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DIPLOMATS

WORLD

The Only Diplomatic Magazine in Bangladesh

*INNOVATIVE PATHWAYS
TO SUSTAINABLE WASTE
MANAGEMENT IN
BANGLADESH & BEYOND*

*FIVE DECADES OF
BANGLADESH-CHINA
RELATIONS: TOWARDS A
NEW HEIGHT*

*BANGLADESH'S ENGAGEMENT WITH THE
INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION (IMO):
ENHANCING MARITIME DIPLOMACY AND
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

07

Innovative Pathways to Sustainable Waste Management in Bangladesh and Beyond

14

The Rivers of Bangladesh: Lifelines of Heritage and Hope

19

Dr Yunus Pays Final Tribute to Pope Francis: A Moment of Global Unity and Diplomacy

25

Five Decades of Bangladesh-China Relations: Towards a New Height (Part 2)

32

Bangladesh-Egypt Bilateral Relations: From Current Prospects to Future Possibilities

37

Crafting Prosperity - Reviving Economy: How Micro, Small, Medium Enterprises (MSME) Can Shape Bangladesh's Economy by Sustainable Innovation and Strengthening Human Resources

41

Algeria's Promising Agriculture: A New Era of Growth and Food Sovereignty

46

Bangladesh's Engagement with the International Maritime Organization (IMO): Enhancing Maritime Diplomacy and Sustainable Development

50

Diplomats Flash Corner

Editor's Note

This month, unrelenting extreme weather events have disrupted lives across continents, bringing the stark reality of climate change into unforgiving focus. These events are no longer isolated incidents; they reflect a growing global pattern. They serve as a resounding call for decisive action; world leaders must move beyond rhetoric and implement sustainable climate strategies with urgency.

In Bangladesh, the interim government's measured and humane response to the tragic air force aircraft crash at the Milestone School campus in Uttara, Dhaka, reflects a heightened sensitivity to public grief and accountability. Government advisers visited the site and acknowledged the students' demands as valid. Their response, including trauma counselling and a pledge to review military flight protocols, signals a welcome shift toward empathetic and responsible governance. In times of national trauma, such gestures foster healing and reaffirm the moral authority of the state.

On the global stage, diplomacy remains under strain. While Washington's focus has shifted to evolving geopolitical concerns, Bangladesh is grappling with proposed U.S. tariffs on apparel exports. These measures threaten both the country's export earnings and the livelihoods of countless women employed in the garment sector. Diplomats World has joined Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus in commending Bangladesh's negotiating team in Washington for securing a reduction of the proposed tariff to 20 percent. Ongoing discussions between the two sides remain constructive.

Meanwhile, the India-U.S. interim trade deal has reached a stalemate, reportedly over issues of agricultural access and tariff concessions. The deadlock highlights how national interests can clash with broader strategic goals, often at the cost of global economic momentum.

Domestically, Professor Yunus has called for building a broad-based national consensus to restore parliamentary authority. His commitment to inclusive governance and free, fair elections is a hopeful step toward securing peace, dignity, and democratic rights for all Bangladeshis.

In this issue of *Diplomat's World*, we offer timely insights and reflections on these unfolding developments, both national and international. We invite our readers to engage deeply with the essays and analyses that illuminate today's interconnected world.

Shahed Akhtar

Ambassador & Fmr. Secretary, GoB and Editor, *Diplomats World*

Algeria's Celebration in Dhaka

63 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE



Algerian Embassy in Dhaka
Celebrates 63 Years of
Independence.

The Algerian Embassy marked its 63rd Independence Day with a tribute to the martyrs of the Liberation War and a call for deeper ties with Bangladesh.

Ambassador Dr Abdelouahab Saidani led the ceremony, joined by senior officials and cultural delegates.



Key guests proposed collaboration in trade, agriculture, and technology. Two research papers explored health diplomacy and the economic legacy of Algerian independence.

The event closed with patriotic performances by Bangladesh Scouts, celebrating solidarity and shared values.



Innovative Pathways to Sustainable Waste Management in Bangladesh and Beyond

- Dr Shahriar Hossain & Maliha Hoque

Bangladesh, one of the world's most climate-vulnerable countries, is at a turning point in its environmental history. In recent years, rising temperatures, declining air and water quality, biodiversity loss, and more unpredictable weather patterns have become everyday occurrences rather than potential worries. Devastating floods, salt intrusion, prolonged droughts, and erratic rainfall are all affecting communities nationwide, eroding livelihoods, endangering food security, and harming delicate ecosystems. Plastic pollution and household waste contribute to this issue as well.

The Plastic Crisis in Bangladesh

Plastic pollution is now a planetary crisis, impacting wildlife, clogging waterways, entering food chains, and contributing to climate change through greenhouse gas emissions during production, transportation, and disposal. Since the 1950s, global plastic production has soared to over 9.5 billion tonnes, with annual output surpassing 400 million tonnes today. Despite increasing awareness, only 9% of plastic waste has been recycled globally, while the rest ends up in landfills, oceans, or incinerators.

In Bangladesh, plastic consumption per capita tripled in 15 years, driven by rapid urbanization, single-use culture, and inadequate municipal systems. Rivers like the Buriganga and Karnaphuli have become dumping grounds for plastics, harming aquatic life and livelihoods (IGC, 2023). Plastic industries also contribute considerably to the growing mismanaged plastic waste in Bangladesh. There are about 5,000 plastic manufacturers that are operating in Bangladesh and employing about 1.2 million individuals (BIDA, 2021). Therefore, leading to a crisis.



The Plastic Crisis: A Global and Local Perspective

In Bangladesh, the amount of plastic consumed per person increased from 2.7 kg in 2005 to 9.8 kg in 2020. Only 36% of the more than 646 tons of plastic garbage produced daily in Dhaka are recycled, primarily by unorganized laborers (World Bank, 2021; ESDO, 2022).

According to IGC (2023), up to 60% of plastic garbage is improperly handled, contaminating wetlands, rivers, and sewers. Likewise, as per UNEP, between 19 and 23 million tons of plastic enter aquatic environments annually. There are now major health concerns due to the discovery of microplastics in human blood, seafood, and even placentas (WHO, 2022).

The Untapped Potential of Household Organic Waste in Bangladesh

Household organic waste presents both a significant challenge and an opportunity for sustainable waste management in Bangladesh. Comprising 68–81% of total household waste nationwide (ESDO, 2022), organic materials such as food scraps, yard trimmings, and agricultural residues dominate the waste stream. In urban centers like Dhaka, an estimated 3,500 tonnes of organic waste are generated daily, accounting for roughly 70% of the city's 5,000+ tonnes of total daily waste; yet less than 5% undergoes proper composting (World Bank, 2021). The situation is even more pronounced in rural areas, making up approximately 90% of household waste.

However, inadequate disposal methods, such as open burning or uncontrolled decomposition, contribute to harmful methane emissions, a greenhouse gas 28 times more potent than CO₂ over 100 years. Globally, organic waste is responsible for 16% of global methane emissions from landfills (World Bank, 2022). Bangladesh's rapidly urbanizing cities risk exacerbating this issue without intervention.

Zero Waste as an Ultimate Solution to Waste Management in Bangladesh-

What is zero waste?

Zero waste is a transformative approach that redefines our relationship with waste, aiming to eliminate it by minimizing generation and promoting sustainable practices.



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Digital Out of Home

- ☑ LED Installation
- ☑ LED Rental
- ☑ LED Ad Management
- ☑ LED Caravan
- ☑ LED Screen Rental
- ☑ LED TV Rental

Event & Activation

- ☑ Outlet / branch Opening
- ☑ Launching
- ☑ Meet Together
- ☑ Sales Promotion
- ☑ Awareness
- ☑ Tele Sales/Promotion

Transit Branding

- ☑ Car Branding
- ☑ Bus Branding
- ☑ Railway station Branding
- ☑ Bus stand Branding
- ☑ Metro rail Branding
- ☑ CNG Branding
- ☑ Auto Rickshaw Branding
- ☑ Rickshaw Branding
- ☑ Caravan Branding

Printing & Packaging

- ☑ Press Print
- ☑ Digital Print
- ☑ Laser Print
- ☑ UV Print
- ☑ Cloth Bag
- ☑ Jute Bag
- ☑ Pocket
- ☑ Box

OUR





It rejects waste as an acceptable outcome, striving for a waste-free world. Furthermore, it's a lifestyle and strategy that prioritizes sustainable consumption and disposal to prevent waste from polluting landfills and oceans. While it acknowledges that some waste is inevitable, the focus remains on reducing it at the source. The core principles of zero waste expand the traditional 3Rs (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) into the 5Rs: Rethink (redesign systems for circularity), Refuse (reject unnecessary items like single-use plastics), Reduce (minimize consumption), Reuse (repurpose or repair items), and Rot (compost organic waste).

These principles guide individuals and communities toward

sustainable practices. The zero waste initiative follows a dynamic and structured 7-step approach:

The 7-steps approach in details:

1. rethinking product design.
2. minimizing waste by keeping products for longer.
3. maximizing reuse through repair and repurposing.
4. composting the kitchen waste.
5. efficiently recovering materials and energy through better source separation and resource extraction.
6. managing non-recyclable waste by rethinking and reducing materials before they become waste.
7. avoiding unacceptable practices like incineration, and emphasizing prevention over disposal. Ensuring a one-stop solution.

Zero Waste in Plastic Management

Adopting a Zero Waste strategy for plastic management provides a comprehensive response to some of the most important social and environmental issues of our day. There are quantifiable advantages to this paradigm change in five important areas:

Environmental Protection:

By stressing sustainable product design and systemic reduction techniques, Zero Waste addresses the underlying causes of plastic waste (UNEP, 2023). This strategy significantly minimizes the adverse effects of both terrestrial and marine environments by reducing the manufacture of plastic and encouraging circular alternatives (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2021). Thus, enabling a proactive, green, ecosystem. That will yeild positive outcomes.

SERVICES

Gift Item

- ☑ Customize
- ☑ Imported and local
- ☑ Branded Item
- ☑ Mug
- ☑ Umbrella
- ☑ Keyring
- ☑ Pen
- ☑ Pen Holder

Out of Home

- ☑ Billboard Installation
- ☑ Billboard Rental
- ☑ Neon Billboard
- ☑ Light Box
- ☑ Police Box
- ☑ Road Sign
- ☑ Foot Over Bridge Branding
- ☑ Wall Branding
- ☑ Road Divider
- ☑ Road Blocked
- ☑ Wall Painting
- ☑ Signage
- ☑ Tourist Spot Branding
- ☑ Market Branding

Digital Marketing & Video Production.

