

# FOREIGN OFFICE

## BRIEFING NOTES

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DHAKA, BANGLADESH



Issue : July 2015

### US AMBASSADOR TO BANGLADESH CALLS ON THE FOREIGN MINISTER



US Ambassador to Bangladesh Marcia Stephens Bloom Bernicat called on Foreign Minister A. H. Mahmood Ali, MP, on 02 July, 2015 at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dhaka. The US

Ambassador congratulated the people and the Government of Bangladesh for being upgraded from LDC to lower middle income country. The Foreign Minister and the US Ambassador discussed the existing bilateral relations between the two countries and international issues. Foreign Secretary Md. Shahidul Haque and Director General, Americas Wing of the Ministry, were also present during the call on.

### STATE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS VISITS MALDIVES



State Minister for Foreign Affairs Md. Shahriar Alam, MP visited Male, Maldives, during 26-27 July 2015 on a two-day official visit to represent Bangladesh Government at the celebration of “50<sup>th</sup> Independence Day of the Maldives”. He was received at the Airport by the High Commissioner of Bangladesh to the Republic of Maldives Rear Admiral Kazi Sarwar Hossain and Dr. Mohamed Asim, Ambassador-at-Large of Republic of Maldives.

A reception was hosted by the President of Maldives Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom in honour of the visiting foreign dignitaries. Md. Shahriar Alam, MP, was received by Maldivian Home Minister Umar Naseer. The event was held at a compound specially built for this occasion and attended by about 400 foreign dignitaries from different countries. The State Minister called on the Foreign Minister of Maldives on 27 July 2015. At the outset of his meeting with Maldivian Foreign Minister Dunya Maumoon, Md. Shahriar Alam, MP, congratulated the people of Maldives on the occasion of their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Independence and conveyed the warm greetings of the President, the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh to the Government and people of



Foreign Minister A. H. Mahmood Ali, MP, signing the condolence book opened at the Indian High Commission in Dhaka following the demise of former President of India Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam on 29 July, 2015.

Maldives on this auspicious occasion. The State Minister expressed happiness for the excellent bilateral relations that exist between the two countries. He mentioned that due to the special initiatives of the present Government of Bangladesh, the relations between the two countries have been deepened and widened further. He mentioned that Bangladesh would like to further enhance the level of engagements with Maldives for mutual benefits. The State Minister thanked the Government of Maldives for its decision to re-open its Mission in Dhaka. The State Minister informed that Bangladesh has got a large pool of skilled and semi-skilled workforce in different trades which could meet requirement of Maldives in various sectors.

The State Minister for Foreign Affairs attended the meeting of the Bangladesh Community Club at the High Commission on 27 July 2015 and exchanged views with the expatriates Bangladeshis living and working in Maldives. The High Commissioner of Maldives Rear Admiral Kazi Sarwar Hossain received the Minister at the meeting and briefed him about the activities of Bangladesh Community Club. A briefing was held highlighting the role, objective, structure, organization and activities of the proposed club. The State Minister patiently listened to the comments of the expatriates present in the meeting and assured that he would issue necessary instruction to the concerned agencies to address the issues discussed.

### BANGLADESH-INDIA IMPLEMENTS LAND BOUNDARY AGREEMENT

As a part of the implementation of the 1974 Bangladesh-India Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) and its 2011 protocol, 30 jointly prepared boundary strip maps were signed at the plenipotentiary level (High Commissioner) on 30 July 2015 at the Department of Land Records and Survey, Dhaka. Syed Muazzem Ali, High Commissioner of Bangladesh in New Delhi and Pankaj Saran, High Commissioner of India in Dhaka signed the strip maps on

