dinner at "Bangladesh House" hosted by Bangladesh Ambassador to the USA M. Shahidul Islam. The government representatives and civil society members from both the US and Bangladesh, and the members of Bangladeshi Diaspora attended the dinner.

Foreign Minister Momen is scheduled to leave Washington DC today for Miami, Florida, where he would inaugurate the new Consulate General of Bangladesh.



## Deputy Secretary Sherman's Meeting with Bangladesh Foreign Secretary Momen



Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman met with Bangladeshi Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen to recognize the 50th anniversary of U.S.-Bangladesh relations and discuss bilateral economic, commercial, and security collaboration. They also discussed steps to promote security and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific. Deputy Secretary Sherman emphasized the importance of protecting human rights, the rule of law, and freedom of expression.

Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh Ambassador Masud Bin Momen met USAID Deputy Administrator Ms. Isobel Coleman on 5th April 2022 at Embassy of Bangladesh in Washington, DC. They discussed the ways to further strengthen cooperation between USAID and Bangladesh.



Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh Ambassador Masud Bin Momen had a fruitful meeting this morning with Assistant Secretary (Bureau of Population, Refugee & Migration) Ms. Julieta Valls Noyes at State Department in Washington. They discussed in detail issues pertaining to Rohingyas from Myanmar temporarily sheltered in Bangladesh.

## **Bangladesh Embassy, Washington DC.**

### **8th US-Bangladesh Security Dialogue held in Washington, US keen to enhance security cooperation with Bangladesh**

#### **Press Release**

The 8th round of US-Bangladesh Security Dialogue was held in Washington DC yesterday (06 April 2022) at the US Department of State. Foreign Secretary Ambassador Masud Bin Momen and US Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Ambassador Bonnie Denise Jenkins led their respective delegations.

Bangladesh side was also represented by Principal Staff Officer of the Armed Forces Division Lieutenant General Waker-Uz-Zaman, SGP, psc, Secretary of Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief Mr. Md Kamrul Hasan, NDC, Secretary of Law and Justice Division, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Md. Golam Sarwar; and representatives from Prime Minister's Office, Public Security Division, Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism, Ministry of Defence, Bangladesh Police, Border Guard Bangladesh and Bangladesh Coast Guard.

US side was represented by, among others, Assistant Secretary Jessica Lewis and Deputy Assistant Secretary Kelley Keiderling. Foreign Secretary Masud and General Waker-Uz-Zaman also held a separate meeting with the US Under Secretary.

In his opening remarks, Foreign Secretary Masud stated that Bangladesh deeply values its partnership with the USA. The US delegation appreciated strong ties with Bangladesh, which is well reflected in the regular dialogues between two sides, as they opined. The daylong meeting covered areas like UN Peacekeeping, Bangladesh US Security Cooperation including cooperation in military training, maritime security, proposed defence agreements, defence purchase and capacity development etc, regional issues like Rohingya, Indo-Pacific, and counterterrorism and civilian security cooperation.

Two sides had constructive discussions on defence agreements like GSOMIA and ACSA. The US side praised Bangladesh's successes and leadership in UN Peacekeeping Operations. They also expressed





willingness to assist Bangladesh in the modernization and institutional development of its armed forces.

Bangladesh side raised deep concern regarding the sanctions on RAB and individuals, and urged US side to reconsider the decision. Detailed discussion took place on this, during which Bangladesh side highlighted RAB's pivotal role in Bangladesh's fight against terrorism, violent extremism and transnational crimes; and also elaborated on how the sanctions on RAB is unjustified as the personnel do not enjoy any impunity.



In conclusion, the US delegation observed that, after 50 years of the independence, Bangladesh has emerged as a responsible country and is taking part in resolving global crises and problems. Two sides agreed to continue robust cooperation in counterterrorism and transnational crimes. The US also assured about its continued support in building law enforcement and prosecutorial capacity as well as in countering violent extremism. Two sides also discussed on cooperation in aviation safety, with the view to early resumption of Dhaka - New York direct flight. Bangladesh appreciated the robust support received from the US in terms of COVID-19 vaccines.

Two sides agreed to maintain regular contact and to continue the discussion on various issues. The next Security Dialogue would be held next year in Dhaka.





## **Bangladesh Embassy, Washington DC**

### **Bangladesh Foreign Minister meets US lawmakers**

#### **Press Release**

Foreign Minister Dr. AK Abdul Momen, MP, yesterday (6 April) held meetings with two US lawmakers and discussed various issues with them.

The Bangladesh Foreign Minister held separate meetings with Senator Jon Ossoff (Democrat-Georgia); and Congressman Ami Bera (Democrat-California), the Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, Central Asia, and Nonproliferation. The meetings took place at the respective offices of the Senator and the Congressman at the US Capitol.