- ☑ Tvc
- ☑ Ovc
- ☑ Documentary
- ☑ Website
- ☑ SEO
- ☑ Social Media
- ☑ Reels
- ☑ Creative Content
- ☑ Influencer Management

Interior & exterior

- ☑ Creative Support
- ☑ 3d Mockup
- ☑ Office Decorations
- ☑ Home Decoreation
- ☑ Hotel / Resort Design and Planning



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Public Health Protection

The approach directly reduces exposure to harmful compounds, such as toxic landfill leachates, microplastic ingestion routes, and carcinogenic dioxins from plastic incineration (Lancet Commission on Pollution and Health, 2022). When taken as a whole, these initiatives lessen the burden of illnesses caused by the environment.

Climate Change Mitigation

Since plastics are made from petroleum, they have a significant impact on greenhouse gas emissions at every stage of their lifespan, from extraction and refining to disposal (CIEL, 2019). By removing hazardous disposal methods and the necessity for the creation of virgin plastic, zerowaste techniques reduce these emissions.

Resources Optimization:

Through frequent reuse and

recycling (recycling only for compostable waste like paper, cloth, or glass, not plastic), circular economy concepts integrated into Zero Waste systems optimize material usefulness (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2021). This synergy between circular economy and Zero Waste not only conserves resources but redefines it.

According to the World Economic Forum (2020), this significantly lowers by up to 70% the energy intensity and environmental damage connected to the extraction and processing of virgin materials. This underscores the transformative potential of sustainable practices in drastically reducing environmental impact and energy demand.

Social Justice Advancement:

Workers in the informal waste industry are included as key

partners in the transformation, offering them economic opportunity, policy representation, and occupational protections (WIEGO, 2022). In Bangladesh alone, this inclusive strategy improves the livelihoods of more than 1.2 million garbage pickers while guaranteeing fair participation in the sustainable economy (BIDA, 2021).

Zero Waste in Household Waste Management

The environmental and social benefits of zero waste are profound. It significantly reduces pollution by cutting landfill methane (28–36 times more potent than CO₂) and toxic incinerator emissions. Reducing the need for raw materials, preserving resources through reuse. The GAIA Report (2022) states that achieving zero waste may reduce waste emissions worldwide by 84%.



By decreasing exposure to hazardous waste and promoting inclusive, sustainable economies, it also helps to create healthier communities. Practically, zero waste can be adopted at home by swapping disposables for reusables (e.g., stainless steel bottles) and composting food scraps, which account for 68–81% of household waste. On-the-go habits like carrying reusable bags and cutlery further reduce waste, while sustainable fashion choices, such as buying second-hand and combat the environmental toll of fast fashion.

On a broader scale, zero waste aligns with global goals like the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption), SDG 13 (Climate Action), and SDG 8 (Economic Growth). Achieving these goals requires community education, policy changes (e.g., banning single-use plastics), and infrastructure for composting and recycling.

Zero Waste Strategies: Upstream Solutions

Addressing plastic waste begins at

the design and policy level. Harmful materials such as sachets, EPS foam, and oxo-degradable bags are being phased out. New systems focused on refillable, reusable, and package-free options are gaining momentum's and smarter product development. Businesses that adopt zero-waste models and plastic-free supply chains are being encouraged through incentives, which works positively. As part of a local initiative, polystyrene trays are being removed from store displays and replaced with compostable alternatives, helping to promote more sustainable choices in everyday shopping.

Community-Based Collection and Composting

Sustainable waste management begins with local action. In remote and tourism-heavy regions, decentralized systems are being introduced to improve efficiency and reduce environmental impact. Households are equipped with three-bin sorting setups, supported by regular awareness campaigns to encourage proper waste separation and

appropriate management. Youth and women are being trained to lead composting and recycling efforts, creating new opportunities and strengthening community ownership. In Betgari, Rangpur, a zero-waste village model has shown how source separation and composting can produce valuable organic fertilizer for local farms, linking environmental care with rural development.

Integration of the Informal Sector

Informal waste collectors play a vital role in keeping communities clean and reducing landfill pressure. Recognizing their contribution, initiatives are providing access to health insurance, financial education, protective equipment, and representation in policy discussions. Worker cooperatives are being formed and included in official waste collection routes, ensuring fair treatment and better working conditions, leading to improvements.





Through structured engagement, informal workers are stepping into leadership roles, helping to implement plastic-free practices in partnership with local markets and driving meaningful change from within their communities.

Education and Campaigns

Building awareness is key to lasting change. Localized Zero Waste learning modules are being introduced in schools and madrasas to foster environmental responsibility from an early age. Creative outreach through street theatre, radio, and visual art helps engage a wide range of audiences across different communities.

Global Inspiration and ESDO's Leadership in Advancing Zero Waste

Innovative examples all over the world show that zero-waste solutions are feasible. It is sustainable, it is durable under rough constraints and it is enables a healthier ecosystem, therefore opening up to a variety of opportunities.

Community-led segregation and composting (GAIA) has helped the Philippines' Zero Waste Cities effort reduce landfill usage by

80%. Slovenia diverts 68% of garbage from landfills through extensive public education, while South Korea's pay-as-you-throw smart bins have significantly increased recycling rates (UNEP, 2023).

One especially striking example is Rwanda, which has become one of Africa's cleanest countries by enacting strict plastic prohibitions and encouraging civic involvement across the country. These achievements provide Bangladesh's transformation practical guidelines. These global successes show that strong policies, community engagement, and public awareness can dramatically reduce waste. For Bangladesh, they offer a clear path forward, one built on collaboration, innovation, and commitment to lasting change.



By learning from others, Bangladesh can shape a cleaner, more resilient future, Waste is not just a challenge, it's a chance to redefine progress through purpose, discipline, sustainability and unity.

The Environment and Social Development Organization (ESDO) in Bangladesh has taken the lead in bringing these fundamental values to the local setting. Partnerships with tour operators and religious institutions are encouraging more mindful consumption habits.

Grassroots movements like "No to Sachets" are raising awareness about the environmental impact of multilayer plastics. Annual initiatives such as "Plastic-Free July" mobilize citizens, students, and retailers to reduce plastic use, while the "Zero Waste to Zero Emissions" campaign links waste reduction to broader climate justice efforts.

- **Dr Shahriar Hossain**, Senior Technical Advisor & **Maliha Hoque**, Administrative Program Officer, ESDO



Argentina Celebrates National Day in Dhaka with Culture and Diplomacy

Argentina joyfully marked its second National Day in Dhaka since reopening its embassy, with distinguished guests H.E. Mr Adilur Rahman Khan and H.E. Ms Farida Akhter, an evening of tango, wine, traditional delicacies and cultural showcases, the launch of FMD vaccines by Biogenesis Bago, the unveiling of Bangla translations of six Argentine literary works, and generous support from local and international sponsors, all reflecting the deepening bilateral ties and a promising trade outlook nearing one billion dollars.



The Rivers of Bangladesh: Lifelines of Heritage and Hope

- Syeda Zainah Binte Habib

A Nation Shaped by Water

Water is the essence of Bangladesh. It shapes the land, sustains its people and narrates the stories of generations. For many, the rivers are more than a geographical reality. They are a living heritage, a source of identity, standing as a constant reminder of both the blessings and the challenges that define this nation. For centuries, the rivers have been the lifeblood of agriculture, trade and culture. They have nourished the fertile plains, connected remote villages to bustling towns, while inspiring poets, painters and musicians. However, in recent decades, the health of these waterways has been tested by pollution, unplanned development and the growing pressures of

climate change. What once seemed an unending gift of nature is now a resource that requires careful protection.

Signs of Change and Renewal

It can be agreed that gradual changes lead to eventual progress. What may have seemed impossible even a decade ago, the idea of restoring and safeguarding these rivers for future generations, is now showing signs of possibility. In 2025, Bangladesh officially recognises a total of 1,294 rivers, according to the Ministry of Water Resources' recently published draft list, reflecting an ongoing effort to document and protect the nation's vital watercourses. Major restoration programmes around Dhaka and other regions are

underway, aimed at reducing pollution, protecting embankments. Therefore, improving river health as part of a wider commitment to sustainable water management and climate resilience. Against the odds, and in defiance of the neglect that has too often been the norm, communities, environmental groups, and policymakers are beginning to act.

They are the ones paving the way towards cleaner water, sustainable livelihoods, and renewed respect for the rivers.

In 2025, organisations like Waterkeepers Bangladesh have amplified community engagement and legal advocacy, playing an essential role in river conservation efforts wide across the country.



Brahmaputra River

Such is the story of the fishermen of Chandpur, who, in 2025, continue to uphold the government-enforced 22-day seasonal ban on hilsa fishing. This ban, timed to protect hilsa during its spawning season, has demonstrably aided the recovery of hilsa populations and improved economic conditions for local communities, as reflected in record hilsa prices shortly before the ban period. Similarly, young volunteers in Rajshahi continue to participate in riverbank clean-ups and tree planting efforts to combat erosion and pollution along the Padma River, thereby directly contributing to the preservation of the river's ecosystem.

These 2025 initiatives by government bodies, communities, and environmental organisations collectively demonstrate tangible signs of change and renewal in Bangladesh's river ecosystems. They mark a hopeful trajectory for safeguarding these crucial waterways for future generations.

Voices from the Water

In the words of a boatman from Barisal, "The river is our mother. If we care for her, she will care for us." A conservationist working in the Sundarbans recently stated, "Protecting the flow of fresh water is not only about saving wildlife. It is about saving the people who depend on it every day."

These voices reflect a growing recognition that rivers are not merely channels of water but living systems that sustain life in countless ways.

From Neglect to Awareness

Prior to these changes, it was common to see industrial waste discharged without consequence or riverbanks encroached upon without thought for the long-term damage. Now, there is a growing awareness that such practices cannot continue if the nation is to thrive. These changes may be slow, but they are constant. The government's recent initiative to dredge key waterways has already improved navigation for cargo and passenger vessels.

Local entrepreneurs are investing in eco-tourism along the Padma and Meghna, offering river cruises that celebrate heritage while promoting environmental responsibility. In the Sundarbans, the joint projects with neighbouring countries are working collectively to protect the delicate balance between fresh water and salt water, ensuring the survival of the mangrove ecosystem, which remains the pride of Bangladesh.





A Cultural Revival Along the Banks

There is also a cultural revival taking place. In 2025, traditional boat races, once in decline, are being reintroduced as part of regional festivals, drawing both local and international visitors. For instance, the boat race held at Beutha Point on the Kaliganga River in Manikganj saw the participation of 35 teams competing in four groups, with thousands attending to enjoy the lively event.

Organised under the theme "Protect water pollution for building a clean Bangladesh," the race highlighted the growing environmental awareness linked to these cultural celebrations. Prizes ranged from refrigerators to motorcycles for the winning teams, creating a festive and competitive atmosphere that emphasised the key importance of safeguarding the country's rivers, preserving legacies.

In addition to these cultural events,

there have been substantial advancements in river conservation and management throughout Bangladesh in 2025. The Ministry of Water Resources, under new leadership, has overseen important projects including the construction and reconstruction of over 100 kilometres of embankments and the re-excavation of 250 kilometres of drainage canals. In the Feni district, a major flood control and riverbank protection project is currently underway, and emergency repairs are ongoing along a 20-kilometre stretch of the erosion-prone Teesta River.

