



Bangladesh Association, Houston

বাংলাদেশ এসোসিয়েশন, হিউস্টন

Evolution of a community: 1971 onward

1971

The beginning

1971

In 1971 there were only 2 students at the University of Houston (UH) from former East Pakistan. With the help of local people, this small Bangali community collected \$5,000 in cash and 500lb of emergency medication, and ship load of old clothes to provide relief for the suffering people in their home country after the worst cyclone in living memory struck Bangladesh (then East Pakistan) on November 12, 1970. Medications were air lifted, the fumigated clothes were shipped by the sea, and the money was donated to an international agency.

In April of 1971, Bangladesh Student Association was formed at UH, despite the strong opposition from Pakistani students. S. S. Newaz was ousted as the President of Pakistan Student Association and became the first president of Bangladesh Student Association. During 1971, there were the following individuals of Bangladeshi origin lived in Houston as students or professionals. They were: Mr. Dewan Aftab Ahmed, Dr. S. S. Newaz, Mr. Habibul Kabir, Mr. Mahbubur Rahman, Mr. Kamalendu Das, Dr. A. Satter, and a young faculty Member Dr. Fazle Hussain (Fall 1971). It is important to note that 21st February was observed at the UH international students' fair, despite a rowdy objections from the majority of the Pakistan Student Association.

The UH student community interacted closely with the larger student body at Texas A&M for the independence movement. The students at UH and A&M collected funds from their meager stipends and supplemented their income with a lot of menial jobs to clandestinely send money to Mukti Jodhha relatives in Bangladesh and India. Their activities to get the public support in the USA was mainly focused through writing in newspapers, radio and TV talk shows, meeting with union groups and communication with US congressmen and senators. Pakistan Embassy categorically declared the leaders of this small group as renegade and undesirable, their passports were cancelled, and they became "stateless persons".

Some other prominent personalities that took an active role in interactions and communications were : Dr. F.R. Khan, the architect from Chicago; Nobel Laureate Mohammed Yunus, then a graduate student at Vanderbilt; Dr.

1971

Zahurul Haq (his grave is in Houston); English faculty at Alcorn A&M (Mississippi), Voice of Bangla Radio News from Radio Pakistan, Karachi. And let's not forget the support of the Indian community in general and West Bengal community in particular, for their continued financial and logistic support during the time of need.

In the summer of 1971, Pakistan Student Association invited one Member of Parliament from East Pakistan (after the earlier election was declared void by Yahya Khan) to show everything was normal in East Pakistan. Bangladesh Student Association protested during the meeting, participated in question and answer sessions, where the pathetic lies were exposed to the local media so clearly.

1973

Handmade bumper stickers were made at the garage of Ed Lewis with slogans like "Joi Bangla", "Stop genocide in Bangladesh", "Yahia Khan, the modern Genghis Khan".

1973-1978

In 1973 The first Ambassador of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh to USA, honorable Hossain Ali, graced us by his visit to Houston and categorically mentioned about the contribution of Bangladeshis living abroad and that of Houston in particular in the independence movement. Mr. Hossain Ali, the first Pakistani diplomat to defect, recognized the support and contribution from the local community. The Student Association was also proud to recognize them through the ambassador. Some of the individuals mentioned were: Mr. Ed Lewis, an engineer with life-long love affair with Bangladesh; Dr. Burke, the International Students' director for supporting the "stateless" students; Dr. James R. Cox, who bought the air ticket for Kamalendu Das to escape the refugee camp in Assam, Dr. Walker and Dr. Tucker, for their continuous support during 1971.

1973-74

Graduates from Texas A&M began to migrate to Houston as professionals, and there started the first wave of students coming to Houston! Some of them along with already in Houston are: Dr. Khandaker Rahman (now in Houston), Dr. Hafiz Ahmed (now in Atlanta), Dr. Sayeed Hassan (now in Houston), Dr. Quamruzzaman (now in Ohio), Dr. Zakiuddin Husain (now in Houston), Dr. Selina Ahmed (now

in Houston), Dr. Zakir Hasan (Now in Florida), Dr. Sabbir Hossain (Now in Houston), Mrs. Rehana Hussain, Mrs. Saeeda Newaz, Mr. Mozammel Hossain, Mr. Ashraf Islam (now in Houston), Mr. Mafuzul Haque (now in Bangladesh), to name a few.

During this period several people served as chairman of the Bangladesh Student Association of UH. They were: Mr. Mustafa Jamal, Dr. Sabbir Hossain, Mr. Hasan Rahman, Mr. Nurul Ahkter, Mr. K. M. Rahman (all in Houston), Mr. Kamalendu Das, and others.

All the representative functions of Bangladesh were done by the Student Association

1978- to date

1978 to date

In 1978 few Bangladeshis from Bangladesh Student Association established Bangladesh Association, Houston (BAH). Since the inception, Bangladesh Association has become pioneer in organizing major fundraising events to help disaster victims in Bangladesh, USA, and around the world. BAH achieved many significant milestones during this period including purchase of a 4 acre land in 2001.

