

## **EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **U.S. AMBASSADOR DAN MOZENA AT SWADS COMMISSIONING AND MEGAPORTS INAUGURATION: EMPHASIZES U.S.-BD PARTNERSHIP TO COUNTER TERRORISM**

**DHAKA, DECEMBER 27** --- Highlighting U.S.- Bangladesh partnership to counter terrorism and strengthen maritime security, today in Chittagong U.S. Ambassador to Bangladesh Dan Mozena observed the President's Parade of the Bangladesh Naval Academy Graduation; attended the Bangladesh Navy's commissioning of the Special Warfare and Dive Salvage unit (SWADS); and participated alongside the Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the inauguration of the Megaports Initiative at the Chittagong Port Authority.

Speaking to journalists following the Megaports Initiative inauguration, Ambassador Mozena said, "This initiative is yet another step in the deep cooperation between Bangladesh and the United States to counter the threat of terrorism and strengthen maritime security. The Megaports Initiative protects Bangladesh and its many trading partners around the world, including the United States, Bangladesh's single largest export market, from the threat of undetected nuclear and radioactive materials entering their country."

Since November 2008, the U.S. Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration (DOE/NNSA) has invested approximately \$12.5 million in the Megaports Initiative project at the Port of Chittagong. Under the 2008 memorandum of understanding between the United States and Bangladesh, the United States Embassy and United States Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration have worked closely with the Bangladesh Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Shipping, National Board of Revenue, Chittagong Port Authority, and Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission to install radiation detection

equipment; train operators, maintenance technicians, and system administrators to scan containers for materials that could be used in a weapon of mass destruction or radiological dispersal device (“dirty bomb”). Bangladesh now has the capability to scan more than over 80% of all import and export containers at its largest port, increasing the security of Bangladesh and the global maritime.

Mozena also said, “This U.S.-Bangladesh partnership also increased the capacity of the Bangladesh Navy’s Special Warfare and Dive Salvage unit here in Chittagong, which the Honorable Prime Minister commissioned earlier today. This SWADS unit is another critical step in developing Bangladesh’s capability to secure its maritime borders, and I am pleased that the U.S. has helped equip and train the unit. Thanks to this growing partnership between America and Bangladesh, the world today is a bit safer from the threat of terrorism.”

Since 2008 the U.S. Government has invested more than \$28 million to promote the development of the SWADS unit, supplying counter terrorism training and equipment that enhances Bangladesh’s maritime security, improves search and rescue responsiveness, and deters terrorist or criminal use of the seas.

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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: 8855500, Fax: 9885688; e-mail: [DhakaPA@state.gov](mailto:DhakaPA@state.gov); Website: [http:// dhaka.usembassy.gov](http://dhaka.usembassy.gov)*