Efforts to clean and restore key rivers near Dhaka, such as the Turag, Buriganga, and Sitalakshya, have been initiated with plans for dredging, pollution control, and encroachment removal. These projects, combined with local conservation efforts and growing environmental awareness, signal a determined push towards healthier, cleaner rivers and sustainable water management across the country in 2025.

Towards a New Vision

Slowly but surely, the rigid patterns of neglect are giving way to a more inclusive vision, one that recognises the rivers as shared heritage, deserving of dignity and care.

In 2025, Bangladesh is beginning to reshape its relationship with its waterways through a combination of grassroots cultural initiatives and government-supported environmental projects.

The government, led by the Ministry of Water Resources under Syeda Rizwana Hasan, has made significant progress in restoring and protecting rivers. This includes the reconstructing of over 100 kilometres of embankments, re-excavating 250 kilometres of drainage canals, and protecting 123 kilometres of riverbanks, alongside measures to combat pollution and encroachment in all eight administrative divisions.



Jamuna River

Work to depollute and reclaim heavily contaminated rivers around Dhaka, such as the Turag, Buriganga, and Sitalakshya, is underway with detailed action plans being finalised and implemented. Enforcement to prevent industrial and household waste from entering rivers has been strengthened, and public awareness campaigns aim to sustain long-term river health. Alongside these efforts, a 20-year masterplan focused on reviving the rivers of Dhaka includes the construction of

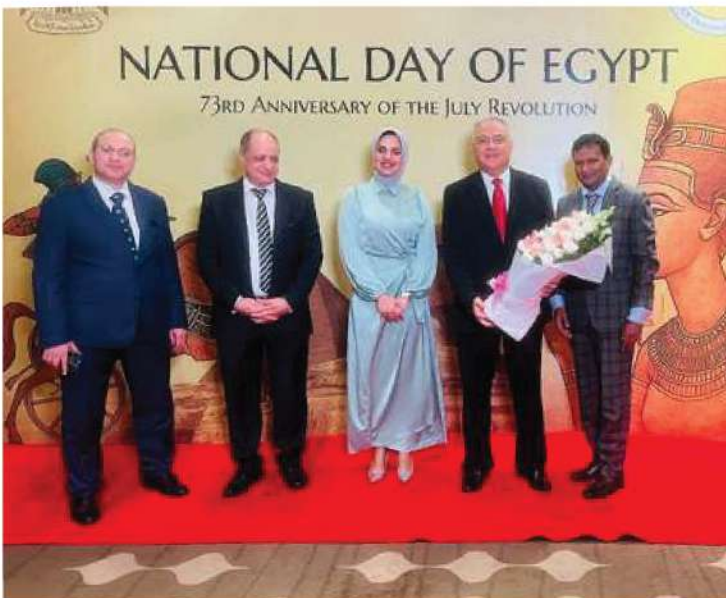
walkways, eco parks, and jetties on riverbanks freed from illegal occupation, transforming degraded waterways into cleaner and more accessible urban rivers.

On the international front, Bangladesh became the first South Asian country to accede to the United Nations Water Convention in June 2025, signalling its commitment to sustainable and equitable transboundary water management. This step is critical, as the nation is home to 57 transboundary rivers, including the

vast Ganges- Brahmaputra-Meghna system that shapes one of the world's largest deltas. This landmark accession reinforces Bangladesh's role as a regional leader in cooperative water governance, safeguarding its vital river systems while setting a precedent for sustainable resource management across South Asia. While the change is not yet complete, it is undeniably underway. The day when rivers run cleaner, riverbanks are fortified and protected, and the people who depend on these waterways can do so with pride is now within sight. This transformation promises to make lasting statements, reshape the nation's future, and embody the very essence of progress for a country whose destiny has always been intertwined with the captivating tide-waves and the everlasting flow of its rivers.



Syeda Zainah Binte Habib
Consultant, Strategic Partnerships
Diplomats World



EGYPTIAN EMBASSY IN DHAKA CELEBRATES 73RD NATIONAL DAY WITH DISTINGUISHED GUESTS

73RD NATIONAL DAY

The Egyptian Embassy in Dhaka held a reception on 14 July 2025 to mark the 73rd anniversary of the July 23 Revolution. Ambassador Omar Fahmy welcomed Bangladeshi officials, diplomats, and civil society members. Guests of honour Mrs. Rizwana Hasan and Chief Justice Syed Refat Ahmed highlighted strong Egypt-Bangladesh ties. The event celebrated shared values and progress in political, economic, and cultural cooperation, reflecting the nations' growing partnership.



Dr Yunus Pays Final Tribute to Pope Francis: A Moment of Global Unity and Diplomacy

- H.E Kevin S Randall

Pope Francis, the first Jesuit pope and the first from the Southern Hemisphere, led the Roman Catholic Church for over a decade with compassion, humility, and bold global vision. His papacy was marked by his unwavering stand for peace, social justice, interfaith dialogue, and care for the environment. Though he was the spiritual head of the world's 1.3 billion Catholics, his moral leadership extended far beyond the walls of the Vatican. He was widely respected as a leader of humanity, a symbol of hope for people of all faiths and nations. Pope Francis will be remembered not just as a religious leader, but as a global beacon of compassion, justice, and unity, whose moral voice resonated across faiths, borders.

On Saturday, April 26, 2025, the world bid farewell to Pope Francis in a solemn and historic funeral mass at St Peter's Square in Vatican City. The funeral drew together over 130 world leaders, including presidents, monarchs, dignitaries, and representatives of faiths and communities from across the globe. Among them was Chief Adviser of Bangladesh and Nobel Peace Laureate Professor Muhammad Yunus, who attended the funeral to pay his last respects to the late Pope, standing in solidarity with the global community. The farewell to Pope Francis became a moment of profound global unity, as leaders from every corner of the world gathered to honour a spiritual figure.

Pope Francis, who passed away on Easter Monday at the age of 88, will be remembered for redefining papal leadership in the 21st century. He prioritized the poor and the marginalized, spoke passionately about the climate crisis, and repeatedly reminded the world of the importance of compassion over conflict. In a time of political and social division across the globe, he consistently called for unity and dialogue. Whether addressing migrant rights, condemning war, or denouncing economic inequality, Pope Francis refused to remain confined to ceremonial leadership. His messages were clear, direct, and rooted in the common values that unite humanity.



Pope Francis with Dr. Muhammad Yunus, 2017.

A Tribute from a Friend and Fellow Visionary

Dr. Yunus arrived in Rome directly from Doha, Qatar, on Friday, April 25. An hour after his arrival, he went to St Peter's Square to pay homage to Pope Francis, where the late pontiff's body was lying in state inside St Peter's Basilica. Standing in solemn silence, the Chief Adviser of Bangladesh offered his final prayers, a personal and profound moment that reflected the bond the two global figures shared.

Pope Francis had been a staunch supporter of Dr. Yunus's vision of a "Three Zero World" - zero poverty, zero unemployment, and zero net carbon emissions. Their shared commitment to uplifting the marginalized and building a sustainable future brought them together beyond formal meetings. In fact, the Vatican itself partnered with Dr. Yunus to launch a joint "Three Zero Initiative" in Rome, underscoring the depth of this connection. In honoring Pope Francis, Dr. Yunus paid tribute not only to a friend but to a fellow visionary whose values aligned with a shared mission for global justice. Their partnership stands as a testament to the power of compassion-driven leadership. His presence at the funeral was not only a personal tribute but also a

powerful diplomatic gesture on behalf of Bangladesh - representing the nation at one of the most globally significant gatherings in recent times.

A Meeting of Minds on a World Stage

On Saturday morning, as the funeral mass commenced at 10:00 am Vatican time, Dr. Yunus took his seat among global leaders and royals. The two-hour ceremony was attended by more than 200,000 people, with every corner of St Peter's Square and its adjacent streets filled to capacity.

In addition to attending the mass, Dr. Yunus used the occasion to exchange greetings and thoughts with several international figures. Among those he met were UN Secretary General António Guterres, EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, and former US President Joe Biden. Dr. Yunus's presence at the funeral not only honored Pope Francis's legacy but also reaffirmed his place among global changemakers, engaging in dialogue with world leaders at a moment of shared reflection and unity.

He also conversed with leaders such as the President of Finland Alexander Stubb, President of

Portugal, the King and Queen of Belgium, and heads of state from Kenya, Montenegro, Ecuador, East Timor, and Iceland. High-level royal dignitaries like Prince Albert of Monaco, the Prince and Princess of Norway, and the Grand Duke and Grand Duchess of Luxembourg were also in attendance. In addition, Dr. Yunus met with key international officials including the Director General of the World Health Organization and former US Secretary of State John Kerry. These interactions, though brief and mostly ceremonial, carried weight.

In such rare moments of global convergence, dialogue, even in its simplest form, builds bridges. Bangladesh's presence through Dr. Yunus at this symbolic event helped reinforce its image as a country invested in peace, justice, and global solidarity.

Elevating Bangladesh in Global Diplomacy

Dr. Yunus' attendance at the funeral of Pope Francis was more than an act of personal tribute — it was a statement of Bangladesh's continued engagement in global diplomacy rooted in values of humanity, interfaith respect, and collective progress.

While Bangladesh is a Muslim-majority country, its participation in this Christian ceremony exemplifies the country's pluralistic outlook and readiness to embrace common values shared by all faiths. Dr. Yunus, as Chief Adviser, embodies this spirit. His presence at such an event, alongside world leaders, is a reflection of a broader vision, one that sees Bangladesh not as a peripheral nation, but as an active participant in shaping bilateral ties through global conversations around peace, inclusion, and sustainable development.



The Pope opens the Holy Door in a solemn ceremony.

The Vatican itself acknowledged Dr. Yunus's contribution to these ideals through its earlier collaboration on the Three Zero Initiative. By honoring Pope Francis in his final journey, Dr. Yunus also rekindled this shared vision on the global stage, reminding leaders and institutions alike of the power of empathy-driven leadership.

Catholic Church in Bangladesh to Host Interfaith Dialogue in September

In the days following the Funeral Mass of Pope Francis in Rome, Bangladesh's Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus held separate meetings with two of the Catholic Church's most senior figures; Cardinal Silvano Maria Tomasi and Cardinal Jacob

Koovakad. The encounters reflected not just personal warmth but also a broader spirit of interfaith understanding. Both cardinals spoke movingly about Pope Francis's lifelong mission to defend the poor, fight inequality, and work toward a world without war or nuclear weapons. They praised Professor Yunus as a close friend of the late Pope and commended his decades-long crusade against poverty.