In his meetings with the US lawmakers, Foreign Minister Momen briefed them on the impressive socioeconomic development that has taken place in Bangladesh under the dynamic and visionary leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. The US lawmakers highly appreciated Bangladesh's tremendous development.

Dr. Momen thankfully acknowledged the strong U.S. humanitarian and political support to Bangladesh in dealing with the Rohingya crisis created by Myanmar by forcibly displacing more than 1.1 million Myanmar nationals from Rakhine State to Bangladesh.



He requested the US lawmakers to persuade Myanmar in all possible ways to create a safe and secure environment in Rakhine State and take back all the forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals temporarily staying in Bangladesh to their homeland in Myanmar.

The US lawmakers commended Bangladesh's generosity in hosting this huge number of Rohingyas and said that they would continue their efforts in this regard.



The Foreign Minister also called for increased trade and investment of the US in Bangladesh. He raised the issue of deportation of Rashed Chowdhury, the self-confessed killer of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, and sought the support of the Senator and the Congressman in this regard.

Seeking the US lawmakers' support on lifting of US sanctions on RAB, the Foreign Minister expressed Bangladesh's expectations that the sanctions on RAB would be withdrawn soon. He also sought their support to revitalize the Congressional Bangladesh Caucus.

The Foreign Minister and the US lawmakers underscored the importance of further expanding the trade and investment relations between Bangladesh and the United States and deepening the excellent partnership in the coming days.

Mahbubul Alam Hanif, Member of Parliament, M Shahidul Islam, Ambassador of Bangladesh to the United States, Shabbir Ahmad Chowdhury, Secretary (West) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and officials of Bangladesh Embassy in Washington D.C. were present in the meetings.



Foreign Minister Momen met Senator Chuck Schumer (D-NY), the Majority Leader of the US Senate. During the meeting, he raised the issue of extradition of Rashed Chowdhury, the self-confessed killer of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, and sought the Senate Majority Leader's assistance in this regard. The Bangladesh Foreign Minister also called for increased trade and investment of the US in Bangladesh and proposed the Senator to revitalize the Bangladesh Caucus.





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1. Official Website and Facebook Page - US Embassy of Dhaka.
2. Official Website and Facebook Page - Bangladesh Embassy US.
3. Many Govt. Website of US and Bangladesh & Different News Portal.



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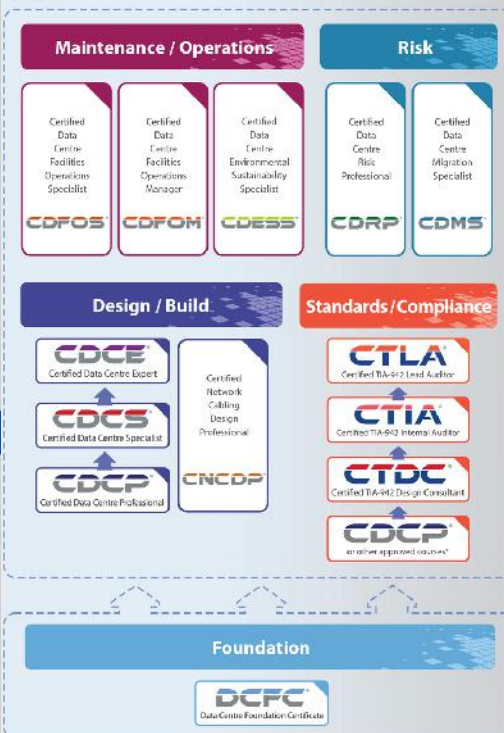
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এককুসিভ  
বিয়ের গহনা-র  
নতুন কালেকশন

# আপন

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স্বর্ণ ও হীরার গহনা



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মৌচাক মার্কেট

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৪৮৩১৩৬৯৮, ৫৮৩১১৯০৪

ধানমন্ডি-২

২,৩,৪, সীমান্ত স্কয়ার, রোড-২, ঢাকা  
৯৬৫০৮৯৭, ৯৬৫০৮৯৮, ০১৩২২৩০৬৩৩৯

উত্তরা

প্লট-০২(৩য় তলা), রোড-১১, সেক্টর-০১,  
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বায়তুল মোকাররম

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বায়তুল মোকাররম

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গুলশান-১ ডিসিসি মার্কেট

বি-১, নিচতলা, ঢাকা  
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গুলশান এভিনিউ

৬৫, সুবাস্ত ইমাম স্কয়ার, ঢাকা  
৫৮৮১৬৭৫৪, ০১৯৪২৯৪৮৩৮৭





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