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PRESS RELEASE

U.S.-FUNDED PROJECT LEADS TO LAUNCH OF PUBLIC FINANCE COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

DHAKA, MAY 11 -- U.S. Ambassador James F. Moriarty, along with Honorable President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Md. Zillur Rahman, Bangladesh government officials, journalists from the print and electronic media, parliamentarians, diplomats, and civil society representatives, met today at the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) to launch the Communication and Media Cell in the CAG's Office. Established to enable greater transparency and accountability in public financial management, the Media Cell will provide information to the public about the activities of the Auditor General and increase media and public awareness of the oversight of public financial management.

In his remarks, Ambassador Moriarty praised the launch of the Media Cell and noted, "Bangladeshi public servants are committed to the improvement of the policy-making and service delivery abilities of this nation. They are committed to testing and measuring their values, their ethics, and their actions as they serve the government and the public. And it is our pleasure to witness one of the finest examples of Bangladesh's commitment to public service delivery and transparency with the opening of the Media Cell in the Comptroller and Auditor General's Office."

The U.S. Government, through its premier development agency U.S Agency for International Development (USAID), supported the establishment of the Comptroller and Auditor General's Communication and Media Cell as part of the \$18 million Promoting Governance, Accountability, Transparency and Integrity (PROGATI) project. The Media Cell will be open to journalists and the public who wish to collect information and ask questions about audit issues, collect tips to strengthen CAG audits or investigations, proactively communicate audit findings with the media and concerned civil society organizations, publish regular newsletters, update the website, summarize audit reports, respond to RTI requests, coordinate with the Public Accounts Committee and other public institutions on information sharing, and respond to negative stories in the media about public audit.

USAID 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)*