behalf of the respective Governments. It may be mentioned, during the first bilateral visit of Narendra Modi, the Prime Minister of India, to Dhaka on 06-07 June 2015, the historic instruments of ratification of the 1974 LBA and its 2011 Protocol were exchanged and modalities for ensuring smooth implementation of the said Agreement and Protocol were worked out under an exchange of letters between the Foreign Secretaries of Bangladesh and India. Accordingly, extensive work was carried out at the ground level by the district administrations of the two countries under the supervision of the Bangladesh-India Joint Boundary Working Group (JBWG). As a part of that, a survey to ascertain the citizenship option of the enclave-dwellers was jointly conducted by the concurred officials of both the countries from 06 to 16 July 2015 on the basis of the 2011 headcount. The 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the JBWG was held in Dhaka on 23-24 July 2015 to review the progress of implementation of the LBA and its protocol. As decided earlier by the two Governments, the 111 Indian enclaves in Bangladesh became Bangladesh territory and 51 Bangladesh enclaves in India became Indian territory with effect from the midnight of 31 July 2015. This was a historic moment in the Bangladesh-India bilateral relations. The respective district administrations of both the countries hoisted their respective national flags in the enclaves in the morning of 01 August 2015. Transfer of territorial jurisdiction of adversely possessed land also took effect from 31 July 2015 midnight. It is a milestone event towards the peaceful settlement of the land boundary demarcation which was started by signing the Land Boundary Agreement on 16 May 1974, a visionary initiative taken by the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to ensure equitable, peaceful and permanent resolution of the land boundary demarcation between the two neighbouring countries.

#### **CONFERENCE ON BANGLADESH MODEL UNITED NATIONS (BANMUN 2015) HELD IN DHAKA**



The United Nations Youth and Students Association (UNYSA) organized the 7<sup>th</sup> Session of Bangladesh Model United Nations Conference (BANMUN 2015)

at Adamjee Cantonment College during 29 July-01 August 2015 under the theme “Role of Youth in Community Development.” State Minister for Foreign Affairs Md. Shahriar Alam, MP, attended the Opening Session as Chief Guest. The State Minister highlighted the Government’s initiatives for the development and empowerment of youth in the country and encouraged young people to further engage in community development work both locally and internationally.

#### **THE JOINT BOUNDARY MEETING BETWEEN BANGLADESH AND MYANMAR HELD IN DHAKA**

The Joint Boundary Meeting 2015 between Bangladesh and Myanmar was held in Dhaka on 27-29 July 2015. Surveyor General of Bangladesh and Director General, Myanmar Survey Department, led the respective delegations in this

annual meeting. In the meeting, Bangladesh-Myanmar boundary related issues such as joint field inspection, construction of boundary pillars, construction of reference marker, review of the Agreed Minutes report of Joint Survey Team, Supplementary Protocol (2007) etc. were discussed elaborately.

#### **NEGOTIATION ON THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA ENDED IN NEW YORK**

A more than three year long process of intergovernmental negotiation on the Post-2015 Development Agenda came to an end on 03 August 2015 in New York. The Meeting with unprecedented participation from different stakeholders from all over the world adopted the development outcome framework called ‘Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’ that features 17 goals and 169 targets that aim to end poverty, promote prosperity and people’s well-being while protecting the environment for next 15 years (2016-2030). Ministry of Foreign Affairs in collaboration with Permanent Mission of Bangladesh in New York led the negotiation on behalf of Bangladesh. Bangladesh was successful to incorporate a number of issues like climate change, migration, water resources, disaster risk reduction, education, and health (autism, non-communicable diseases) that reflects the development realities of Bangladesh. This 29-page outcome document will be formally adopted at the Sustainable Development Summit at the UN headquarters in New York by the world leaders during the 70th UNGA in September 2015.

#### **FIRST MEETING OF JOINT GROUP OF CUSTOMS BETWEEN BANGLADESH AND BHUTAN HELD**

The first meeting of Joint Group of Customs between Bangladesh and Bhutan was held on 26-27 July 2015 in Thimphu. Member, National Board of Revenue, led Bangladesh delegation. The meeting discussed various issues related to enhancement of bilateral trade between Bangladesh and Bhutan.

