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**State Minister for Foreign Affairs Visits Washington, DC**

Honorable State Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr. Hasan Mahmud paid a visit to Washington, DC from 11-13 May 2009. This was the first visit of a member of Council of Ministers since the government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina assumed power in January 2009. During his visit, Honorable State Minister met Congressmen Joseph Crowley and Jim McDermott. He also held meetings with Assistant Secretary of State for Central and South Asia Ambassador Richard Boucher and Senior Director at the National Security Council Mr. Donald Camp.
During his interactions with the US leadership, the United States reiterated its support to the democratic government of Bangladesh and expressed its resolve to further cement their bilateral relations.

On his part, the Honorable State Minister thanked the US government for its continued support for transition to democracy in Bangladesh. He assured that the Government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina remained committed to ensuring good governance for the welfare of the people of Bangladesh and to transform Bangladesh into a middle income country by 2021. The State Minister also assured that the new government remained committed to transforming the political culture of Bangladesh from ‘denial and confrontation’ to ‘constructive engagement with the Opposition’ through making the Parliament as the center of all activities. He sought US assistance in this regard.

Dr. Mahmud assured of Bangladesh’s resolve to protect the human rights and elaborated on different measures undertaken by the incumbent government in this regard. Acknowledging the efforts being undertaken by the government, the US officials urged the Ministry to continue such efforts and assured him of further US assistance.

Dr. Hasan appreciates US leadership in the field of climate change and hoped that Bangladesh, a vulnerable country, would be provided due assistance to fight the challenges of climate change. Bangladesh Minister gave a detailed account on how Bangladesh was trying to deal with this challenge in an inclusive and innovative manner.

Referring to the ongoing financial crisis Dr. Hasan sought immediate duty free access to products from Bangladesh especially for ready-made Garments to the US market. He elaborated on how crucial this help would be to ease the burden of financial crisis for which Bangladesh has little or nothing to be blamed.

In his interactions with the Congressmen Jim McDermott and Joseph Crowley, the Honorable State Minister thanked the US Congress for their support for Bangladesh’s transition to democracy and sought their continued support. He in particular sought their support to pursue New Partnership for Development Act (NPDA) in the US Congress. The Congressmen assured the Honorable State Minister that they would pursue the Act.

Dr. Christopher Flavin, President of World Watch Institute, a renowned think tank specializing in climate issues, also called on the State Minister at the Bangladesh Embassy. They discussed avenues for more cooperation among scientists from both the countries to study and research on the challenges of climate change. Dr. Flavin assured Bangladesh Minister of their continued cooperation.

The Hon’ble State Minister for Foreign Affairs also attended a luncheon discussion at the Heritage Foundation. State Department officials, academia, experts on South Asia, Congressional staffers, journalists, Bangladesh Ambassador to the US Mr. M. Humayun Kabir and officials of Bangladesh Embassy in Washington, DC attended the discussion meeting.

Dr. Hasan Mahmud also gave interviews to BBC, Voice of America and the local Bangladesh journalists during his stay in Washington, DC. He also exchanged views with the members of expatriate Bangladesh community.
US Report lauds Bangladesh’s Position on Religious and Minority Issues

The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), a US bipartisan body, dropped Bangladesh from its Watch List of countries deemed to be in violation of minority right to religious freedom. Absence of measures to promote minority rights and the failure of the government to investigate the anti-minority crimes were among the reasons for which Bangladesh was placed in the Watch List from 2005 to 2008. However, in light of the positive developments witnessed during the last two years and particularly after the 29 December 2008 general elections, the Commission removed Bangladesh from its Watch List of 2009.

The USCIRF places a number of countries across the world in three categories: 1. Countries of Particular Concern, 2. The Commission’s Watch List and 3. Additional Countries Closely Monitored.

The USCIRF in its 2009 annual Report said that the 2008 elections allowed minorities to exercise their voting rights and the country proceeded without the anti-minority violence. The Commission suggested the new government to strengthen protections for all Bangladeshis to enjoy the right to freedom of religion or belief, and undertake efforts to improve conditions for minority religious communities. The Report also suggested that additional efforts are needed to counter discrimination in access to public services, the legal system, and government, military, and police employment.

