

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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STATEMENT BY USAID ADMINISTRATOR GAYLE SMITH ON THE DEATH OF FOREIGN SERVICE NATIONAL XULHAZ MANNAN

DHAKA, April 25, 2016 -- "Today, USAID lost one of our own. On behalf of our entire team, I send our deepest condolences to the family, friends, and colleagues of USAID Foreign Service National Xulhaz Mannan, who was brutally murdered in Bangladesh today. We condemn this cruel and inhumane act of violence and add our voices to all those calling to bring his cowardly attackers to justice.

From an early age, Xulhaz demonstrated a passion for helping others - a passion that would grow throughout his life. He was the kind of person willing to fight for what he believed in, someone ready to stand up for his own rights and the rights of others. A dedicated and courageous advocate for human rights, Xulhaz sought to shape a society that was more diverse and inclusive. He believed in the people of Bangladesh, and he strove to make the world a better place for everyone.

Xulhaz's colleagues regarded him with special affection. He first joined the U.S. Embassy as a Protocol Specialist, serving for eight years in that capacity before joining USAID last September. In his role as a Project Management Assistant in the Democracy and Governance office, he worked tirelessly to support organizations focused on broadening and deepening political understanding throughout Bangladesh. Unsurprisingly, he also devoted extra time to building a more open and welcoming workplace, serving as a founding member of the U.S. Embassy Diversity Committee. That's the kind of person he was, and we were incredibly fortunate to have him on our team.

In addition to his passion for service, justice, and human rights, Xulhaz had a great love of learning. He received a Bachelor's of Social Science in International Relations in 2000 and a Masters of Social Science in Peace and Conflict Studies in 2003 from the University of Dhaka.

This tragedy reminds us of the deep commitment and sacrifice of USAID staff serving in countries around the world, and the bravery of all those fighting for a better world. Xulhaz is

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survived by his brother and his mother, and friends in Bangladesh and around the world who mourn this great loss. Our thoughts and our hearts are with them at this tragic time."

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