For his part, Yunus recalled the Pope's openness, including his decision to publish, unedited, Yunus's critical letter on Vatican Bank reforms in *L'Osservatore Romano*. He also spoke of collaborative initiatives such as the Pope Francis–Yunus Three Zero Clubs, aimed at achieving zero

unemployment, zero wealth concentration, and zero net carbon emissions. Cardinal Tomasi, a veteran Vatican diplomat, discussed global geopolitics, praising Vietnam's economic progress and echoing Pope Francis's calls for peace in Ukraine and Gaza. Cardinal Koovakad, head of the Dicastery for Interreligious Dialogue, announced that the Catholic Church in Bangladesh will host an interfaith dialogue this September, bringing together leaders from different faiths.

A Legacy Continued

The funeral of Pope Francis marked the end of a remarkable era, but also the continuation of the ideals he championed. For leaders like Dr. Yunus, the occasion was not only about remembrance, nor was it merely a tribute, but it is also about revisiting the commitment, a renewed pledge to carry forward the shared mission of building a just, inclusive and compassionate world. In this light it can be agreed that Bangladesh, too, stands to benefit from this spirit of international goodwill. It is moments like these that strengthen bilateral ties, deepen mutual respect, and open new avenues for cultural and humanitarian collaboration. Dr. Yunus' participation sent a powerful message: Bangladesh is committed to global unity, human dignity, and peaceful coexistence.





Vatican City, in all its glory...

As he departed Rome early on Sunday, April 27, Dr. Yunus left behind not just a signature in the visitors' book at the Bangladesh House, but a lasting impression on the world stage, one that highlighted the potential of shared humanity over divisions, and unity over difference. As he departed Rome early on Sunday, 27 April, Dr Yunus left more than a signature in the visitors' book at the Bangladesh House; he left a quiet yet powerful reminder of the strength found in shared humanity and unity across differences.

Looking Forward with Hope

In a world facing escalating conflicts, climate disasters, and inequality, the funeral of Pope Francis reminded us of the importance of moral leadership, the kind that transcends borders and politics. Leaders like Pope Francis and Professor Yunus show that deep compassion, when combined with bold action, can move the world toward a better future. Their shared legacy offers a guiding light in turbulent times, proving that empathy and courage can shape a more just and sustainable world. In remembering them, we renew our

commitment to hope, humanity, and meaningful change.

As Bangladesh continues to navigate the challenges of the modern world, its global engagement through inclusive, respectful diplomacy will play a crucial role. Professor Yunus's tribute to Pope Francis is not just a chapter in diplomatic protocol; it is a symbol of Bangladesh's commitment to standing tall with those who believe in a fairer world for all.

In the final silence that enveloped St Peter's Square on that April morning, hope lingered hope that the seeds of peace, justice, and dignity planted by leaders like Pope Francis and nurtured by others like Dr. Yunus, will continue to grow. Bangladesh was there. And the world noticed. Bangladesh stood not only in mourning, but in promise, carrying forward the hope of a more just and compassionate world.

- H.E Kevin S Randall
Ambassador of
Embassy of The Holy See, Vatican



HIGH COMMISSION OF MALDIVES IN DHAKA CELEBRATES 60TH INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY WITH CULTURAL CEREMONY

DHAKA TOASTS MALDIVES: 60 YEARS OF SOVEREIGNTY, UNITY & GRACE



High Commission marked the 60th Independence Anniversary of the Maldives with a ceremony in Dhaka, bringing together members of the diplomatic corps, senior government officials, business leaders, and the Maldivian community in Dhaka to celebrate the momentous occasion. Held on 28 July, the Chief Guest of the ceremony was H.E. Dr. Asif Nazrul, Adviser to the Ministries of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, and Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment of the Government of Bangladesh.

WOMEN OF INFLUENCE GRACE MALDIVES' 60TH JUBILEE IN DHAKA

Sharmeen Soneya Murshid, Adviser to the Ministries of Social Welfare and Women and Children Affairs, and Farida Akhter, Adviser to the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, graced the ceremony as esteemed Guests of Honour. Their presence added depth and distinction to the celebration, reflecting the strong ties between the Maldives and Bangladesh across social, developmental, and diplomatic spheres.



HARMONY ACROSS OCEANS: MALDIVES & BANGLADESH UNITE IN SONG

As part of the celebrations, the High Commission, in collaboration with Maldivian artist Mr. Mohamed Maisaan Mumthaz and Bangladeshi singer Ms. Mehreen Mahmud, presented an exclusive song that reflects the deep and long-standing friendship between the Maldives and Bangladesh. The song was officially launched by High Commissioner Shiuneen Rasheed and Chief Guest Dr. Asif Nazrul during the ceremony.



No. 1 University in Bangladesh Gazipur Agricultural University

GAU in World Ranking



THE World University Rankings 2024
Gazipur Agricultural University (GAU) has been ranked at 801-1000
No. 1 Among all Public Universities in Bangladesh

THE Life Science Category Rankings 2025
GAU has been ranked at 501-600
No. 1 Among all Public & Private Universities in Bangladesh

THE ASIA University Rankings 2025
GAU has been ranked at 351-400
No. 1 Agricultural Universities in Bangladesh

THE Impact Rankings 2025
No. 1 Among all Public Universities in Bangladesh



GAU has been Ranked 77th globally in the Technology Development & Application category



GAU has been Ranked in the Global Top 400 (301-350) among the most innovative universities in the world



No. 1 University in Bangladesh



History

- ◆ Bangladesh College of Agricultural Sciences (BCAS): 1979-1983
- ◆ Institute of Postgraduate Studies in Agriculture (IPSA): 1983-1997
- ◆ Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Agricultural University (BSMRAU): 1998
- ◆ Gazipur Agricultural University (GAU): 2025

Establishment

22 November 1998

Area

187 acre

Vision

Fostering quality teaching and research that develop highly skilled and educated people necessary to advancing the well-being of the nation in general, and farming communities in particular.

Mission

Contributing to society through the pursuit of agricultural education, research and innovation for sustainable development.



Program

- ◆ BS/DVM
- ◆ MS
- ◆ PhD
- ◆ Dual Degree (PhD) with GIFS, USask, Canada
- ◆ PGDRD with RDA

Current Students

BS/DVM: 1343; MS: 756; PhD: 44 Foreign Students: 48

Speciality

- ◆ BS/DVM: 1343; MS: 597; PhD: 32 Foreign Students: 48
- ◆ Course Credit System with Fixed Academic Calendar
- ◆ Outcome based Education
- ◆ Fully Residential
- ◆ 50 years Academic Master Plan
- ◆ Graduate & Undergraduate catalogue

Community service

- ◆ Digital Herbarium
- ◆ Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic
- ◆ Veterinary Teaching Hospital
- ◆ Two Technology Villages

Recognition and Award

- ◆ The International IDB Prize for Science and Technology-2011
- ◆ Bangabandhu National Agriculture Award (Gold) 1st. Prize-2017
- ◆ Prime Minister National Tree Plantation Award 1st Prize-2015
- ◆ Annual Performance Agreement (APA) Award by the UGC (No.1 Position For 3 Consecutive Years, 2021-2023)



IDB International Award



APA Award 2021,2022,2023

Faculty

- ◆ Graduate Studies
- ◆ Agriculture
- ◆ Fisheries
- ◆ Veterinary Medicine and Animal Sciences
- ◆ Agricultural Economics and Rural Development
- ◆ Forestry and Environment
- ◆ Agricultural and Bioresources Engineering

Institute

- ◆ Institute of Biotechnology and Genetic Engineering (IBGE)
- ◆ Institute of Climate Change and Environment (ICCE)
- ◆ Institute of Food Safety and Processing (IFSP)

Unit

- ◆ Seed Science and Technology (SST)
- ◆ General Education Unit (GEU)

Achievement

- ◆ 346 PhD, 2630 MS, 2769 BS/DVM and 113 PGDRD degrees
- ◆ 91 crop varieties ((cereals 07, vegetables 49, pulses 14, oilseeds 05, fruits 07, spices 01, and flowers 08); 4 in pipeline
- ◆ More than 20 improved agricultural technologies (jackfruit grafting, CRISPR based wheat blast diagnostic kit, smart milk lab, IOT based smart irrigation and soil moisture management, I-Vet app, wheel/power operated multirow sprayer etc.)



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Five Decades of Bangladesh-China Relations: Towards a New Height (Part 2)

- Professor Imtiaz Ahmed

The Rohingya Crisis

Equally contentious is the issue of the Rohingya refugees. Efforts to resolve the crisis have focused on various pathways: bilateral, multilateral, and even tripartite, where Bangladesh, Myanmar, and China agreed to form a “tripartite joint working mechanism” for Rohingya repatriation in New York in September 2019. But to date, the tripartite initiative has failed to repatriate a single Rohingya to Myanmar. The limited success in the various pathways should not dissuade us from initiating new ones. “Every crisis is an opportunity,” Sun Tzu and Einstein repeatedly reminded us. The time has come to launch an

out-of-the-box pathway, or what could be referred to as a mini-Marshall Plan, with support from multiple countries. Saudi Arabia’s former intelligence chief, Prince Turki al-Faisal, too, has recently proposed a Marshall Plan for Gaza so that the Palestinians can “remain in their homeland.”¹³ The time has come to think of a Marshall plan in the Rakhine State, which would be attractive for the Myanmar military as well as the Arakan Army to repatriate the Rohingya refugees residing in Bangladesh and elsewhere. This is where China can play an active role in making the proposed Marshall Plan a reality.

Health, Education, and Innovation Hub

An opportunity has emerged for a closer relationship between Bangladesh and China in the health sector. However, the merit lies not in having Bangladeshi patients go to China for medical reasons, particularly in the backdrop of India’s visa restrictions. Instead, Bangladesh should seek China’s support in revamping and developing Bangladesh’s dismal health sector, which India, Thailand or Singapore, the countries where Bangladeshis mostly go to for treatment, would not invest in for reasons of getting patients from Bangladesh and profiting from it.



Bangladesh-China trade symbolised through a cargo ship laden with containers at port

However, China's investment in Bangladesh's health sector, with infrastructure, research and technology components, has the potential to attract patients, doctors, and researchers from the country and beyond. This could also stop the medical 'brain drain' and contribute substantially to Bangladesh's development. There has already been some progress on this. As part of the 50-year celebration of diplomatic ties, China has already committed to building a 500 to 700-bed hospital in Bangladesh.¹⁴ However, the current state of Chinese technology, too, could link Bangladeshi and Chinese hospitals for diagnosis and research. A pilot project can be

initiated with 10 hospitals in Bangladesh, preferably outside Dhaka, connecting them with hospitals in China. Once successful, the linkages could be further scaled up.