To view a list of countries under the Commission’s list and full report on Bangladesh, the following webpage may be visited


Thousands attend Bangladesh’s Cultural Program in Washington, DC

Bangladesh Embassy in Washington DC organized a daylong colorful cultural and trade show at the Embassy premises on 02 May 2009. The event, organized as a part of Cultural Tourism DC’s annual celebration of international culture, was attended by a large number of visitors from various parts of the USA. Tourists from other countries also made time to attend the event. Cultural Tourism, DC is a Washington-based non-profit organization dedicated to showcasing cultural diversity through the holding of such events in collaboration with the Embassies in Washington, DC. This is the second consecutive year that this particular cultural program has been organized at the Bangladesh Embassy.

M. Humayun Kabir, Bangladesh Ambassador to the USA and his wife Mrs. Rokeya Kabir welcomed the guests at the Embassy. In his remarks prior to the cultural show, the Bangladesh Ambassador said that Bangladesh has a rich cultural heritage, which has been further enriched by many creative minds of the people. In this connection, he drew a parallel between the huge sacrifice made by the people of these countries for achieving their independence from the colonial rule, and stated that the social egalitarianism and entrepreneurial spirits of the people of Bangladesh and those in the United States connect and energize two societies to explore new grounds for strengthening mutual friendship and understanding. Ambassador Kabir also said that the cultural event at the Embassy was an effort to showcase various aspects of Bangladesh’s culture, heritage and human dynamism with a view to
connecting to wider audience in the USA and beyond. He thanked the guests for attending the event.

The day’s program included, among others, display of Bangladesh’s handicrafts and exportable items and cultural program performed by the expatriate Bangladeshi artists. A video presentation on Bangladesh’s rich cultural heritage and contemporary achievements was screened during the event. The Embassy availed the opportunity to display Bangladesh’s history, art and contemporary achievements in various spheres of activities including women empowerment and Bangladesh’s contribution to UN peacekeeping. The guests were served with traditional Bangladeshi cuisine.

The event attracted about three thousand five hundred enthusiastic visitors due to vigorous publicity and sustained effort by the Embassy. It may be noted that about three thousand guests visited the Embassy last year for the same purpose.

Bangladesh develops its climate change strategy based on two pillars: policy and people: Ambassador Kabir asserted in a panel discussion

Bangladesh is trying to develop its strategy to deal with challenges emanating from the climate change around two pillars: policy and people. At the policy level, Bangladesh’s National Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA), among other things, has focused on ensuring food security, security of livelihood and health, and effective management of disasters. This was stated by Bangladesh Ambassador M. Humayun Kabir while he was speaking as the keynote speaker at a panel discussion organized by the US Bangladesh Advisory Council (USBAC) in Washington, DC on 04 May 2009. The panelists included Dr. Saleemul Huq, Head of the Climate Change program at UK-based International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), Ms. Lisa Friedman, Deputy Editor of the leading U.S. environment policy journal, ClimateWire. Mr. David Waskow of Oxfam America and Ms. Ilana Solomon of Action Aid. USBAC Executive Director, Ms. Shamarukh Mohiuddin moderated the discussion.

Highlighting the challenges faced by Bangladesh due to climate change, Ambassador Kabir mentioned that extreme weather incidents, the sea level rise, which could potentially displace up to 70 million people, public health challenges and other human and social costs. In response, he said “Bangladesh is mobilizing its best resources—its human and social capital and network—to implement climate related strategies.” He also elaborated on the actions taken by Bangladesh government and society to address the challenges. Ambassador Kabir opined that Bangladesh could immensely benefit from “building a new partnership with the United States in addressing the impact of climate change.” He said that Bangladesh is “particularly encouraged by the readiness of the Obama administration to engage and lead the ongoing climate change negotiations leading up to the Copenhagen conference at the end of 2009.” While appreciating US support to Bangladesh to deal with climate change, Ambassador Kabir emphasized on the “need for additional international funding arrangements and technical support.”

Dr. Saleemul Huq of IIED spoke about the global climate change policy scenario. He noted that that the Framework Agreements following the Kyoto Protocol have recognized that mitigation alone is not sufficient. He said that the “primary emphasis for adaptation in the near term needs to be on the poorest and most vulnerable countries including Bangladesh.” He said that approximately “100 countries with a billion people will suffer the consequences of climate change fast and hardest, although they have contributed the least, only 3%, to global carbon emissions.” “These countries” he said “are not the ones who caused the problems, but are
going to suffer the consequences.” He said: “The total bill for addressing all the adaptation problems in all the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) would be roughly under $2 billion over the next two years.”

