

Proceedings  
Commemorative Seminar on

“INTERNATIONAL  
DAY OF PEACE 2019”  
and



LAUNCHING OF BOOK TITLED  
“BANGLADESH IN INTERNATIONAL  
PEACEBUILDING: DISCOURSES  
FROM JAPAN AND BEYOND”

BISS Auditorium, Dhaka  
26 November 2019

Jointly Organized by



Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS)



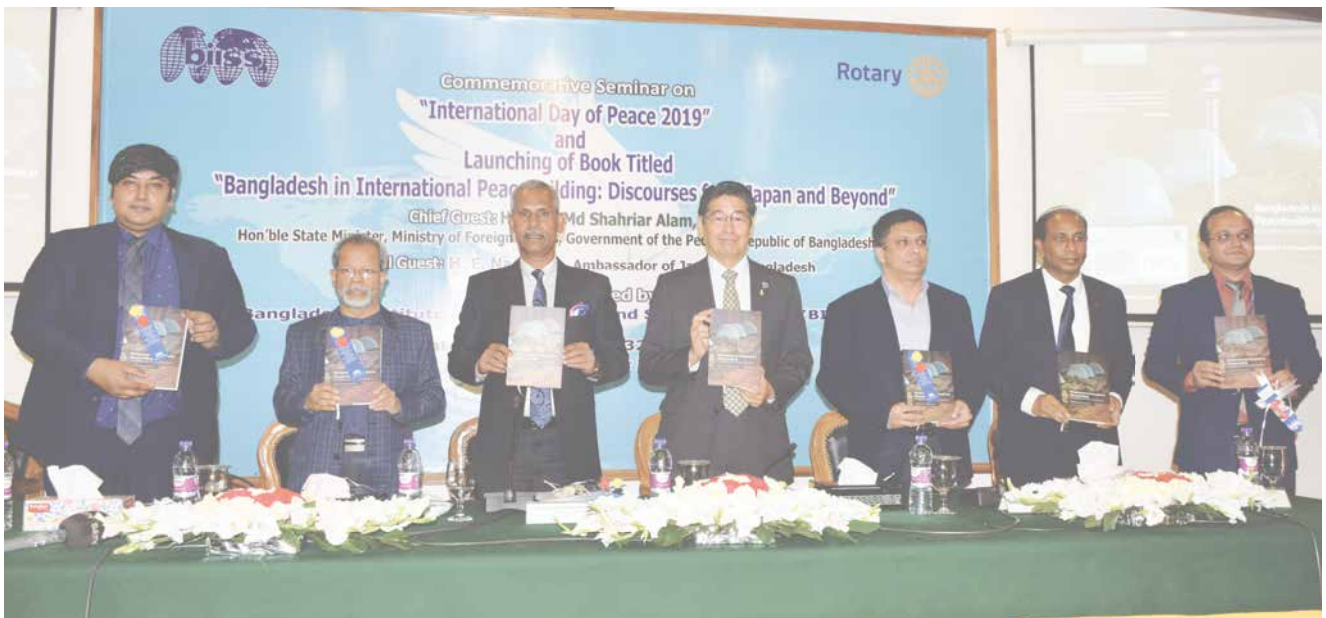
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Rotary International District 3281, Bangladesh



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# Introduction

## Commemorative Seminar on “International Day of Peace 2019” and Launching of Book Titled “Bangladesh in International Peacebuilding: Discourses from Japan and Beyond”

Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) in collaboration with the Rotary International District 3281, Bangladesh, organized a commemorative seminar titled “International Day of Peace 2019”; at the same programme, a book titled *Bangladesh in International Peacebuilding: Discourses from Japan and Beyond* was launched by Major General A K M Abdur Rahman, OSP, ndc, psc, Director General, BISS. H.E. Naoki Ito, Ambassador of Japan to Bangladesh, graced the occasion as the Special



Guest. It was chaired by Air Cdre (Retd) Ishfaq Ilahi Choudhury, ndc, psc, former president, The Rotary Club of Ramna. After him, Rtn. M. Khairul Alam, District Governor, RID 3281 Bangladesh, made his remarks. Then two presentations were made by Lt. Gen. (Retd) Md. Mainul Islam, OSP, BGBM, awc, psc, former Chief of General Staff, Bangladesh Army, and Dr. Imtiaz Ahmed, Professor, Department of International Relations, Director, Centre for Genocide Studies (CGS), University of Dhaka. This was followed by an open discussion session. Then the Special Guest, H.E. the Ambassador, delivered his valuable address. Rtn. Alauddin Chowdhury, President, The Rotary Club of Ramna, wrapped the session up with a vote of thanks.

# Welcome Address



**Air Cdre (Retd) Ishfaq Ilahi Choudhury, ndc, psc,**

*Former President, The Rotary Club of Ramna*

In the welcome address, **Air Cdre (Retd) Ishfaq Ilahi Choudhury, ndc, psc**, former president, The Rotary Club of Ramna, said, for many non-rotarians, the idea of Rotary might seem a group of elites who would meet once a week in a hotel, enjoy a dinner or a cup of tea, and then depart. His own experience with Rotary was of about eight years and there were many Rotarians present in the seminar including the District Governor **Rtn. M. Khairul Alam**, who had years of experience in this regard. Rotary, throughout the world, is deeply involved in the pursuit of peace. They believe peace is not the absence of violence but means progress, social amity, good governance, health and education. In all these sectors all over the globe, Rotarians are working. Today, Rotary is the pioneer in eliminating polio from the world and their success rate is almost 100 per cent, except for three countries where Rotarians are still working. Regarding Bangladesh, when someone would talk about sanitation, education, helping out the poor, like, as winter is coming and Rotarians will be distributing clothes to those who are homeless and shelterless, especially in the northern part of Bangladesh. Rotarians believe peace is a right for every citizen of this world and they are promoting it positively. Pointing to young guests present at the seminar, he said Rotary has a peace fellowship programme where throughout the world, there are thousands of people who have been granted these scholarships, 100 per cent funded by the Rotary Club. There are six universities where they are providing this fellowship leading to master's degree and certificate; 50 people for master's and 50 people for certificates each year. These people, after their training, come back and whether in government jobs or in NGOs, are providing excellent services. Therefore, Rotary believes that through their development efforts, they are making significant contribution for securing peace in the world. As for the Rotary International District 3281, Air Cdre Choudhury said that more than 75 per cent of Bangladesh was being covered by it, while the Old Chittagong Division and Sylhet Division made up the Rotary 3282. The 3281 is one of the largest in the world in terms of the number of clubs they had and it was being represented by District Governor Rtn. M. Khairul Alam.



