

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 “MAYER HASHI”
PROGRAM TO IMPROVE
FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES**

DHAKA, JULY 23 -- Minister of Health Dr. A.F.M. Ruhul Haque and U.S. Ambassador to Bangladesh James F. Moriarty launched a major new health initiative today called “Mayer Hashi” (“Smiling Mother”). The program will improve women’s and children’s health by increasing awareness of and access to long-acting and permanent methods (LAPM) of family planning. The project will also raise awareness among health care workers about pregnancy-related complications allowing them to identify and treat these life-threatening conditions at an early stage. The U.S. Government, through USAID, is funding this \$12 million program.

According to the latest Bangladesh Demographic Survey, 62% of women do not want more children, yet only 7% use LAPM. Mayer Hashi will work with health care providers, the Government of Bangladesh and NGOs to improve information about family planning and train professionals to provide safe LAPM service. This program will provide access to LAPM to five million married couples in Sylhet, Chittagong and Barisal. Mayer Hashi will also target rural areas where LAPM is not readily available.

=====

GR/2009

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>