#### **THE AGREEMENT ON VISA WAIVER FOR DIPLOMATIC AND OFFICIAL PASSPORT HOLDERS BETWEEN BANGLADESH AND BELARUS COMES INTO FORCE**

Following the visit of the Belarusian Prime Minister to Dhaka in 2014, the bilateral relations between Bangladesh and Belarus have been steadily progressing towards attaining new heights. As a consequence of this, Bangladesh has recently (on 06 July 2015) conveyed through diplomatic channel the coming into force, de facto, of “the Agreement on Visa Waiver for Diplomatic and Official Passport Holders” with effect from 21 January 2014. Further, “the Agreement on Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to taxes on income between Bangladesh and Belarus”, has entered into force on 01 June 2014. The Minister for Industries of Bangladesh visited Belarus on 22-24 July 2015 upon invitation of his Belarusian counterpart. He was accompanied by a high-powered business delegation.

#### **BANGLADESH ATTENDS THE 21<sup>ST</sup> ASSEMBLY OF INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY**

The 21<sup>st</sup> assembly of International Seabed Authority, formed under UNCLOS-1982, was held at the organization’s Headquarters in Kingston, Jamaica on 6-24 July 2015. Representatives from all ISA member states participated in the assembly. Rear Admiral (Rtd.) Md. Khurshed Alam, Secretary, Maritime Affairs Unit of the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs represented Bangladesh in the assembly. Considering the activities of the 26 licenses issued by ISA, a draft mining code was formulated in the assembly for exploration of Poly metallic Nodules, Cobalt-rich ferromanganese crusts and Poly metallic sulphides as well as exploitation of such mineral resources from the deep seabed. Apart from this, consideration of the requests for awarding observer status as per Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, election of the President and the Vice-President for the Council and the Assembly, assessment of the report and recommendations of the Finance Committee, presentation of report on annual activities by the Secretary General, examination of draft Terms of Reference as per UNCLOS, discussion on Plan of Work as proposed by China Minmetals Corporation for exploration of Poly metallic nodules, rescheduling Plan of Work duly approved as per UNCLOS etc. were explicitly discussed in the Assembly. Secretary, Maritime Affairs Unit of the Ministry, availed a floor to deliver his statement there on behalf of Bangladesh. In his intervention in the Assembly, he lauded the measures taken by ISA on deep seabed mining and hoped that these measures would enable ocean researchers of developing countries to operate scientific research in the oceans. He also highlighted on the Endowment Fund and emphasized on arrangements of seminars, workshops and training programmes for research fellows and experts of developing countries. He concluded his statement conveying the assurance of continued support of the Government of Bangladesh to the activities of the organization.

#### **BANGLADESH PERMANENT MISSION IN GENEVA OBSERVES "PAHELA BAISHAKH" 2015**



Bangladesh Permanent Mission in Geneva observed "Pahele Baishakh" 2015 in a befitting manner

with local Bangladeshis from different parts of Switzerland. A reception was organized at the Bangladesh House hosted by the Ambassador and P.R. Members of the expatriate Bangladeshis including political leaders, professionals, entrepreneurs, cultural personalities, attended with their family members. For the occasion, Bangladesh House was decorated colourfully. The guests were entertained with various traditional Bengali foods and sweets.

#### **BANGLADESH PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE IN GENEVA MEETS THE KENYAN FOREIGN MINISTER**



M Shameem Ahsan, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh in Geneva, met the Kenyan Foreign Minister Amina

Mohamed on 2 July 2015 and discussed different issues of the

forthcoming 10th WTO Ministerial Conference to be held in Nairobi on 15-18 December 2015. Amina Mohamed wanted to ascertain the views of the LDC Coordinator regarding the outcome of the first ever Ministerial meeting in Africa hosted by Kenya. The PR highlighted the principal LDC issues as they stand now putting the state of play on all issues of importance to the WTO membership in perspective. Underscoring the pessimistic outlook of outcome as seen at the current stage, he sought the assistance and active engagement of the Kenyan Foreign Minister as host to facilitate consensus decisions at the Conference. The PR expressed the hope that her energetic efforts would be successful in bringing success for the LDCs which will be important for Kenya as the host as well as for the majority of the LDCs who were from Africa, her own continent. The PR assured the Foreign Minister of the full support of Bangladesh as LDC coordinator for the successful organization of the 10<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference in Nairobi and wished its complete success.