# Remarks



**Rtn. M. Khairul Alam,**

*District Governor, RID 3281 Bangladesh*

Rtn. M. Khairul Alam, District Governor, RID 3281 Bangladesh, began his remarks by informing that many people are unaware of Rotary. However, he said that many audiences in the seminar were Rotarians.

Speaking about the common linkage between peace and Rotary, he stated that peace has been one of Rotary's top goals almost since the day **Paul Harris** started the movement in Chicago in 1905. In 1914, the convention adopted a resolution proposed by The Rotary Club of Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, that the International Association of Rotary Clubs "lend its influence to the maintenance of peace among the nations of the world." In 1921, with memories of the First World War still fresh in their minds, delegates to the Rotary International (RI) Convention in Edinburgh, Scotland, attached due importance to peace. In 1940, the Rotarian published a commentary that came out of the RI Convention in Havana, Cuba.

Long before there was a United Nations (UN), before "human rights" was a term most people even understood, the Rotarians' meeting in Havana adopted a resolution calling for "freedom, justice, truth, sanctity of the pledged word, and respect for human rights." It was a major milestone in Rotary history also. Rotary International's relationship with the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) dates back to a conference organized in London in 1942 by the Rotary Clubs of 21 countries to develop a vision for advanced education, science and culture after the Second World War. This event was also attended by many ministers of education and observers from around the world. It was an impetus to the establishment of the UNESCO in 1946. Thus, the Rotary also played a pivotal role in forming the UNESCO's parent organization, the UN. Nearly 50 Rotarians served as delegates, advisors, or consultants at the UN charter conference in San Francisco, California, the US in 1945, and five Rotarians subsequently served as president of the UN General Assembly (UNGA). He also highlighted that when the newly chartered UN wrote the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948, it used the resolution from the Rotary International's Havana Convention as its framework.



Throughout the 1950s and '60s, almost every Rotary Foundation programme was designed to improve cross-cultural understanding through people-to-people exchanges or shared projects. Ambassadorial Scholars, Group Study Exchange teams, Matching Grants, Grants for University Teachers—all might have fulfilled different functions, but collectively, they upheld the same principle: when “foreigners” meet and break bread with one another, exchange their family stories, learn about each other’s cultures and traditions, they come away with the realization that they are more alike as people than they are different.

He talked about the nature of Rotary Peace Centres saying that in April 1999, trustees of The Rotary Foundation committed US\$ 02 Million for creation and support of the Rotary Centres for International Studies in Peace and Conflict Resolution in seven universities around the world. Through academic training, practice and global networking opportunities, these programmes help develop the fellows into experienced and effective catalysts for peace. The fellowships cover tuition, fees and field-study expenses. In just over a decade, these centres have trained more than 1,200 fellows. Many of them now serve as leaders at international organizations or have started their own foundations. With its service projects, peace fellowships and scholarships, Rotary members are taking action to address the underlying causes of conflict, including poverty, inequality, ethnic tensions, lack of access to education and unequal distribution of resources.

Rtn. Alam also informed that this year, Rotary just celebrated the Rotary and UN Day on 09 November where they addressed one of the burning issues, the Rohingya Crisis in Bangladesh. There are 70 million refugees currently, higher than that after the Second World War. Bangladesh is having over one million refugees for more than a year. He stated that the Rohingya issue was addressed on the Rotary and UN Day on 09 November at the UN Headquarters. Both Rotary and UN leaders talked about this crisis and appreciated the initiatives undertaken by the people and government of Bangladesh. They also talked about contributions of Rotarians towards making peace in the world. This year, the theme is, “Rotary Connects the World”. He concluded by thanking BISS and the Rotary Club of Ramna for their initiative in organizing the seminar and hoped to work with BISS in the days to come.



# Presentation: United Nations Peacekeeping Operations



**Lt. Gen. (Retd) Md. Mainul Islam,**  
*OSP, BGBM, awc, psc, former Chief of General Staff, Bangladesh Army*

Lt. Gen. (Retd) Md. Mainul Islam began his presentation by describing the origins of UN peacekeeping operations which began in 1948 after the armistice between Arab countries and Israel. Nowadays, there are about 1,00,000 peacekeepers working in 14 missions. Since 1948, there has been a total of 71 peace missions where peacekeepers from 120 countries joined and 3,855 of them died. In this regard, General Islam said he was one of the 16 peacekeepers from Bangladesh to be deployed in the UN Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIIMOG), created after the Iran-Iraq War of 1980-88. UN peacekeeping missions have evolved a lot over time to cope with the changing world and most of these conflicts were intra-state. It should be noted that these missions were born during the Cold War era, but in those days, limited mainly to peaceful resolution of conflicts and maintain ceasefire. They consisted of military observers whose role included monitoring, reporting and confidence-building. However, end of the Cold War saw a rapid increase in peacebuilding missions due to conflicts breaking out in the new global system. For example, between 1989 and 1994, the UN Security Council (UNSC) authorized 20 peace missions, with raising number of peacekeepers from 11,000 to 75,000; such was the surge in the post-Cold War era, a big quantum leap. After the Cold War ended, UN peace missions were undertaken in Angola, Cambodia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mozambique and Namibia. Bangladesh took part in Angola, Cambodia, Mozambique and Namibia. Their tasks were: to implement peace agreements; stabilize, reorganize and elect new governments; and establish democratic institutions. Success of these missions raised expectations beyond the UN's capacity, i.e., lack of

robust mandate and adequate resources. The terms Chapter 6, 7, 7.5 came much later, only very recently; missions were established in situations where there was no peace to keep, e.g., former Yugoslavia, Somalia and Rwanda. He also said Bangladesh contributed significantly in peace missions in Somalia, Rwanda and helped the US withdrawal from Somalia as US troops deployed there, were in big trouble after the Black Hawk Down incident. Bangladeshi troops were deployed who covered US forces' withdrawal. This was a big operation and General Islam himself was involved in it; he was talking with them over wireless from the Army Headquarters (AHQ) in Bangladesh. On the 21<sup>st</sup> century surge of peacekeepers, he said that In 1999, the UN was asked to perform more complex tasks with greater understanding of the limits and potentials. For the first time, it served in Kosovo and East Timor, was recognized as the only global institution that had credibility and impartiality to undertake such tasks in these two countries. In the 2000s, conflicts in African countries demanded peacekeeping to be larger and more complex, namely those in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo), Sierra Leone, Liberia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Burundi, the Central African Republic (CAR), Ivory Coast, Sudan, Chad, etc. Bangladesh took part in almost all these missions, except in Burundi. Peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions were restarted in Haiti and the newly independent East Timor. In 2007, peacekeepers' number rose to 1,30,000 when new missions were launched in Darfur, Chad and the CAR. Bangladesh contributed also to the Darfur mission.

