

The AMBASSADOR

July 2025

DIPLOMACY | DEFENSE | GLOBAL AFFAIRS



BIMSTEC

Can Bangladesh's Leadership Shape an Ideal Platform of Regional Cooperation?

Philippines-Bangladesh Friendship Celebrated in Style: 127th Philippine Independence Day Honored with Diplomatic Splendor in Dhaka

BEHIND The **AMBASSADOR**

Editor
Dr Arifur Rahman

Advisor
Lieutenant General (Retd) Mohammad Mahfuzur Rahman PhD
Professor Dr Mohammad Tarikul Islam
Moshiur Ahmed
Imtiaz Ahmed

Executive Editor
Nazmul Hasan

Editor: UN, Human Rights, and Rohingya Affairs
Shakhawat Khan

Editor: Tourism and Hospitality
Mizanur Rahman

Assistant Editor
Md Rashidul Hasan Chowdhury

Bureaucracy Board
ASEAN Bureau Chief
Haji Md. Metussin Hj Abd Wahab

Bureau Chief Bhutan
Mr. Penjor

Bureau Chief East Africa
Ambassador Abdirrazak Siyad Abdi

Bureau Chief Canada
Mohammed Tareq Khan

Publisher
Mahbub Saber

Our Address:
Flat :F2, Lift-5, House:10, Road:16/A, Gulshan-1, Dhaka

CONTENT

05

BIMSTEC

Can Bangladesh's Leadership Shape an Ideal Platform of Regional Cooperation?

13

Egypt-Bangladesh Friendship Shines: Egyptian Embassy in Dhaka Celebrates 73rd National Day with Distinguished Guests and Diplomatic Grandeur

20

One-Fourth of the World's Stateless Population Resides in Bangladesh

30

Operation Sea Angel: How a Gulf War Deployment Saved 200,000 Lives in Bangladesh

37

Unlocking the Potential of Silica Gel in Bangladesh: Opportunities for Industry, Agriculture, and Sustainability

09

63rd Anniversary of Algeria's Independence Day (July 5, 1962 – 2025)

17

How the July Revolution Changed the Youth of Bangladesh

26

Tea, Trade, and Ties That Bind: A Junior Diplomat's Journey Through the Philippines-Bangladesh Friendship

34

Philippines-Bangladesh Friendship Celebrated in Style: 127th Philippine Independence Day Honored with Diplomatic Splendor in Dhaka

43

Express Bulletin



EDITOR'S NOTE

As we welcome the warmth of June, this edition of Ambassador Magazine offers a vibrant reflection of the positive momentum shaping diplomatic landscapes in Bangladesh and beyond. In recent months, Dhaka has become a dynamic hub for meaningful dialogues, strategic partnerships, and cultural exchanges — signaling a renewed spirit of cooperation among nations. This issue features exclusive coverage of national day celebrations hosted by several embassies, showcasing the rich diversity and shared values that bind our global community. We are especially honored to spotlight the spirited reception marking the **127th Philippine Independence Day**, which resonated with warmth, unity, and friendship.

From the increasing focus on South-South cooperation to sustainable development partnerships, the diplomatic community in Bangladesh continues to play a vital role in addressing global challenges with local solutions. As always, our mission remains clear — to document, celebrate, and amplify these milestones of progress and mutual respect.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to the ambassadors, diplomats, cultural envoys, and development partners who continuously enrich the pages of this magazine with their vision and action. Your trust and collaboration inspire us to keep raising the bar.

As you turn through this issue, may you find stories of hope, cooperation, and inspiration — a testament to diplomacy's enduring power to connect hearts, build peace, and shape a better tomorrow.

Warm regards,

Warm regards,
Dr Arifur Rahman
Editor
The Ambassador



BIMSTEC

CAN BANGLADESH'S LEADERSHIP SHAPE AN IDEAL PLATFORM OF REGIONAL COOPERATION?

**Professor Dr Mohammad Tarikul Islam &
Md. Shihab Uddin**

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) strategically aims to connect South and Southeast Asia through various cooperation domains, including trade enhancement, security initiatives, climate resilience strategies, and interpersonal engagement programs. In particular, it has become a more efficient venue for regional collaboration due to the persistent impasse within SAARC. BIMSTEC aims to foster cooperation among the seven

South and Southeast Asian countries, with a particular focus on bridging the gap between SAARC and ASEAN. It emphasizes seven key fields of regional collaboration – commerce and investment, security, agricultural and food security, environment and climate change, research, technology, and innovation, as well as interpersonal relations and connectivity, in which Bangladesh plays a significant role.

Indeed, Bangladesh's strategic position at the crossroads of

South and Southeast Asia has established it as the focal point and principal leader of BIMSTEC activities. Bangladesh is considered a vital ally in the Indo-Pacific region due to its strategic position in the northern Bay of Bengal, at the confluence of the Indian and Pacific Oceans. The United States, India, Japan, and Australia view Bangladesh as a crucial component of their Indo-Pacific strategy due to its strategic geographical position. Nevertheless, smaller nations like Bangladesh are essential for maintaining balance, especially via multilateral frameworks such



as BIMSTEC. Moreover, as a founding member and host of the BIMSTEC Secretariat in Dhaka, Bangladesh, it has a significant influence on the organization's vision and trajectory.

Bangladesh assumed the BIMSTEC chairmanship during the Bangkok summit on 4 April 2025, for a two-year term. As such, the chair of BIMSTEC, Bangladesh, exemplifies its commitment to fostering inclusive and action-driven regional cooperation. Dr. Muhammad Yunus, Chief Adviser

of Bangladesh, emphasized the need for member nations to consolidate their efforts to expand BIMSTEC's capabilities in economic integration, disaster preparation, and sustainable development projects. A significant aspect of the conference was establishing commercial connections and enhancing disaster assistance capacities in response to recent natural disasters affecting the area. Therefore, the BIMSTEC has promising prospects for future advancement as Bangladesh takes the helm, primarily because of its potential to position itself as a

contemporary platform that transcends conventional blocs to fulfill its foundational objective. The leadership role taken by Bangladesh will be crucial for promoting BIMSTEC objectives and enhancing interstate interconnection.

Moreover, Bangladesh, inspired by Nobel Laureate Dr. Muhammad Yunus's pioneering "Three Zeros" framework—zero poverty, zero unemployment, and zero net carbon emissions—has actively engaged in the pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the advancement of an inclusive Indo-Pacific strategy. Thus, the strategic dimensions of Bangladesh's leadership in BIMSTEC, examining how Bangladesh's proactive engagement may enhance regional integration, promote security cooperation, and strengthen collective resilience within the evolving Indo-Pacific context, is a significant topic in global political discussion. Accordingly, the question posits whether Bangladesh's leadership in BIMSTEC can provide an





optimal framework for regional cooperation.

The guiding principles of Bangladesh's Indo-Pacific vision assert that sustainable development, peace, security, humanitarian action, and fundamental rights rely on regional and international cooperation. In this regard, Bangladesh's dedication to a free and open Indo-Pacific is consistent with its constitutional ideals of sovereignty, equality, non-interference, peaceful conflict settlement, and compliance with international law. Consequently, as the chair of BIMSTEC, Bangladesh will have the opportunity to underscore its commitment to regional cooperation by leading the organization with extensive initiatives across various sectors.

The primary objective of BIMSTEC is to enhance rapid economic growth and social development in the Bay of Bengal area. In line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Bangladesh is advancing inclusive economic growth and poverty alleviation via international

trade. In particular, Bangladesh can enhance economic security via BIMSTEC by promoting vital regional value chains in textile manufacturing, pharmaceutical innovation, and agricultural processing. In addition, concerning social security within the BIMSTEC region, Bangladesh needs to lead initiatives in food and health security by endorsing cooperative structures, such as a regional food security task force, promoting sustainable agriculture, traditional medicine, and eco-friendly technology. Notably, a significant enhancement in regional connectivity was achieved with the completion of the protocol for executing the BBIN Motor Vehicle Agreement (MVA) in 2025 among Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal, designed to enable the unobstructed transit of passenger, personal, and cargo vehicles among these nations.

BIMSTEC's anti-corruption initiatives primarily emphasize promoting international collaboration to address corruption, which is a

significant impediment to sustainable development and effective government. Bangladesh, as a committed member state, aims to combat corruption and engage in the global anti-corruption movement to foster a free and open Indo-Pacific region. In 2025, adopting a zero-tolerance policy, Bangladesh and Thailand signed a Memorandum of Understanding to enhance international collaboration in the collective fight against corruption. At the same time, a vision and significant potential exist to guarantee the freedom of navigation and the safety and security of maritime communication channels in the Indian Ocean. As a result, as the head of BIMSTEC, Bangladesh may establish a robust security framework founded on mutual trust and collaboration, particularly with its neighboring countries, India and Myanmar. Ensuring the security of maritime routes will be crucial for achieving shared prosperity and peace in the region.

The interim government has pursued change in essential



national sectors and institutions, including the police, courts, and constitution. Moreover, the Forces Goal 2030 military modernization policy aims to enhance the Army, Navy, and Air Force as components of a broader reform initiative. The modernization of Bangladesh's military will certainly bolster its national security and contribute to collective security efforts and regional stability. Additionally, it enhances its credibility in proposing and organizing defense diplomacy initiatives, naval cooperation frameworks, and joint military exercises within the BIMSTEC framework.

Nonetheless, enhancing global climate collaboration is essential for sustainable development in the Indo-Pacific area. Dr.

Muhammad Yunus posits that his "Three Zeros" concept may substantially facilitate the attainment of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 13 - Climate Action. At the COP29 climate conference, Muhammad Yunus asserted that Bangladesh is prepared to partner with the 'Climate Club', an international effort aimed at enhancing global climate collaboration and promoting industrial decarbonization. Furthermore, he advocated for enhanced international cooperation, technology transfer, and concessional finance to assist developing countries in adopting green technologies, along with initiatives such as carbon border adjustments that impose taxes

on imports based on their carbon footprint.

Taking the role of leadership offers many advantages for every nation. The adoption of the BIMSTEC Bangkok Vision 2030 is the first Vision Document of BIMSTEC, providing a comprehensive and pragmatic framework for future cooperation among member states to achieve the goal of a Prosperous, Resilient, and Open BIMSTEC. As such, as the chairman, Bangladesh will have a significant chance to articulate its views inside the organization. Moreover, as Bangladesh seeks to align itself with ASEAN, it will provide a new avenue for negotiations with Thailand, a key member of BIMSTEC.

