

**EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION**

TEL: 880-2-883-7150-4

FAX: 880-2-9881677, 9885688

E-MAIL: [DhakaPA@state.gov](mailto:DhakaPA@state.gov)

WEBSITE: <http://dhaka.usembassy.gov>



**REMARKS BY  
U.S. AMBASSADOR TO BANGLADESH DAN MOZENA  
BANGLADESH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA  
UPDATE IN MEDICINE CONFERENCE  
BRAC CENTER  
DECEMBER 28, 2012**

Prof. Dr. A.F.M. Ruhul Haque, Honorable Minister of Health and Family Welfare  
Dr. Maksud Chowdhury, President, Bangladesh Medical Association of North America  
Honored Members of BMANA who have chosen to come to Bangladesh to give their time and share their experience to the benefit of the people of wonderful Bangladesh

Honored Bangladeshi physicians and health professionals who likewise have chosen to give their time and experience to building Bangladesh

Many friends and fellow believers in Bangladesh

This is the perfect way to bring the year 2012 to a close!

As I stand here, I look out on individuals ... doctors, other health professionals, Americans, Bangladeshis, all friends of Bangladesh ... individuals who are here not because they have to be, but who are here because they want to be.

Bangladeshis are extraordinary people, truly exceptional people.

As I told His Excellency President Zillur Rahman in November last year when I presented my credentials to him, I know of no other people on this earth who are as energetic, dynamic, creative, generous and resilient as are the people of Bangladesh. This is true no matter where I go in Bangladesh. My wife and I are well on our way to visiting each of Bangladesh's 64 districts, and everywhere we go we find Bangladeshis brimming with optimism as they work so hard to build the New Bangladesh, the Middle-Income Bangladesh, the Sonar Bangla. I am pleased that these same wonderful character traits are alive and well in the Bangladeshi-American community, too. Energetic, dynamic, creative, generous and resilient, these Bangladeshi-Americans under the rubric of BMANA regularly come back to Bangladesh so they can give back to their ethnic birthplace.

And give back they do ... ever so generously.

In partnership with the Bangladesh Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and with Bangladeshi health professionals, BMANA undertakes regular educational and training programs for doctors and nurses to improve health care in Bangladesh; in partnership with their Bangladeshi counterparts, BMANA introduces the latest technologies and other medical advances to Bangladesh; in partnership with Bangladesh, BMANA offers assistance in further strengthening the Bangladesh Medical College and Nursing curricula. In short, BMANA works hard with their Bangladeshi counterparts to help bring the best possible health care to the people of Bangladesh.

Over the past couple of weeks, BMANA members have been in and out of Bangladeshi hospitals and medical schools offering hands-on training, helping to set up Emergency Room equipment, and donating Automated External Defibrillators or AEDs. They have shared their expertise in providing care for those suffering from cancer, cardiac problems, pediatric concerns, and so much more.

The work of BMANA here in Bangladesh well complements our official development assistance programs in Bangladesh. Bangladesh is one of the main beneficiaries of President Obama's Global Health Initiative, which aims to end preventable child deaths and ensure an AIDS-free generation. Our health partnership with Bangladesh has helped Bangladesh make tremendous progress in achieving its Millennium Development Goals in reducing maternal mortality, reducing under-five child mortality, and in enabling Bangladeshis to have the family size they want, thus reducing the fertility rate to replacement level. These are remarkable achievements, and I am proud that America is Bangladesh's partner in helping to making these goals reality.

Bangladesh is the only country in the world that is a focus of all four of President Obama's global initiatives, which include the Global Health Initiative that I just cited, the Feed the Future Initiative, which seeks to make Bangladesh food secure, the Global Climate Change Initiative, which helps Bangladesh mitigate for and adapt to the changes resulting from climate change, and the Muslim Outreach Initiative, which seeks to strengthen America's ties with Muslim communities around the world. As a result of these initiatives and many other activities,

America's development assistance program in Bangladesh totals over \$200 million a year, our largest in Asia outside of Afghanistan and Pakistan.

I am deeply proud of our development partnership with Bangladesh, but that truly is only part of the strong relationship between our two countries. America is the largest market for Bangladeshi exports; America is the largest investor in Bangladesh; America is the third largest source of remittances to Bangladesh. And, of course, there are the many ties between the growing, prospering and increasingly influential Bangladeshi-American community and Bangladesh, as we see here today with our friends from BMANA.

One of my goals as ambassador is to expand and strengthen the linkages between the Bangladeshi-American community and their ethnic birthplace, Bangladesh. When I travel back to the U.S., I seek out and engage Bangladeshi-Americans. So far, I've encountered them in New York, Washington, Portland, Oregon, and Los Angeles. In February, I will go to San Francisco and San Jose to meet with more Bangladeshi-Americans to encourage them to stay connected to Bangladesh and to help promote a peaceful, secure, prosperous, healthy and democratic Bangladesh. I encourage Bangladeshi-Americans to give back to Bangladesh through either investments or philanthropy. To help Bangladeshi-Americans donate back to Bangladesh in a safe and secure fashion, we are establishing a portal that will enable Bangladeshi-Americans to make donations in confidence that their contributions will be used responsibly to promote the well-being of the Bangladeshi people.

I close as I began by thanking BMANA for this opportunity to meet with these American and Bangladeshi health professionals. I thank BMANA for enabling me to close out the year 2012 on such a strong, positive, constructive note.

I wish BMANA and their Bangladeshi counterparts all the best as they continue their extraordinary work in the final days of this year and through the new year to the benefit of the wonderful people of magnificent Bangladesh.

Thank you.

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*\*As prepared for delivery*