



# MEDIA RELEASE

**ATTENTION: NEWS EDITOR / CHIEF REPORTER**

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## **New Beginning for Human Rights in Bangladesh**

**Dhaka** – Efforts to promote and protect citizens' human rights were bolstered today with the announcement of a new partnership to strengthen the National Human Rights Commission.

The partnership will support the National Human Rights Commission to become an effective leader for the promotion and protection of human rights for all in Bangladesh. It will be implemented through the 'Bangladesh National Human Rights Commission Capacity Development Project', which contributes US\$ 7 million (approximately 49 crore taka) over the next five years. The project is a joint initiative of the Commission, and UNDP. Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland and Korea are committed to support the project. Through the project, the Commission will develop its capacity to undertake investigations, monitoring, research, public education and advocacy of human rights.

"We have been looking forward to starting this capacity building project with the National Human Rights Commission for a long time. I believe this project will help the Commission to flourish as a key institution that can effectively help promote and protect the human rights of all in Bangladesh, particularly the rights of vulnerable groups", Ambassador Einar Hebogård Jensen of Royal Danish Embassy said at the launching of the project.

Fundamental human rights are enshrined in the Bangladesh Constitution and at the core of the country's development vision which focuses on pro-poor growth and outreach to the most vulnerable, including women and minority groups. The Bangladesh National Human Rights Commission is the institution whose very role is to support the realization of these human rights goals in Bangladesh.

The Commission strengthens the institutional safeguards of these human rights, and allows each citizen to seek and receive redress when rights are violated. The Commission as a national independent institution is a symbol of the national commitment to the recognition and respect of the human rights of all citizens. Already, the Commission has received and responded to over 100 complaints despite scarce resources or manpower

"This is a very important intervention from development partners for the promotion of human rights in Bangladesh. Human rights are essential for good governance. In five years time, we expect to see a strong and highly visible Human Rights Commission that is recognized as a 'Beacon' of good governance and justice in this country", said Stefan Priesner, UNDP Bangladesh Resident Representative a.i.

National Human Rights Institutions are globally recognized as vital components of efforts to strengthen the protection and promotion of human rights, the rule of law and access to justice. Through their official but independent status, they provide a key bridge between Government, Members of Parliament, and civil society organizations focusing on human rights.

It is for this reason that today, in signing into action this new project, Donor Partners sincerely hopes that the Government of Bangladesh will soon appoint the remaining Commissioners, ensure administrative and financial autonomy and eventual full independence of the Commission. Through an effective and independent Commission will come stronger and more inclusive governance and better development for all.

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