As peacekeeping became multidimensional from traditional, things also began changing; new missions began to undertake more complex tasks like building sustainable institutions of governance, human rights monitoring, security sector reforms, disarmament, demobilization, reintegration of former combatants, etc. What began with binocular and reporting-only observers, ended in these complex situations. Nature of conflicts also changed; first, it was interstate but now more intra-state, like, civil wars. Who is fighting whom or whose intention is what, cannot really be known as these change every day and week. Although military personnel remained the backbone of peace missions, new faces began emerging. The military then began to work together with these new entities, i. e., stakeholders besides them: administrators and economists, police officers, legal experts, gender officials, electoral observers, governance and civil affairs specialists, human rights workers and monitors, communications and public information experts, etc. General Islam shared his own experience in this regard; he had been at the Military Operations Directorate in the AHQ for a long time to monitor the deployment. Once these things changed, he was in the headquarters and they had to visit the mission to make their troops and officers understand that they would need to work with those entities, as initially, there were some differences. Peacekeepers had a way of thinking that they knew or understood everything although that was not right. This was the time when they had really to work hard. For training, they had to change the curriculum back home, make peacekeepers understand the need to work with aforementioned entities who really were experts in their respective works. This was truly a challenge not only for Bangladesh, but also for many other troops contributing countries.

General Islam then said, presently, the UN's 14 peacekeeping operations were divided into four categories: a) Supporting a ceasefire agreement which is traditional in nature and began much earlier, some as far back as 1948, e.g., Cyprus, India-Pakistan, Western Sahara, Israel-Palestine, Lebanon, and the Golan Heights; b) Supporting a peace process and national authorities after conflict. The most complex missions are in Mali, the CAR and DR Congo. Peacekeepers are still facing such challenges; c) Extending political and security gains into longer term peacebuilding, e.g., Haiti. This mission, as per the UN's resolution, is the sixth one running on different terms of references; d) Providing security and protection during ongoing conflict, e.g., South Sudan and Darfur, Sudan. On 31<sup>st</sup> October 2014, Ban-Ki Moon, the then UN Secretary General, established a High-Level Independent Panel for two purposes: 1) To make a comprehensive assessment of the state of UN peace operations; and 2) Emerging future needs. The UN Secretary General said, "the world



is changing and UN peace operations must change with it if they are to remain an indispensable and effective tool in promoting international peace and security.” This panel had 16 members, chaired by Jose Ramos Horta (East Timor) and Ameerah Haq (Bangladesh) was vice-chair. They also visited Bangladesh and there had been a regional conference on the subject in Bangladesh supported by the country’s Army. The panel submitted its report on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2015, titled *High Level Independent Panel on UN Peace Operations*, in short, HIPPO. On 2<sup>nd</sup> September that year, Ban-Ki Moon submitted it to the UNGA and the UNSC. It focused strongly on four necessary shifts: 1) Primacy of politics; 2) Full spectrum of UN peacekeeping operations that was including the Chapter 7.5 saying peace should be enforced; 3) Stronger global-regional partnerships. This has changed the participation of countries from outside Africa. After this, African countries began contributing their own troops. It was a welcome thing. The Bangladesh Army trained many African personnel, e.g., in Rwanda, where Bangladeshi peacekeepers were deployed but it also assisted the Rwandan military to be deployed in UN missions. Rwanda is now one of the largest contributors of troops in various peace missions 4) Field-focused and people-centric. The Secretary General also derived an action plan focused on three pillars: 1) A renewed focus on prevention and mediation; 2) Stronger regional and global partnership; 3) New ways of planning and conducting peace operations.

Nevertheless, nature and complexity of UN peacekeeping operations continue to evolve. Yesterday is not same as today and today will be different from tomorrow. For example, the UN emblem itself became a target of many attacks in recent times while it is there to provide safety and stability. One group that pledged earlier to support peacekeepers, later blew their armoured personnel carriers (APCs) up. Regional events also have significant impact; something that occurred in Libya, has an effect on the CAR and Mali, i.e., one news from Libya affected these two nations after armed groups instantly changed their minds.

These are complicated things peacekeepers have to take into consideration; they also faced direct threats from armed groups in Mali, South Sudan, the CAR and DR Congo. In this regard, Secretary General Ban-Ki Moon described three observations in 2015 in his statement to the UNSC: 1) UN peacekeeping operations are increasingly mandated to operate where there is no peace to keep. Here, General Islam mentioned as example that in el-Obeid, Central Sudan, there was no peace to keep indeed since there was no mandate or agreement with anyone. Just some UN troops are deployed there. The only mandate they have is to separate the people of North and South Sudan. No mandate was approved in the UN with some conditions. This is a single country contribution and was outside the UN's purview, nonetheless, a practical thing to be done. He also asked the UN Secretary General if that was the espoused law of the UN to which the Secretary General said they had no other option to do it; 2) Some operations are being authorized in the absence of clearly identifiable parties to the conflict or a viable political process; 3) They are increasingly operating in more complex environments that feature asymmetric and unconventional threats. With such unconventional threats, the Bangladesh Army had really to change and they introduced drones in UN missions. Initially, the CAR and the UN, both disagreed on drone deployment but the Bangladesh Army said they would not need money from them and drones would assure protection of Bangladeshi peacekeepers. This device helped reduce peacekeepers' casualties notably. They could see a disturbed sand-dune or track going somewhere, stop their convoy, check that up, find improvised explosive devices (IEDs), clear those and then go forward. Drone is now a part of Bangladeshi battalion contingent deployment.

Unfortunately, root causes of conflict are not addressed. Intra-state conflicts are mainly political in nature. This is a difficult thing. Many times, mandates do not answer these questions, but they are approved and passed. Peace missions are facing more challenges due to: failure in establishing inclusive political arrangements, ensure fair share of resources, negligence of ethnic and religious diversity, stubbornness of different groups during mediation/negotiations and militarized options prove to be very short-lasting, etc. Thus, there have appeared more tasks ahead of peacekeepers. They also need training on protection of civilians, children in particular, deal with conflict related sexual violence (CRSV), prevent oneself from sexual abuse and exploitation, surviving in environments to face asymmetric threats, e.g., IEDs, etc. UN peacekeeping is guided by three basic tenets—impartiality, consent of parties involved, use of force primarily for self-defence and the mandate. But at present, peacekeeping is facing increasing noncooperation from host nations where peacekeepers are often viewed as intruders, hampering hosts' sovereignty. Such noncooperation is often highly visible in the DR Congo, Sudan, and South Sudan; for example, they try to delay peacekeepers' logistic supplies and military support as much as possible. Another problem is, high expectation from peacekeepers by local people who think these personnel will help them solve all difficulties—security, water, earning, livelihood, everything. Peacekeepers then put their military dress on and engaged in solving those issues as there was no other option for them too.