Dr. Huq said: “One of the most important things that the Obama administration and the Democratic Congress can do is to accept responsibility for helping the poorest and most vulnerable and fulfill a promise made 8 years ago [at the Marrakesh Conference of Parties] to contribute to the Least Developed Countries fund.” He said that USBAC and other international development NGOs could contribute to enhancing awareness of the policymakers about adaptation. He also recommended working with the U.S. intelligence and security establishments, which also understand the magnitude of the issue.

Ms. Friedman spoke about her experience as a journalist covering the impact of climate change in Bangladesh, which formed the basis of her recent five-part New York Times series. She said, “I wanted to do a sustained coverage of what it means to be living in a country where the existence is tied to the land, and where people’s livelihoods and futures are an existential threat because of climate change.” Ms. Friedman said that while internal climate migration does not get much exposure in the news, there are people in the coastal areas moving to cities all the time, which is why Dhaka has doubled in population over the last decade. Ms. Friedman observed: “In the villages, nobody used the language of climate change but they said people were moving because floods were coming so frequently and fiercely, and because salinity levels had ruined the rice crops.” She said, “Still what I found was a country that was doing a tremendous amount with very little help.”

Environmentalists, members of leading US think tanks, staffs of non-profit organizations and Bangladesh Embassy officials attended the event.

**SAARC Ambassador’s forum Discusses Water Issues in South Asia**

The Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) at Johns Hopkins University organized a seminar on the theme “Water Issues in South Asia” on 01 May 2009. This is the fifth annual SAIS SAARC Ambassadors’ Forum dedicated to South Asian issues. Speakers included Mr. Husain Haqqani, Pakistan’s Ambassador to the United States, Mr. Jaliya Wickramasuriya, Sri Lanka’s Ambassador to the United States, Mr. Said T. Jawad, Afghanistan’s Ambassador to the United States, Mr. Humayun Kabir, Bangladesh’s Ambassador to the United States, Mr. Kali Prasad Pokhrel, Chargé d’Affaires at the Embassy of Nepal, Mr. Jawed Ashraf, Political Counselor at the Embassy of India, Mr. Winston Yu, Water Resources Specialist at the World Bank, among others. Professor Walter Anderson, Associate Director of the SAIS South Asia Studies Program conducted the discussion.

In his remarks, Ambassador Kabir highlighted the internal as well as the external dimensions of Bangladesh’s water resources. He said that Bangladesh is dependent on water resource for its agriculture and other facets of livelihood. He stressed that being a lower riparian country, Bangladesh did not have control on water flow coming down from upstream. Mr. Humayun Kabir drew attention to a number of water related problems faced by Bangladesh, including water contamination such as recent discovery of arsenic contamination and intrusion of saline water as well as the potential disastrous effects of sea level rise.

“External dimensions are multifarious. Bangladesh shares eastern Himalayan Rivers as a lower riparian country. Bangladesh is adversely positioned with 92% of Himalayan discharge and 2 billion tons of silt flowing over a 55,000 square miles area causing clogging of regular water channels,’ Bangladesh Ambassador said. He also mentioned that Bangladesh shares 54 trans-boundary rivers with India but the two neighboring countries have only one bilateral agreement on trans-boundary rivers- the Ganges Water Sharing Treaty. Negotiation on the sharing of the Teesta waters has now been continuing for years while on the remaining rivers there has been no discussion. As for steps taken by Bangladesh, he said that Bangladesh was trying to manage water problem on its own as much as it could, but the challenges are enormous. Bangladesh is planning to build Ganges barrage, as suggested in the bilateral Ganges Agreement to reserve water during dry season. He mentioned about Bangladesh’s concern on India’s reported river
linking project. He urged the countries in the South Asia region to look holistically at the issue for optimum utilization of the available water resources. In this context, he suggested a basin wise approach in the region, which, he said, would be beneficial for both upper and lower riparian countries. To finance such basin wise projects bilateral and regional efforts should be made for attracting international funding.

Other speakers highlighted various aspects of water issues from their countries’ perspective. The event was organized as part of the “Year of Water” that brings the SAIS community together to explore global water issues. Students of Johns Hopkins University and members of Washington based research and development organizations attended the event.

Bangladesh Embassy hosts a Climate related seminar

The challenges of climate change in Bangladesh is a microcosm of the problem faced by around 100 vulnerable countries in the world, and Bangladesh is trying to address this challenge through a two pronged approach based on policy and people. This was said by Ambassador to the Unites States M. Humayun Kabir during his speech as the keynote speaker at a panel discussion organized at the Embassy of Bangladesh in Washington, DC on 16 May 2009 on “Confronting Climate Change: Bridging the North-South Divide.” The event was co-sponsored by the Embassy of Bangladesh, World Watch Institute, and the International Club of DC.

