

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION

TEL: 8802-55662000

FAX: 880-2-9881677, 9885688

E-MAIL: DhakaPA@state.gov

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



**REMARKS
BY
U.S. AMBASSADOR TO BANGLADESH MARCIA BERNICAT
FIRST RESPONDER TRAINING
GRADUATION CEREMONY**

**RAJSHAHI METRO POLICE HEADQUARTERS
RAJSHAHI, BANGLADESH
JULY 30, 2015**

Introduction

Honorable Deputy Inspector of Police,

Respected Police Commissioner,

Learned Instructors,

Talented Language Assistants, and

Attentive Student Officers, *Assalamualaikum* and a very good afternoon.

What an honor it is to be making my first visit to Rajshahi It gives me the greatest pleasure to congratulate you on the achievements you have made this past week.

The United States and Bangladesh have a strong and enduring partnership – a partnership that encompasses a variety of issues, from security cooperation and countering violent extremism, to lifting people out of poverty and strengthening democratic institutions. We also partner by sharing best practices with each other on how best to police our communities and it is that partnership that brings us all here today.

Service

It is said that if one saves the life of another human being, then that person has saved all of humanity. We all possess the ability to help another who is in need, and it is indeed one of the

finer aspects of our nature. In fact, we recognize and honor a person who voluntarily and without hesitation helps another human being in distress. We call this person a hero.

I imagine that each and every one of you, members of the police here at this graduation today, joined the police service because you wanted to help people.

The first responder training you have received will do just that. The United States Government is pleased to offer you the first aid kits and training to strengthen your ability to serve the people of the great nation of Bangladesh in a positive manner.

The training that you have just completed is but one of the essential tools that police need to serve their citizens. Each of you will use the skills you have learned here at some point in your career.

The help you provide in the future may be to a citizen, a stranger, or even someone in your own family. It is my hope that you are recognized by your fellow citizens as a hero for providing this much needed service that helps people and saves lives. I can only imagine that there is no finer feeling than that.

Dedication

Police dedicate their careers, and indeed their lives, to the service of others. You voluntarily chose to serve your communities, and the citizens within them, without expectation of extraordinary recognition or reward. Yet each day you choose to put on a uniform and go to work, you perform an extraordinary duty, as it is your charge to protect and serve. And you risk your lives every single time you do. To us, citizens of a democracy, the uniform you wear publically declares this dedication. We count on you to carry out your duties with skill and integrity. And we are grateful to you for the sacrifices you make on a daily basis to keep us safe.

Bangladesh is still a very young country, and is a country rightfully proud of the positive change that is happening here as well as its rich history. Sacrifices were made to form this country, and honor must always be given to the price that was paid for those who fought for liberation. Police demonstrate that honor by always doing the right thing and always serving their citizens first.

Many of the challenges facing Bangladesh are also faced by many other countries in the world today, including my own. None is more threatening than violent extremism.

One of the appeals of violent extremist groups and other criminals who respect no border and no sovereignty is their promise of strict and immediate so-called justice.

To counter their appeal, and to reinforce the bond between police and citizens, we must work together to strengthen community policing. The Embassy and the Department of Justice's International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) work extensively with you to help develop trust and open the lines of communication between you and the public.

One of the most powerful tools you can have as a police officer is to build partnerships between yourselves and the citizens you serve. Your good efforts will enhance your country's overall stability by providing a stronger, more responsive security force and by having the trust and cooperation of the people you serve to help you keep the peace.

Conclusion

It has indeed been an honor and a pleasure for me to stand with you today during this auspicious graduation. You may never know if you have made a positive difference in even one person's life, but I am sure that you have and that you will. It is our belief that the skills you have acquired in this course will help you to do that.

The dedication of police to serve their citizens reminds me of a statement that I find inspiring. Nelson Henderson, a second generation farmer, who once said, "The true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit." I think police more than many of us have the opportunity to plant trees every day.

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