



QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF NORTH AMERICAN BANGLADESHI ISLAMIC COMMUNITY

... YOU PROMOTE GOOD  
FORBID EVIL  
& BELIEVE IN ALLAH ...  
[AL-E IMRAN: 3.110]

# NABIC VOICE

JANUARY-MARCH 2008 ~ MUHARRAM-RABI-I 1429 A.H.

VOLUME 18, #1 ISSUE

## 2007: A YEAR FOR THE HISTORY BOOKS

The year 2007 may well be remembered as a monumental year in the history of Bangladesh. The year that started with anarchy, and a high degree of uncertainty about the future of the country took a major detour on January 11 when a caretaker government composed of mostly technocrat and backed by the military took over. The long-term impact this experiment is still uncertain. However, many of the events that has already happened, e.g., arresting the two former prime ministers along with dozens of their associates for corruption charges, finalization of the separation of Judiciary from the administration definitely are for the record books. Aside from the political arena two major natural calamities also befall on Bangladesh in 2007- back-to-back flooding in summer that submerged about 60 percent of the country, and a category 4 cyclone Sidr that directly hit the coastal regions of Bangladesh killing thousands of people and destroying millions of homes, livestock and crops. The challenges that arose from these natural calamities provided Relief and Development organizations like North American Bangladeshi Islamic Community a golden opportunity to show their care for Bangladesh and its people.

NABIC members and supporters rose to the occasion and raised over \$200,000 for the flood and cyclone relief efforts and to date have accomplished the following:

- NABIC Immediately following the summer floods provided \$9,000 to NUSRA for relief operations in Dhaka, Narayanganj, Manikgonj, and Hobigoni areas. With NABIC provided funds NUSRA distributed emergency food packages to 1000 families, seeds to 120 families, one bundle of tin each to 50 families and provided emergency medicine and a visit by a doctor to about 1000 families. NABIC also provided \$10,000 to Karmirhath of Gaibandha for flood relief works in Gaibandha and Kurigram area.



- With \$8,000 provided by NABIC for post-flood rehabilitation, the Old Rajshahi Cadet Association (ORCA) re-built 62 flood damaged homes in Bohuli, Sirajganj .
- Following cyclone Sidr NABIC provided \$6,000 to NUSRA for emergency relief work in Mirjagonj upazila of Paukhali. With

the funds from NABIC, NUSRA provided 600 blankets, 600 saris and 6000 packets of oral Saline.

- In Early December, NABIC also hand delivered a \$25,000 check for Chief Advisor's Relief and Welfare Fund to Mr. Tapan Chowdhury, then Advisor for Food and Disaster Management .



- Recently NABIC signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with ORCA to build 40 homes in the cyclone affected areas at a cost of \$50,000. The cluster of homes will be named " ORCA-NABIC Polli." The construction work for this project has already started and expected to be completed in the next six months.

- NABIC is currently finalizing details for funding a comprehensive recovery and rehabilitation of a village, consisting renovating water sources, sponsorship of 50 children, a resource center for the village, and couple of cooperative factories (e.g. fish drying, making fishing nets, etc.) for employment generation. The estimated cost for this one year project is expected to be \$80,000-\$100,000.



In addition to the flood and cyclone relief works mentioned above in 2007 NABIC continued supporting various on-going development projects and has provided over \$130,000 towards those projects.

All-in-all the year 2007 was a record year for both Bangladesh and NABIC.

## NABIC Voice

### Published by:

North American  
Bangladeshi Islamic Community

### President:

Dr. Sadrul Ula  
Wyoming

### Executive Secretary

Dr. Abu Bakar Ahmed  
865.481.8988  
[abahmed@nabic.org](mailto:abahmed@nabic.org)

### Editor:

Dr. Mohammad Jalaluddin  
[Jalaluddin\\_md@hotmail.com](mailto:Jalaluddin_md@hotmail.com)

### NABIC

P.O. Box 6631  
Oak Ridge, TN 37831  
[nabic-info@nabic.org](mailto:nabic-info@nabic.org)  
<http://www.nabic.org>

**NABIC-L:** An electronic bulletin board. To subscribe, visit <http://www.nabic.org>, read the list server policy, and follow the instruction to subscribe.

NABIC VOICE, a publication of North American Bangladeshi Islamic Community, is dedicated to enhance Islamic awareness and to create a congenial atmosphere for exchanging ideas and building cooperation and understanding in the context of Islam, Muslim Ummah, and Bangladesh. The views and opinions expressed in various materials here do not necessarily represent the views of the editor or of this organization.

While NABIC activities are mainly facilitated by its members and staff, the basis of this initiative is the active cooperation and participation of Bangladeshis in North America. All kinds of cooperation and assistance are welcome. Please use the contact address for more information about its activities in North America, and those in Bangladesh.