General Islam discussed Bangladesh's role in UNPKOs. Ethiopia is currently the largest troops contributor in UN peace missions with 7,499 personnel, followed by Rwanda-6546, Bangladesh-6487 and India-6,319. The Bangladesh Army has remarkable contributions to peace missions; out of 14 missions, Bangladeshi personnel are serving in 9 missions. Duration of missions vary from 01 year to 29 years and the current deployment number is 5,063. They country took part in and completed 33 missions; duration of these missions varied from 56 years to even less than 01 year as some missions closed very quickly, for example, Syria. Immediately after the Syrian Civil War began, Bangladesh sent a mission there consisting of about 50 observers. But they were shot at almost all the time, tyre was busted and glass broken by snipers. Bangladesh launched a lot of protests but that was futile. Syrian President **Bashar al-Assad** did not want peacekeepers to go beyond certain circles; they drew some circles on maps and asked them to remain within those. As a

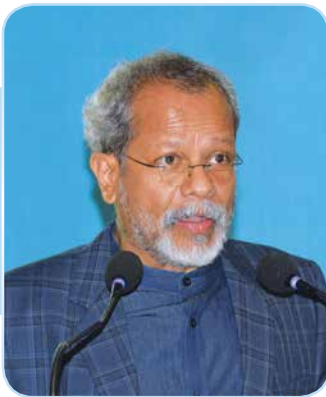




result, the mission had eventually to be closed by the UN. Regarding slots for peace missions at Bangladeshi diplomatic representative offices in mission areas, General Islam said there are 36 of such countries or mission areas, but unfortunately, there is no such slot in Bangladeshi embassy, high commission or anyone in ongoing mission areas. Conversely, India has two of such slots in their high commission or foreign office while China has five slots. About completed missions, where peace had already been established, he said the number was 27 but Bangladesh had only four slots in those and that were also much earlier, for example, in Iraq. Hardly any new mission has been opened where Bangladesh has left the mission area. By contrast, India has 18 slots and China has 25. That means, Bangladesh has 11 per cent, India 56 per cent and China 83 per cent. However, China being a large and powerful country, can always take more slots. In conclusion, he said, peacekeepers are operating in dangerous environments. More than two-thirds of them are operating in areas with ongoing violence, e.g., Darfur, South Sudan, Mali, the CAR, and DR Congo. The scale of human sufferings is immense which demands collective response from all stakeholders. Therefore, the UN needs to speak in one voice—to strengthen instruments for ensuring international peace and security.



# Presentation: Bangladesh and World Peace



**Dr. Imtiaz Ahmed,**

*Professor of International Relations, and Director, Centre for Genocide Studies (CGS), University of Dhaka*

Dr. Imtiaz Ahmed, Professor of International Relations, and Director, Centre for Genocide Studies (CGS), University of Dhaka, presented a paper titled “Bangladesh and World Peace”. He stated that Bangladesh has come a long way since its independence in 1971, from being a bottomless basket to a developing nation. Having it in his lifetime makes him delighted. He was a 15-year old kid back in 1971, who witnessed the struggle of the nation. He then pointed out some facts about Bangladesh’s economic growth. Since 2005, the country has grown at an average rate of 6 plus per cent annually. It successfully graduated from the World Bank’s defined low income group to the lower-middle income group. In 2000, 50 per cent of the total population was living below the poverty line and in 2016, the rate plummeted to 25 per cent. In the early ‘80s, the economy saw a growth rate of 3.5 per cent, which in the 1990s, increased to 5 per cent and by 2016, surpassed the 7 per cent benchmark. In 1975, foreign aid accounted for about 90 per cent of gross investment, which declined over time, reaching 40 per cent in 1990 to less than 4 per cent in 2016. About 52 per cent of Bangladeshi people falls in the age bracket between 15 and 35, which denotes the young labour force of Bangladesh. Besides, the fertility rate decreased from an average of over six children per woman in 1975 to slightly more than two in 2016, which is less than that of India.

He identified four elements that laid the foundation of Bangladesh’s economy. The first is ready-made garments (RMG) industry, which is one of the strongest drivers of its economy, having provided employment

to almost 2.7 per cent of the country's population; nearly 70 per cent of these are women. Second is labour exports to the Middle East, as remittance has become a major contributor to the Bangladeshi economy. Third is surge in agricultural growth and finally, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who brought out the woman in the '70s and '80s, thus helping the RMG sector immensely.

Professor Ahmed then made a regional comparison among Bangladesh, India and Pakistan and presented some statistics. Bangladesh is expected to be the 26<sup>th</sup> biggest economy by 2030. Its foreign exchange reserve is more than double of Pakistan's. The per capita GDP of Bangladesh and Pakistan was US\$ 120 and US\$ 180 in 1971-72, which has become US\$ 1827 and US\$ 1641, respectively, in 2018-19. The GDP of Bangladesh is US\$ 300 billion in 2018-19 against US\$ 320 billion of Pakistan. While comparing Bangladesh and India, he said that as the real GDP per capita has doubled since the turn of the century, Bangladesh appears to be on a similar exponential growth path as that of its neighbour, India. At current rates, Bangladesh could top India's per capita income by 2020. It is expected to post a growth rate of 7.5 per cent against the 7.3 per cent projected for India. Besides, it has a higher average life expectancy than India and Pakistan. The life expectancy of Bangladesh is 72.5 years against 68.6 years in India and 66.5 years in Pakistan. The infant mortality rate of Bangladesh is 28.2 per cent against 34.6 per cent in India and 64.2 per cent in Pakistan. Therefore, even in the Human Development Index (HDI), indicators Bangladesh is doing better. He listed three components through which Bangladesh is contributing to world peace. First is civilizational. People often forget that Bangladesh has emerged in 1971 but it is part of an older civilization. The reference of Bengal can be found in the *Mahabharata*. The Bengali language is a major civilizational contribution. The country came out of the Language Movement. Honouring the heroic struggles and sacrifices of the martyrs for the mother tongue Bangla, the International Mother Language Day is celebrated every year on 21<sup>st</sup> February. The main purpose of celebrating this day is to recognize the sanctity of language. The gastronomy of Bangladesh is another civilizational contribution. Bangladeshi cuisine restaurants are one of the big contributors to British economy. In Ramadan, during *Sahri* (pre-dawn meal for those who fast this month), the Old Dhaka goes into festive mood. For nearly five decades, Fakruddin has been one of Dhaka's favourite purveyors of the Kachchi Biryani, synonymous with weddings and other grand celebrations. Their chefs were even flown to Jordan to cater the royal wedding. Besides, music of the Bauls is another such contribution. The national anthem of Bangladesh is written by Rabindranath Tagore in 1905, but the melody of this hymn is derived from the Baul singer Gagan Harkara. Bauls had enormous influence in Bengal. They are immensely, even hyper tolerant. They have taken the tolerance and peace of three big religions, e.g., Hinduism, Islam and Buddhism.