Education collaboration, too, has great potential. Again, not in the sense of exchange programs between students and faculty members at the tertiary level. This can be done, but I'm afraid it would not create the Asian bonding that is now so much needed in this part of the world. Minds become rigid in adulthood and are seldom open to transformation and new things. Instead, educational linkages between the primary school children are required. This is now possible

with newer technologies, allowing Bangladeshi and Chinese primary school-goers to communicate and learn languages and scientific materials, not to mention each other's culture, online. Here, too, a pilot project with selective primary schools could be initiated and then scaled up once proven successful. This could create a model of cooperation in the region and beyond. However, similar to other countries in the region, Bangladesh has a serious problem of being unable to keep its youth, particularly the bright ones, at home. This has also created space for corruption and money laundering.





Bangladesh Bank Governor Ahsan H. Mansur stated at a press conference that the government is preparing to establish a special compensation fund using assets seized from fraudsters and money launderers. (May 2025)

As Ahsan Mansur, currently the Governor of Bangladesh Bank, pointed out, incidentally, five years back, “Many politicians, bureaucrats, and businessmen try to launder money as their children stay abroad... [Those] people do not have the confidence to invest funds in the country.”¹⁵ According to The White Paper, commissioned by the Interim Government and published in December 2024, USD 16.7 billion

gets laundered annually from Bangladesh.

One critical way to address this would be to make Bangladesh attractive for youth. This is where innovation hubs, supported by China, can make a difference. We often forget that most of the developed Western countries are diasporic and are, therefore, structurally forced to hunt talent throughout the world, particularly

in developing countries.

Instability, misgovernance, and poor infrastructure in developing countries are often blessings for them. In the case of Bangladesh, a very few youths, including their parents, possess the tenacity and the patience to realise their future in the place of their birth, which, if we were to paraphrase Thomas Hobbes, is seemingly “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.”¹⁶



However, given the current state of technology, innovation hubs in Bangladesh could attract the youth to stay home and contribute to its development.

Not being a diasporic country, China can benefit from such innovation hubs, not only by dissuading creative Bangladeshis from going abroad and settling in some diasporic country, but also from the innovations of all kinds produced in the hubs.



Dhaka Expressway

Infrastructure Development

My final thoughts are on the infrastructure development; I'll be very brief on this. China has been a significant partner in Bangladesh's mega-projects, including the Padma Bridge, Karnaphuli Tunnel, Elevated Expressway, and various power supply projects.

What has puzzled me over the years is that a sizeable number of economists in Bangladesh are anti-mega-projects, almost sounding like a Luddite (a person opposed to new technology), cautioning policymakers and citizens about the futility of investing in megaprojects.

It will just be infrastructure

projects. But the question is, how can a country develop without such infrastructure projects? How will the budding engineers get employed?

What about the professionalism and knowledge of technology that comes with infrastructure development? What about the local army of workers employed when building a road or bridge? There is a famous Chinese saying, "If you want to be wealthy, build a road first." Keeping this perspective in mind, Bangladesh must start planning to connect all eight divisional headquarters - Dhaka, Chittagong, Sylhet, Mymensingh, Rangpur, Rajshahi, Khulna, and Barisal - with high-speed trains.

This will undoubtedly change Bangladesh's landscape and the quality of people's connectivity. Given that the average high-speed train can run about 300 kph, and the road distance between Dhaka and Sylhet is only 298.3 km, one can travel to Sylhet from Dhaka in just one hour. Dhaka-Barisal (240 km bus route) will take only 48 minutes.





Mohakhali Flyover, first flyover in Bangladesh, incepted in 2004

The same will be the case with all other divisional headquarters. This would mean one can live in Sylhet or Barisal and work in Dhaka and vice versa, even go for lunch and return to work. There will be other unintended consequences.

Population pressure on Dhaka and Chittagong would cease immediately and simultaneously contribute to the development of rural towns and villages.

This is precisely what China has achieved with its 48,000-kilometre-long high-speed

rail network. Currently, China is helping Southeast Asian countries, including Indonesia, Laos, Thailand, and many more, in building a high-speed rail network. This is one area where Bangladesh-China relations can reach a new height in the not-so-distant future.

Let me conclude then. The grounds for pursuing a ‘new height’ are already there. An overwhelming number of Bangladeshis have a positive impression of China.

This is clear from the three

consecutive annual surveys on the Image of China in Bangladesh, carried out since 2022. When asked about “which country comes to your mind first, when someone refers to Bangladesh’s development partners,” the response has consistently been ‘China’! Indeed, as People’s Republics and as civilisational entities, Bangladesh and China are destined to cherish and pursue independently and collectively the ideal of friendship, mutual respect, and a global community with a shared future.

Keynotes

[13] Hadley Gamble, “Prince Turki says many alternatives to Trump’s Gaza plan, proposes Marshall Plan,” *Al Arabiya News*, 2 April 2025.

[14] Shishir Moral, “China intends to set up a large hospital in Bangladesh,” *Prothom Alo English*, 13 April 2025.

[15] Staff Correspondent, “Tk 640b siphoned off the country for ‘trade,’” *Prothom Alo English*, 5 March 2020.

[16] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan Or the Matter, Forme, & Power of a Common-wealth Ecclesiasticall and Civill* (London: Andrew Crooke, 1651), p. 78.

- Professor Imtiaz Ahmed
Executive Director
Centre of the Alternatives, Dhaka



FRENCH NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATION

The Embassy of France in Bangladesh celebrated its National Day on July 13, 2025 in Dhaka, bringing together interim government advisers, diplomats, officials, civil society members, business leaders, and journalists. The event honored the spirit of liberty, equality, and fraternity, with the venue adorned in the colors of the French flag. Chief Guest Mr. Ali Imam Majumder, Adviser for Food and Land, joined the celebration. Ambassador H.E. Marie Masdupuy reflected on the storming of the Bastille and Bangladesh's recent historic movement, highlighting shared values. She emphasized the importance of democracy, freedom of expression, and fair justice. As part of France's commitment to language promotion, three students from Dhaka and Chittagong Universities received the Ambassador's Prize. The Ambassador also announced future cooperation in space technology to support Bangladesh's climate monitoring and strategic autonomy.



WE SOLEMNLY REMEMBER THE DEPARTED SOULS

Tragic Bangladesh Air Force Jet Crash Claims Lives at Milestone School

We, the Diplomats World Team, are deeply saddened by the tragic incident at Milestone School and College in Dhaka. The loss of so many young lives is an unimaginable sorrow, and our thoughts are with the families, students, and staff affected by this devastating event. In this time of profound grief, we extend our sincerest condolences and stand in solidarity with the entire community. We hope that the strength of collective compassion may offer some comfort to those mourning, and that the memory of the departed will be honoured with dignity and love.



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Bangladesh-Egypt Bilateral Relations: From Current Prospects to Future Possibilities

- H.E Omar Mohie Eldin Ahmed Fahmy

In an ever-evolving global order where diplomacy is shaped not just by politics but also by economic ambitions, environmental concerns, and cultural exchange, the relationship between Bangladesh and Egypt stands as a notable example of shared values and mutual benefit.

With historical ties rooted in solidarity, and current developments showing momentum in trade, education, and strategic dialogue, both nations are clearly poised to deepen their bilateral engagement. Bangladesh and Egypt continue to strengthen a partnership grounded in shared values and forward-looking collective growth.

A Relationship Rooted in History and Shared Struggles

Egypt and Bangladesh may be

geographically apart, but they are bonded by shared historical legacies. Both are majority-Muslim countries with rich cultural traditions, long histories of resilience, and deep-rooted aspirations for sovereignty, justice, and development.

Egypt officially recognized Bangladesh on February 22, 1974, during the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) summit held in Lahore, Pakistan. The two states have since maintained diplomatic relations built on mutual respect, cultural understanding, and collaboration across various multilateral platforms such as the United Nations and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Egypt and Bangladesh remain united by history. This foundation of friendship has gradually evolved

into a multi-dimensional partnership covering education, agriculture, infrastructure, microcredit, trade, defense, and people-to-people connectivity. The recent efforts made by both governments signal a conscious intention to transition this bond into a deeper strategic relationship.

The Second Foreign Office Consultations (FOC): Cementing Bilateral Ambitions

A landmark moment in this progression took place on 6 February 2025, when the Second Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) between Bangladesh and Egypt was held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the New Administrative Capital of Cairo.



Unity through tradition, respect through exchange.

Led by Ambassador Md Jashim Uddin, Fmr. Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh, and Assistant Foreign Minister H. E. Mr. Ahmed Shaheen of Egypt, the consultations covered an ambitious and broad spectrum of sectors. Political and economic collaboration, trade and investment, microcredit programs, education, agriculture, aquaculture, shipbuilding, defense, and energy cooperation were all on the table.

Both countries agreed on the need for greater private-sector engagement, and a decision was made to establish a joint business forum, a move that could significantly increase bilateral trade and investment flows. The dialogue also touched on expanding educational exchanges, especially the possibility of increasing scholarships for Bangladeshi students at Egypt's prestigious Al Azhar University. On the agricultural front, the two nations found common ground on areas like sustainable farming, irrigation technologies, and food security. Promoting tourism, sports, and cultural programs also emerged as vital tools to boost people-to-people connectivity. The consultation didn't shy away

from global issues either. Both sides expressed solidarity with the Palestinian people, strongly supporting their right to self-determination and statehood, while emphasizing the need for regional peace and stability. The Rohingya crisis was also discussed, with Egypt showing support for a sustainable and humane solution.

Another important outcome of the consultation was the decision to host the Third FOC in Dhaka in 2026, a commitment that indicates a long-term diplomatic roadmap between the two nations.

Celebrating Egyptian Revolution Day in Dhaka: A Showcase of Growing Bonds

Just a few months after the FOC, the Egyptian Embassy in Dhaka hosted a grand reception on 14 July 2025, celebrating the 73rd anniversary of Egypt's July 23 Revolution. The event, held in an atmosphere of warmth and distinction, brought together a wide array of Bangladeshi officials, foreign diplomats, academics, and civil society leaders. The celebration reaffirmed the Egypt-Bangladesh friendship

and shared diplomatic goodwill.

For the first time, two high-profile Bangladeshi guests were in attendance as guests of honor: Mrs. Syeda Rizwana Hasan, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Environment, Forests, and Climate Change, and Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed.

Their participation symbolized a maturing of ties and a shared desire to build bridges not only between governments but also between institutions, ideas, and people. In his speech, Egyptian Ambassador Omar Mohy Eldin Ahmed Fahmy emphasized the historical and cultural closeness of the two peoples, linking their parallel struggles for justice, freedom, and dignity.

He highlighted recent achievements in bilateral ties, including successful political consultations, the establishment of direct air connectivity via Egypt Air, and cooperation in multilateral forums. From tourism to education and trade to diplomacy, the message was clear: Bangladesh and Egypt are ready to move forward together.





Rizwana Hasan's Vision for Shared Growth:

In her keynote speech at the reception, Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan made a strong case for expanding economic ties, calling upon Egyptian investors to explore Bangladesh's potential in infrastructure, energy, tourism, and hospitality.