It is anticipated that, under Bangladesh's leadership, regional cooperation will attain a new dimension through this platform. However, the total efficacy of BIMSTEC's activities will mostly rely on the genuine collaboration and dedication of its member nations. SAARC as a South Asian regional organisation should be strengthened to promote collaboration between South and Southeast Asia, as BIMSTEC links Bangladesh and a few other South Asian nations to Southeast Asian nations for improved economic development.

Dr. Mohammad Tarikul Islam

Professor, Department of Government and Politics, Jahangirnagar University and Visiting Professor, Oxford, Cambridge, and Harvard

Md. Shihab Uddin

Assistant Director, Centre for Local Governance Discourse (CLGD)



63RD ANNIVERSARY OF ALGERIA'S INDEPENDENCE DAY (JULY 5, 1962 – 2025)

Ambassador Abdelouahab SAIDANI

July 5: A Day to Honor a Defining Moment of Liberation, It is with deep reverence and heartfelt joy that we gather today to commemorate the 63rd anniversary of Algerian Independence Day, observed each year on July 5. This historic day stands as a powerful symbol of resilience and victory, marking the end of 132 years of colonial rule under France. The liberation of Algeria, achieved after nearly eight years of armed resistance from 1954 to 1962, represents a pivotal moment not only for Algeria but also for global struggles for freedom. Today's celebration is made even more meaningful as we also observe Algerian Youth Day—an intentional and profound tribute to the nation's young people, whose courage and



aspirations continue to shape Algeria's future.

The Human Cost and Collective Struggle

The journey to independence was long and marked by immense human sacrifice. The Algerian people endured profound suffering under colonial rule, with over 5.6 million lives lost since 1830, including 1.5 million martyrs during the war for liberation. This struggle was not fought by a few—it was a united movement encompassing every segment of society, including youth, women, and workers across diverse regions and backgrounds. Independence was

not only a political achievement, but a profound social and moral victory that reasserted

Algeria's right to dignity, sovereignty, and identity.

A Triumph of Arms and Diplomacy

The Algerian Revolution was distinguished not only by its determination on the battlefield but also by its strategic diplomatic outreach. The National Liberation Front (FLN) worked relentlessly to garner international recognition and support, presenting the Algerian cause as a just pursuit of decolonization and

self-determination. This dual approach—military resistance and international diplomacy—culminated in the signing of the Evian Accords on March 18, 1962. These accords led to a historic referendum on July 1, in which 99% of Algerians voted for independence. The formal proclamation of freedom on July 5 by the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic marked the dawn of a new chapter, affirming Algeria's place among sovereign nations.

A Legacy of Progress and Solidarity

Since gaining independence in 1962, Algeria has embarked on a remarkable journey of national development. Significant progress has been made in education, healthcare, industry, agriculture, and urban infrastructure—reflecting the country's enduring commitment to building a modern, sovereign state.

Rooted in the revolutionary values of human dignity, sovereignty, and social justice, Algeria's experience has inspired liberation movements across the globe. True to these values, Algeria extended concrete support to national liberation movements in Africa, Latin America, and Asia—providing financial aid, training, and political solidarity to freedom fighters from Angola, Southern Rhodesia, Portuguese Guinea, Mozambique, Palestine, and Vietnam. Through these efforts, Algeria became a beacon of hope and a strategic hub for those seeking justice and independence.





forefront of Algeria’s journey, shaping the nation’s future as policymakers, diplomats, and innovators. Since gaining independence, Algeria has made remarkable progress in education, healthcare, infrastructure, agriculture, and international diplomacy. Rooted in the enduring principles of the Revolution—sovereignty, dignity, and justice—Algeria has consistently championed global liberation movements across Africa, Asia, and Latin America. This legacy of solidarity remains alive today in its steadfast support for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian and Sahrawi peoples to self-determination and independence.

Champion of Peace, Security, and Multilateralism

Guided by its founding principles, Algeria remains a key contributor to international peace and regional stability. As a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council since January 2024, Algeria continues to uphold multilateralism and diplomatic dialogue as the most effective tools for conflict resolution. Its foreign policy firmly opposes the use of force and emphasizes political solutions, as exemplified in its stance on Iran. Algeria also remains steadfast in its support for the Sahrawi people’s right to self-determination and reaffirms its unwavering solidarity with the Palestinian cause—advocating for an independent state with East Jerusalem as its capital. Regionally, Algeria plays a pivotal role in promoting peace and counter-terrorism in the Sahel, while also investing in strategic development projects such as the trans-Saharan gas pipeline. Its geographic location

and natural resources further cement its role as a vital bridge between Europe and Africa.

Algerian Independence and Youth: A Legacy of Liberation, Progress, and Global Solidarity

Today, we are also honored to commemorate Algerian Youth Day—an intentional and symbolic observance that coincides with Independence Day. The youth played a vital role in the liberation struggle and continue to be at the

Economic Modernization and Investment Potential

Today, Algeria stands as Africa’s second-largest economy, demonstrating steady growth driven by robust domestic consumption and a commitment to economic modernization. While hydrocarbons remain a cornerstone of the national economy, Algeria is actively





diversifying its economic base to attract global partnerships and investment. Recent reforms—including the removal of the 51/49 ownership restriction under the 2020 Finance Law and the implementation of Law No. 22-18—have opened up greater opportunities for foreign investors, particularly in the production of goods and services. These efforts have already shown results: in 2024, foreign investment surged to 8.6 billion USD, signaling increased

confidence in Algeria's economic future and its evolving legal and business landscape.

Since 1971, Algeria and Bangladesh have enjoyed longstanding diplomatic relations, grounded in mutual respect and solidarity. Algeria proudly holds the distinction of being the first Arab country to recognize Bangladesh, standing by its side during pivotal moments and supporting its integration into the

international community. Our two nations continue to cooperate on global platforms in pursuit of peace, multilateralism, and a more just international order. The establishment of the Algeria-Bangladesh Business Forum and the exchange of economic delegations reflect our growing partnership and shared vision for sustainable development. Plans for high-level visits in the near future further underscore our commitment to expanding collaboration across diverse sectors.

As we honor the 63rd anniversary of Algerian independence, we celebrate the freedom, strength, and resilience of the Algerian people. May this cherished occasion deepen the friendship between our two nations and inspire continued progress.

Long live Algeria. Long live Bangladesh. Long live Algeria-Bangladesh friendship.

Glory and eternity our righteous Martyrs

This article draws from Ambassador Abdelouahab SAIDANI's remarks commemorating the 63rd Anniversary of Algeria's Independence Day (July 5, 1962 – 2025).

H.E. Abdelouahab SAIDANI
Ambassador
Embassy of Algeria

EGYPT-BANGLADESH FRIENDSHIP SHINES: EGYPTIAN EMBASSY IN DHAKA CELEBRATES 73RD NATIONAL DAY WITH DISTINGUISHED GUESTS AND DIPLOMATIC GRANDEUR



In a momentous celebration marked by elegance and diplomacy, the Egyptian Embassy in Dhaka commemorated the 73rd anniversary of Egypt's historic July 23 Revolution with a grand reception hosted by His Excellency Mr. Omar Mohy Eldin Ahmed Fahmy, Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt to Bangladesh. Held on the evening of July 14, the event brought together an impressive array of dignitaries, reaffirming the strength and warmth of Egypt-Bangladesh relations.

The ceremony, which took place in a vibrant and dignified setting, was attended by a large number of senior officials from the Government of Bangladesh, ambassadors and representatives from the diplomatic corps, leading figures from civil society, academia, the judiciary, and





media. This year's National Day celebration stood out for its distinguished guest list and the special significance attached to the evolving partnership between the two countries.

High-Level Guests Symbolize Deepening Ties

Two of Bangladesh's most prominent public figures—Mrs. Rizwana Hasan, Advisor to the Prime Minister on Environment, Forest, and Climate Change, and Mr. Syed Refat Ahmed, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh—graced the event as guests of honor. Their presence underscored the increasingly strategic dimension of Egypt-Bangladesh ties and the mutual recognition of shared aspirations for progress, justice, and cooperation.



A Message of Shared Values and Growing Cooperation

In his address to the gathering, Ambassador Fahmy reflected on the historical and ideological affinities that bind Egypt and Bangladesh. He praised the long-standing friendship between the two nations, rooted in mutual struggles for independence and social justice. Highlighting the convergence of national values—particularly freedom, sovereignty, and dignity—he emphasized that the bilateral relationship is experiencing a renaissance across political, economic, and cultural spheres.



The Ambassador cited recent achievements, including:

- Successful political consultations in Cairo
- Enhanced connectivity through EgyptAir's direct routes
- Strong collaboration in



multilateral forums. These developments, he noted, demonstrate the commitment of both nations to forge a future of mutual benefit and global cooperation.

Bangladeshi Leaders Laud Egypt's Role and Promise Closer Ties

Delivering a heartfelt speech, Advisor Rizwana Hasan conveyed Bangladesh's deep appreciation for its enduring friendship with Egypt. She commended Egypt's contributions in sectors such as education, energy, and tourism, and expressed optimism about expanding bilateral trade and investment. "In today's rapidly transforming global order, Egypt and Bangladesh can serve as pillars of South-South cooperation," she remarked.



In his turn, Chief Justice Syed Refat Ahmed acknowledged the historic influence and reputation of Egypt's legal system across the Arab and Islamic worlds. Calling for greater judicial exchange and institutional collaboration, he proposed enhanced engagement between the two countries' legal institutions. "Egypt's legal thought continues to inspire jurists around the world," he said, expressing hope for partnerships in legal education and reform.

A Celebration of Culture and Diplomacy

Beyond the formalities, the evening provided a warm and celebratory atmosphere, where guests shared in the rich cultural heritage of Egypt and engaged in dialogue on shared challenges and opportunities. The diversity of attendees—including





diplomats, professors, legal scholars, entrepreneurs, and environmentalists—symbolized the multifaceted nature of Egypt-Bangladesh ties.

The event reaffirmed Egypt's enduring place in the hearts of its Bangladeshi partners and

celebrated the trust and mutual admiration that have defined this relationship for decades.

