



U.S. Ambassador Earl R. Miller's Remarks
– As Prepared for Delivery Opening Ceremony
Virtual 2021 International e-Conference Physics
Friday, February 5, 2021

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As-salaamu alaikum.

Good evening depending where you are in the world.

Vice Chancellor Dr. Md. Akhtaruzzaman,
Honorable Minister Dr. Dipu Moni,
distinguished guests,
it is an honor to be with you for this International e-Conference on Physics.

Over the next three days, accomplished speakers from Bangladesh and the United States – including 2001 American Nobel Laureate Eric Cornell – will lead discussions we hope pave the way for future scientific collaborations between the United States and Bangladesh. Many thanks to Dhaka University, Bangladesh Physical Society, and Frontiers of Physics for organizing this conference, and all participants.

I salute all of you – the brilliant, dedicated scientists, researchers, and innovators leading the unending quest for greater scientific discovery in the 21st century and finding solutions to the world's most pressing challenges.

Today, we gather in celebration of scientific collaboration and in the virtual shadow of great collaborations right here in Dhaka. During its first hundred years, Dhaka University was part of some remarkable partnerships – including the work between Satyendra Nath Bose and Albert Einstein which continues to shape the way we understand physics and the world. Their research collaboration predicted something unique about atoms at temperatures nearing absolute zero. In fact, American Nobel Laureate Eric Cornell and his colleagues proved this theory,

which led to creation of the world's first Bose-Einstein condensate in 1995, and the field of ultra-cold atoms.

As Bangladesh approaches the 50th anniversary of its independence, there's no better time to recognize the power of young minds to solve global challenges and shape the future of our increasingly interconnected world through scientific research. Honorable Minister Moni, I look forward to our two great nations working even closer in the next 50 years by increasing collaboration between U.S. and Bangladeshi educational institutions.

The United States is committed to providing opportunities to prepare young people to become tomorrow's leaders.

We are encouraging Bangladeshi girls to pursue careers in the STEM field; funding scholarships and exchange opportunities so talented Bangladeshi students and scholars can study and conduct research in the United States; supporting online learning and skill development for thousands of teachers with access to Massive Open Online Courses, or MOOCs, and other training programs. The United States is privileged and proud to invest in Bangladesh's future.

Last year, over 8800 Bangladeshi students studied in the United States, an all-time high for Bangladesh.

Over 75% were pursuing degrees in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics fields – many with partial or full funding. In fact, the Vice Chancellor is a Boston University Fulbright alumnus. And the Honorable Minister of Education, Bangladesh's and South Asia's first woman Foreign Minister, earned a Master's Degree in Public Health from John Hopkins University and also studied at Harvard.

And as we prepare to celebrate the International Day of Women and Girls in Science on February 11, I want to emphasize the significant contributions Bangladeshi women are making in advancing scientific research and discovery.

Last year, 29-year-old Dhaka-born astrophysicist Dr. Tonima Tasnim Ananna – a postdoctoral researcher at Dartmouth College – was selected by *Science News*, an award-winning American science magazine, as one of ten young scientists to watch for her work developing X-ray telescope technology to better understand black holes.

Her story reminds me of the inspiring words of Mae Carol Jemison, American engineer, physician, and NASA astronaut who was the first Black woman to travel in space. I share her words as the United States celebrates Black History Month and honors the indispensable incalculable contributions of Black Americans to the journey and story of America.

For our students and scholars, young and not so young, Jemison said, “Don’t let anyone rob you of your imagination, your creativity, or your curiosity. It’s your place in the world; it’s your life. Go on and do all you can with it and make it the life you want to live.”

The COVID-19 pandemic reminds us of how truly interdependent we are on this wonderful vulnerable planet we are so privileged to share and responsible to protect. Your advancement of the science and knowledge to do so makes you frontline heroes, too. I admire you, salute you and we are all in your debt.

Thank you. Onek dhonnobad.

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