Elaborating on Bangladesh’s policy on climate change issue Ambassador Kabir said that Bangladesh was trying to address the climate change related challenges within the framework of National Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA). with particular focus on food security, livelihood and health security as well as effective disaster management. Ambassador Kabir mentioned that the government of Bangladesh under Hon’ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has already formed two separate high-powered committees, namely Strategy and Action Plan Committee and Fund Operation Committee to prepare climate change strategies and manage a US$ 44 million fund from her own resources. As for expectation from the ongoing global negotiations, he said, Bangladesh would like to see that both mitigation and adaptation aspects get equal importance, and the element of fairness guide the negotiations. Additional fund and appropriate technology, as outlined in the Bali Action Plan, should also be integrated into this process with a view to offering continued benefit to all stakeholders, he said. He also opined that special support mechanism should be devised to extend support to the vulnerable LDCs to deal with the effects of climate change. He appreciated the steps being taken by the Obama administration to address this issue and reiterated Bangladesh’s willingness to work bilaterally and internationally with other countries, including the United States.

National Geographic Magazine Executive Editor Dennis Dimick presented a 15-minute documentary on “Climate and Energy,” which is being shown to the common people and politicians throughout the US to raise public awareness about this problem. World Watch Institute China Program Manager Yingling Liu briefed on the climate change issue in the context of China and touched upon Chinese government’s efforts to address the challenge. Global Environment Facility Adaptation and Country Relations Officer Rawleston Moore in his remarks said that the issue of climate change deserved more attention at the international level, as it is an issue of “survival” for poor countries with coastal belts. Energy Action Coalition Executive Director of Programs Jessy Tolkan expressed her optimism that a serious and genuine effort is underway in the U.S. to address the challenges of climate change.

At the beginning, World Watch President Mr. Christopher Flavin gave a brief background of the panel discussion stating that prior to the Copenhagen discussions, there is a strategic opportunity for governments and peoples from across the world to work together and forge a new global agreement on climate change. He regretted that with only seven months to go before the Copenhagen meeting, wide disparity between the United States, Europe, China
and India is yet to be bridged. Mr. Flavin said that Bangladesh is at the front line of climate change, and thanked Bangladesh Embassy for providing the embassy premise for hosting such a discussion. Mr. Flavin also moderated a lively Q&A session.

This seminar was a part of ongoing effort of the Bangladesh Embassy to partner with the social organizations and think tanks in the United States to generate interest about Bangladesh and the issues, which affect Bangladesh and other developing countries. More than 150 invited guests, including leading environmentalists and friends of Bangladesh from various US non-profit organizations and mainstream and local media attended this ticketed event. A 30-minute cultural program was presented by the local Bangladeshi artists, followed by a dinner featuring Bangladeshi traditional delicacies.

Culture Heritage Tourism

Bangladesh Embassy Welcomes New Bangla Year

Amidst fanfare and festivity, the Bangladesh Embassy in Washington, DC welcomed the New Bangla Year 1416 at the Embassy premises. To mark the occasion, Embassy organized a colorful program at its premises on 11 April 2009.

At the beginning of the program, Ambassador M. Humayun Kabir welcomed the guests, and greeted the audience on this auspicious occasion. In his remarks, he said that Bangla New Year was a reminder about the root of our inclusive and positive identity as a nation and there was a need to look at this occasion from a much deeper dimension than only celebrating once in a year. In this context, he urged all expatriate Bangladeshis to nourish our cultural heritage and tradition, and at the same time spread the deeper meaning of this occasion to the wider audience in the United States and beyond. He also called upon them to work unitedly for the peace and prosperity of the nation.

It may be noted that this year, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton issues a congratulatory message during the observance of Pohela Boishakh. She said in her message, “I salute the spirit of tolerance and shared linguistic and cultural heritage that brings so many together, regardless of religion or nationality, to usher in a new year with music, drama, and traditional foods.”

The celebration included a cultural presentation and serving of Bangladeshi cuisine and Pithas. Large number of expatriate Bangladeshis and many local American guests joined the joyous celebration and welcomed the ‘Nabobarsha’. Visiting guests were served with various kinds of home made food and pithas prepared by the family members of the
Embassy officials. Local Bangladeshi artists and members of the Embassy family performed in the cultural part of the day’s program. The program concluded with vote of thanks by the wife of Bangladesh Ambassador Mrs. Rokeya Kabir.