The second component through which Bangladesh is contributing to world peace is by following the norms of 'growth without enmity'. The country does not have enemies. Since independence in 1971, it has stressed its principle of "friendship towards all, malice towards none" in dictating its diplomacy. It is member of all the major multilateral initiatives, supports both the Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). However, he commented that more growth also implies more enemies. Therefore, the country has to be very careful in the future in this regard.

'Sensitive to human suffering' is the third component. He described how Bangladesh contributed to world peace, including showing generosity towards Rohingyas. The Rohingya population in Bangladesh is bigger than Bhutan's total population and that happened within just three months. Bangladesh is hosting over 1.1 million Rohingyas and most of them entered Cox's Bazar since 25<sup>th</sup> August 2017, amid military crackdown on them in the Rakhine state. He commented that the camp sites are safer than New York. He is confident with this information as the Centre for Genocide Studies has a Bangladesh Peace Observatory



(BPO), which has been monitoring violence inside the camp sites since August 2017 onwards. The country has shown the world that sensitivity towards human sufferings is deeply rooted in the psyche of its people. He concluded the presentation by reiterating that Bangladesh is contributing to world peace through the three components mentioned, i.e., civilizational, which include language, gastronomy, music of Bauls, growth without enmity, and sensitivity towards human suffering.



# Open Session



**Maj Gen (Retd) Imamuz Zaman, BB, psc**, asked Lt. Gen. (Retd) Md. Mainul Islam about the statistics in his slide showing the number of largest troops contributing nations to UNPKOs; now Ethiopia leads followed by Rwanda. Some years ago, Bangladesh was the leader in this and before or after Bangladesh, that position was held by either India or Pakistan, in short, sub-continental armed forces were leading in UNPKOs. Now, Ethiopia is leading and Rwanda, though a small country, is in the second place. What factors contributed to the decline of subcontinent's troops contribution in UNPKOs presently?

**Muhammad Nurul Huda**, former Inspector General, Bangladesh Police, referred to Dr. Ahmed's mention of sensitivity and human sufferings, and said Bangladesh stands very tall as it displayed admirable tolerance. But the other side should not be lost sight of, i.e., the Rohingya issue. Distinctiveness of this issue is, if one does not belong to the mainstream religion, but looks different racially and speaks a different language, that person is a fair game. This has to stop in the interest of world peace. There is a pathetic marginalization of the minority of all descriptions throughout the world including the sub-continent. He opined that democracy will not go well if minorities are marginalized in such pathetic ways and that has to be recognized.



**Ramesh Singh**, Security Adviser, the UN Department of Safety and Security, asked about the mention of NGOs as one of the factors that contributed to the growth and development of countries. He said for the first time, he found mention of INGOs in a presentation which directly credited them in this growth and therefore, thanked the presenter. He had two questions: 1) Does this also include the UN as per the presenter's understanding or it is only NGOs? 2) How specifically would the presenter like to explain NGOs' role or provide any suggestion?

**Dr. Syed Anwar Husain**, Bangabandhu Chair Professor, Bangladesh University of Professionals (BUP) and former professor, Department of History, University of Dhaka, praised Lt. Gen. (Retd) Md. Mainul Islam for providing an informative presentation on UN peacekeeping operations and Professor Dr. Imtiaz Ahmed, for sharing his perception regarding Bangladesh's contribution to world peace. He opined that NGOs in the context of Bangladesh, do not really contribute to the development. Distinguishing development from growth, he raised two questions to Dr. Ahmed. Firstly, despite growing fast, why is not Bangladesh developed yet or not still on the way to develop?



Secondly, how reliable is the yardstick of GDP in calculating growth? Bangladesh is growing fast. At the same time, inequality is growing faster in the country. In this respect, he also expressed his perception that development is growth with equity; thus, if there is no equity, there is no development.

**Dr. Mahbub Ullah**, former professor, Department of Development Studies, University of Dhaka, referred to Dr. Ahmed's figures of the Gini coefficient which showed inequality or income distribution; it was something like 0.37 or 0.35. But at present, that coefficient for Bangladesh is 0.48 which indicates a very high income inequality. He also said Dr. Ahmed should not have glorified "Adda", though it has been



mentioned by the great scholar and philosopher Amartya Sen. Unconstrained adda leads to many evils. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar said about the Bengali people that they wasted their time in meaningless things and could not do anything worthy. Therefore, if adda means indulging in doing such things, it will bring no good. One of the most important state principles of Bangladesh is nationalism and its credit goes to the architect of the nation, **Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman**, who incorporated this particular principle into the country's constitution. Around 16<sup>th</sup> December, people were hearing that Bangladesh would have three state principles: democracy, secularism and socialism. But Bangabandhu included nationalism in his speech at Calcutta where Indian Premier **Indira Gandhi** herself was present. When nationalism is discussed, that means one surely has enemies or potential enemies. As

the world is divided into nations, almost 200 in number, and every nation must have this or that enemy. Dr. Ullah also questioned: if countries are complacent that they do not have enemies, why do they maintain armed forces, spend so much on defence and armaments? Therefore, he suggested caution while saying that Bangladesh does not have enemies.

**Ambassador Ziaus Shams Chowdhury**, pointed at the ongoing trend for despotism, particularly in the US and the UK. He said that both of these countries have a bothersome situation. He mentioned **Nancy Pelosi**, speaker, the US House of Representative, who expressed a concern that within the next election if President **Donald Trump** would not lose very decisively, he might not even make the concession of power. Ambassador Chowdhury regarded the situation as erosion of democratic culture and trend towards global despotism. He then spoke about the importance of peacebuilding. There should be a peaceful transition of power when a government changes. Besides, there is a need of a constitutional framework to avoid violence, unpredictability and uncertainty.





# Response

In reply to Maj Gen (Retd) Imamuz Zaman's question, Lt. Gen. (Retd) Md. Mainul Islam said the leading position of troops contributing countries changed indeed, as the UN decided for balancing regional participation. African countries did not earlier have any participation and it was all by other countries. That was the requirement by the UN and also has several reasons; first of all, the language and culture. Another reason is, the African Union (AU) is now trying to stenorize the equipment for African countries as they are within the bloc. This helps them as well as the UN for using the same equipment in the same missions, which is comparable and operable. It also helps reduce troop costs for the UN. Because, taking a battalion from Rwanda to mission areas rather than taking from Bangladesh is much easier, less costlier and they can do



the rotation in six months whereas that time for Bangladesh is 12 months. There are many other factors. The regional balancing has changed things substantially. This is not anyone's fault, but just a new approach.