As the evening concluded with smiles, handshakes, and renewed pledges of cooperation, it became clear that the Egypt-Bangladesh

friendship continues to shine—rooted in history, enriched by people-to-people connections, and driven by a shared vision for the future.

Long live the Egypt-Bangladesh friendship!

demanding justice. By August 2024, the government was forced to step down. This was the biggest political change the country had seen in decades, and the youth were the leaders of this movement.

To understand why this revolution was so powerful, it is important to look at the mood among young people before it began. For many years, politics in Bangladesh was viewed as corrupt and unfair. People saw politicians as self-serving and unwilling to listen to the needs of ordinary citizens. The political environment was hostile to anyone who spoke out, and young people were often silenced or scared to get involved. Many avoided politics altogether, preferring to spend their time on social media, entertainment, or personal goals rather than national issues.

But all that changed with the July Revolution.

Many young people, especially those from the Gen-Z generation, had a complicated relationship with politics. They had grown up watching corruption, political violence, and manipulation, which made them feel hopeless. They had seen student politics in campuses become more about power struggles than real change. Many thought they had only two choices: accept the system as it was, or leave Bangladesh for a better life elsewhere. Yet, the events of July 2024 showed them there was another way.

The revolution was not led by experienced politicians or activists. Instead, it was led by young students, many of whom





had never been involved in politics before. When the government tried to suppress them with force, these young people did not back down. Their courage surprised many and forced the political establishment to take notice.

The protests that started over job quotas became a demand for a new political system, one that was fairer and more just. For the first time in a long while, many youths felt that their voices mattered. This new hope spread quickly, and patriotism grew stronger among young people across the country.

For many young Bangladeshis, the revolution was a personal experience. They saw friends arrested, families torn apart, and even lost loved ones. By the end of July, the movement was about more than just quotas—it was a

fight to change the entire way the country was governed.

The revolution also made young people reflect on their own past behavior. Many had accepted political apathy as normal, believing that their actions could not make a difference. But now they realized that collective effort could bring real change, even against powerful and corrupt systems. This realization was both humbling and inspiring. They understood that being silent or indifferent was no longer an option.

After the revolution, young people began learning more about Bangladesh's history, politics, and the ideas behind different political movements. Discussions that were once considered risky or boring became exciting and important. The youth were no longer

passive observers—they became active participants in writing the country's future.

Perhaps the biggest change has been in their dreams and hopes. Before the revolution, many young people only dreamed of leaving Bangladesh. Now, they dream of staying and building a better nation. They want to reform the political system and create a society where future generations will not feel the need to leave.

This change is not only about ideas. It is deeply emotional. It shows a refusal to accept despair and a strong belief in hope and possibility. Young people now see themselves as owners and builders of Bangladesh's future, not just as citizens or outsiders.

The July Revolution was a wake-up call for everyone, especially the youth. It proved that the idea of an apolitical generation is a myth. Beneath the surface, young people have passion, strength, and determination. When pushed to the limit, they can do more than dream or criticize—they can act and create real change.

Today, after the revolution, the youth are staying in Bangladesh and working hard to rebuild the country, facing one challenge at a time. The revolution gave them a voice, a purpose, and a renewed hope for the future.

Md. Nazmul Hassan

Businessman and
Director, International Institute of Global Studies (IIGS)



ONE-FOURTH OF THE WORLD'S STATELESS POPULATION RESIDES IN BANGLADESH

(A COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIC, LEGAL, AND HUMANITARIAN ANALYSIS OF THE ROHINGYA CRISIS- 2025)

Md. Nazmul Hassan

Executive Summary
Bangladesh hosts more than 1.13 million stateless Rohingya, accounting for over one-fourth of the world's total stateless population. The crisis, initially humanitarian, has transformed into a multi-dimensional geopolitical challenge involving human rights, national security, diplomacy, and socioeconomic sustainability. This report integrates updated insights from recent UNHCR, IOM, UNICEF, and RRRC data, offering a strategic outlook on addressing the crisis in 2025 and beyond.

1. Introduction

Statelessness affects over 4.4 million people globally, depriving them of legal identity,

freedom of movement, education, and employment. Bangladesh, despite limited resources, provides refuge to over 1.13 million Rohingya Muslims primarily settled in Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char. As Myanmar continues its denial of citizenship to the Rohingya through the 1982 Citizenship Law, Bangladesh shoulders the weight of a protracted regional emergency.

2. Understanding

Statelessness: Global and Legal Framework

Statelessness is a severe human rights issue that denies individuals not only citizenship but also the basic protections, privileges, and dignity that come with legal nationality.

While the concept may appear abstract, its impact on daily life is devastating. Understanding statelessness through legal, institutional, and global lenses is critical to grasping the scale and depth of the Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh and beyond.

2.1 Defining Statelessness in International Law

Statelessness is defined in Article 1 of the 1954 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons as:

"A person who is not considered as a national by any State under the operation of its law."

This definition emphasizes *de jure* statelessness, meaning individuals have no nationality according to any country's legal framework. There's also *de facto*



- Rohingya in Myanmar and Bangladesh
- Kurds in parts of the Middle East
- Dominicans of Haitian descent in the Dominican Republic
- Hill Tamils in Sri Lanka
- Bidoon in the Gulf States

2.4 The Rohingya: A Legalized Case of Statelessness

The Rohingya are among the most systematically disenfranchised groups in modern history. Myanmar’s 1982 Citizenship Law:

- Removed Rohingya from the list of 135 officially recognized ethnic groups.
- Denied them the ability to register as full citizens.
- Created a three-tier system (full, associate, naturalized) from which Rohingya were largely excluded.

Without citizenship, the Rohingya became legally invisible—unable to access education, employment, land rights, or protection from abuse. This law remains the legal root of their statelessness, and no successive government has amended or repealed it.

3. Demographic Overview

- Population in Bangladesh: 1.13 million Rohingya
- Distribution:

statelessness, where individuals may hold a nationality on paper but are denied its protections in practice.

2.2 Legal Identity and Human Rights

Citizenship is the gateway to virtually all rights under international law. A stateless person typically lacks:

- A legal identity or passport
- Access to education and healthcare
- Property ownership rights
- Voting and political participation
- Freedom of movement
- Employment in the formal sector

This deprivation can last for generations, creating what the UNHCR calls “invisible populations”—millions of people excluded from national plans, censuses, and services.

2.3 Global Landscape of Statelessness

According to the UNHCR Global Trends Report (2024):

- 4.4 million people are officially recognized as stateless worldwide.
- The real figure is likely much higher, as many states do not report or underreport due to political sensitivities.
- Major stateless groups include:





- Cox's Bazar: 1.106 million
- Bhasan Char: ~37,000
- Demographics: >50% are women and children
- Global Distribution:
- Malaysia: 111,700
- India: 23,300
- Indonesia, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan: Significant unregistered populations

4. Historical Context of Rohingya Displacement

The Rohingya, a persecuted ethnic Muslim minority from Myanmar's Rakhine State, have faced systematic exclusion, violence, and displacement for decades. Their statelessness stems from both colonial-era migrations and Myanmar's post-independence policies.

- Colonial Roots (1826–1948): British-era migration between Bengal and Arakan triggered long-term ethnic tensions. After independence, Rohingya were labeled as foreigners.
- Major Expulsions:
 - 1978 (Operation Nagamin): 200,000+ Rohingya forcibly deported amid violence.
 - 1991–92 Crackdown: 250,000 fled

due to forced labor and land seizure.

- 1982 Citizenship Law: A turning point that legally excluded the Rohingya from Myanmar's recognized ethnic groups, stripping them of citizenship and cementing statelessness.
- 2012 Riots: Sparked mass displacement and led to the creation of internment camps.
- 2017 Genocide: Following ARSA attacks, Myanmar's military launched a brutal crackdown. 750,000+ fled to Bangladesh, with the UN calling it ethnic cleansing or genocide.



- 2018–2025: All repatriation efforts failed due to unsafe conditions, lack of citizenship guarantees, and the rise of the Arakan Army, which now controls much of Rakhine.

- Intergenerational Crisis: Children born in camps have no link to Myanmar, facing chronic identity loss, lack of education, and growing risk of radicalization.

Decades of state-sponsored persecution and Myanmar's refusal to grant citizenship have made the Rohingya the most protracted stateless group in Asia. Bangladesh continues to shoulder the humanitarian burden, with no resolution in sight.

5. Humanitarian Response & Funding Crisis

Joint Response Plan (JRP) 2025–26

- Target: 1.5 million (Rohingya + host communities)
- Required Funding: \$934.5 million
- Funding Secured (as of July 2025): Only 15%

Key Aid Gaps:

- Education:
 - 1,250 education centers closed
 - 500,000 children face

educational neglect

- Nutrition/Health:
- Funding cuts to maternal healthcare & food support (now just \$12/month/person)
- Increase in stunting, maternal mortality, and WASH-related diseases
- UNICEF, USAID, and other major donors have pulled or reduced funding

6. Strategic Impact on Bangladesh

- Environment:
- Significant deforestation and destruction of reserved forests,



particularly in the Cox's Bazar region.

- Economy:
- Wage depression in low-income sectors
- Increased pressure on the local labor market
- Rising inflation and cost of basic goods
- Security:
- Escalation of drug trafficking, especially methamphetamine ("yaba")
- Threat of radicalization among camp residents
- Presence of ARSA (Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army) elements

- Growth in transnational crimes
- Social Cohesion:
- Mounting tensions with host communities
- Intensified competition for resources and services

7. Repatriation Challenges:

Political Gridlock and Geopolitical Complexities
Repatriation of the Rohingya to Myanmar is considered the ideal solution, but it remains unachievable due to legal, political, and security barriers.

- Lack of Progress on Agreements: Despite the 2017

Bangladesh–Myanmar agreement brokered by China, no significant repatriation has occurred. Rohingya refuse to return without citizenship, safety, and international monitoring.

- 1982 Citizenship Law: Myanmar's law excludes Rohingya from recognized ethnic groups, denying them citizenship. Any return without legal status risks renewed statelessness and internment.
- Rakhine's Changing Power Structure: The Arakan Army (AA) now controls large parts of

Rakhine. Myanmar's military has lost operational control, complicating negotiations and security guarantees for returnees.