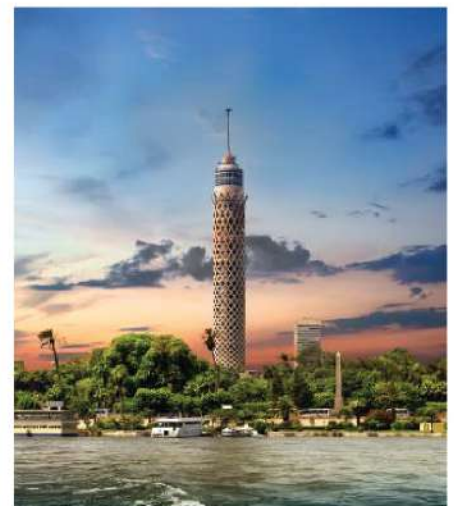
With optimism and cultural sensitivity, she congratulated the Egyptian people and recalled her own enriching visit to Egypt, particularly her admiration for its rich cultural heritage, iconic museums, and the legendary Nile River.

Her remarks reflected both strategic foresight and heartfelt appreciation, laying the groundwork for deeper engagement between Bangladesh and Egypt across sectors and cultures.

Rizwana pointed out how bilateral cooperation has already borne fruit in sectors like trade, education, agriculture, and clean energy. She welcomed the direct Dhaka-Cairo air route as a meaningful bridge between the two peoples. Reflecting on Bangladesh's own political journey, she spoke of the July-August Uprising of 2024, which she described as a national reawakening towards a more just, equal, and inclusive society. Her comments served as a reminder that both nations, despite different geopolitical realities, are united in their pursuit of social and environmental justice. Bangladesh and Egypt remain united in their shared pursuit of justice, progress, and people-centred partnership.

Her reflections affirmed a growing bond between Bangladesh and Egypt, grounded in shared values and a commitment to inclusive progress. She took it a little further by addressing the common

approaches shared by both. She thanked Egypt for extending scholarships to Bangladeshi students and reiterated Bangladesh's commitment to collaborating with Egypt in regional and international platforms like the OIC and the UN. Her message was one of dignified diplomacy, a call for shared progress without compromising national identities or values.





Egypt's Legal Tradition

Chief Justice's Call for Legal Dialogue

In his remarks, Syed Refaat Ahmed (Chief Justice), acknowledged the prestigious legacy of Egypt's legal system, which has influenced jurisprudence across the Arab and Islamic world. He expressed his hope for more judicial cooperation, including the exchange of expertise and the establishment of dialogue between judicial institutions. This legal diplomacy could pave the way for cross-training, academic exchanges, and institutional partnerships between law schools and bar associations of both countries.

Muslim-Majority Partners with Common Goals

The significance of Bangladesh-Egypt relations cannot be viewed in isolation. As two Muslim-majority nations, both countries share a common responsibility to uphold the values of peace, tolerance, education, and economic justice in the wider Islamic world. The two countries share a history deeply rooted in mutual respect and cultural significance, leading to a collective effort to supporting each-other.

Both have large populations, growing economies, and rising youth demographics. Egypt, with its strategic location connecting Africa, the Middle East, and Europe and Bangladesh, with its manufacturing strength and access to South and Southeast Asia, stand to benefit greatly from mutual collaboration.

Egypt's experience in desert agriculture, renewable energy, and cultural preservation can inspire similar innovations in Bangladesh. Likewise, Bangladesh's expertise in microfinance, textiles, and IT-enabled services offers avenues for Egyptian entrepreneurs.

In an increasingly polarized world, partnerships like these, based on cultural respect, mutual benefit, and political sincerity, can serve as models of South-South cooperation.

A Shared Future, Built on Trust

The recent developments in Bangladesh-Egypt relations signal more than just ceremonial goodwill. From structured diplomatic consultations and joint business initiatives to cultural exchanges and educational cooperation, both countries are working toward a Shared future.

What's most encouraging is the tone of the dialogue, one of respect, aspiration, and equal partnership. With both nations emphasizing climate resilience, economic reform, and social justice, the possibilities ahead are vast.

As Bangladesh continues to grow its economy and strengthen its democratic institutions, and Egypt continues to assert its leadership in Africa and the Arab world, their partnership holds the potential to positively influence their respective regions and contribute meaningfully to the wider Muslim world.

In a time when international alliances are constantly shifting, Bangladesh and Egypt's deepening bond is a reminder that diplomacy doesn't always need to be dramatic, it just needs to be sincere. May the spirit of cooperation between Dhaka and Cairo continue to grow, bearing fruitful outcomes for generations to come.

- **H.E Omar Mohie Eldin Ahmed Fahmy**
 Ambassador
 Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt
 to Bangladesh

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Crafting Prosperity - Reviving Economy How Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Can Shape Bangladesh's Economy by Sustainable Innovation and Strengthening Human Resources

- Sheikh Nazia Hasan

On June 27, 2025, Bangladesh joined the global community in celebrating World MSME Day, a moment that carries more significance today than ever before. Recognised by the United Nations, this observance highlights the crucial role that MSMEs play in promoting sustainable development, job creation, and economic resilience. Bangladesh's celebration of World MSME Day reaffirms its commitment to empowering small enterprises as engines of inclusive growth and resilience.

For Bangladesh, where the informal and small business sector forms the backbone of the national economy, this is more than a symbolic celebration, it is a call to action. MSMEs in Bangladesh are no longer just ancillary contributors. They are at the centre of employment, local innovation, and grassroots industrialisation. With over 7.8 million enterprises employing more than 21 million people directly or indirectly, the sector has become the pulse of the economy. MSMEs are no longer on the sidelines, they are the driving force behind Bangladesh's economic heartbeat.

According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), MSMEs contribute around 25 per cent of GDP and more than 32 per cent of employment in the industrial sector. Yet, in contrast to their significance, their share of total investment is surprisingly low. In the fiscal year 2022-23, MSMEs contributed 24.45 per cent to GDP but accounted for only 0.61 per cent of total investment. Despite powering a quarter of the economy, MSMEs in Bangladesh remain critically underfunded. Digital access is the missing link in unlocking MSME potential.



The thriving Jute Industry

Compared to countries like India, China, Japan, and Germany, where MSMEs contribute up to 80 per cent of GDP or employment, Bangladesh has much room to grow. The disparity is not due to lack of potential but lack of structured support and incentives.

The Present Landscape

The MSME sector in Bangladesh spans various industries, from light engineering in Bogura to handicrafts in Jessore, from agro-processing in Rajshahi to garments in Narayanganj. Most of these businesses operate informally, without access to formal finance or technological resources. They struggle with infrastructural

challenges, limited capital, and regulatory barriers. Despite these hurdles, MSMEs continue to thrive in several areas. The garment and textile sector, although largely dominated by large exporters, has a growing cottage and small enterprise base. The jute industry, handicrafts, agro-processing, light manufacturing, and small-scale electronics are all showing promise. Home-based service sectors, such as tailoring, beauty services, and small food processing units, have also seen a post-pandemic boom.

Regional and Global Scope

Regionally, Bangladesh's MSMEs have an opportunity to integrate with South Asian and Southeast

Asian value chains. Bangladesh's MSMEs are poised to plug into regional value. Export-oriented MSMEs can tap into markets in India, Nepal, Myanmar, and ASEAN nations. Globally, green supply chains and fair-trade networks are increasingly looking for small, sustainable suppliers. MSMEs in eco-friendly textiles, natural dyes, organic farming, and recycled goods can fill this niche.

The global shift toward ethical consumption and sustainable sourcing is an advantage for Bangladeshi MSMEs that adopt eco-friendly practices. Already, some are exporting handmade jute bags, clay pottery, and artisanal products to niche markets in Europe and North America. Government-to-government trade agreements and private sector initiatives can expand this further.

Unlocking Human Potential

Bangladesh's population is youthful, with a large portion still unemployed or underemployed. MSMEs offer a practical solution to this demographic challenge. They absorb labour faster and more efficiently than large corporations. Especially in rural areas, where job opportunities are scarce, MSMEs act as economic lifelines.



Additionally, MSMEs have a unique ability to empower women and marginalised groups. Home-based enterprises and cooperatives allow women to earn while managing household responsibilities. The same goes for youth entrepreneurs, who often start businesses in tech, delivery services and e-commerce.

Preserving National and Cultural Heritage

In Bangladesh, the MSME sector plays a vital role in preserving and promoting our rich national and cultural heritage. From handcrafted Jamdani sarees in Narayanganj to Nakshi Kantha embroidery in rural Mymensingh, these enterprises uphold traditional craftsmanship that's been passed down through generations.

Many of these heritage products are created by home-based workers, often women, whose livelihoods depend on sustaining these ancestral art forms.

Moreover, MSMEs serve as cultural ambassadors, enabling local artisans and entrepreneurs to showcase their heritage goods on both domestic and international platforms. With growing global interest in authentic, sustainable, and handmade products.

MSMEs have the potential to turn Bangladesh's cultural identity into an economic asset. Supporting these industries not only creates jobs, it also helps preserve our identity in a rapidly modernising world.

Financial Support and Green Banking

Financing is perhaps the most critical barrier for MSME growth. Only 15 per cent of MSMEs in Bangladesh currently have access to formal bank loans. Recognising this gap, some of the country's private banks have taken the lead in offering green and inclusive loan products.

Banks like Eastern Bank, City Bank, Trust Bank, and BRAC Bank are providing collateral-free loans, especially to environmentally sustainable enterprises. Products like EBL Utkarsha and Trust Shufola are targeting green sectors, from solar energy to eco-friendly garment manufacturing. These banks are also integrating digital technologies to reduce administrative costs and carbon footprints. Therefore leading to both energy and cost-efficiency in operations.

Tax and Policy Incentives

To strengthen the MSME sector, the 2025-26 fiscal budget proposes a series of financial incentives, low-interest loans, VAT exemptions, reduced income tax, and tax holidays for specific clusters. These policies are designed to make MSMEs more competitive and financially viable.

Preferential Tax Regimes for labour-intensive industries and tax breaks for green practices can significantly reduce operating costs and increase investment. Furthermore, setting up regional clusters with shared infrastructure and training centres can help decentralise growth and reduce urban-rural income inequality. Areas like light engineering in Bogura or plastic manufacturing in Dholaikhal (Dhaka) can benefit greatly from targeted cluster-based incentives.





Digital Readiness and Innovation

Digitalisation is key to the next phase of MSME evolution. Platforms like bKash, Daraz, and Facebook Marketplace have enabled small businesses to reach wider audiences. However, access remains uneven. Many rural entrepreneurs still lack internet access or digital literacy, and AI happens to be the future.

Expanding broadband coverage, providing training on e-commerce and digital marketing, and offering affordable smart devices can help MSMEs fully embrace the digital economy. Moreover, digital loan processing, mobile banking, and e-wallet systems reduce both corruption and operational costs. Digital inclusion empowers MSMEs to thrive, cut costs, and operate with greater transparency and coherency.