**Commonwealth Women’s Association hosts Bridal Show at the Bangladesh Embassy**

A Bridal Show and Lunch for Charity was held at the Embassy of Bangladesh on 29 May 2009. The event, first of its kind at the Embassy, was organized by the Washington Chapter of the Commonwealth Women’s Association (CWA).

Participants from a number of Commonwealth countries attended the Show. The Show highlighted each country’s rich heritage as well as cultural diversity within the nations under the Commonwealth Group.

In her address of welcome, Mrs. Rokeya Kabir, wife of Bangladesh Ambassador to the United States, thanked the Commonwealth Women Association for selecting the Bangladesh Embassy as the bridal show venue. Stating that wedding is an important facet of the lives of people around the world, she urged upon the participants to take the opportunity of cultural exchanges through such activities as bridal show in deepening our understanding of the values of cultural diversity and to learn how to “live together” better.

During the show, the model brides blended a long heritage of their aesthetic beauty into their own unique brand of expression. As the brides paraded before the audience, they had shown all the glamour associated with a real life wedding ceremony - colourful bridal outfits, dazzling jewelry, decorative wedding canopies and bouquets. The gala continued for two hours with presentations by bridal models from various countries and cultures. The Bangladeshi models in their traditional sarees with outstanding embroidery and prints drawn from Bengal textile heritage drew praise from the audience.

The programme was co-ordinated by Ms. Josette Miceli, President of the Washington Chapter of the CWA, who is the wife of the Ambassador of Malta to USA.

The event was attended by more than 120 guests including the wives of the members of the diplomatic corps and ladies from various organizations. Money raised from this ticketed event will go to the CWA fund for charity. The show ended with a lunch where dishes reflecting the traditional cuisines provided by all participating countries were served. The event marked an initiative of the Bangladesh Embassy in Washington, DC to remain visible while vigorously pursuing, among others issues, cultural diplomacy.

**Members of Elder Hostel visit Bangladesh Embassy**

A group of more than sixty persons - all of them senior citizens - visited Bangladesh Embassy on 6 April 2009. Bangladesh Embassy hosted this educational learning tour as part of its outreach program. Under this program, the Embassy officials undertake interactive sessions with the local US citizens on various aspects of both historic and contemporary Bangladesh.

Deputy Chief of Mission, Sheikh Mohammed Belal briefed the group. The Deputy Chief of Mission highlighted Bangladesh’s successes including in the area of women empowerment, girl education and health care. He also gave an overview of Bangladesh’s struggle for independence culminating in the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent nation in December 1971. This was followed by a Q&A session. Earlier, the visitors were also shown a video presentation on the flora, fauna and the archeological landmarks of Bangladesh.

The visit was organized at the initiative of Elderhostel, Inc., a not-for-profit organization dedicated to providing learning opportunities to adults over 55 years of age. It is the US’s first and the world’s largest, educational travel organization primarily dedicated to catering to the needs of elderly citizens.
M/s. Geebee Garments Industries Ltd, an Indian company, will set up a garments manufacturing factory in the Karnaphuli Export Processing Zone in Bangladesh.

This 100 percent foreign owned company will invest US $9.513 million in setting up their unit and will produce Shirt, T-shirt, Blouse, Jackets, Trousers/Shorts, in which 2278 job opportunities will be created for Bangladeshi citizens.

An agreement to this effect has been signed between the Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (BEPZA) and the M/s Geebee Garments Industries Ltd in BEPZA Complex in April 2009.

Cairn Energy Plc has reported net profits at US $367 million, according to a press statement released recently by the firm. Cairn's disclosure is based on its preliminary results for 2008.

Cairn is expected to make its onshore compressor operational by July 2009 to increase gas production from Sangu gas field. The energy company said it has moved to install the compressor as the decade-old offshore Sangu gas field has recorded a gradual drop in production. A well-intervention helped increase gas production by 60 percent.

Cairn and its joint venture Santos have decided not to proceed into the next phase of the production-sharing contract with the government for gas exploration in Block 5.

Bangladesh Plans to Build a Deep Sea Port

Honorable Shipping Minister Dr Afsarul Amin said that Bangladesh could be turned into a commercially important country like Singapore with the implementation of the proposed deep seaport project.