- Rohingya Distrust and Trauma: Refugees cite past abuses, destroyed homes, and lack of guarantees as reasons for refusing return. Previous returnees faced surveillance, confinement, and denied basic rights.

- Weak Regional Diplomacy: China, India, and ASEAN have shown limited initiative. Their reluctance to pressure Myanmar weakens the prospects of a viable repatriation framework.

- Bangladesh's Diplomatic Stalemate: Dhaka's calls for sanctions, third-party oversight, and pilot return programs have failed. Officials now recognize that meaningful repatriation may require talks with the Arakan Army.

- Legal Standards Not Met: Under international law, repatriation must be voluntary, safe, dignified, and informed—all conditions absent in Myanmar today.

Repatriation is currently unrealistic due to Myanmar's discriminatory laws, civil conflict, lack of trust, and weak regional cooperation.

8. Educational and Youth Crisis

The Rohingya population faces a growing "lost generation."

- Pilot Myanmar curriculum launched to prepare for reintegration—but faces funding risks
- High youth unemployment and despair have led to radicalization risks



- Children born stateless face psychological, legal, and physical barriers to growth

9. Bangladesh's Policy

Crossroads

Bangladesh faces a critical policy dilemma in dealing with over 1.13 million Rohingya refugees. Its long-standing stance of temporary hosting is becoming unsustainable amid prolonged displacement, failed repatriation, and declining international support.

- **Temporary vs. Long-Term Hosting:** Bangladesh must choose between maintaining restrictive refugee camps or allowing limited legal integration (e.g., work permits, education) to reduce dependency and unrest.
- **Domestic Pressures:** Host communities are increasingly resentful due to job competition, rising living costs, and security issues. Political pressure is mounting for stricter controls.
- **Balancing Interests:** Bangladesh is torn between

international humanitarian obligations and its national interests. Though not party to refugee conventions, it has upheld non-refoulement, but now questions if that's sustainable without global support.

- **Policy Options:**
 - **Containment (Status Quo):** Risks radicalization, crime, and hopelessness.
 - **Limited Integration:** May promote self-reliance and coexistence but could be seen as accepting permanence.
 - **Bhasan Char Relocation:** An experimental model for decongestion. While it offers infrastructure and safety, concerns remain over isolation and lack of freedom, and it is not scalable for all refugees.
 - **Risks of Inaction:** Without livelihood and education opportunities, the situation could fuel extremism, trafficking, and health crises—also weakening international support.
 - **Global Perception and Leverage:**

Bangladesh's moral leadership is under strain. The country demands long-term aid, legal protections for stateless Rohingya, and recognition of the Arakan Army as a repatriation stakeholder, as regional powers (China, India, ASEAN) show limited engagement.

Bangladesh must urgently balance humanitarian leadership with domestic realities and push for a multilateral solution, or risk long-term instability and international disengagement.

10. International and Regional Security Implications

- **Deaths at sea:** 427 in May 2025 alone (IOM)
- **Human trafficking:** Organized criminal syndicates exploiting vulnerable Rohingya
- **Regional instability:** Growing tensions in border areas, involving India and Myanmar

11. Strategic Recommendations

- **Humanitarian Funding:** Fully fund the Joint Response Plan (JRP) and broaden the donor base to include the OIC, ASEAN, and Gulf States.
- **Diplomatic Engagement:** Incorporate the Arakan Army and ASEAN countries in future repatriation negotiations to ensure inclusivity and realistic implementation.
- **Legal Pathways:** Provide temporary legal access for Rohingya to essential services such as education, skills training, and limited employment opportunities.
- **Third-Country Resettlement:** Facilitate the resettlement of

vulnerable Rohingya groups through enhanced UNHCR partnerships with willing host countries.

- **Host Community Aid:** Expand economic and development support to host communities in Bangladesh to help ease tensions and ensure social cohesion.
- **Youth Engagement:** Develop education-to-employment



pipelines to reduce the risk of radicalization and create long-term prospects for Rohingya youth.

12. Policy Brief Summary

Rebuilding Hope: A Strategic

Response to the Rohingya Statelessness Crisis

Target Audience: UN Donors, Government of Bangladesh, ASEAN, Humanitarian Actors
Key Ask:

- **Immediate:** Emergency funding to avert collapse of humanitarian response
- **Medium-Term:** Legal and educational support within Bangladesh
- **Long-Term:** Global diplomatic pressure on Myanmar for

inclusive citizenship reform

Infographic Descriptions (For Insertion)

- **Global Statelessness Pie Chart:** Showing 1.13M Rohingya in Bangladesh as 25%+ of total

global stateless population

- **Rohingya Displacement Timeline:** Key years (1978, 1991–92, 2012, 2017) with triggers and migration numbers
- **Funding Gap Bar Graph:** JRP required vs. received funding over 5 years
- **Regional Map:** Showing Rohingya presence in South and Southeast Asia
- **Education Crisis Pyramid:** From early education to youth vocational training – with dropout/inaccessibility percentages

Conclusion

The Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh is a protracted humanitarian and geopolitical challenge rooted in Myanmar's denial of citizenship. While repatriation remains the ideal solution, current conditions make it unviable. Bangladesh now faces a critical policy choice between indefinite containment and limited integration, both of which carry complex risks. Sustainable solutions require international burden-sharing, regional diplomacy, and long-term humanitarian support. Statelessness is not Bangladesh's burden alone—it is a global responsibility.

Md. Nazmul Hassan

Businessman and
Director, International Institute of Global Studies (IIGS)



TEA, TRADE, AND TIES THAT BIND: A JUNIOR DIPLOMAT'S JOURNEY THROUGH THE PHILIPPINES-BANGLADESH FRIENDSHIP

Lynn R. Gutierrez

When I first arrived in Dhaka a year and five months ago, I came with the usual expectations of a junior diplomat—ready to observe, engage, and represent my country. What I did not anticipate was how profoundly this posting would enrich my understanding of cross-cultural connection, resilience, and shared aspiration. Bangladesh, with its deep-rooted traditions

and dynamic momentum, offered more than a professional experience—it offered a window into a kindred spirit. Over time, I came to see that beneath every diplomatic engagement lies a deeper story—one of friendship, curiosity, and enduring ties between our peoples.

As a young diplomat entrusted with nurturing bilateral

relations, I often find myself marveling at how much potential lies between the Philippines and Bangladesh—two countries steeped in rich histories, resilient in the face of adversity, and buoyed by young populations and boundless dreams.

Shared Histories, Shared Aspirations

While separated by the Bay of Bengal and thousands of kilometers, the Philippines and Bangladesh are bound by common values—family, faith, hard work, and community. Both nations know the meaning of struggle and perseverance. We are peoples who have rebuilt after cyclones, floods, and typhoons. We have fought for independence, for democracy, and for dignity. Today, we strive together toward inclusive growth and sustainable development.



Our diplomatic ties, formally established in 1972, have grown steadily. Over the years, cooperation has expanded from traditional political dialogue to include trade, tourism, labor migration, cultural exchange, and increasingly, people-to-people connectivity.

A Year of Engagement, A Lifetime of Insight

Living in Dhaka has given me a front-row seat to a country in transition. I've seen the city light up with ambition—tech startups emerging, metro rail lines rising, and new expressways connecting dreams with destinations.

Between meetings and diplomatic engagements, I've found comfort in the everyday joys of this vibrant city: walking through Ramna Park at dusk, sipping tandoori tea in

Purbachal, and hopping on a boat to explore the Meghna River in Chandpur. And yes, on weekends, I sometimes challenge kids at Unimart's claw machine—still holding the record, at least for now. These simple moments ground me and remind me that diplomacy, at its core, is about building human connections—person to person, heart to heart.

Economic Diplomacy in Action
 From an economic standpoint, the Philippines and Bangladesh are poised at a decisive moment for deepening collaboration. According to the Observatory of Economic Complexity (OEC), in May 2025, the Philippines exported USD 2.07 million worth of goods to Bangladesh and imported USD 5.78 million, resulting in a trade gap of USD 3.71 million on the Philippine

side. This reflects a significant 75.2% decrease in Philippine exports compared to the same period in 2024, while imports slightly rose by 0.57%.

While these figures signal sustained trade activity, they also point to the need for strategic interventions to rebalance trade and unlock the full potential of value-driven exchanges. Bangladesh's expanding consumer base presents a strong opportunity for the Philippines to enhance its market presence through competitive exports—such as processed tropical foods, agro-industrial goods, electronics, beauty and wellness products, and halal-certified items.

Bangladesh's globally recognized ready-made garments (RMG) sector, accounting for over 80% of its exports, offers affordable, high-quality apparel that can benefit Filipino consumers. Yet beyond garments, the Philippines can introduce high-value goods that reflect our strengths as an exporter and innovator.

I envision the day when Philippine food products—dried mangoes from Cebu; banana chips from Davao; coconut-based products from Palawan like Slow drinks and Cocos condiments; adobo-flavored seasonings; and even frozen beef tapa—find their way into Bangladeshi homes, hotel pantries, and grocery aisles. With the Philippines' robust agro-processing sector and Bangladesh's efficient distribution networks, such partnerships could become a compelling success story in regional cooperation.

There is also great potential for

joint ventures in agro-processing, especially in fruit preservation, coconut-based goods, and halal products—where the Philippines has established standards and abundant raw materials, and Bangladesh has manufacturing scale and access to South Asian markets.

Likewise, Philippine electronics, cosmetics, and wellness products, many of which are grounded in natural ingredients and sustainable sourcing, could resonate with Bangladesh's young, upwardly mobile consumers. These sectors highlight Filipino innovation and entrepreneurship—traits we are proud to showcase.

Strategic cooperation in pharmaceuticals is another area worth exploring. Bangladesh's capacity in generic drug manufacturing could be complemented by Philippine expertise in regulatory compliance, R&D, and clinical trials, opening doors to affordable and accessible medicines for both populations.

Equally promising are education and skills partnerships. The Philippines is globally

recognized for excellence in nursing, caregiving, tourism and hospitality, aviation, and maritime education. Twinning arrangements between Philippine and Bangladeshi institutions could foster mutual capacity-building, professional development, and intercultural exchange.

