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PRESS RELEASE

**USAID LAUNCHES NEW AGRICULTURE PROJECT
PROMISING HIGHER YIELD WITH LESS FERTILIZER**

DHAKA, MARCH 05 -- James F. Moriarty, the United States Ambassador in Bangladesh, and Mrs. Matia Chowdhury, Minister of Agriculture, today jointly launched the \$25 million Accelerating Agriculture Productivity Improvement (AAPI) project in Sherpur district. The AAPI project promotes Urea Deep Placement technology that decreases the use of high-cost fertilizers while increasing crop yields. The project will help two million rice and vegetable farmers across the nation improve their incomes while increasing food security. In addition, about 1,800 private entrepreneur supply points will be established through AAPI to create access for farmers to Fertilizer Deep Placement (FDP) products. As a result of this program, the Bangladesh government is projected to save \$84 million over five years.

After the launching ceremony, Minister Chowdhury and Ambassador Moriarty distributed four fertilizer briquette machines at a 75% subsidized price to four potential entrepreneurs of Nalitabari Upazila, one of the 68 project Upazilas. They also met with several local farmers and discussed the benefits of this new program.

The AAPI project is funded by the United States Government through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented in close collaboration with the Bangladesh Ministry of Agriculture and the Department of Agriculture Extension.

Through USAID, the U.S. Government administers programs in five key areas in Bangladesh: improving health and pre-primary education; creating income opportunities for rural poor; supporting good governance; enhancing food security; and strengthening disaster preparedness and providing emergency assistance following natural disasters. Since 1971, the U.S. Government has provided over \$5.8 billion in assistance to Bangladesh.

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Note: A Bangla translation of this press release is also available at the American Center. If you are interested in the translation, please call the American Center Press Section, Tel: 8837150-4, Fax: 9885688; e-mail: DhakaPA@state.gov; Website: [http:// dhaka.usembassy.gov](http://dhaka.usembassy.gov)