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Bangladeshi Local Nationals Celebrate the Victory Day In Basrah Area office

By Mohammed Aliwi
Gulf Region South District



Bangladeshi local nationals' group photo was taken for celebrating the 36 anniversary of the victory day of Bangladesh on December 16, 2007 in Basrah area Office for the Gulf Region South District in Basrah province in Iraq. (USACE PHOTO BY B.J.WEINER)

Basrah, Iraq --The Bangladeshi workers who work for the Basrah Area Office (BAO), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), celebrated the 36th anniversary of their national Victory Day Dec. 16.

The name "Bangladesh" means "Country of Bengal" in the official Bengali language. The People's Republic of Bangladesh, located in southern Asia, is bordered by India on all sides except for a small strip of land which borders Myanmar to the far southeast and the Bay of Bengal to the south. Together with Indian state West Bengal, it makes up the ethnolinguistic region of Bengal.

Faisal Rabby, a Bangladeshi house keeping supervisor with the Corps, said that the Victory Day is celebrated in Bangladesh on Dec. 16 while the Independence Day is cele-

brated on March 26, the anniversary of the war between Bangladesh, Pakistan and India in which Bangladesh won its independence.

"On this day in 1971, the Pakistani Army surrendered to the Indo-Bangladeshi High Command on Mujib Nagar west of Dhaka (the capital of Bangladesh), adjacent to the Indian borders, ending a nine month war of independence. The war actually started on March 26," he said.

Rabby explained that Bangladesh gained independence after a nine-month bloody struggle. The war resulted in East Pakistan's independence as the new nation of Bangladesh. More than three million people sacrificed their lives for their independence during that war, he said. "Even now, we still feel the sorrow of that time as many people lost dear members of their families. We are proud of this sacrifice that brought freedom to our people."



Simon Gomes, Bangladeshi Executive Chef at Basrah Area Office with the gulf Region South District. (USACE PHOTO BY MOHAMMED ALIWI)

Simon Gomes, executive chef at the BAO, said that the government is a parliamentary democracy and that Bangladesh is also a member of the Commonwealth of Nations and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), which is an economic and political organization of eight countries in Southern Asia.

The workers at the Gulf Region South District of Basrah Office celebrated the Independence Day at 9:30 a.m. They raised the Bangladeshi flag and played the national anthem. "We wanted to show how much we love our country even if we are in Iraq. We reminded the glory of our victory that day," said Gomes.

"Direct elections, in which every citizen over 18 can participate, are held every five years for the unicameral parliament which all of its members are elected by the people," said Rabby. "The parliament is known as the Jatiyo Sangshad designed by architect Louis Kahn and currently has 300 seats, elected from single-member constituencies."

He added that the prime minister, as the head of government, forms the cabinet and runs the day-to-day affairs of state. He is formally appointed by parliament members. Before 1990, the head of the Bengali government of Bengal was a president.



The Bangladeshi workers saluting the Bangladeshi flag when playing the National Anthem of Bangladesh. (USACE PHOTO BY B.J. WEINER)

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