In response to Muhammad Nurul Huda's question, Dr. Imtiaz Ahmed said it would turn him a bit out of the track watching the international community making relationship with Myanmar bypassing the atrocities it unleashed on the Rohingyas and other minority communities. He also questioned the democratic situation of that country referring to the one-third share of incumbent military officers in the parliament. Civil societies of some countries might be too diplomatic. Criticizing business-oriented perspective of Western countries, he emphasized on the necessity of a moral condition. He brought the instance of the Roman Empire in this regard and said they ceased to be present in modern days as they had lost the moral touch or foundation. There would have to be a serious gaze on Myanmar regarding who are investing there, who are producing, the narco-terrorism they love to use; these are the things he considers one should seriously look into, not because it is Myanmar, but because the victims are humans. He referred to his recent visit to Bangkok where Pope Francis was present and there was a fascinating discussion including Burmese scholars who were criticizing the whole structure.

He exemplified the upcoming International Court of Justice (ICJ) hearings and Aung San Suu Kyi would go to Geneva; the monks had been fasting for her success at that court. Here, he expressed grievances questioning how religion could come to this level. One would have to focus on how religion and politics had come to the point where there would be a necessity to address the issues as humans and not as a Bangladeshi or a Japanese or an Indian. According to him, minorities are always created by the majority; minorities never create themselves and the problem lies with the majority community instead. Thus, the gaze

must be on the majority community assuming they have done something wrong. Dr. Ahmed also pointed out the remarkable success of NGOs in Bangladesh opining it was possible because of the fascinating GO-NGO relationship immediately after the independence of Bangladesh in 1971. Hence, he provided instances of BRAC, Proshika, ASA and added how the partnership had changed Bangladesh in many ways. He further added that when the Rohingya issue came up, the government had to call some of these NGOs including BRAC which is the largest NGO in the world and has been hugely involved in the Rohingya camps. He emphasized on the fact that the role of the NGOs had been greater in comparison with the GOs and said it could happen only in Bangladesh but not in other South Asian countries, because GOs and NGOs started the journey together in 1971 and as a result, they know each other. Comparatively, in other countries, that would not work as GOs are overdeveloped; in the case of Bangladesh, this situation helped women come out and fertility rate went down, as that is where NGOs primarily focused on. Moreover, a large section of the women joined the garments sector. This kind of example, according to him, is very unique and other countries will not be able to replicate.

Responding to Dr. Anwar Husain's question, he referred to the HDI, and the GDP of Bangladesh. Admitting the issue of inequality, he said capitalism had always been unequal; one should work on it given the mindset that derived from the legacy of 1971 and the point raised would also be equally addressed.

On the question of 'Adda' by Professor Dr. Mahbub Ullah, Dr. Ahmed said humans are the only beings who do 'adda'. They do 'adda' or gossip but other animals, like cats and dogs do not do that. The great thinker, Chanakya Kautilya, from whose name the word 'Kutniti' came, 'Kut-Kutilla-Kautilya', 'Niti' of Kautilya; 'Kutnami' also comes after the name of Kautilya. Thus, Kutniti is a good element whereas Kutnami is bad. But these two words originated from one name, that is Kautilya. Like this, 'adda' has also its bad sides. Dr. Ahmed tried to make the audience understand that he wanted to use the word 'adda' in his presentation for focussing on the good sides of it; 'adda' promotes socialization between and among human hearts. Being an important element in the culture, if people would take the good sides of it and appreciate the way it is supposed to be, then something very good could come up.

Regarding Ambassador Ziaus Shams Chowdhury's comment on despotism, he said the relationship between democracy and capitalism started after the Second World War and lasted until 2008. The developed Europe did not develop through democracy, but through colonialism, the whole of Europe. One can easily understand if he/she visits the British Museum. Thus, the point here is through robbery and cheating, they developed. But what happened because of Hitler, Mussolini and the suffering they went through, that was the highest number of people killed in human history. 66 million people got killed in 6 years—22 million Russians, 6 million Jews. After all these, Europeans decided to establish a relationship between democracy and capitalism. This relationship crashed in 2008. Afterwards, no one saw this relationship; rather, people saw countries were parting out. India is a good example of this. People saw the rise of the rightwing in Europe, and reign of president Trump, etc. Dr. Ahmed believes that human are not only thoughtful beings but also creative. Based on changes in global politics since 2008, he believed they would come out either with solutions to fix the problem or with a different kind of vision to cope with the changes. The main point is, people have already realized that despotism has now become an issue. And Dr. Ahmed was hopeful that there would be a force or vision to tackle despotism for the betterment of the world.



# Book Launching

Major General A K M Abdur Rahman, OSP, ndc, psc, Director General of BISS, commenced the launching programme of the book *Bangladesh in International Peacebuilding: Discourses from Japan and Beyond*, with his welcome speech. First of all, he conveyed sincere thanks to the special guest, H.E. Naoki Ito, Ambassador of Japan to Bangladesh, the Japan Foundation and the Japanese Embassy for their wholehearted support. Because of them, BISS successfully arranged a conference last year and the book was indeed, a result of it. The post-Cold War era was marked by emergence of various discourses on peacebuilding; the shift had been reflected in UN peace operations and manifested by taking a more comprehensive approach in state-building activities. Around the past few decades, there had been a number of great changes in world politics. He exemplified the war on terror following the 9/11, rise of intra-state conflicts, growing salience of the human rights concept that took the central stage in discussions on peace and conflict, etc. Similarly, as the growth of populism, inequality and violent extremism, influx of refugees from the global south to the north, added complexities to peace and stability, peace became a key goal of the new Sustainable Development Agenda (SDG-16). He discussed how such changes closely echoed Bangladesh's commitment to global peace and main tenets of its foreign policy.



The conference organized by BISS in collaboration with the Japan Foundation in August 2018, titled “Bangladesh in International Peacebuilding: Experience from Japan”, helped create a platform for exchanging



ideas and sharing experiences of Japan in this field, revisit Bangladesh's contribution to global peace, and foresee future challenges. It also provided an excellent opportunity to enrich understanding and contribute to the current academic discourse on peacebuilding. Core ideas behind the conference were establishment of a peacebuilding centre in Bangladesh and learn from Japan as it accumulated huge experience in peacebuilding. The book being launched, is a compilation of revised papers presented at the conference that reviewed existing theories and practices of peacebuilding with a particular focus on South Asian and Japanese practices, to explore its new approaches and adapt with the changing dynamics of global politics.

