

# 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

### **SISIMPUR CELEBRATES LAUNCH OF 7<sup>TH</sup> SEASON**

**DHAKA, APRIL 1** -- *Sisimpur*, the most popular children's TV show in Bangladesh, is celebrated the launch of its seventh season with a commemorative event at Bangladesh Shishu Academy on Saturday, March 31. The honorable Minister of Information Mr. Abul Kalam Azad and along with U.S. Ambassador to Bangladesh Dan Mozena and USAID Mission Director Richard Greene, attended as chief guests.

The United States Government, through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), has provided \$14 million to fund the *Sisimpur* program since 2004. *Sisimpur*, the Bangladeshi adaptation of Sesame Street, is designed as a high-quality early childhood education venue for Bangladesh, and addresses the immediate needs of preschoolers with an emphasis on cognitive and socio-emotional development. The show is a co-production of the world-renowned Sesame Street Workshop and aims to provide 3-to-6-year-olds with the fundamentals of reading, writing, numbers, math and social skills. The program reaches underprivileged children in "media-dark" regions through distributed educational materials and unique rickshaw van community viewings. Its popularity among children and caregivers alike makes it Bangladesh's favorite children's program, viewed by nine million children every week. Independent research shows that *Sisimpur* has enriched the lives of millions of Bangladeshi children with improvements in literacy, numeracy and social skills.

The celebration show was anchored by *Sisimpur*'s Ambassador characters Halum, Tuktuki, Shiku and Ikri. Children, educators, media personalities, organizations working on early childhood education and development and government officials made an appearance.

The focus of Season 7 is "Critical Thinking, Science and Science-Mindedness." The leading proponents of science education in Bangladesh, including Dr. Mohammad Zafar Iqbal, Professor M. Shahjahan Mian Tapan, Dr. Professor Haseena Khan, Professor Dr. Muhammad Ibrahim and Siddique Belal have made significant contributions to content development.

The U.S. Government, through USAID, has provided more than \$5.8 billion in development assistance since Bangladesh's independence, with over \$770 million going to the health sector alone.

USAID currently dedicates about \$180 million every year to improve the lives of people in Bangladesh; promote democratic institutions and practices; expand economic opportunity; improve health and education services; increase food security; and support Bangladeshi efforts to mitigate the impact of natural disasters.



**GR/ 2012**

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