

# Appeal to Expatriate Bangladeshis

Dear friends,

The United Nations Millennium Development Goal (MDG) has a vision that by 2015, world poverty would be brought down to a half of what was in 2000. The Bangladesh government has also set a target that by 2020, to reduce poverty by half and become a Middle Ranking Developing country. The two renowned persons known throughout the world as the pioneers who have the most effective & successful micro-credit programs to eradicate poverty are Bangladeshi nationals – Prof. Yunus of Grameen Bank & Mr. Abed Khan of BRAC. They are very hopeful that Bangladesh will be able to achieve total eradication of poverty by 2020 if population growth is not explored because Bangladesh is very much ahead of others. The gigantic task to eradicate poverty once and for all from Bangladesh requires expertise, goodwill and concerted efforts by all citizens of Bangladesh. It is not at all difficult to achieve those two goals by year 2020 because Bangladesh is now in an enviable position. About 8 million Bangladeshi citizens, a critical mass of population, are now earning & living overseas. These people have tremendous goodwill for Bangladesh and are willing to help provided they see the honesty of purpose with sincere efforts undertaken by the government and others in the field. Statistical evidences indicate that the poverty eradication can be possible even before 2020.

Throughout human history, new ideas along with the application of science & technology have created unprecedented opportunities and changed the world forever. Sometimes, simple ideas have created the break-through. Micro-credit is one of such unique ideas to eradicate world-poverty and has been accepted as such by the world community.

To take part in a small way in achieving this goal Grameen Support Group Australia initiated, some years ago, a movement among expatriate Bangladeshis to open current accounts with Grameen Bank for about \$200.00 equivalent Taka currency and keep the money for 5-6 years in order to get poor Bangladeshis out of poverty forever. A good number of you have responded to our call and opened accounts. As you probably know, Grameen 's more than 8 million members (families) that means over 40 millions ( average 5 member family)

very poor people, about 27% of total population of Bangladesh, are entirely dependent for their livelihood on Grameen Bank. About 62% of Grameen members have already crossed the poverty line. Those of you who have opened accounts and have kept the money there for 5-6 years will get immense satisfaction that you have assisted five members of one such family to get out of poverty. The impact is evident when one goes to any village in Bangladesh now. If all expatriate Bangladeshis are prepared to give away about \$4.00, a year, cost of a cup of coffee, it will be possible to make the country poverty-free and will become economically a Middle Ranking Developing country by year 2020. It is difficult to believe but in reality it is happening; all statistics confirming the reality.

Grameen Support Group Australia has also taken new initiative to give scholarships to very poor meritorious HSC students allowing them to continue further studies; without this assistance they would have stopped studies altogether and the country would have been deprived of these top ranking brains for the future. These students will be in the forefront of skilled manpower in the ' Bangladesh Digital Technology year of 2020'. From May 2010, 4 HSC scholarships, two males & two females have been awarded for two years duration @ Tk1500/- per month. All of the following recipients have achieved GoldenGPA-5(highest category) in SSC:

1. Hasan Ali, son of a landless poor farmer cum day-labourer Kader Mondol of village Sathvita, Ulipur, worked as a day-labourer with his father outside school hours, is studying at Holy Flower Model College, Dhaka with full waiver of tuition fees.
2. Saiful Islam, son of a day-labourer Momtaz Hossain & his wife Jannatun Nessa of village Itakhola Bazar, Joypurhat, helped his father as a day-labourer when not in school, is studying at Sayeed Altafunnessa Degree College, Khetlal, and Joypurhat.
3. Mukti Rani Sutradhar, daughter of a village tailor Jotindra Sutradhar & her wife Dipali Rani, a house-maid of village Nolgora, Sibchar, Madaripur, is studying at Cambrian College, Dhaka with full waiver of tuition fees & subsidized meals.
4. Rima Akter, daughter of a Rickshaw-puller Abu Taher & his wife Khadiza Begum of Mirpur Dhaka (originally from Bhola), achieved a Golden GPA-5, Science Group (A+ in every subjects) in 2010 SSC finals

from Mirpur Girls' High School. She is now enrolled in a college in Mirpur.

Grameen Shikkha, a reputed institution in this field is in the management of our program. We shall be getting updates from Grameen Shikkha regularly and also receiving 'academic performance report' of the recipients in February-March each year. This will serve as the 'institutional set-up' for further scholarships.

Some of you have shown empathy and generosity for these students to help continue their further studies and to allow this scholarship program to be a reality. To make these four scholarships in perpetuity that means on-going forever, we need about \$12-13,000. So far we have raised fund about \$6,000 (got commitment of further about \$1000) and in need of an additional \$ 6-7,000. Sooner we raise this amount; it will allow us to have some savings as interest. Otherwise we shall be spending from the capital we deposited already and have to raise more than \$ 7000.00 as time goes. I solicit your opinion on how we can proceed to raise this amount.

We are having a meeting to discuss & explain how we, the Bangladeshi Australians, can participate and assist the poverty-eradication efforts in Bangladesh. Also, discuss how to save the bright and the meritorious very poor students from oblivion. Please come and take part in the discussion even if you are sceptic. Your scepticism will also help us to infuse fine tuning our resolves.

**Date :** On coming Sunday, 5 September 2010.

**Place:** 65 Spurway Road, Ermington, Sydney.

**Time:** 2- 4PM

Phone No. 9670 2745, 0421 594 332

(Confirmation will be appreciated)

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1 September, 2010