In parallel with these efforts, I've taken personal joy in seeing a Filipino-franchised restaurant in Dhaka—Teriyaki Boy and Sizzling Steak. More than just a place to eat, it's a slice of home and a soft power symbol of our cultural presence. One day, I hope to welcome the opening of a Jollibee store in Bangladesh, where I can once again savor my all-time favorites—Chicken Joy and peach mango pie—and share them with new friends. That experience would be more than just nostalgic; it would be a joyful celebration of our shared love for good food and warm hospitality.

Looking forward, one of the most transformative goals for our bilateral relationship would be the establishment of a direct flight between Manila and Dhaka. Currently, travel

between our countries involves lengthy stopovers. A direct link would not only reduce travel time and cost, but also open doors for trade missions, tourism, student mobility, and diaspora engagement—paving the way for deeper connectivity.

This would also solidify our roles as regional gateways—the Philippines as an ASEAN hub, and Bangladesh as an emerging South Asian powerhouse.

Tourism and Cultural Exchange

Bangladesh's beauty is found in its diversity—from the Sundarbans and Srimangal's tea estates to Cox's Bazar, the longest natural sea beach in the world. As more Filipinos discover this "Land of Rivers," I believe we can create two-way tourism bridges—positioning our countries as alternative, halal-friendly, and affordable travel destinations.

In return, I hope to see more Bangladeshis enjoying the sunset in Boracay, walking the historic walls of Intramuros, marveling at the Ifugao Rice Terraces, or cruising through the mystical Underground River in Palawan, one of the New 7 Wonders of Nature.





Cultural diplomacy can flourish through literature, music, dance, student exchanges, and film festivals. Our stories—whether sung in Bangla or Filipino—reveal a shared spirit of resilience, rhythm, and joy.

Migration and People-to-People Ties

Our overseas workers continue to

build bridges of cooperation. A small yet growing number of Filipinos work in Bangladesh, while Bangladeshi students, entrepreneurs, and medical tourists are discovering opportunities in the Philippines.

As both countries enhance migration governance, we can share best practices on ethical

recruitment, skills matching, and labor welfare—ensuring that mobility is safe, empowering, and development-focused.

Looking Ahead: Digital, Green, and Inclusive

As we look to the future, we must also expand collaboration into non-traditional sectors, such as:

Digital economy and fintech, combining Bangladesh’s mobile banking success with the Philippines’ growing digital finance ecosystem

Climate resilience, leveraging shared experiences in disaster management and adaptation

Women empowerment and gender equality, building on the strong cultural and social roles women play in both societies



A Personal Note

Dhaka’s golden hour, the laughter shared during iftar dinners, and my first taste of smoked hilsa during a MOFA event remain vivid memories. My heart smiles whenever someone calls me “sister” even before knowing my name. I’ve learned to navigate the city’s energetic streets with calm and come to deeply admire the quiet strength of this nation.

One day, I hope to walk through a Dhaka grocery aisle and see a pack of Philippine dried mangoes. I’ll smile, knowing we’re getting there—one step, one handshake, one cup of tea at a time.

Lynn R. Gutierrez
Third Secretary and Vice Consul
Philippine Embassy in Bangladesh



OPERATION SEA ANGEL: HOW A GULF WAR DEPLOYMENT SAVED 200,000 LIVES IN BANGLADESH

Md. Rashidul Hasan Chowdhury

In the early hours of August 2, 1990, nearly 200,000 Iraqi soldiers backed by 300 tanks stormed and swiftly occupied the small but oil-rich Gulf nation of Kuwait. Under the leadership of President Saddam Hussein, Iraq accused Kuwait of manipulating oil prices and overproducing crude oil. The 16,000-strong Kuwaiti military stood little chance, and within hours, the country was overrun. Kuwait's Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, his cabinet, and nearly 100,000 Kuwaitis fled to neighboring Saudi Arabia in search of safety.

The invasion triggered a global outcry. The United Nations swiftly condemned the



American Ambassador William B. Milam, left, MajGen Henry C. Stackpole III, and LtGen Muhammad Noor Uddin Khan, chief of staff of the Bangladeshi army, were briefed during the preparatory stage of the relief operation. Photograph courtesy of American Embassy, Bangladesh

aggression, and on January 17, 1991, a U.S.-led coalition launched Operation Desert Storm, a massive air and ground assault that forced Iraqi forces to retreat. The war officially ended on February 28, 1991, but unbeknownst to many, the American troops who had just completed their mission in the Middle East were about to play an even more critical role—this time in South Asia.

A Storm That Ravaged Bangladesh

On the night of April 29, 1991, a Category-4 tropical cyclone made landfall on the southeastern coast of Bangladesh, particularly devastating the Chattogram and Cox's Bazar regions. With sustained wind speeds reaching an unprecedented 250 km/h (155 mph) and a storm surge of nearly 20 feet, the cyclone became one of the deadliest in recorded history. Within hours, it claimed the lives of more

than 138,000 people and left over 10 million homeless.

Entire infrastructures—including roads, railways, telecommunications, and electricity lines—were obliterated. Relief efforts were paralyzed. The recently elected government of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, who had

just ushered the country into democracy after years of autocracy, faced a humanitarian crisis of historic proportions. With hundreds of thousands still at risk of dying from disease, hunger, and exposure, Bangladesh desperately needed immediate global support.

The U.S. President's Call to Action

In response to the catastrophe, U.S. President George H. W. Bush personally called Prime Minister Khaleda Zia on May 3, 1991, to express his condolences and offer assistance. The very next day, a reconnaissance team comprising members of the U.S. military and USAID arrived in Chattogram to assess the damage. Upon their urgent recommendation, President Bush ordered a redirection of U.S. naval assets stationed in the Gulf toward Bangladesh.

Thus, began Operation Sea



American soldiers offload emergency aid from naval vessels as part of Operation Sea Angel



U.S. Marines carry a sack of rice across the airfield at Chittagong Air Base during Operation Sea Angel, a U.S. military effort to provide disaster relief to victims of a cyclone which devastated Bangladesh

Angel—the largest humanitarian relief mission ever conducted by the United States military.

Soldiers of War Turned Angels of Mercy

On May 10, 1991, the Amphibious Task Force (ATF),

originally en route back to the U.S. from the Gulf, was rerouted to Bangladesh. This task force included over 8,000 personnel from the U.S. Marine Corps, Navy, Army, and engineering units. The mission was led by Lieutenant General Henry C. Stackpole,



U.S. military personnel coordinate supply deliveries from a communications site during Operation Sea Angel

Commander of the 3rd Marine Expeditionary Brigade based in Okinawa, Japan.

Troops deployed helicopters and amphibious vehicles to reach the most remote and inaccessible islands such as Sandwip, Bhola, Hatiya, and Banshkhali—places where survivors had been completely cut off.

Joining the American forces were aid workers from China, Japan, India, Pakistan, the UK, and various international humanitarian agencies, forming an unprecedented multinational relief coalition.

According to “Angels from the Sea: Relief Operations in Bangladesh”, authored by Charles R. Smith of the U.S. Marine Corps History and Museums Division, General Stackpole traveled to Dhaka after his initial assessment and held high-level coordination meetings with Bangladesh Army Chief Lt. Gen. Nuruddin Khan, U.S. Ambassador William B. Milam, and representatives from international organizations. Relief efforts began rapidly, with a singular mission: save as many lives as possible.

A Mission That Changed the Course of Disaster Response

In total, over 4,000 tons of food were distributed, 266,000 gallons of clean water supplied, and 15,000 critically ill people treated at temporary field hospitals. According to American analysts, without this mission, an additional 200,000 lives might have been



LT. John Koella, a doctor with the 2nd Bn., 11th Marines, 1ST Marine Div., examines a patient as Hospital Corpsman 1ST Class Robert Andrews stands by. The U.S. medical team is assisting local doctors as part of Operation Sea Angel

lost in the aftermath of the cyclone.

Former U.S. Ambassador William B. Milam, who oversaw

the mission on the ground, later recalled:

“Looking back, it’s clear that when tragedy strikes,

humanity has the power to turn it into triumph.”

A Legacy That Endures

Operation Sea Angel not only saved lives—it transformed the way Bangladesh and the United States approached disaster preparedness and response. When Cyclone Sidr struck in 2007, the U.S. once again returned, launching Operation Sea Angel II, inspired by the original 1991 relief efforts.

The 1991 mission remains a shining example of how military forces, often trained for war, can pivot to peace and healing in the face of human suffering. It also remains a lesser-known but profoundly powerful chapter in Bangladesh-U.S. relations.

Two decades after the end of the Gulf War, it wasn’t the battlefield but the battered shores of Bangladesh that bore witness to one of the most compassionate deployments in military history—an operation that quite literally turned soldiers into angels.

Md. Rashidul Hasan Chowdhury
Asst. Editor
The Ambassador



PHILIPPINES–BANGLADESH FRIENDSHIP CELEBRATED IN STYLE: 127TH PHILIPPINE INDEPENDENCE DAY HONORED WITH DIPLOMATIC SPLENDOR IN DHAKA

RADISSON BLU GALA STRENGTHENS BILATERAL TIES, CULTURAL BONDS, AND
CREATIVE INDUSTRY COOPERATION

The Philippine Embassy in Bangladesh hosted a grand diplomatic reception at the Radisson Blu Water Garden Hotel in Dhaka to mark the 127th Anniversary of the Proclamation of Philippine Independence, celebrating a long-standing friendship between the Philippines and Bangladesh and reaffirming commitments to peace, prosperity, and shared cultural values.

Chief Guest, the Honorable Mostofa Sarwar Farooki, Adviser to the Ministry of Cultural Affairs of Bangladesh and renowned filmmaker, emphasized in his remarks the rich and evolving relationship between the two nations. He noted with pride that the Philippines was one of the first countries to recognize Bangladesh’s sovereignty following its independence in

1971, and highlighted deep-rooted cultural similarities between the two peoples—including a shared love for storytelling, music, and cinema. Citing a recent Bangladeshi–Philippine film co-production that received accolades at the 78th Cannes Film Festival, Adviser Farooki called for greater cooperation in the creative industries, particularly in filmmaking and

Spearheaded by Her Excellency Nina P. Cainglet, Ambassador of the Republic of the Philippines to Bangladesh, the evening brought together a distinguished gathering of diplomats, senior officials from the Government of Bangladesh, business leaders, cultural icons, academics, and members of both the media and the Filipino diaspora.





acknowledged the contributions of the Filipino community in Bangladesh, who are playing crucial roles in education, health, hospitality, and manufacturing, thereby strengthening the people-to-people foundation of diplomatic relations.