## Bangladesh Viewed Through NABIC: Editorial

A group of expatriate sailors were committed to paddling to the shore. Sailing of their symbolic boat has not been quite plain against the *status quo*. Riding the peaks and turns of time since its inception on a university campus in 1990, this humble non-profit has reached its early stage of maturity. Once quiet and somewhat bashful, NABIC, plying through occasional negative criticism and slanted remarks from even kindred, is now able to face the challenges of time. Through struggles and strives, it has acquired the state of credibility as an action oriented philanthropist group of Bangladeshi origin.

Moderate in size but high in ambition, this organization of Bangladeshi Muslims in North America is solely driven by its primary mission of serving the causes of Bangladesh, its expatriates in America and their posterity. The founders of NABIC call this mission an obligatory attempt at paying back mother's debt, in a modest way.

Our beloved Bangladesh always needs a hand from us and we owe it to her. We all know what Bangladesh needs at the moment and always. It is not begging for honest leaders, nor is it panhandling money from the foreign mega-banks and monetary funds. We have painfully witnessed that as long as money will flow in freely without a flow of the salty sweat, a nation cannot stand on its feet or retain its dignity. The socioeconomic development at the grassroots is the key to national prosperity and pride.

The process of socioeconomic salvation begins with human resource development. In some miraculous way, this truth must be infused into the heads and hearts of all the public and their servants, political and non-political alike. For a free nation, virtuous and patriotic voluntary organizations are expected to serve as the supporting ribs to the national backbone. The sprit of voluntarism of NABIC perseveres to achieve its goals of fulfilling this expectation.

Like many other Bangladeshi American organizations, humble NABIC is standing beside its fellow countrymen in its tragedy and triumph. By virtue of its *ummatic* orientation, NABIC has developed a longstanding relationship with other mainstream Islamic organizations including the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) with whom, for a while, NABIC maintained the ISNA-Bangladesh Fund. It has recently shaken hands with the Islamic Medical Association of North America (IMANA), which gave a gen-

erous gift for the cyclone victims of Bangladesh. In addition, a number of nonprofit organizations as committed affiliates in Bangladesh have been partnering with NABIC to serve the nation in the areas of socioeconomic development such as education, healthcare, poverty alleviation, micro-financing, rural development, environmental hazard mitigation, and disaster relief & rehabilitation.

There is no alternative of progressive education and training for elevating the levels of knowledge and skills for boosting productivity. Higher education and advanced training must go hand in hand with vocational skills development. At this moment, the nation needs more productive shoulders to support the heavy heads full of ideas. Above all, reverting of the undercurrent of a menacing moral degradation of the entire society is the first and foremost assignment incumbent upon the nation and its vital organs.

Effective education facilitated with modern methods and techniques has to be the key to prosperity of Bangladesh. For that the schools and its boards at all levels must be disciplined and streamlined. Politically active teachers and students were assets prior and during the nation's war of independence, but definitely the independent Bangladesh must get rid of the political tails of the touts. If this cannot be achieved, then the blood of the martyrs might have gone down the drain and their motherland must have shed tons of tears in vain.

For every action to progress there must be a strong moral character standing behind it. But unfortunately, progress often gets into the hands of the progressives who misinterpret the concept; and as a result, the definitions of character and morality get mutilated. The progressives, at least for some Bangladeshis, tend to brand themselves with secularism. Especially now, more often than ever, the secularists find Islamists in opposition, without knowing that Islam offers the most secular of any system of living and governance.

In spite of occasional human failures, the ideals and teachings of Islam have reaffirmed through ages that human-rights, peace and justice are preconditions to progress, and Islam and only Islam can deliver it. The NABIC as one of the voluntary arms of the Bangladeshi philanthropists in America has been diligently upholding the values and essence of Islam in its core belief and action.

-M. Jalaluddin

# NABIC Executive Secretary's Dhaka Trip Report

Abu Bakar Ahmed

I left Knoxville on November 22, 2007 and reached Dhaka on the 24<sup>th</sup>. Though the primary purpose of my visit was to see my parents and relatives, I took a long list of NABIC related work with me and was able to accomplish most of my goals. Here is a brief report on my trip:

On November 26<sup>th</sup>, I met with the representatives of all the NABIC Development Relief Partners (with the exception of BUET ACM-ICPC) at the BECS Clinic on Dar-us-Salam Road, Mirpur. The participants at the meeting were Dr. Mustafizur Rahman, Dr. K. M. F. Abdullah, Dr. Syed Reza Hussain and Syed Mahmudul Haque (of BECS); Kazi Shariful Alam and Md. Abul Hossain (of NUSRA); M. Abdus Sobhan (of Karmirhath); Abdullah Al Harun (of Brotee); Khorshed Alam Chowdhury (of Diganta Memorial); Dr. A. K. A. Mubin (of Safe Home); M. Siddiqui Rahman and Md. Abdul Muquaddem (of ORCA, our newest partner). Representatives from each organization gave a brief update of their activities and which was followed by some general discussion. I reminded the meeting participants that at a minimum, NABIC expects the following three things from each of our partners: (i) timely requests for funds with good justification, preferably by the end of January; (ii) detailed financial and activity reports at the end of each funding period; and (iii) prompt acknowledgements of receipt of funds. I also mentioned that periodic reports or articles with pictures of NABIC supported activities would be beneficial.