#### **BANGLADESH CO-CHAIRS AT THE SESSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

In the 29<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council, a resolution was adopted on Human Rights and Climate Change by consensus. Bangladesh and the Philippines were the co-chairs and main sponsors of the resolution which was co-sponsored by 116 countries, 11 more than last year. Through the resolution, the Council requests the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to conduct a detailed analytical study on the impact of climate change on the human rights of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health to be submitted to the Council prior to its 31<sup>st</sup> session; and decides to hold a half-day panel discussion on the same topic at the 31<sup>st</sup> session of the Council. As per the resolution, the Panel discussion will be based on different elements contained in the present resolution. The resolution also noted the establishment and advocacy of the Climate Vulnerable Forum. While introducing the draft resolution, Ambassador M. Shameem Ahsan emphasized that across countries, communities and people, there were huge gaps in the capacity and vulnerability of the affected and this called for climate justice and how to ensure that people affected by climate change could draw on resources and support measures fairly, equitably and with dignity.

#### **BANGLADESH ATTENDS DIFFERENT MEETINGS HELD IN BRUSSELS**

Bangladesh attended the TROIKA meeting of GFMD held in Brussels on 15 July 2015. The meeting discussed on the possible next chair of GFMD after Bangladesh, about which the decision was still pending at that point. Mentionable that both Germany and Morocco expressed to be the next Chair. The issue of Bangladesh holding the 9<sup>th</sup> GFMD in February 2017 was discussed during the meeting. Bangladesh has been requested to prepare a work plan for it and consult with the current Chair and TROIKA. Another meeting was held in Geneva on 9 July 2015 between Bangladesh Ambassador & Permanent Representative M. Shameem Ahsan and Ambassador Gnesa of Switzerland for discussing the inclusion of a Business Meeting under GFMD. In the meeting, he requested for a report/feedback on the secretarial arrangement and also for a feedback on the view of the civil society on the proposal of the Business Meeting. A meeting titled "Mediterranean crisis in a global context: A new look at

Migration and Development” was held in Brussels on 15 July 2015. In this meeting on Migrants in Crisis, Bangladesh clarified that the root cause of migration needs to be well thought out since it is not necessarily caused by economic need. A briefing on Nansen Initiative Protection Agenda was held in Geneva on 8 July 2015. The Geneva based delegations of countries from South Asia, Indian Ocean-Rim as well as ASEAN were present in the meeting. Bangladesh co-chaired the briefing session with the Philippines.

#### **MINISTER FOR ROAD TRANSPORT AND BRIDGES VISITS JAPAN, PHILIPPINES AND HONG KONG**

Minister for Road Transport and Bridges, Obaidul Quader, visited Japan on 26-30 July 2015. During the visit he had meeting with Japanese investors at the Headquarters of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The meeting was organized by JICA and attended by representatives of 20 top construction companies of Japan. He also met Japanese Minister for Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT) Akihiro Ohta and sought Japanese cooperation for construction of a tunnel under the river Jamuna and Dhaka Eastern Bypass. The Japanese Minister expressed his interest on the matter. The Minister also spoke at a meeting of Japan-Bangladesh Parliamentary Friendship League in Tokyo where he again sought Japanese cooperation in constructing a tunnel under the river Jamuna and the Dhaka Eastern Bypass while requesting Japanese government for more development assistance in favour of Bangladesh’s infrastructure sector. He also requested both JICA and MLIT to extend their support for MRT 1 and MRT 5. Obaidul Quader, visited Manila on 30-31 July 2015. During his short stay in Manila, he met the Asian Development Bank President Takehiko Nakao. The Minister briefed the ADB President on how Bangladesh was coming up with new projects in its transport and communication sector. In response, the ADB President said that Bangladesh was an emerging economy with a steady economic growth above 6%. He maintained that Bangladesh was a role model of women empowerment and microcredit. He also appreciated Bangladesh’s ongoing infrastructural development.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister, Obaidul Quader, visited Hong Kong on July 01-03, 2015 leading a five member delegation. During the visit, the delegation met, among others, China Zhejiang Construction Group (H.K.) Ltd and discussed the possibility of constructing a tunnel under the river of mighty Jamuna.