The evening's cultural program was a vibrant display of Filipino heritage. The internationally celebrated soprano duo The Nightingales mesmerized the audience with traditional and contemporary Filipino songs—and stunned the crowd with a surprise rendition of a beloved Bangladeshi song, drawing a standing ovation. A captivating performance of Singkil, a royal dance from the Maranao people of Mindanao, performed by Filipino community members, celebrated diasporic pride and cultural fusion.

Guests enjoyed a flavorful spread of Filipino culinary delights, including adobo, pancit, lumpia,

music exchange.

In her keynote address, Ambassador Cainglet paid tribute to the courage and vision of the Filipino heroes of 1898 and reaffirmed the Philippines' ongoing commitment to inclusive development, democratic resilience, and regional peace. She elaborated on the country's Eight-Point Socioeconomic Agenda and the long-term national vision, "AmBisyon Natin 2040," which aspires to eliminate poverty and

empower every Filipino to live a secure, middle-class life by the year 2040.

Ambassador Cainglet also outlined the Philippines' global priorities under ASEAN, including climate action, maritime security, seafarers' rights, and gender-inclusive peacebuilding. She lauded the growing bilateral cooperation between the Philippines and Bangladesh in key sectors such as agro-processing, pharmaceuticals, garments, textiles, and tourism. She further





and desserts, offering a true taste of the archipelago’s diverse food culture. A mini-exhibit showcased Philippine handicrafts, handwoven fabrics, natural wellness products, and artisanal jewelry—promoting both trade and cultural exchange.

As a gesture of diplomatic goodwill, Ambassador Cainglet presented tokens of appreciation to Adviser Farooki, including a handcrafted Banwa Pen made from native Philippine wood, and a copy of *Inabel: Philippine Textile* from the Ilocos Region, a coffee table book highlighting the

Philippines’ indigenous weaving legacy.

The Embassy expressed deep appreciation to its partners, notably the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), Sentro Rizal, the Bangladesh–Philippines Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BPCCI), Honorary Consuls Mohammed Awwal, Sriyal Dissanayake, and Abdulla Salih, as well as the dedicated Filipino community in Bangladesh, whose participation ensured the success of the evening.

The celebration closed on an emotional note with Ambassador Cainglet’s resonant words: “At the end of the day, we share the same hope, and we share the same dreams.”

The reception not only commemorated a historic milestone in Philippine nationhood but also powerfully underscored the enduring strength of Philippines–Bangladesh diplomatic relations, built on shared aspirations, cultural respect, and a commitment to collaborative progress.

Ambassador’s Desk Report



UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL OF SILICA GEL IN BANGLADESH: OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDUSTRY, AGRICULTURE, AND SUSTAINABILITY

Md. Hasinur Rahman

Silica gel, a porous and amorphous form of silicon dioxide (SiO_2), has long been prized for its exceptional moisture-absorbing capabilities. With a remarkably high surface area of approximately 750–800 m^2/g , it can adsorb up to 37% of its weight in water. Often encountered in small sachets marked "Do Not Eat," silica gel is commonly used as a desiccant—but its potential extends far beyond moisture control. In Bangladesh, this versatile material holds untapped promise across sectors such as agriculture,

pharmaceuticals, electronics, heritage preservation, and even sustainable manufacturing.

Understanding Silica Gel and Its Types

Silica gel is commercially available in several forms, each designed for specific functions:

- Type A: Clear pellets used for drying and moisture-proofing.
- Type B: Translucent pellets often found in cat litter and as general adsorbents.
- Type C: Microporous forms suited for raw material applications.
- Silica Alumina Gel:

Flame-resistant, often used in chemical industries.

- Stabilizing Silica Gel: Common in the brewing industry for clarifying beer.

Each type offers unique advantages, particularly due to silica gel's ability to adsorb both water and gases, making it a valuable resource for a wide array of applications.

How Bangladesh Can Benefit from Silica Gel

1. Agriculture and Post-Harvest Storage
In Bangladesh's



Reducing Post-Harvest Loss: Silica Gel Protects Crops and Grains from Moisture in Bangladesh's Agricultural Supply Chain

agriculture-driven economy, post-harvest losses are a critical issue due to humidity and inadequate storage facilities. Integrating silica gel sachets into packaging can prolong the shelf life of seeds, grains, and dried foods by preventing fungal growth and moisture damage. Stabilizing silica gel can also help maintain the quality of medicinal and herbal products during processing and storage.

2. Pharmaceuticals and Healthcare

As Bangladesh's pharmaceutical sector continues to expand, the

need for effective moisture control becomes crucial. Pharmaceutical-grade silica gel can maintain the integrity of moisture-sensitive drug formulations. Additionally, it can be used in diagnostic kits, laboratory storage, and packaging of medical devices to prevent degradation.

3. Electronics and Leather Industries

Moisture is a major threat to electronic components, which are highly sensitive to humidity. Silica gel is indispensable for preserving electronics during

manufacturing, shipping, and storage. In the leather and footwear sectors—key export industries for Bangladesh—silica gel helps protect products from mold and moisture-related damage.

4. Preservation of Historical Artifacts and Documents

Cultural institutions like museums and libraries face challenges related to humidity, which can degrade valuable documents, paintings, and artifacts. Silica gel can maintain controlled humidity levels in display cases and archives, safeguarding Bangladesh's rich cultural heritage.

5. Textile and Garment Exports

The Ready-Made Garment (RMG) industry is a cornerstone of Bangladesh's economy. Silica gel can enhance export quality by preventing mildew, odors, and moisture damage in garments during shipping, especially in tropical and humid conditions.

6. Brewery and Beverage Industry

In brewing, stabilizing silica gel is widely used to clarify beer and extend its shelf life. As Bangladesh's beverage industry grows, adopting food-grade silica gel can elevate product standards and improve consumer satisfaction.

7. Environmental Protection and Air Purification

Advanced forms of silica gel are now employed in air and gas purification systems. These can be implemented in Bangladesh's industrial zones to lower emissions, improve air quality, and comply with environmental regulations.



Pharmaceutical-Grade Silica Gel Helps Ensure Drug Stability in Bangladesh's Growing Health Sector



Silica Gel Prevents Mold and Odors in Bangladesh's Ready-Made Garment (RMG) Exports

8. Artificial Leather and Plastic Alternatives

Recent innovations have demonstrated that silica-based composites can be used to manufacture artificial leather—offering greater durability than traditional synthetic leather. This new material is not only more resilient but also provides an eco-friendly alternative to plastics and plastic bottles. By

investing in silica-based artificial leather production, Bangladesh can reduce its dependence on petroleum-based products and lead the way in sustainable manufacturing for fashion, upholstery, and packaging.

Local Production and Investment Opportunities

With silica gel's wide-ranging applications, Bangladesh stands

to gain by establishing domestic production using locally available raw materials like sand and sodium silicate. Doing so would:

- Reduce reliance on imports.
- Lower production costs across industries.
- Generate employment in the chemical and packaging sectors.

Collaborations between universities, startups, and international firms can spur innovation and develop customized silica gel solutions suited for Bangladesh's humid climate and industrial needs.

Conclusion

Silica gel is far more than just a desiccant tucked into packaging—it is a multifunctional material with immense potential to transform industries in Bangladesh. From enhancing food security and preserving cultural heritage to promoting eco-friendly alternatives to plastic, silica gel offers a pathway toward sustainable development. With strategic investments in local production and research, Bangladesh can unlock the full value of silica gel to build a more resilient and diversified economy

Md. Hasinur Rahman

Additional Deputy Director, Plant Protection Wing
Department of Agricultural Extension



PRESERVING RAINWATER IN BANGLADESH: A STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE FOR SUSTAINABLE WATER SECURITY

Dr. ATM Delowar Hossain, PHD

Introduction
Bangladesh, with its subtropical monsoon climate, receives an average annual rainfall of approximately 2,300 mm. Ironically, despite this abundance of rain, the country faces a looming water crisis due to groundwater depletion, contamination, and inadequate water management infrastructure. In this context, rainwater harvesting (RWH) emerges as a highly viable, sustainable, and cost-effective solution to meet diverse water needs while ensuring ecological balance.

Current Water Scenario in Bangladesh

The country's over-reliance on groundwater—over 70% of water used for irrigation and more than 90% for domestic use—has led to alarming consequences:

Groundwater depletion: Excessive withdrawal has caused the water table to drop significantly, especially in Dhaka and other urban centers.

Arsenic contamination: An estimated 27% of shallow tube wells are contaminated with

arsenic, posing serious public health hazards.

Salinity intrusion: In coastal areas, rising sea levels and saline intrusion into freshwater aquifers are exacerbating water scarcity.

Flood and drought cycles: Monsoon rains are intense but poorly distributed, with most rainfall occurring in just three to four months. This leads to seasonal flooding followed by prolonged dry spells.

Why Rainwater Harvesting?
Rainwater, if efficiently collected



and stored, could address many of these challenges. The core advantages include:

1. **Accessibility and Simplicity:** Rainwater is free, locally available, and easy to collect using basic infrastructure such as rooftops, gutters, tanks, or ponds.
2. **Quality and Safety:** Properly filtered and stored rainwater is safe for domestic use, reducing dependency on arsenic-contaminated groundwater.
3. **Reduced Pressure on Groundwater:** Harvesting rainwater during the monsoon

can significantly lower groundwater extraction needs.

4. **Climate Resilience:** RWH promotes water security during dry seasons, reduces urban flooding, and strengthens climate adaptation strategies.

Uses of Rainwater in Bangladesh

1. Domestic Use:

In rural areas, rainwater is used for drinking, cooking, and sanitation during the monsoon.

In coastal regions like Satkhira, Khulna, and Barisal, where salinity and arsenic contamination are severe, rainwater is often the only safe

source of drinking water.

2. Agriculture:

Rain-fed agriculture constitutes over 60% of total farmland. Rainwater storage can provide critical irrigation during dry spells.

Small-scale farm ponds and earthen tanks are being increasingly used for supplemental irrigation.

3. Urban Use:

In cities like Dhaka and Chattogram, rainwater can be used for toilet flushing, gardening, car washing, and construction, reducing municipal water demand.

