

# EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

## PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION

TEL: 880-2-883-7150-4

FAX: 880-2-9881677, 9885688

E-MAIL: [DhakaPA@state.gov](mailto:DhakaPA@state.gov)

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



## PRESS RELEASE

### **BANGLADESH ARMED FORCES DIVISION AND U.S. ARMY PACIFIC TO CONDUCT DISASTER RESPONSE EXERCISE**

**SEPTEMBER 15, DHAKA** -- The United States Government, through the U.S. Army Pacific (USARPAC), in conjunction with the Government of Bangladesh and the Armed Forces Division (AFD), is conducting the 2012 Disaster Response Exercise & Exchange (DREE) to better prepare both countries' parties for a catastrophic earthquake in Bangladesh. From September 17 – 20, 2012, the DREE will be conducted in Dhaka by USARPAC and AFD, in collaboration with the U.S. Embassy – Dhaka. Additional U.S. participation includes the Oregon National Guard, 18<sup>th</sup> Medical Command, Tripler Army Medical Center, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The event is being funded by the U.S. Pacific Command. The exercise will be led by the U.S. Army Pacific Civil-Military Operations Department and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

DREE activities are important to local communities both in Bangladesh and the United States because they showcase efforts to prepare for disasters before they occur. By preparing ahead of time, each country can mitigate issues that may arise before an actual disaster takes place, leaving them more prepared to provide vital public services that citizens demand. Without these preparation efforts, communication, collaboration, and interoperability would be dramatically reduced, increasing the potential for loss of life and property.

The DREE will emphasize field preparedness to a mass casualty earthquake event affecting Dhaka. The response exercise will commence with presentations focused on future trends in disaster management and earthquake preparedness, as well as an overview of what resources already exist in Bangladesh to respond to and recover from large-scale disasters. It will be followed by a Table Top Exercise and Field Training Exercise. Both exercise activities will allow USARPAC and the Government of Bangladesh to test communications, practice

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search and rescue measures, assess complex situations, and respond to medical scenarios. This is the third iteration of the USARPAC DREE, and marks the first time USARPAC and the Government of Bangladesh have practiced disaster response activities in a field environment.

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