#### **BANGLADESH CONSULATE GENERAL PARTICIPATES IN INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR**

The Consulate General of Bangladesh in Hong Kong participated in the ‘Hong Kong Book Fair 2015’ which was well appreciated by both the Hong Kong government and the public. Under the theme, ‘Reading the World-love at first Book’, the 26<sup>th</sup> edition of the ‘Hong Kong Book Fair’ was held in Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre during 15-21 July, 2015. The Consulate tried to highlight ‘Bangladesh’ in the fair by possessing a booth and manning it with its manpower. The materials displayed in the Hong Kong Book Fair by the Consulate included posters, leaflets and books on touristic attractions, investment potential and cultural diversity of Bangladesh. This annual event has become a significant cultural highlight in the Asia-Pacific region every summer. It was attended by 589 exhibitors from 33 countries and regions, and welcomed more than one

million visitors during the seven-day show period. Organized by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC), the Hong Kong Book Fair featured world-renowned authors; there were some 360 cultural events including reading sessions, new book parades, storytelling by celebrities and art performances.

#### **MINISTER FOR CULTURAL AFFAIRS VISITS ARMENIA**

The Minister for Cultural Affairs participated in the International Conference on “Cultural Policy, Policy for Culture: the Role of Culture in post-2015 Development Agenda” organized by UNESCO held in Yerevan, Armenia on 13-14 July 2015.

#### **STATE MINISTER FOR FINANCE AND PLANNING VISITS ADDIS ABABA**

Bangladesh delegation led by State Minister for Finance and Planning attended ‘Third International Conference on Financing for Development’ held on 13-16 July 2015 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The conference adopted the ‘Addis Ababa Action Agenda’ to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity.

#### **BANGLADESH DELEGATION ATTENDS THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGIONAL MEETING ON UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION**

A Bangladesh delegation attended the Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting on “Enhancing the Capabilities and Effective Responses of the UN Peacekeeping Operations” held on 27-28 July 2015 in Jakarta, Indonesia. As the highest troops contributing country in the UN Peacekeeping Operations, Bangladesh reiterated her commitment to work together with other Asia-Pacific countries to effectively address the current capabilities, gaps and challenges in UN peace operations. Bangladesh also placed its support for the ongoing reform in UN peace operations.

#### **BANGLADESH DELEGATION VISITS CONGO**

The Member of the Parliament, Farook Khan, led a 9-member delegation on an official visit to Democratic Republic of Congo on 25 to 31 July 2015 to observe the activities of Bangladesh UN Peace Keeping teams. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs coordinated the visit along with the High Commission of Kenya. The Ministry also provided the suggested talking points, brief and other relevant inputs for the bilateral meetings.

#### **BANGLADESH DELEGATION VISITS JAPAN**

A 5-member delegation from Bangladesh Defense Services Command & Staff College (DSCSC) led by the commandant of the college Major General Sajjadul Haque visited Japan on 6-8 July 2015. The delegation visited the four staff colleges of Japan Self Defense Forces (JSDF) namely Joint Staff College, Ground Staff College, Maritime Staff College and Air staff College at Camp/Base Meguro in Tokyo. During the visit, Bangladesh delegation was briefed about the organizational structure, curriculum, training facilities and packages offered to foreign defense officials, and training programs offered by the four staff colleges related to United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO).