Rooftop rainwater harvesting is gaining popularity in housing complexes, schools, and government buildings.

4. Industrial Applications:

Industries in water-stressed zones can use harvested rainwater to reduce dependency on groundwater, thus aligning with sustainable production goals.

Challenges to Effective Implementation

Despite its potential, rainwater harvesting remains underutilized due to:

- Lack of awareness and policy enforcement.
- High initial cost perception (especially for large-scale RWH systems).
- Insufficient technical expertise among local builders and homeowners.
- Poor maintenance of existing systems, leading to contamination risks.





Introduce cooperatives for shared rainwater storage facilities in agriculture.

3. Research and Innovation:
Promote low-cost, modular rainwater filters and tanks.

Use GIS and climate models to identify high-potential RWH zones.

4. Education and Advocacy:
Integrate water literacy in school curricula.

Use media campaigns to promote the benefits of RWH.

Conclusion

Rainwater preservation is not just an environmental imperative—it is a socio-economic necessity for Bangladesh. Harnessing the monsoon’s bounty through efficient rainwater harvesting can reduce water stress, enhance agricultural productivity, and safeguard public health. With the right mix of policy support, community engagement, and technological innovation, Bangladesh can turn its seasonal rainfall into a year-round resource and a pillar of water security

Government and NGO Initiatives

- Several initiatives are in place to promote rainwater preservation:
- DPHE and NGOs like WaterAid and UNICEF have installed rainwater tanks in thousands of coastal households.
- National Water Policy (1999) and Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100 emphasize RWH for climate resilience.
- Green Building Guidelines encourage RWH integration in new constructions, especially in urban areas.

Recommendations for a Scalable Strategy

1. Policy Integration and Incentives:

Mandate rainwater harvesting systems in new buildings through urban bylaws.

Offer tax rebates or subsidies for installing RWH infrastructure.

2. Community-Based Models:

Train rural communities in system maintenance and water quality management.

Dr. ATM Delowar Hossain, PHD

Express Bulletin

Russia and Bangladesh Sign Landmark MoU on Standardization Cooperation



standardization, both Ms Semenova and Mr Alam emphasized its potential to streamline and facilitate bilateral trade between the two countries.

Ms Maksura Noor, Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Industries of Bangladesh, attended the event as the Chief Guest, commending the initiative as a step toward harmonizing standards and boosting economic partnership.

Under the terms of the MoU, Russia and Bangladesh have agreed to promote collaboration through:

- Exchange of information on national standards and technical regulations,
- Sharing of publications, standardization activities, and research programs,
- Exchange of experiences in national standards development.

Officials from both nations expressed optimism that the agreement would lay the foundation for a long-term partnership in regulatory science, technical alignment, and quality assurance.

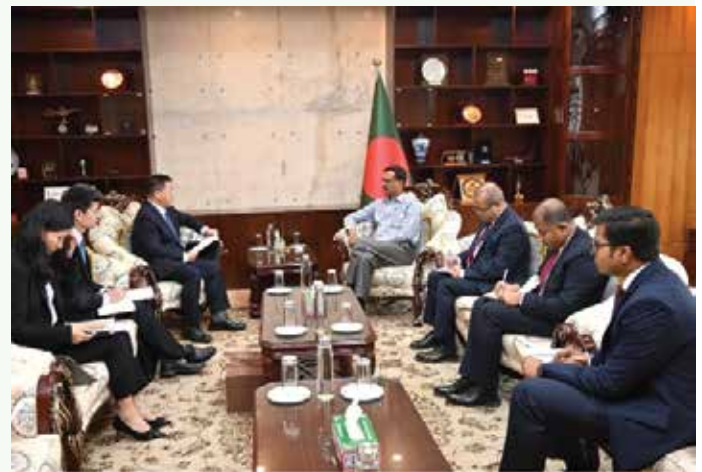


In a significant step toward strengthening bilateral trade and technical collaboration, the Russian Federal Agency on Technical Regulation and Metrology and the Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on July 14, focusing on cooperation in the field of standardization.

The official signing ceremony was held in Dhaka, where Ms Ekaterina Semenova, Minister-Counsellor of the Russian Embassy, formally handed over the MoU copies signed by the Russian side. Mr SM Ferdous Alam, Director General of BSTI, signed the document on behalf of Bangladesh.

Describing the MoU as a milestone in enhancing cooperation in technical regulations and

Chinese Ambassador Meets Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain to Strengthen Bilateral Ties



Ambassador of China to Bangladesh, H.E. Mr. Yao Wen, paid a courtesy call on H.E. Mr. Md. Touhid Hossain, Hon'ble Adviser for Foreign Affairs, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs this morning. The meeting focused on a wide range of issues of mutual interest between Bangladesh and China.

Both sides reaffirmed the importance of enhanced collaboration and people-to-people exchanges, especially in the context of celebrating the 50th anniversary of Bangladesh-China diplomatic relations this year.

Ambassador Yao briefed the Foreign Adviser on the follow-up actions from the recent official visit of the Hon'ble Chief Adviser of Bangladesh to China. Key areas discussed included deepening bilateral cooperation in trade, infrastructure development, healthcare, agriculture, fisheries, green energy, disaster management, and tourism.

He also referred to previous discussions held between the Chinese Foreign Minister and the Bangladeshi Foreign Adviser in Kuala Lumpur, highlighting the continuity of high-level engagements between the two countries.

Addressing regional concerns, Ambassador Yao clarified that the Chinese hydro-power project on the Yarlung Zangbo River is exclusively intended for electricity generation. He assured that "China will not withdraw or use any water from the project, and it will not affect downstream countries."



Express Bulletin

New Saudi Ambassador Meets Foreign Adviser and Foreign Secretary to Boost Bilateral Ties



The newly appointed Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Bangladesh, H.E. Dr. Abdullah Zafer H. Bin Abiyah, paid separate courtesy calls on the Hon'ble Foreign Adviser, H.E. Mr. Md. Touhid Hossain, and the Foreign Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

During the meetings, both the Foreign Adviser and the Foreign Secretary extended a warm welcome to Ambassador Dr. Abiyah and assured him of their full



cooperation in fulfilling his diplomatic mission in Bangladesh.

Ambassador Dr. Abiyah expressed his strong interest in working closely with Bangladeshi counterparts to deepen the longstanding and brotherly relations between the two nations. He emphasized his commitment to enhancing cooperation across various sectors, reflecting the shared values and mutual respect that underpin the Bangladesh-Saudi Arabia partnership.



Express Bulletin

Canada's Indo-Pacific Assistant Deputy Minister Meets Foreign Secretary to Strengthen Bilateral Ties



Dhaka, July 13, 2025 — Canada's Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) for the Indo-Pacific Branch, Mr. Weldon Epp, paid a courtesy call on the Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs this afternoon. This visit marks Mr. Epp's first official trip to Bangladesh, reflecting Canada's growing engagement with the country.

The meeting focused on deepening the bilateral partnership across key sectors including trade, investment, development cooperation, and people-to-people connections. Mr. Epp described Bangladesh as a long-standing and reliable partner in the Indo-Pacific region.

The Foreign Secretary highlighted areas of ongoing and future collaboration, and emphasized the need to simplify the student visa process to support educational exchange and skill development. Mr. Epp acknowledged the strong presence and positive

contributions of the Bangladeshi diaspora in Canada as a pillar of bilateral relations.

Both parties expressed optimism about the ongoing technical discussions on a Foreign Investment Protection and Promotion Agreement (FIPA), with Mr. Epp noting its importance in boosting Canadian investor confidence. They also discussed the potential for initiating talks on a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in the near future.

In addition, Mr. Epp praised Bangladesh's continued humanitarian support for the forcibly displaced Rohingyas and reaffirmed Canada's commitment to ongoing assistance. The two sides agreed on the need to deepen Indo-Pacific cooperation to ensure shared prosperity and regional stability.

The meeting concluded with a reaffirmation of the commitment to a forward-looking and robust partnership between Bangladesh and Canada.



Express Bulletin

Denmark and Bangladesh Collaborate on Sustainable Dairy Transformation through Green Dairy Partnership Project



Dhaka, July 2025: In a groundbreaking step towards a greener and more inclusive dairy industry, Bangladesh has officially launched the Dairy Value Chain Forum under the Green Dairy Partnership Project, a transformative initiative backed by the Danida Green Business Partnership under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark.

The forum brings together a robust consortium of public and private stakeholders, including renowned Danish entities such as Arla Foods, Danish Agriculture & Food Council, and SEGES Innovation, in collaboration with Bangladeshi partners like PRAN, Solidaridad Network Asia, and IDRN-Bangladesh Agricultural University.

With a vision to support over 10,000 dairy farming households and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 30%, the initiative aims to build a resilient, low-emission, and commercially viable dairy value chain in Bangladesh. The Dairy Value Chain Forum



will serve as the central operational platform to promote green innovation, enhance productivity, and uplift rural livelihoods.

This collaborative effort reflects the shared commitment of Denmark and Bangladesh to climate-resilient development, responsible business practices, and inclusive economic growth.

The Green Dairy Partnership Project stands as a testament to the growing bilateral cooperation between the two nations and offers a model for sustainable transformation in agri-food sectors globally.



Express Bulletin

Strengthening Financial Inclusion and Rural Exchange Between Bangladesh and China



Beijing/Ulanqab_July25_2025: A high-level delegation from Grameen Bank and its grantees has successfully concluded a five-day official visit to China from July 21 to 25, marking a significant step in deepening cooperation on microfinance, inclusive finance, and rural development between the two nations.

The visit featured participation in the China-Bangladesh Microcredit Seminar, where policymakers, financial experts, and practitioners shared insights on inclusive finance models and innovations. A major highlight was the field visit to the



Grameen Bank branch in Shangdu County, Ulanqab, where the delegation engaged directly with Chinese rural women entrepreneurs to understand China's approach to rural revitalization and financial empowerment.

In addition to professional exchanges, the delegation explored China's rich cultural and historical legacy with visits to iconic landmarks including the Great Wall and the Forbidden City, offering a glimpse into the country's dynamic blend of tradition and modern development.

This successful visit not only strengthened the Bangladesh-China financial and cultural ties but also opened new opportunities for collaborative learning in the areas of poverty reduction, rural entrepreneurship, and social banking innovation.