After elaborating the background of the book, he requested the honourable Ambassador to unwrap the book's cover. Its Foreword was written by Professor **Dr. Johan Galtung**, a highly respected scholar who is considered as the principal founder of the academic discipline of Peace and Conflict Studies; he coined the idea of negative and positive peace. General Rahman expressed gratitude for the guidance and appreciation provided by Dr. Galtung, whose appreciation for the volume would speak about its quality which was similar to any book published by globally renowned publishers such as *Routledge* and *Sage* in terms of quality of papers and publication. Afterwards, he thanked the publisher *Pathak Shamabesh* for successfully managing the publication and delivering such a high-quality book.

Apart from being the editor of the book, he contributed a chapter excluding the introduction and conclusion. He provided an overview of the chapter "**Contemporary Peacebuilding Challenges: Bangladesh as a Mitigating Actor**", where he explained contemporary challenges of peacebuilding and how Bangladesh could contribute to make peacebuilding efforts more effective. UNPKOs were becoming more robust and new debates were surfacing on how to make these more effective. Since 1988, Bangladesh had been one of the top troops contributors to UNPKOs and acquired a wide array of expertise on issues related to peacebuilding. In this regard, he referred to his own experience of being a part of peacebuilding operations. According to him, the aforementioned chapter explored how Bangladesh's role in UNPKOs could further be strengthened.

After the brief summary of his chapter, he referred to Professor **Dr. Peter Wallensteen**, Senior Professor of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University, Sweden, and the University of Notre Dame, the US, who is also one of the top contemporary scholars of peace and conflict studies discipline. General Rahman mentioned key areas from Dr. Wallesteen's contribution in the book, the chapter titled "Global



**Conflict, Autonomous Agreements and the Challenge of Quality Peace**", where he explored the concept of "quality peace" and its relation with peacebuilding. He added that by studying autonomous peace agreements and the changes in international politics, Dr. Wallensteen explored the evolution of patterns of conflicts, their implications for peace and stability.

General Rahman referred to one of the two Japanese contributors of the book, **Dr. Mari Katayanagi**, Professor, Hiroshima University, who contributed the chapter "**Wider Peacebuilding: Engagement of New Actors and Expanding Activities with Example from Japan**". She discussed experience of Japan in international peacebuilding by specifically highlighting the role of new actors from the private sector and their engagement in peacebuilding as new approaches. The analysis brought in the development of Japanese peacebuilding activities through Official Development Assistance (ODA) and further focuses on peacebuilding activities of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The second Japanese contributor mentioned and thanked, was **Dr. Hideaki Shinoda**, Professor of Foreign Studies, University of Tokyo, and Director of the Hiroshima Peacebuilders Center (HPC), who wrote the chapter "**The Possibility of Japan's Contributions to International Peacebuilding in the Age of Partnership Peace Operations**". He discussed new strategies to enhance Japan's engagement in international peace operations, especially through use of technologies, capacity development and partnerships. General Rahman said the chapter would talk about the activities of the HPC, which Bangladesh can learn more from.

The Director General then mentioned **Zahid ul Arefin Choudhury**, Associate Professor, Political Science, University of Dhaka, and **Jahidul Islam** of Stamford University, who co-authored the chapter "**Terrorist Strategies and Counterterrorism in South Asian Democracies**". They explored strategies adopted by different terrorist organizations in South Asia, how law enforcement agencies should strengthen coordination to ensure peace and stability. He also acknowledged **Nazmul Arifeen** and **A S M Tarek Hasan Semul**, Research Fellows from BISS, who jointly contributed a chapter titled "**Rethinking Peace as Sustainable Development Goal: Peacebuilding in 'Apparently Peaceful' Societies**", exploring the concept of peace from sustainable development goals perspective; and **Shahab Enam Khan**, Professor of International Relations, Jahangirnagar University, for discussing theoretical challenges associated with the complex dimensions of SDGs as well as challenges in implementing them in his chapter titled "**Turning the SDG 16 into Reality**".



At this stage, General Rahman requested Dr. Rashed Uz Zaman, Professor of International Relations, University of Dhaka, to briefly discuss his chapter titled “Preventing Violent Extremism: A Peacebuilding Perspective”.

Dr. Rashed Uz Zaman began his speech by referring to 27<sup>th</sup> August, 1928 when the *Kellogg-Briand Pact* was convened. Leaders from all over the world congregated in Paris on that day and signed this pact, also called the Paris Peace Pact. But it was a failure as it intended to outlaw war marked by the outbreak of the Second World War, resulting in the death of 75 million people. He mentioned the series of warfare the 20<sup>th</sup> century had to experience, e. g., the Arab-Israel Wars, the Vietnam War, the 1971 War of Bangladesh’s Independence, the cases of Rwanda, Syria and so on. However, the pact was successful in a sense, as it envisioned a new world order, except for prohibiting states to engage in war as a solution for disputes, cascading weapons, catalyzing human rights, enabling economic sanctions as tool of law enforcement and encouraging establishment of international organizations. The pact should not be taken as granted which indeed made the 20<sup>th</sup> century one of the peaceful centuries in the history of mankind followed by unprecedented cooperation among states as well. Dr. Zaman asked the audience to take lessons from the past where war had been used as a permissible way to address wrongs, look deeply into the insights of the pact, promote ideas of peace and the new world order it tried to establish for the sake of future generations.

Conveying his thanks to Dr. Rashed Uz Zaman, General Rahman called upon Mr. Md. Monirul Islam, Additional Police Commissioner and Chief, the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC), Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), to share some words from his chapter, “Preventing Violent Extremism Peacebuilding: Perspectives and Prospects” as well as his feelings.



Mr. Md. Monirul Islam, relating to his 24 years of experience as a practitioner of law enforcement and security issues, explained how peacebuilding is more than just eliminating the presence of violence in the



society, how it tries to tackle injustice in a non-violent way, transform the cultural and structural components that can generate destructive conflicts. Peacebuilding also involves developing constructive personal and political relations, addresses ethnic-religious classes or national and racial boundaries. He mentioned how the process includes prevention of violence, conflict management, resolution or transformation and post-conflict resolution of trauma. Prevention of violence should incorporate elimination of discrimination and generators or causes of extremism. He concluded his speech by opining that peacebuilding and prevention of violent extremism share some common components and he tried to explain the relation in his chapter. Finally, he expressed his affirmative feelings towards the book and wished it might help practitioners understand the complexities in peacebuilding operations and become a well-accepted reference to academicians and practitioners around the world.

In this context, General Rahman informed the audience that the book had already received a number of recognition from different parts of the world and many universities also showed their keen willingness to include it into their academic curricula. A book of such kind had never been published in the academic world before; it could be a milestone on peacebuilding given the wide range of issues it addressed. Hereafter, he requested Dr. Imtiaz Ahmed, Professor, Department of International Relations, University of Dhaka, to share some brief notes from his chapter "Peacebuilding in South Asia: Beyond Good Theory and Bad Practice".