Gender Inclusivity

Women-led MSMEs face unique challenges, lack of mobility, social restrictions, and unequal access to credit. Targeted loan schemes, capacity-building programs, and market access initiatives can significantly improve women's participation in the MSME sector. Policies that mandate gender inclusion in public procurement and offer childcare support for entrepreneurs could be game-changing.

What the Future Holds

The potential for MSMEs in Bangladesh is enormous. With the right support, these enterprises can not only lift millions out of poverty but also position the country as a hub for sustainable and inclusive innovation. The upcoming international forums in Sevilla and Doha offer an opportunity for Bangladesh to push for global financing models that support small enterprises in developing

economies. More importantly, MSMEs should be seen not just as recipients of aid but as active agents of change.

Time to Invest More

Bangladesh's MSMEs are more than just small businesses, they are the beating heart of the economy. They reflect the dreams of millions of families, the spirit of entrepreneurship, and the promise of inclusive prosperity. As the world rethinks development in the wake of multiple global crises, supporting MSMEs is no longer optional, it is essential. With coordinated efforts from government agencies, financial institutions, development partners, and civil society, Bangladesh can transform its MSME sector into a powerhouse of sustainable growth and innovation. Let this World MSME Day be a turning point, not just for celebration, but for decisive action. The future is full of possibilities.

- **Sheikh Nazia Hasan**,
Coordinator,
Diplomats World



Algeria's Promising Agriculture: A New Era of Growth and Food Sovereignty

Algeria is entering a new and promising phase in its agricultural development. For years, the country depended heavily on food imports to meet its population's needs. But today, that narrative is changing. With strong government backing, major investments, and the use of advanced technologies, Algeria is steadily transforming its agriculture into a powerful engine for food security, economic diversification, and rural employment.

This shift is unlocking the potential of Algeria's vast landscapes and empowering communities across the country. It's a strategic leap toward long-term sustainability and national resilience. This begins a new scope for growth, vitality and a matter of pride.

A National Priority: Agriculture at the Heart of Economic Transformation

Recognising the vulnerability caused by its dependence on food imports, Algeria has placed agriculture at the centre of its national development strategy. The country has vast land resources, especially in the high plateaus and parts of the Sahara, and a growing commitment to unlock its potential. Agriculture already contributes significantly to the national GDP and employs millions of Algerians. Algeria is harnessing its vast land and strategic vision to turn agriculture into a pillar of national strength and self-reliance. The pursuit is for sheer self-reliance and this is where the government plays a major role.

- Nazinur Rahim

The government's vision is clear: make Algeria self-reliant in key food crops and transform the sector into a pillar of export-led growth. To support this vision, Algeria has launched multiple initiatives aimed at boosting domestic production. These include expanding cultivable land, offering subsidies for fertilisers and irrigation systems, improving access to credit, and encouraging both domestic and foreign investments. There is also a strong focus on modernising farming methods to make agriculture more productive, sustainable, and climate-resilient, making solid impact, by procreating opportunities.



President Tebboune addressing the National Agriculture Conference

Revolutionising the Sector Through Technology

One of the most exciting changes in Algerian agriculture is the rapid adoption of modern technologies. Farmers across the country are increasingly utilising drones, satellite imagery, and precision farming tools to monitor soil health, water usage, and crop conditions. This allows them to make smarter decisions, reduce waste and improve yields.



Desert Farming Goes High-Tech in Southern Algeria

Smart irrigation systems are being introduced in water-scarce regions, especially in southern Algeria. These systems use sensors to detect soil moisture and deliver just the right amount of water, reducing losses and saving energy. In addition, solar-powered irrigation and energy-efficient greenhouses are being promoted in desert areas, allowing year-round cultivation even in harsh climates.

Artificial intelligence and robotics are also finding their way into Algeria's agricultural landscape. Startups and research institutions are experimenting with AI-driven systems that can forecast crop diseases, optimize planting cycles, and even automate harvesting. These innovations not only improve efficiency but also attract young people into the sector by making agriculture more appealing and tech-driven. Because, now is the time. This is the era for changes, implementing progressive methods shall incorporate the means to become completely solution-driven. This

will open doors for cultivation, har and sustainable growth, enabling jobs as well.

Large-Scale Projects and International Partnerships

To accelerate the transformation of its agricultural sector, Algeria has actively invited international investors and companies to collaborate on mega-agriculture projects. These initiatives are primarily concentrated in the country's southern regions, including Adrar and Timimoun, where vast expanses of arable land are being harnessed for crop cultivation, livestock farming, and food processing. The scale of these projects reflects Algeria's ambition to modernize its agricultural infrastructure, introduce climate-resilient practices, and boost productivity. By leveraging global expertise and technology - Algeria aims to create a more competitive and sustainable agricultural economy that can meet domestic needs and tap into export markets, boosting the economy, the environment and food sovereignty.



Algerian Food Sovereignty

Some of these projects focus on wheat, barley, and legumes, which are essential for food security. Others involve the production of milk, dairy products, and animal feed, aiming to reduce dependence on costly imports. These large-scale developments are creating thousands of jobs and helping build integrated Agri-industrial chains within the country.

What makes these projects especially promising is the focus on sustainability. Many adopt regenerative farming practices that enrich the soil, minimise water use, and avoid chemical overuse. By combining modern techniques with ecological awareness,

Algeria is building a future-proof agriculture sector that can withstand climate shocks and serve generations to come.

Algeria's sustainable agri-projects are laying the foundation for resilient food systems and long-term prosperity, not just by

boosting yields, but by redefining what agricultural success looks like in a climate-stressed world.

Expanding High-Value Crops and Export Opportunities

Beyond food staples, Algeria is also focusing on high-value crops such as dates, olives, fruits, and vegetables. The country is already one of the world's top producers of dates, and the government is working to improve quality standards, packaging, and marketing for global export.

Olive cultivation is expanding rapidly, with thousands of hectares being planted each year. Olive oil from Algeria is gaining recognition in international markets, and plans are underway to double olive cultivation and strengthen processing capacity. Fruits and vegetables, especially those grown in greenhouses, are also increasing in production, with potential for regional and global export. By investing in high-value crops and global market readiness, Algeria is transforming its agricultural

landscape into a powerhouse of premium exports and rural prosperity.

These high-value crops not only improve incomes for farmers but also position Algeria as a serious player in agri-food exports.

A Sustainable Approach: Greening the Desert

One of Algeria's most ambitious efforts is the expansion of agriculture into its desert regions.

Through the careful use of irrigation systems, climate-controlled greenhouses, and renewable energy sources, the Sahara is gradually being transformed into a productive agricultural zone.

By turning arid desert into fertile farmland, Algeria is proving that innovation and resilience can rewrite the limits of geography and redefine the future of agriculture, enhancing the path to authentic and organic cultivation.



Land once considered barren is now yielding vegetables, cereals, and even fruit, not only for domestic consumption but also for export. The government is also breathing new life into the “Green Dam” project, a large-scale reforestation initiative designed to halt desertification and restore degraded ecosystems.

This programme supports agricultural development while also contributing to climate resilience and long-term environmental sustainability.

To improve soil quality, techniques such as composting, cover cropping, and organic farming are being introduced. Local farmers are receiving training in these methods, helping to ensure that future agricultural practices remain both productive and respectful of natural resources.

Overcoming Challenges with Strong Political Will

Algeria’s agricultural transformation faces challenges, notably water scarcity in the south, but smart irrigation, desalination, and improved water management are easing the problem, and harnessing a future filled with

safety, sustainability and stability in mind. Administrative and bureaucratic hurdles have also discouraged some investors. In response, reforms are being introduced to simplify land laws, speed up permit approvals, and create one-stop services to make agricultural investment more attractive and accessible.

Education and training remain essential. Many farmers, particularly in remote areas, lack access to modern tools and up-to-date knowledge.

To bridge this gap, agricultural extension services are being expanded, mobile applications are being developed, and partnerships with universities are being strengthened. These efforts aim to equip farmers with the skills and information they need to succeed in a changing agricultural landscape. By streamlining regulations and investing in farmer education, Algeria is not only unlocking agricultural potential but also empowering a new generation to lead its transformation from the ground up. Furthermore, the resources in Algeria are unlimited. Opportunities are already there, and this is the untapped potential.

Looking Ahead: A Leader in African Agriculture

Algeria possesses the key ingredients to become a leading force in African agriculture. With vast tracts of land, a growing workforce, a clear national vision, and increasing investment in technology, the country is well placed to feed its population, export food, create rural employment, and strengthen its economy in a sustainable way.

The agriculture of the future in Algeria will be markedly different from that of the past.

It will be smarter, greener, more inclusive, and geared towards international markets. By focusing on food security, economic resilience, and environmental responsibility, Algeria is laying the foundations for a brighter and more prosperous future. With vision, innovation, and sustainability at its core, Algeria is poised to lead Africa’s agricultural renaissance, cultivating not just crops, but a resilient future rooted in opportunity and global impact.

- **Nazinur Rahim**,
Executive Editor,
Diplomats World



RELIVE THE MAGIC OF KALAYAAN 2025

The Philippine Embassy in Bangladesh proudly hosted a vibrant and heartfelt Independence Day Reception, honoring our nation's freedom, celebrating Filipino culture, and deepening our friendship with the Bangladeshi people. From soul-stirring music and dazzling cultural performances to moments of unity and pride, the evening was a beautiful reflection of our shared aspirations.



Philippines National Day

The event brought together distinguished guests from the diplomatic community, government officials, business leaders, members of the Filipino community, and friends of the Philippines in Bangladesh.



It commenced with the solemn playing of the national anthems of the Philippines and Bangladesh, followed by remarks that highlighted the enduring spirit of freedom, unity, and resilience that defines the Filipino people. The Ambassador spoke about the shared values that bind the Philippines and Bangladesh, particularly the deep respect for independence, cultural heritage, and aspirations for a brighter future.





Bangladesh's Engagement with the International Maritime Organization (IMO): Enhancing Maritime Diplomacy and Sustainable Development

- Md Harun Or Rashid

Positioned alongside the Bay of Bengal, Bangladesh has for a long time understood the significance of the sea in aiding economic growth, and has also been geopolitically important. Bangladesh constantly interacts with international maritime organizations to maintain sustainable development of its prowess in shipping and trade, as well as advance its maritime diplomacy for a country so dependent on shipping and trade. The IMO as an example, is one of the most active global practitioners overseeing the development policy, legislation, and global collaboration concerning maritime affairs. Bangladesh thrives through strategic maritime engagement for growth, sustainability and global influence.

In this regard, the purpose of this article is to examine the relationship between Bangladesh and the IMO focusing on the contributions of the country towards diplomacy at Sea, sustainable development, and implementation of blue economy principles.

Maritime Background of Bangladesh

Bangladesh has one of the world's biggest river systems and a more than 700-kilometer coastline along the Bay of Bengal. Trade is dependent largely on the maritime sector of the country, as over 90% of its volume-based trade moves by sea. Bangladesh's trade flows through its vast rivers and busy coastline, paving the path forward towards solidifying bilateral relationships.