#### **CONSULAR DELEGATION VISITS DENMARK**

A consular delegation headed by Lutfor Rahman, Director General, Consular and Welfare of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, paid an official visit to Copenhagen, Denmark, on

28 June to 01 July 2015. During this visit, the delegation met representatives from the Danish Ministry of Foreign affairs, Ministry of Justice, Danish Immigration Services and Danish National Police.

#### **DEPUTY MINISTER OF REPUBLIC OF KOREA VISITS BANGLADESH**

Deputy Minister for Multilateral and Global Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea Shin Dong-ik visited Bangladesh on 29-30 July 2015. Shin Dong-ik called on Foreign Secretary Md. Shahidul Haque on 29 July 2015. They exchanged views on bilateral and international issues of common concern. Korean Deputy Minister also met Senior Secretary of Economic Relations Division (ERD) Mohammad Mejbahuddin on the same day and discussed issues related to economic cooperation and development assistance between the two countries.

#### **FRENCH CLIMATE ADVISER VISITS BANGLADESH**

Philippe Zeller, the Diplomatic Adviser to the French Government and Ambassador-at-Large (for Climate for Asia and Oceania), visited Bangladesh on 25-26 July 2015. The main focus of his visit was to discuss the upcoming COP21 scheduled to be held in Paris later this year. Ambassador Zeller met the Minister for Environment and Forests, the Senior Secretary of Economic Relations Division and the Chairman of National Board of Revenue. The Foreign Secretary met Ambassador Zeller over a lunch on 26 July 2015 at the State Guest house Padma and exchanged views on the prospect of a legally binding treaty.

#### **BANGLADESH PARTICIPATES IN JFW-IFF INTERNATIONAL FASHION FAIR IN JAPAN**

Bangladesh participated in JFW-IFF International Fashion Fair which was held on 22-24 July 2015. The Bangladesh Pavilion was composed of seven exhibitors together with Export Promotion Bureau. Apart from opening and closing ceremonies, Seminar, Networking Reception, Dinner Reception etc. were also organized. Nearly 150 people attended the Seminar which had a capacity of maximum 100 audiences. There was an arrangement of modest refreshment with Bangladeshi snack 'Shingara' and soft drinks. The participants showed high interest in tasting the Bangladeshi snack which was another stroke of branding Bangladesh. From Bangladesh, two MPs including the Chairman of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Ministry of Commerce paid a visit to Japan in connection with the IFF. The success of the IFF can be glimpsed by the article carried on the SENKEN SHIMBUN on 24 July 2015 with a reference to the Bangladesh participation.

#### **BANGLADESH AMBASSADOR TO THE PHILIPPINES MEETS SENATOR SONNY ANGARA**

Bangladesh Ambassador to the Philippines Maj. Gen. John Gomes recently called on Senator Sonny Angara, Acting Chairperson for Senate Committee on Labour and Employment. The Senator warmly welcomed the Ambassador in his office at Senate of the Philippines. They discussed labour issues affecting the Embassy activities. The Senator assured his support to the Bangladesh Ambassador in this regard.

#### **OUTGOING AMBASSADOR OF THE STATE OF PALESTINE CALLS ON THE PRESIDENT AND PRIME MINISTER**

Outgoing Ambassador of the State of Palestine Shaheer M. H. Abuiyyadeh had farewell calls on the President and the

Prime Minister on 16 July 2015 and Foreign Minister on 14 July 2015. Foreign Secretary hosted a farewell Iftar followed by dinner in honour of the outgoing Ambassador at the State Guest House, Padma on 16 July 2015. At this event, all the Heads of Missions in Dhaka were invited. Moreover, the outgoing Ambassador had farewell calls on the Director Generals of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

#### **OUTGOING AMBASSADOR OF THE STATE OF KUWAIT CALLS ON THE PRIME MINISTER**

Outgoing Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to Bangladesh Ali Ahmad Ebraheem Al-Dafiri had a farewell call on the Prime Minister on 30 July 2015. During the call on, Kuwaiti Ambassador handed over a cheque of US\$ 1 million to the Prime Minister as the 1<sup>st</sup> instalment of the project to be funded by the Kuwait Fund to renovate the Andarkilla Jame Masjid in Chittagong.