Professor **Dr. Imtiaz Ahmed** began his speech by sharing a preference towards the longer view of humans and mentioned the abundance of theories in South Asia about the associated field. He addressed three different theories of peace mentioned in his chapter in the book: the *Ashokan* tradition where the emperor **Ashoka** tried his level best to bring peace but failed; the *Baulian* tradition where the Bauls even went out of the state and started living in forests as they thought state was not the place where peace could be found; and the *Gandhian* tradition that exemplified the contribution of **Mahatma Gandhi**. He also mentioned, how, despite the existence of all these theories, the sub-continent still had to witness long history of genocides including the cases of 1947 and 1971. The 20<sup>th</sup> century, according to him, killed more people than ever. The European understanding of things had always been divisive and led to the creation of philosophical tradition of post-modernity promoted by Jacques Derrida or Michel Foucault. One should look take a deeper look into the Eurocentric understanding and how that had devastated the world—not just colonialism, rather, the concept of nation-state, and viewing humans as ‘states.’

After Dr. Ahmed’s comments, General Rahman announced the concluding phase of the event. He expressed sincere gratitude to the Japan Foundation for their partnership with BISS in the venture of organizing an international conference and publishing the book. He also thanked all authors for their contributions in the book, and the editorial team led by **Dr. Mohammad Mahfuz Kabir**, Research Director, BISS, who worked hard to publish a book of this standard.

# Address by the Special Guest



**H. E. Naoki Ito,**  
*Ambassador of Japan to Bangladesh*

H. E. Naoki Ito, Ambassador of Japan to Bangladesh, began his speech by congratulating BISS for arranging the commemorative seminar for the International Day of Peace. He expressed gratitude and said he felt honoured to join the book launching ceremony. He hoped the book would provide a better understanding on peace, and contribution of Japan and Bangladesh to peacebuilding. Regarding Japan's contribution in peacebuilding, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)'s role was well-mentioned by him. This organisation is well-known for its aid related works, especially in development sectors like infrastructure building, but also has significant contribution towards supporting peacebuilding in many ways.

Mentioning a book chapter of the newly launched book that was written on the SDGs Goal-16, ambassador Ito said this goal is the new approach for sustainable development. It speaks about promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development. The important visit of Pope Francis to Japan couple of days ago, started with visiting the 1945 atomic bombing sites—Hiroshima and Nagasaki. While visiting those sites, the Pope remembered the pain and sufferings of the people who experienced those horrific bombings. Hiroshima and Nagasaki made the world deeply aware of the pain and horror that human beings are capable of inflicting upon one another. The bombings made Japan the only country that suffered such atrocities of the two nuclear bombs 74 years ago. Referring the bombings and breach of peace, He congratulated BISS and the Rotary International for arranging such an event to celebrate the day of peace. He also shared his own experience with the Rotary International. Since his house is near the Rotary International Headquarters, he got the opportunity to be a member of Rotary. After joining government service, he attended many programmes arranged by the Rotary International. Two years ago, he attended the International Convention on Rotary held at Atlanta, Georgia, the US, and also attended the one held in Toronto, Canada, last year.



In his speech, the ambassador highlighted Japan's contribution in establishing peace in the world through many different avenues. The country has taken initiatives for rules based international order and maritime cooperation. Recently, it undertook the vision based on the Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP). It is also promoting capacity building for those nations who are willing to make multilateral efforts related to peacebuilding. Japan and Bangladesh are partners in many areas and cooperating in peacebuilding and peacekeeping. Functions and contributions of the Hiroshima Peacebuilders Center have been discussed in a chapter of this book. This centre has been commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and is inviting participants from Bangladesh for educational training in peacekeeping operations. Japan is also trying to advance its tripartite cooperation between the UN and troops contributing countries. It is an important financial contributor to such operations. Bangladesh, for its immense engagement with these operations, became one of the largest troops sending countries. In this regard, Japan is mainly contributing financially to the UNPKOs. The country also participates in UNPKOs and has been sending its troops since 1992, after passing the International Peace Cooperation Act. The first troops of Japan were defence troops and sent to the UN mission in Cambodia (UNTAC, 1992-93). Since then, it has participated in 28 peacekeeping operations. In South Sudan, Japan and Bangladesh contingent stationed next to each other.



While concluding his speech, ambassador Ito mentioned and lauded Bangladesh's humanitarian contribution in securing peace. It is sheltering about 1.5 million Rohingyas who fled their homeland due to severe persecution. The country along with UN agencies, Japan, international organizations and local NGOs, is working closely to provide all types of humanitarian support to these people. In this regard, he urged for their early repatriation to their motherland, i.e., Myanmar. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in a summit couple of weeks ago, raised the Rohingya issue and urged to provide a conducive environment for early repatriation of those displaced people. He expressed hope that the Myanmar government and military authority would undertake appropriate measures regarding alleged human rights violation after the report and recommendation by the Independent Commission of Enquiry (ICOE).

# Vote of Thanks



**Rtn. Alauddin Chowdhury,**  
*President, The Rotary Club of Ramna*

Rtn. Alauddin Chowdhury, President, The Rotary Club of Ramna, delivered the vote of thanks; he thanked **Major General A K M Abdur Rahman**, OSP, ndc, psc, Director General of BISS, **Rtn. Khairul Alam**, all officers from BISS, and the audience. He recalled memories from the 1990s and praised initiatives by the Rotary Club. He said he was deeply moved by the conglomeration and known faces were making him nostalgic as well. He specially mentioned the names of **Dr. Enamul Haque**, Professor **Dr. Mahbub Ullah**, **Major General (Retd) Jiban Kanai Das**, and Professor **Dr. Syed Anwar Husain**—all who were former Rotarians. He thanked organizers of the seminar for dedicating the event to the International Day of Peace-2019. On the importance of peace and peacebuilding, he opined that such collaborative ventures could lead to inclusive arrangements. About the commemorative seminar, he said it included people from different backgrounds who were involved in research-based fields related to peace, security and conflict or worked as practitioners.

He appreciated the programme highly, expressed hope that the legacy would continue and also thanked former IGP **Muhammad Nurul Huda**, whom he became acquainted with in the 1990s. He extended heartfelt gratitude to H. E. **Ambassador Naoki Ito** for gracing the seminar as the Special Guest and delivering his valuable speech. The Japan Foundation made noteworthy contributions in organizing the conference in 2018, and successful publication of the book. He concluded the speech by thanking General Rahman, The Rotary Club of Ramna, and all participants.

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