

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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PRESS RELEASE

BUDGET PROCESS CRITICAL TO DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE, SAYS U.S. AMBASSADOR

DHAKA, FEBRUARY 27 -- U.S. Ambassador James F. Moriarty and Honorable Speaker of the 9th Jatiyo Sangsad, Advocate Md. Abdul Hamid, yesterday attended the first session of the National Budget Oversight orientation program at the Bangabandhu International Conference Center in Dhaka. The program, organized by the Budget Analysis and Monitoring Unit (BAMU) of Bangladesh, and supported by the U.S. Government through USAID's PROGATI project, is focusing on the practical skills necessary to support members of parliament in the upcoming budget session of the 9th Jatiyo Sangsad (National Parliament). Approximately 120 Members of Parliament (MPs) are participating in three half-day orientation sessions, which end February 28.

BAMU was launched on December 7, 2010, with the goal of assisting members of parliament to make informed decisions about the national budget. BAMU will provide economic forecasts, address specific requests for analysis and reporting, and help ensure transparency and accountability in identifying budget priorities and monitoring expenditures. In his remarks to yesterday's attendees, Ambassador Moriarty stressed the importance of debate across all parties and cooperation to ensure that national interests and the welfare of the Bangladeshi people remain central to the budget process. "I urge all members of the parliament to engage actively across parties with the challenges and opportunities presented to you in analyzing and monitoring the national budget," he said. "On your shoulders rest the duty and the privilege of creating the dream of a Shonar Bangla."

USAID's \$18 million Promoting Governance, Accountability, Transparency and Integrity (PROGATI) project is helping improve transparency and accountability in public resource management by strengthening the institutions that provide public sector oversight. USAID,

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through PROGATI, worked in close collaboration with the Parliament and the Secretariat to develop in-house expertise and training for BAMU officials.

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)