#### **FOREIGN SECRETARY HOSTS FAREWELL DINNER TO THE DUTCH AMBASSADOR**

Foreign Secretary hosted a farewell dinner in honour of the departing Ambassador of the Netherlands to Bangladesh, Gerben de Jong, on 27 July 2015, at the State Guest House, Padma. At the dinner the Ambassador shared his rich experience of working in Bangladesh with the audience. The Foreign Secretary also shared his memories of working with the outgoing Dutch Envoy, who has apparently transformed Bangladesh- Netherlands relations.

#### **BANGLADESH AMBASSADOR TO REPUBLIC OF KOREA PRESENTS LETTER OF CREDENCE**

Ambassador of Bangladesh to the Republic of Korea Md. Zulfiqur Rahman visited the Presidential Palace- Blue House, to present his credentials to the South Korean President Park Geun-hye. The Ambassador also had brief discussions with the President which encompassed all major components of the bilateral relations of the two countries. South Korean Foreign Minister, Yun Byung-se, Senior Secretary to the President for Foreign Affairs and National Security, Ju Chul-ki and Presidential Spokesperson, Min Kyungwook were present during the discussions.

#### **JAPANESE AMBASSADOR TO BANGLADESH PRESENTS LETTER OF CREDENCE**

Japanese Ambassador Masato Watanabe presented his Letter of Credence to President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Md. Abdul Hamid on 16 July 2015. The Ambassador later paid courtesy call on Foreign Minister, Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali, MP, on 30 July 2015. While congratulating him, the Foreign Minister told the Ambassador that he had taken up assignment at a time when the two countries were enjoying the best of their relationship in the backdrop of the visit of the two Prime Ministers to each other's country. The Ambassador expressed his plan to work on the decisions taken by the two Prime Ministers during their visit. The Ambassador also called on the State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Md. Shahriar Alam, MP, and Foreign Secretary Md. Shahidul Haque on the same day. The Foreign Minister, the State Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Foreign Secretary assured the Ambassador all possible support in carrying out his duties as Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh.

#### **BANGLADESH CONSULATE GENERAL IN HONG KONG FACILITATES SCHOLARSHIPS TO BANGLADESH STUDENTS**

The Consulate General is striving to utilize the potentials of Macao by establishing different links with various

stakeholders in Macao. Following the Consulate General's active coordination with both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China and University of Macao, two Bangladesh students got chance to study in University of Macao (UOM). This is the first time that any Bangladesh student is offered a place in the UOM. According to the offer, the scholarship recipients would enjoy waiver of full tuition fee and residential college fee (for 2 semesters including accommodation and 15 meals per week) in the first academic year. It may be mentioned that according to 'The Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2014-2015, University of Macao ranks 276. In this regard, the Consulate General also appreciated the assistance of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dhaka, for its prompt inter-Ministerial coordination.

#### **BANGLADESH HIGH COMMISSION TO MALDIVES OBSERVES CLEANING CAMPAIGN FOR PREVENTION OF DENGUE MALARIA**

The Bangladesh High Commission in Maldives organized a special meeting between High Commissioner and Iruthisham Adam, Minister, Ministry of Health, Republic of Maldives on 01 July 2015 to discuss measures to curb the ongoing Dengue situation in Maldives. In the morning of 05 July 2015, the High Commissioner addressed the Bangladesh community in Maldives through the National TV of Maldives and other renowned Electronic Media of Maldives about the Dengue curbing campaign and gave away some important instructions to the Bangladesh expatriates as well as Maldivians to keep themselves and their area clean. In view of the emergent situation, the High Commission of the People's Republic of Bangladesh felt the urgency of raising public awareness regarding the preventive measures against Dengue Fever particularly for the Bangladesh Community in Maldives. The High Commission arranged a self-cleaning programme in Male' around the High Commission on 06 July 2015. The High Commissioner along with staff of the High Commission and expatriate Bangladeshis participated in this Cleaning Campaign. High Commission of Bangladesh in Male', Maldives also organized an Iftar Party for the Bangladesh Expatriates on 11 July 2015 at DHARUMAVANTHA SCHOOL, Medhuziyaaraiy Magu, Male', Maldives.