The initiative underlines the continued relevance of Grameen Bank's global microfinance model and sets a new benchmark for cross-border collaboration in inclusive development.



Express Bulletin

Quad Foreign Ministers Meet in Washington to Bolster Indo-Pacific Strategy



Washington D.C., 2025: U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio met today with the Foreign Ministers of India, Japan, and Australia in a high-level Quad meeting focused on strengthening cooperation for peace, security, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region.

“Met with the Quad Foreign Ministers to discuss our work together to increase peace, stability, security, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region,” Secretary Rubio stated following the talks.

Key outcomes of the meeting included:

- Commitment to maritime freedom and regional stability

- Expansion of resilient infrastructure and clean energy partnerships
- Enhanced cooperation on cybersecurity and emerging technologies
- Support for health security and climate resilience across the Indo-Pacific

The meeting reaffirmed the Quad's unified stance against coercive regional behavior and highlighted shared efforts to ensure a free, open, and rules-based Indo-Pacific amid rising global challenges.



Express Bulletin

Ambassador Reto Renggli Hosts Strategic Breakfast Meeting with Swiss Business Leaders and Dr. Debapriya Bhattacharya



The meeting fostered thoughtful dialogue on a broad range of macroeconomic topics, including the evolving financial sector landscape, current economic challenges, and emerging opportunities for foreign investors. Discussions also addressed the regulatory environment, currency stability, and prospects for Swiss investment and innovation in key Bangladeshi sectors.

Ambassador Renggli emphasized Switzerland's ongoing commitment to responsible business practices and sustainable partnerships, noting that economic collaboration remains a vital pillar in Bangladesh-Switzerland bilateral relations.

The event underscored the importance of open dialogue between policymakers, economists, and private sector actors in navigating today's dynamic economic climate and advancing mutually beneficial cooperation.

This timely exchange reflects growing confidence in Bangladesh's investment potential and marks another step forward in fostering Swiss-Bangladeshi economic diplomacy.

Dhaka, July, 2025 : In a significant effort to deepen economic engagement, Ambassador Reto Renggli of Switzerland hosted a high-level breakfast meeting today with prominent representatives of the Swiss business community in Bangladesh. The session was also joined by Dr. Debapriya Bhattacharya, distinguished economist and Chair of the Commission that recently published the White Paper on the State of the Bangladesh Economy.



Express Bulletin

Sweden and Bangladesh Forge New Agreement to Protect Nature and Strengthen Climate Resilience



Dhaka, July 27, 2025: In a major step toward advancing environmental sustainability and climate resilience, Sweden and Bangladesh have signed a new bilateral agreement aimed at protecting the country's rich biodiversity and enhancing the capacity of environmental institutions.

The agreement, signed between Sweden and the Economic Relations Division (ERD) of the Government of Bangladesh, will be implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and supported by Sida – the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.



This groundbreaking partnership will:

- Strengthen key environmental institutions and policy frameworks
- Support the restoration of ecologically vital areas, including Sonadia Island, a critical habitat for marine life and migratory birds
- Facilitate the creation of a national Wildlife Trust Fund to ensure sustainable conservation financing

The initiative reflects a shared vision to build a more climate-resilient and sustainable Bangladesh that prioritizes both people and the planet.

Swedish officials hailed the agreement as a model for nature-based solutions and inclusive green development, while Bangladeshi authorities reiterated their commitment to preserving ecosystems amid rising climate threats.

This partnership is a testament to the growing cooperation between the two nations in combating environmental degradation and promoting a greener, stronger future.

“Origins of Vision” Art Exhibition Concludes at Embassy of Japan, Celebrating Cultural Bridges Between Bangladesh and Japan



The Embassy of Japan, in collaboration with HerNet Fine Arts and the HerNet Foundation, concluded the week-long Group Art Exhibition “Origins of Vision” with a grand closing ceremony at its multipurpose hall in Dhaka.

The event was attended by diplomats, artists, and cultural figures, including Guests of Honor Artist Farida Zaman, Architect FR Khan, and Mr. Durjoy Rahman, founder of the Durjoy Bangladesh Foundation. Chief Curator Ms. Alisha Pradhan, also Secretary-General of the HerNet Foundation, and Chairman Mr. Monir Prodhan led the organizing efforts.



Ambassador IWAMA Kiminori (SAIDA) congratulated the organizers and artists, highlighting the growing cultural ties between Japan and Bangladesh. He referenced the recent Tokyo meeting between Prime Minister ISHIBA Shigeru and Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus, where both reaffirmed their commitment to cultural cooperation.

“Many artists here have studied in Japan, and this exhibition reflects a beautiful blend of our cultures,” he noted.

Running from July 18 to 26, the exhibition featured 47 leading and emerging Bangladeshi artists, and drew large crowds. A special tribute honored art pioneers such as Zainul Abedin, SM Sultan, Novera, and others, with rare works on display.

Visitors also experienced traditional Japanese cultural demonstrations including the Tea Ceremony, Origami, and Ikebana, enriching the exchange.

The Embassy expressed appreciation to all participants and reaffirmed its support for Bangladesh’s creative sector and deeper cultural engagement between the two nations.



Express Bulletin

Chargé d'affaires of Japan Delivers Insightful Lecture on Foreign Policy and Japan–Bangladesh Strategic Partnership at National Defence College



A major portion of the presentation highlighted the growing Japan–Bangladesh Strategic Partnership, emphasizing areas of cooperation including infrastructure development, trade, defense dialogue, climate resilience, and capacity-building.

“Japan and Bangladesh share not just economic goals but a deep-rooted friendship based on mutual respect, democratic values, and a shared vision for regional peace and prosperity,” Mr. Takahashi noted during his address.

The lecture was followed by an interactive session, where participants engaged in lively discussions on bilateral relations, regional security challenges, and multilateral diplomacy.

The event underscored Japan’s strong engagement with Bangladesh’s defense and policy institutions, and reaffirmed its commitment to contributing to regional peace, development, and strategic dialogue in South Asia and beyond.

Dhaka, July 20, 2025 : Mr. TAKAHASHI Naoki, Chargé d'affaires ad interim of Japan to Bangladesh, delivered an engaging and insightful lecture at the National Defence College (NDC) titled “Contemporary Japan: Its Foreign Policy, Security and Development Strategy and Japan-Bangladesh Relations.”

The lecture, held on July 20, 2025, was attended by 97 course members, including senior officers and professionals from 18 different countries, reflecting the international scope and significance of the event.

Mr. TAKAHASHI offered an in-depth analysis of Japan’s contemporary foreign policy and its security and development strategies, with a special focus on Japan’s evolving vision for a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)”. He emphasized Japan’s commitment to maintaining a rules-based international order, maritime security, and regional connectivity.



French National Day Celebrated in Dhaka with Tributes to Shared Democratic Values and Future Cooperation



Dhaka, July 27, 2025: The Embassy of France in Bangladesh hosted a vibrant celebration of French National Day on Sunday in Dhaka, bringing together a distinguished gathering of government officials, diplomats, cultural icons, civil society leaders, and business figures to honor the enduring values of liberty, equality, and fraternity.

The event, held in a festively adorned embassy space draped in blue, white, and red, reflected both the historical significance of Bastille Day and the growing bond between France and Bangladesh.

Mr. Ali Imam Majumder, Adviser for Food and Land in the interim government, attended as chief guest, underscoring the importance of bilateral ties. A highlight of the evening was the presentation of the Ambassador's Prize to three outstanding students from Dhaka University and Chittagong University for their excellence in the French language, reinforcing France's cultural diplomacy and educational engagement in Bangladesh.

In her keynote speech, Ambassador H.E. Marie Masdupuy recalled the storming of the Bastille 236



years ago, drawing a powerful parallel with Bangladesh's own recent democratic movement in July 2024:

“The values you have been fighting for are familiar to us. Democracy is also about liberty, equality, fraternity, and inclusivity. Freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, and press freedom are also cornerstones on that tortuous path, and they must go hand in hand with fair justice.”

Ambassador Masdupuy reaffirmed France's steadfast support for Bangladesh's development and strategic autonomy, announcing an exciting new area of cooperation in space technology. France will assist Bangladesh in enhancing its sovereign capabilities to monitor climate change and environmental data through advanced satellite systems.

The celebration served not only as a tribute to France's revolutionary heritage, but also as a platform to strengthen bilateral cooperation in culture, governance, education, and science, paving the way for a more resilient and inclusive partnership

Germany Reaffirms Support to Bangladesh's Leather Sector Amid Urgent Call for Reform and Global Standards



Savar, July 17, 2025: Germany has once again reiterated its long-standing support for Bangladesh's leather industry, emphasizing the urgent need for improved environmental compliance and labor standards to unlock the sector's full economic potential.

Speaking at the workshop “Shaping the Future of Tanneries in Bangladesh”, held at the Tannery Industrial Estate in Savar, Mr. Ulrich Kleppmann, Head of Development Cooperation at the German Embassy, stressed the importance of joint action between government and private actors to build a sustainable, safe, and internationally competitive leather sector.

“Germany remains committed to supporting Bangladesh's development journey, and the leather industry—though underperforming—holds

immense value-added potential that must not be overlooked,” Kleppmann stated.

Despite nearly 90% value addition potential in leather goods manufacturing, Bangladesh's leather exports have witnessed a sharp decline—from \$397 million in FY 2013–14 to only \$142.5 million in FY 2023–24, falling drastically short of the projected \$5 billion target.

The workshop was jointly organized by GIZ, the German development cooperation agency, and the Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments (DIFE). It featured key stakeholders including Mr. A H M Shafiquzzaman, Secretary of the Ministry of Labour and Employment, who attended as Chief Guest, alongside representatives from the private sector, labor organizations, international donors, and regulatory agencies.

Participants discussed pathways to:

- Upgrade tanneries to meet international environmental benchmarks
- Enhance labor rights and workplace safety
- Foster public-private partnerships for sustainable industrial growth
- Rebuild investor confidence and export competitiveness

Germany's continued support signals a strategic push to revive Bangladesh's leather sector as a safer, more inclusive, and environmentally compliant industry, aligned with both national economic goals and global trade standards.

The AMBASSADOR

DIPLOMACY | DEFENSE | GLOBAL AFFAIRS

