

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION

TEL: 880-2-883-7150-4

FAX: 880-2-9881677, 9885688

E-MAIL: DhakaPA@state.gov

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



PRESS RELEASE

U.S. GOVERNMENT-FUNDED CYCLONE SHELTER CONSTRUCTION PROJECT BEGINS IN COX'S BAZAAR

DHAKA, JANUARY 20 -- The United States Government (USG) will begin groundbreaking for seven Multi-Purpose Cyclone Shelters (MPCS) in Cox's Bazaar January 20-21, 2010. These ground breaking sites include Shahparirdip Pashchim Utter Para, Shahparirdip Dakshin Para, Hamidia, Habi Mohammed Hussein, Kutupalong, Gooliaplanag and Haladia Patabari. These seven MPCSs funded by the U.S. Government, through the U.S. Pacific Command, will be used as schools when not needed for emergencies. As schools, each MPCS can accommodate 120 students. During natural disasters, each MPCS can shelter up to 1,200 people. The shelters also have toilet facilities and water catchment reservoirs.

These humanitarian assistance projects are part of a 2009 agreement between the USG and Government of Bangladesh providing \$2.1 million to construct Multi-Purpose Cyclone Shelters and bridges. In addition to these seven shelters, there are also 23 multi-purpose cyclone shelters and four bridges now under construction in Cyclone Sidr-affected areas of Khulna and Barisal.

The United States Government is committed to assisting the Government of Bangladesh and its people. The USG has provided more than \$5.5 billion in development assistance to Bangladesh since independence. Immediately after Cyclone Sidr, The United States Government provided \$31.2 million in emergency food assistance and \$6.5 million for non-food emergency relief activities. The United States also is providing \$80 million in cyclone assistance for emergency relief, rehabilitation, and sustainable development in poor and vulnerable Cyclone affected areas (including villages and chars). The continuing assistance reflects the U.S. commitment to helping build a brighter tomorrow for Bangladesh's most vulnerable citizens.

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Note: *A Bangla translation of this press release is also available at the American Center. If you are interested in the translation, please call the American Center Press Section, Tel: 8837150-4, Fax: 9885688; e-mail:*

DhakaPA@state.gov; Website: [http:// dhaka.usembassy.gov](http://dhaka.usembassy.gov)