"If we can implement the deep seaport project at Sonadia Island in time and maintain the standard of service we may expect a new Singapore within Bangladesh," he said, adding that the deep seaport might be a major vehicle of economic development of Bangladesh. The Shipping Minister made the remarks while speaking as chief guest at a workshop titled 'Techno-Economic Feasibility Study of a Deep Seaport in Bangladesh' held in Dhaka. Honorable Adviser on Economic Affairs Dr Mashiur Rahman was the special guest at the inaugural session of the workshop.

The Shipping Minister said the government would go ahead with the project after reviewing the feasibility study report, which will be implemented in three phases -- short term (2009-2020), medium term (2021-2035) and long term (2036-2055). He hoped that the current inability of welcoming mother vessels and bulk container vessels in the anchorage by Chittagong and Mongla ports would be removed if the deep seaport is finally implemented. Dr Afsarul Amin said it would attract mother vessels, reduce cost of transportation by at least 15 percent, facilitate foreign direct investment and ensure smooth trade in the whole country. Since there is no operational deep seaport in Myanmar and also on the...
east coast of India, he said there is possibility that a deep seaport in Bangladesh can provide services to these areas in addition to supporting Chittagong and Mongla ports in handling increased volume of export and import cargoes.

Honorable Economic Adviser Dr Mashiur Rahman said the deep seaport project should be implemented urgently to bring a radical change in country's economy. Emphasizing on public-private partnership to implement the project, he said individual investment must be encouraged which will help to bring foreign investment in bulk volume for the early implementation of the project. Private sector expert of Pacific Consultants International, Japan Dr Eddy Declercq said Chittagong port would get 30 percent share of the deep seaport while the remaining 70 percent share would go to public-private investors. He proposed a management for the deep seaport with directors from both public and private sectors. During the short-term period, he said, all cargoes except clinker and liquid bulk cargoes would be handled. The deep seaport in its first phase will have five international container berths. Later, reports on the draft of the final feasibility study were presented in the workshop analyzing various aspects of the project.

Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics Projects 5.88pc GDP growth

Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) has projected 5.88 percent GDP growth in the fiscal year (FY) 2008-09, which may be higher than the estimates made by donor agencies, including the World Bank (WB). The WB had earlier projected GDP growth at 4.5 -5.5 percent and Asian Development Bank (ADB) at 5.6 per cent, giving rise to a debate over this issue. Against this backdrop, both the government and Bangladesh Bank (BB) said GDP growth would be around 6 percent. The BBS has prepared estimates of GDP growth in the FY 2008-09 and in the last FY, to be released with the next budget documents. The earlier estimated GDP growth of 6.2 per cent last year has now stood at 6.1 per cent in the final account. GDP growth this year would be 0.31 percentage point less than that last year, the estimate said. Farm sector growth rate would almost double but that of manufacturing, power and gas sectors would fall. According to BBS data, growth rate in the current FY increased in agriculture and forestry, mining, construction, hotel and restaurant, real estate and business activities, public administration and defense, and education sectors. But the growth rate fell in manufacturing, electricity, gas and water supply, wholesale and retail trade, transport and communication, and financial sectors. Agriculture and forestry sector's contribution to GDP is 16.03 percent. According to the quarterly report of Bangladesh Bank, agriculture sector remains bright with good harvest in ahus and amin seasons, and similar production expected in the boro season. Contribution of manufacturing sector to GDP is almost 18 per cent. Growth rate in the sector is falling due to the impact of global recession. Readymade garments, jute, and frozen food sectors are being affected. BBS however said their estimates might be reviewed on the basis of latest data before the publication of budget documents in June 2009.

Japan to Invest $ 7m in CEPZ

M/s. Meiji Corporation Ltd, a Japanese company, will set up a motor parts manufacturing industry in the Chittagong Export Processing Zone (CEPZ).

This 100 per cent foreign owned company will invest US$7.021 million in setting up their unit and will produce and export Motor parts. The company will also create employment opportunity for 259 Bangladeshi nationals, including 2 foreign nationals. An agreement to this effect has been signed between the Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (BEPZA) and the M/s Meiji Corporation Ltd in BEPZA Complex, Dhaka on 26 April 2009.
PHOTO GALLERY

Visit of the State Minister for Foreign Affairs

Embassy Open House

Celebrating Bangla New Year 1416 at the Embassy

Climate Change Seminar

Visitors at the Embassy

If you need any further information or have any suggestions or if you do not wish to receive this web journal, please email to Md. Monwar Hossain, First Secretary, Embassy of Bangladesh at drmonwar@yahoo.com

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