

EMERGENCY MESSAGE TO U.S. CITIZENS

Countrywide General Strike Thursday September 22

A country-wide general strike, or hartal, is being called for Thursday, September 22, 2011 from dawn to dusk.

A hartal can involve a total shutdown of the country. Hartals can also turn violent if hartal supporters decide to enforce the shut down, for example by closing businesses or stopping traffic. In major cities, we expect actions to enforce the hartal to center around downtown or commercial districts, though there is the possibility that enforcement actions could spread more broadly. We wish to remind U.S. citizens that even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can turn confrontational and possibly escalate into violence. U.S. citizens are therefore urged to avoid crowds and any areas of demonstrations if possible, and to exercise routine personal security awareness.

The travel of U.S. Embassy employees and their family members is restricted to the Diplomatic Enclave (Gulshan, Baridhara & Banani north of Kamal Ataturk Avenue) during hartals. The United States Embassy advises its employees to avoid road 86 and 83 in Gulshan, as the BNP Chairperson's Office and Residence are located on these roads. Large unscheduled events occur frequently and usually spill out on to the road making it impassable.

Please monitor the local media for updates. English language local news is available on the following channels at the following times:

ATN – 1800

Bangla Vision – 2105

BTV – 2200

BTV – 2330 (also broadcasts by all local satellite stations: ATN, Channel I, NTV, RTV, Bangla Vision, and Boishaki)

The U.S. Embassy's regular work week is Sunday-Thursday, 0800-1630 hours.

Emergency American Citizens Services are available at all times. The U.S. Embassy in Dhaka can be reached at (880) (2) 885-5500 during regular hours and for after-hours emergencies. For after-hours emergency services please press "0" and ask for the duty officer.

U.S. citizens resident or traveling in Bangladesh are urged to enroll with the U.S. Embassy or nearest U.S. Consulate via the Department of State's on-line enrollment service through the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) located at <http://travel.state.gov>. Travel enrollment allows the Department of State to contact its citizens in the event of an emergency and to provide up-to-date safety and security information. Enrollees wishing to receive such information must provide an e-mail address with their enrollment. All enrollees are urged to provide complete contact information and a departure date when signing up on-line.

For the latest security information, U.S. citizens living and traveling abroad should regularly monitor the Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs internet website at <http://travel.state.gov>, where the current Worldwide Caution, Travel Alerts, Travel Warnings, and health-information resources can be found. Up-to-date information on security can also be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll free in

the United States and Canada or, for callers in other areas by calling a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).

American Citizens Services

U.S. Embassy

Dhaka, Bangladesh