Secretary Abu Bakar Ahmed with NABIC affiliates.

On November 29<sup>th</sup>, I met with Mr. Abdus Sobhan (President, Karmirhath). He gave me 100 copies of small 2008 calendars in which NABIC is listed as one of their sponsors. On November 30<sup>th</sup>, I went to Chapai-Nawabgonj with Mr. Abdullah Al Harun (Brotee's Project Manager for the Rural Piped Water Supply Project), Ponkaj Kumar Gosh (Brotee's Public Relation Officer) and another Director of Brotee. We spent a couple of hours at the project site, visiting the Intake Well near the river and the Water Treatment Plant about a kilometer away from the well. The completion of the project

has been delayed by several setbacks—the electrical transformer near the intake well was stolen and now Brotee is building a guard post there before they install another transformer. Also, bringing the dedicated power line needed for the Treatment Plant has been postponed several times by the Rural Electrification Board. However, Brotee is hopeful that they will be able to conduct a test run before the end of the year and be fully operational by early next year (2008).

On December 3<sup>rd</sup>, I met with Ms. Sharmin Murshid (Executive Director) and Abdulla Al Harun at Brotee's office in Dhaka. We talked about various aspects of the Water Project in Chapai-Nawabgonj and Brotee's future plans. Ms. Murshid told me that they would like to have a NABIC representative present when they do the test run. She also informed me Brotee would like to submit a comprehensive post-cyclone rehabilitation project in one of the cyclone affected areas for funding to NABIC and promised it do so by the end of December. Also, if the private water supply pilot project in Chapai-Nawabgonj proves to be successful, Brotee may copy it in several other areas in partnership with NABIC. I have invited Sharmin Murshid to attend either our Annual Convention or the NABIC program at the ISNA Convention in the US.

On December 4<sup>th</sup>, I made a brief visit with Prof. Salma Chowdhury (founder of SHG) at her residence in Baridhara DOHS. I also had a long telephone conversation with her daughter Mrs. Momtaz Chowdhury on how to improve the management of SHG.

On December 6, I visited NUSRA's office and had a meeting with Kazi Shariful Alam (Executive Director) and Prof. Khalequzzaman (Chairman). They updated me on various aspects of the three projects we have with them: Poverty Alleviation, Hospital, and Relief and Rehabilitation. They informed me that they are seriously working to prepare a report on the evaluation of the micro-credit program and expect to complete it by the end of January 2008. They also reported to me that Madhabpur, Hobigong hospital is now fully functional under the leadership of two medical professionals—one MBBS and one doctor's assistant (similar to PA in the US). The hospital usually sees a large number outdoor patients every day. They expect to recover at least 95% percent of their operational cost from the fees charged and the sale of medicine. NUSRA officials also gave me written reports on the flood and cyclone relief operations, many pictures and a CD on relief operations.

On December 3<sup>rd</sup>, I met with Mr. Tapan Chowdhury, Advisor for Food and Disaster Management, at his office and handed over a \$25,000 cyclone relief check from NABIC (for Chief Advisor's Relief and Welfare Fund) to him. Mr. Chowdhury gave me some suggestions on how we should conduct our cyclone relief and rehabilitation activities. He suggested that instead of providing emergency short-term relief we should select an affected area and do comprehensive rehabilitation of that area.

# 18th NABIC Annual Convention

**What:** 18th Annual Convention of the North American Bangladeshi Islamic Community (NABIC)

**When:** Saturday, June 21, 2008 (9:00 am - 9:00 pm)

**Where:** Ramada Plaza Hotel (near the Galleria), Houston , Texas

**Program:** Lectures, Youth Program, Entertainment, Fundraising Banquet

**Speakers:** North American Islamic Scholars, Bangladeshi Community Leaders, and NABIC Officials

For more information about the NABIC Convention Contact: Ahsanul Huq, 832.545.6994 or Abu Bakar Ahmed, 865.387.0135 or visit [www.nabic.org](http://www.nabic.org)

We are on the web!

Visit Us, Join Us & Donate at: [www.nabic.org](http://www.nabic.org)

North American Bangladeshi Islamic Community  
P. O. Box 6631  
Oak Ridge, TN 37831

Phone: 865-481-8988

Fax: 865-481-8970

Email: [info@nabic.org](mailto:info@nabic.org)



SPEND, O' SON OF ADAMI AND I WILL SPEND UPON YOU!  
[HADITH QUDSI: 11]