Chattogram, Mongla and Payraports are the major entry and exit points for goods into and out of the country. With this reliance on the sea for economic activities, maritime development and security are of prime importance for the economic advancement of Bangladesh. The country is also highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, including sea level rise and climate disasters. Given that the majority of its people are found along the coast, Bangladesh is highly exposed because of coastal erosion, flooding, and storm surges. Coastal trade drives Bangladesh's economy, but climate threats loom large. Coastal ports anchor Bangladesh's trade and climate resilience.



Maritime Security for Cargo Trade

All of these indicate the importance of effective maritime governance and international cooperation, and this is where Bangladesh's active membership with the IMO comes into play.

The Role of the International Maritime Organization (IMO)

The IMO is a UN specialized agency responsible for overseeing shipping and promoting international maritime activities conducted safely, securely, and environmentally friendly. Mandates of the IMO include adopting worldwide maritime conventions, protocols, and regulations encompassing all areas of maritime safety, security, environmental conservation, and preventing pollution of the sea. The IMO fosters cooperation among member nations and collaboration in exchanging best practices in the maritime industry. Since its establishment in 1948, the IMO has led the way in shaping maritime policies worldwide. The agency is instrumental in promoting the United Nations Sustainable

Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 14. It is aimed at conserving and making sustainable use of seas, oceans, and marine resources. Being a member of the IMO since 1976, Bangladesh has been an active player in all these global forums and has been committed to enhancing maritime diplomacy and maximizing the achievement of sustainable maritime development.

Bangladesh's Maritime Diplomacy and IMO Engagement

1. Policy Formulation and Role in Regulation: Bangladesh's engagement with the IMO is not just a question and dialogue; it also plays a significant role in formulating maritime policies and regulations.

The country has taken a significant role in advocating for policies that advance the interests of developing nations, especially those vulnerable to climate change and environmental degradation. The Bangladesh maritime diplomacy

seeks to enhance the capacity of least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS) to respond to the challenge created by rising sea levels and coastal ecosystem decline. Bangladesh's efforts under IMO conventions are evidence of its commitment to international maritime safety and environmental security. The country has been involved in the development of the International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes (IMSBC) Code, which governs the shipment of bulk cargoes safely in order to ensure that such operations are conducted in the least possible way as regards risk to human life and the environment. Bangladesh has also become a part of regulating the implementation aimed at neutralizing the impact of shipping on marine organisms, including the Ballast Water Management Convention that aims to prevent the release of invasive species through ballast water.

2. Capacity Building and Technical Assistance: This is one of the primary domains of Bangladesh's engagement with the IMO. Bangladesh has consistently requested the IMO to offer technical assistance to its development of maritime infrastructure, upgrading standards of safety, and rising efficiency at its ports. This collaboration has facilitated modernization of the country's maritime sector, compliance with international standards, and sustainable growth in the industry. IMO support drives Bangladesh's maritime modernization and global compliance.



Enhanced Measures for Maritime Security

The IMO provides various training courses and workshops with the aim of enhancing technical capabilities of member countries. Bangladesh has been positively involved in the efforts, which have enabled local stakeholders to better understand the complexities of international maritime law and ensure Bangladesh's conformity with international best practices. For example, Bangladesh has benefitted from IMO-organized training in maritime safety management, environmental protection, and shipping law. These initiatives have helped Bangladesh develop its human resources in the maritime sector and improve its overall maritime management.

3. Maritime Security and Piracy: Maritime security is another important subject area where Bangladesh has interacted with the IMO. As a temporary UN Security Council member during 2000-2001, Bangladesh emphasized the necessity of upgrading maritime security and preventing piracy.

The IMO's contribution to countering maritime threats, including piracy and armed robbery on the high seas, has been the core agenda of Bangladesh's foreign diplomacy. Bangladesh has been actively supporting IMO initiatives to improve the safety and security of shipping lanes, particularly in regions where piracy is prevalent, such as in the Gulf of Aden and the Strait of Malacca.

Bangladesh has also contributed to regional maritime security in the Indian Ocean region and Bay of Bengal. Being a member of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), Bangladesh has cooperated with the neighbouring states with the aim of enhancing maritime security and the suppression of illegal activities such as human trafficking and piracy. "The IMO Conventions, for example, the International Ship and Port Facility

Security (ISPS) Code, have played an important role in tightening security and repelling threats to global shipping."

4. Climate Change and Protection of the Environment Bangladesh's vulnerability to climate change and its dedication to sustainable development have made environmental protection the center of its engagement with the IMO. Bangladesh has at all times been an advocate for stricter regulations to protect the marine environment against the negative impacts of shipping, including shipborne pollution, oil spills, and ballast water discharge. The commitment of the government to SDG 14 can be seen in its support of the work of the IMO to promote sustainable seafaring habits and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases through ships. Bangladesh prioritizes marine protection through strong IMO-backed sustainability efforts, solidifying progress through heightened security measures, protecting trade.



Maritime choreography across South and Southeast Asia, where diplomacy meets the deep blue

Bangladesh has been a strong supporter of the IMO's efforts to restrict emissions from shipping, such as the IMO's decision to adopt its Initial Strategy on GHG Emissions Reduction from Shipping.

Bangladesh has also joined initiatives in enhancing ships' energy efficiency and encouraging alternative fuels with a view to reducing the carbon intensity of global shipping.

In a word, Bangladesh's role in the IMO has played a vital role in augmenting the country's maritime diplomacy, supporting the development of international maritime regulations, and advancing sustainable maritime practices.

Through intensified activity within the IMO, Bangladesh has been able to make valuable contributions to global efforts to ensure safer, more secure, and cleaner shipping.

Furthermore, the cooperation of Bangladesh with the IMO has helped to improve its maritime infrastructure, boost its technical capability, and improve its maritime governance, which are required for Bangladesh's sustainable long-term growth. Bangladesh's IMO partnership boosts global shipping safety and fuels its own maritime growth, perpetuating protection in a cohesive manner, securing trade and omitting piracy.

With the global community still dealing with issues of climate change, maritime security, and sustainable economic development, cooperation of the country with the IMO will remain an important part in helping to manage and protect its maritime resources effectively.

Through continued collaboration with the IMO, Bangladesh can ensure that its shipping sector is strong, sustainable, and poised to contribute towards realizing the nation's overall development goals in the coming years.

Continued IMO collaboration secures Bangladesh's maritime future and national progress.

- Md Harun Or Rashid

Maritime Policy Researcher, Former First Secretary
Embassy of Bangladesh in Bahrain

WORLD BANK VP REAFFIRMS SUPPORT FOR BANGLADESH'S REFORM AND YOUTH-CENTRIC GROWTH



World Bank Vice President for South Asia Johannes Zutt met Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus in Dhaka, reaffirming support for inclusive growth and pledging stronger backing for youth and women's empowerment. Joined by Division Director Jean Pesme, Zutt praised Bangladesh's reform efforts. Dr. Yunus honored the role of youth and women in last year's movement and urged the Bank to view Bangladesh as a rising regional hub. Special Envoy Lutfey Siddiqi highlighted increased foreign investment and improved port efficiency.

YOUTH AS CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE: AMBASSADOR BHANDARI CALLS FOR JOINT EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVES



Ambassador, H.E, Mr. Ghanashyam Bhandari, speaking as Chief Guest at a seminar jointly organized by BISS and Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB), emphasized the strategic importance of empowering youth in Nepal and Bangladesh. He highlighted the shared potential of the youth dividend to drive inclusive development, innovation, and stronger bilateral ties. He noted the growing role of young people in shaping policy, advancing climate resilience, and promoting social equity. With both nations approaching graduation from the Least Developed Country (LDC) category, he stressed the need to foster entrepreneurship and grassroots innovation to ensure sustained progress.

COURTESY CALL BY THE AMBASSADOR OF BHUTAN: STRENGTHENING BANGLADESH-BHUTAN BILATERAL RELATIONS



Her Excellency Dasho Karma Hamu Dorjee, newly appointed Ambassador of Bhutan to Bangladesh, paid a courtesy call on Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain. He welcomed her, praised the growing bilateral ties with emphasis on hydropower cooperation, and proposed convening the next Commerce Secretary Meeting. Ambassador Dorjee reaffirmed Bhutan's commitment and shared updates on the Gelephu Mindfulness City project.

SWEDEN AND BANGLADESH ARE WORKING TOGETHER FOR A GREENER, STRONGER FUTURE



Sweden signed a new agreement with Bangladesh's Economic Relations Division and the Ministry of Environment to support nature conservation and climate resilience. The partnership aims to strengthen environmental institutions, restore ecosystems such as Sonadia Island, and establish a national Wildlife Trust Fund. This joint initiative reflects a shared commitment to building a more sustainable and climate-resilient Bangladesh.

CELEBRATING YOUTH-LED CLIMATE ACTION AT THE NEO 2025 GRAND FINALE



Ambassador H.E. Marie Masdupuy hosted the NEO 2025 Award Ceremony, celebrating the Grand Finale of the 12th National Earth Olympiad. The event gathered young environmental champions and leaders from diverse sectors. Over 1,500 students participated in the BYEI-organized Olympiad, where Ambassador Masdupuy awarded winners and highlighted the role of political ecology in addressing climate challenges. She reaffirmed France's support for youth-led climate action in Bangladesh.

CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES AD INTERIM OF JAPAN DELIVERS LECTURE ON JAPAN'S FOREIGN POLICY AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP WITH BANGLADESH AT NATIONAL DEFENCE COLLEGE



Mr. TAKAHASHI Naoki, Chargé d'affaires ad interim of Japan to Bangladesh, delivered a lecture at the National Defence College on Japan's foreign policy, security strategy, and its vision for a Free and Open Indo-Pacific. He also highlighted the Strategic Partnership between Japan and Bangladesh. The session was attended by 97 course members from 18 countries, who engaged in discussions on bilateral ties and global issues.

CHINESE MEDICAL TEAM PAYS COURTESY CALL ON HONOURABLE CHIEF ADVISER PROFESSOR MUHAMMAD YUNUS



The Chinese medical team met Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus, who thanked them for their swift support in treating the injured and expressed hope for deeper healthcare cooperation. Ambassador Yao conveyed condolences for the lives lost and reaffirmed China's friendship with Bangladesh, pledging continued collaboration through training, knowledge sharing, and infrastructure development.

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS INAUGURATES PHOTOGRAPHY AND GRAFFITI EXHIBITION IN MEMORY OF JULY MARTYRS



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs launched a month-long photography and graffiti exhibition at the Foreign Service Academy to honor the July Martyrs. Foreign Affairs Adviser Md. Touhid Hossain inaugurated the event, joined by senior officials, as part of the July Renaissance Programmes 2025. A special prayer was also held at the Ministry's mosque, seeking eternal peace for the martyrs.

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