#### **BANGLADESH WELCOMES THE HISTORIC AGREEMENT ON JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF ACTION (JCPOA)**

On 16 July 2015, Bangladesh issued a statement welcoming recently concluded historic agreement on Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in Vienna between E3/EU+3 (China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the UK, the USA and the EU) and Iran on Iran's Nuclear Program. In the statement, Bangladesh expressed the hope that implementation of the JCPOA would contribute towards peace, stability and well being of the peoples in the Middle East.

#### **BANGLADESH CONVEYS CONDOLENCE TO SAUDI ARABIA**

A message of condolences was sent from the Foreign Minister to his Saudi counterpart Adel A. Al-Jubeir on the sad demise of the former Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal on 9 July 2015. It is worth noting that the late Prince Saud was a very influential member of the Saudi Royal family and made valuable contribution to foster

Bangladesh-Saudi bilateral relations since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in mid 70s. Furthermore, considering the excellent brotherly relations between Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia as well as the goodwill of late former Foreign Minister towards Bangladesh, State Minister for Foreign Affairs visited KSA during 12-14 July 2015 to attend mourning reception on the demise of Prince Saud. During the visit, he met Prince Khalid Al Faisal, Governor of Makkah and brother of the deceased Prince Saud and conveyed deepest condolences and expressed sympathies on behalf of the people and the Government of Bangladesh. The visit of the State Minister symbolized the deep brotherly relations between Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia and was highly acclaimed by the Saudi Royal family and leadership.

#### **PRIME MINISTER CONVEYS CONDOLENCES TO THE VICTIMS OF A BOMB ATTACK IN TURKEY**

Message of condolences from the Prime Minister was sent to the Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey expressing deep condolences and heartfelt sympathies to the bereaved family members of the victims of a bomb attack by ISIS in a cultural centre in the South-Eastern region of Turkey on 20 July 2015. She strongly condemned the heinous act of terrorism and reiterated Bangladesh's solidarity with the brotherly people and the Government of Turkey in their fight against terrorism.

#### **BANGLADESH FLAG VESSEL AND ITS CREW RELEASED FROM CONAKRY PORT IN GUINEA**

The arrested Bangladesh flag vessel (DAHIATUL KALBI, IMO No. 8311376) and its crew got released from Conakry Port, Guinea on 29 July 2015. The vessel arrived at Conakry, Guinea, for discharging goods on 30 October 2014 but it got arrested along with its crews on 07 November 2014 for the first time on the ground of charterer delay. It faced subsequent several suits in the local courts of Guinea. The owner and Department of Shipping of the government brought the matter under reference to the notice of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 26 May 2015. Considering its importance, the Ministry immediately took up the matter with its Guinean counterpart through a Note Verbale and requested to take urgent necessary measures to release the vessel along with its crew members. As there is no Bangladesh Mission in Guinea, Bangladesh Mission in Rabat, Morocco (concurrently accredited to Guinea) handed over the letter to the government of Guinea. Apart from that, the Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh, while attending an OIC meeting in Jeddah during 16-19 June 2015, called on the Guinean Foreign Minister on the sidelines and handed over a copy of the Note Verbale conveying the request of the Government for taking urgent action to release the vessel and its crew members at an early date. As a result of the endeavours of the Government and its owner, the vessel DAHIATUL KALBI with its 22 crews finally got released and left Conakry Port of Guinea after 8 months.

#### **BANGLADESH MISSION IN LIBYA RELOCATES TO TUNISIA**

Bangladesh Mission to Libya has been relocated to Tunisia due to the ongoing anarchic situation in Libya. The Bangladesh citizens were also advised to avoid travelling to Libya for the time being.