

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION

TEL: 880-2-8855500

FAX: 880-2-9881677, 9885688

E-MAIL: DhakaPA@state.gov

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



REMARKS BY
U.S. AMBASSADOR DAN MOZENA
AT THE
COMBINED DNA INDEX SYSTEM (CODIS)
GRADUATION CEREMONY

DHAKA MEDICAL COLLEGE, NUCLEAR MEDICINE BUILDING
DHAKA
SEPTEMBER 26, 2013

Dr. Abdul Hossain, Project Director, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs

Dr. Sharif Akhteruzzaman, Dhaka Medical College

U.S. Legal Attache Dan Clegg

The thirteen graduates who have completed the specialized training on how to use this new DNA analysis technology

... and all who share with me the belief that DNA analysis can play an important role both in fighting crime and in identifying human remains after a disaster

Asalaam 'malaikum and good afternoon

Today is a bad day ...

Today is a very bad day for some people ...

Today is a terrible day for those who commit heinous crimes.

Today Bangladesh ... the law enforcement agencies of Bangladesh ... Bangladesh adds expanded capabilities to existing capacity to use an important tool to fight crime: DNA analysis. This added technology enables the police and other crime fighting agencies to better identify perpetrators of crime and to bring them to justice.

The Combined DNA Index System ... better known as CODIS ... enables laboratories to store, compare and match DNA records so DNA evidence collected from a crime scene can be used to

solve the crime. CODIS combines forensic science with the latest computer technology into an effective crime-busting weapon.

The U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation ... the FBI ... has provided the Bangladesh National Forensic DNA Profiling Lab with the latest, cutting edge CODIS software, which is deployed throughout America and in many countries around the world. This software ... in the hands of the highly qualified technicians who are completing their intensive training today ... is a powerful tool for solving crimes. This new DNA analysis capacity will be particularly effective in solving violent crimes against women.

The FBI has spent millions of dollars to develop and refine this software, and is now making it available free of charge to friends around the world. Perhaps, you are curious as to why the FBI would endeavor to do this, especially in a time when budgets in America are under great cost-cutting pressure. That is a reasonable question; the answer is simple: As Bangladesh improves its capacity to fight crime, as Bangladesh better identifies and more effectively prosecutes criminals and puts them behind bars, the world becomes a safer place ... a safer place for Bangladeshis ... a safer place for all who believe in freedom and the right to live in peace, safety and harmony.

Surely, Bangladesh's victories in defeating crime are victories for us all.

In America, CODIS is used in 190 laboratories to help both federal and state law enforcement agencies in fighting crime. In fact, CODIS has aided over 200,000 investigations in the United States. CODIS can also be used to exonerate those wrongly charged or convicted of heinous crimes.

Bangladesh now joins more than 45 countries around the world that use the CODIS technology. I am confident that this technology will prove equally useful here in Bangladesh in solving both current crimes and cold cases, where DNA evidence may provide the missing link needed to undertake effective prosecution.

CODIS is more than just a powerful tool for fighting crime. It also a means for confirming the identity of unidentified human remains. As we know, there are hundreds of unidentified remains from the great tragedy of the Rana Plaza building collapse, which killed 1,132 people. CODIS will be invaluable to the government in identifying these remains and in confirming family members, thus enabling compensation and closure for the hundreds of families of the Rana Plaza victims. This is a very good thing ... these families have already suffered so much.

In America and around the world, CODIS can help identify remains after disasters such as floods and earthquakes. I am sure CODIS would be equally beneficial here.

I applaud the Government of Bangladesh and, most particularly, the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs for moving so rapidly to install this new CODIS technology and for providing top technicians for training so this technology can be used effectively. I believe this new capacity will pay huge dividends soonest not only in identifying victims of Rana Plaza and their family members, but also in solving violent crime across Bangladesh.

I applaud, too, the technicians who are “graduating” today from a most intensive training program on how to employ this technology most effectively. They have been good students ... they will serve their nation well.

I am pleased that America has helped Bangladesh take this important step forward in ensuring that the wonderful people of this great nation can live in peace and safety. I am pleased that Bangladesh is now joining the global CODIS team.

Thank you.

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**Prepared for delivery*