During this period several people served as chairman of Bangladesh Association and the Director of Bangladesh-American Center. Chairman of BAH were Mr. Dewan Aftab Ahmed, Dr. Khandaker Rahman, Dr. S. S. Newaz, Dr. Aziz Ahmad, Mr. Humayan Morshed, Mr. Nazmul Husain, Mr. Shahadat Khan, Dr. Zakiuddin Husain, Dr. Selina Ahmed, Mr. Golam Mohammad, Mr. Hasan Rahman, Prof Selina K. rahman, and Mr. Afzal Ahmed. Bangladesh-American Center Directors were Mr. Azadul Haq, Late Mr. Quamrul Islam, Mr. Mohammed Fakrul Ahsan, and Mr. Hasan Rahman.

- 1978 Established Bangladesh Association, Houston
- 1984 Bangladesh head of state visited Houston and inaugurated a trade show with trade delegates lead Hossain Md. Ershad. City of Houston provided a stately protocol
- 1989 Received 501 c (3) statuses from IRS
- 1989 Held Seminar on Flood Prevention in Bangladesh
- 1990 BAH started a very successful weekend Bangla school
- 1990 Co-hosted 1990 FOBANA Convention in Dallas
- 1991 Organized fund-raising for Bangladesh flood victims and raised \$120,000.00
- 1996 Bangladesh-American Center formation dialogue initiated
- 1998 Launched Bangladesh Association website: www.bangladesh-association.com
- 1998 Bangladesh-American Center formation dialogue formally launched
- 1998 Organized fund-raising for Bangladesh flood victims and raised \$50,000.00
- 1999 Established emergency fund “Zee Memorial Fund” for helping needy families
- 1999 Celebrated of 100th Birthday of Kazi Nazrul Islam
- 2000 Amended the BAH constitution
- 2000 Celebrated the first International Mother Language Day (IMLD) in Houston and continued the event every year. Since then representative from over 20 countries joined in the celebration. Houston Mayor proclaimed the Day as International Mother Language Day (IMLD)

- 2001 Held prayer vigil, raised fund for victims of 9/11 tragedy. Worked with federal, state and local officials to raise awareness for peace and harmony
- 2001 Bought 3.99 acres land for \$137,000 to build Bangladesh-American Center
- 2002 His Excellency Syed Hasan Ahmad, Ambassador of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to USA visited Houston
- 2002 The Coalition for Peace in South Asia - a Rally in front of the Houston City Hall to stop the imminent war between India & Pakistan
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- 2003 Sent proposal to Bangladesh Embassy to offer Mobile Consulate Services in North America. Bangladesh Embassy started this service in 2004
- 2003 Bangladesh Association By-Laws reviewed and approved
- 2003 Raised \$5,000 under "Zee Memorial Fund" and helped Musa family. Also worked with the parties involved to have Late Musa's house completely paid off and helped secure the families future housing needs
- 2003 Bangladesh-American Center established 1150 sq ft office with nice patio to accommodate BAH activities while the center project is underway. This facility is used regularly for BAH meetings, rehearsals, tournaments, etc. and also rented to other Bangladeshis for various events
- 2003 Bangladesh Association joined the Houston Mayor's International Affairs and Development Council

(MIADC) and continued the membership since then

- 2004 Organized fund-raising for Bangladesh flood victims and raised \$35,000
- 2004 Raised \$2,050 under “Zee Memorial Fund” and helped Mustafizur Rahman and Lamiya fund
- 2004 Sent a proposal to the Government of Bangladesh to recognize foreign citizens who had contributed as Freedom Fighters for our Liberation War.
- 2005 Started a campaign “Bring the honorable remains of Late Bir Shrestho Flight Lieutenant Matiur Rahman”
- 2005 Successfully hosted North America Bangla Literature and Cultural Convention. Texas Governor Rick Perry, and Houston Mayor Bill White proclaimed the Convention
- 2005 Organized fund-raising for Victims of Hurricane Katrina and raised \$4,500, donated computers, procured medical attention and supply, housing to house the displaced, providing rides and other services as needed.
- 2005 Worked with Congresswoman Sheila Jackson-Lee to raise funds and other necessities for the Tsunami victims.
- 2006 Since 2006, Bangladesh Association is serving as a liaison between our community and the U.S. Justice Department, and various local, state and federal law enforcement agencies, like FBI, HPD, Airport Security, etc. and discusses issues and concerns to find solutions that relates to our community. These interactions provide us a forum to discuss community concerns and work towards greater understanding.
- 2006 Raised \$1,400 under “Zee Memorial Fund” and helped the Russell Family
- 2007 Organized Arsenic problem awareness and fund-raising. Developed web site and raised \$3,500

- 2007 Organized fund-raising for Bangladesh flood victims and raised \$100,000
- 2007 Raised \$18,000 under “Zee Memorial Fund” and helped three families in crisis
- 2008 Organized fund-raising for Bangladesh flood victims and raised \$41,000
- 2008 Nobel laureate Dr. Muhammad Yunus visited Houston and met community members
- 2008 BAH/ BAC was listed as North American Bangladeshi organization under dissemination list about Diabetes. National Diabetes Education Program and CDC together produced and translated the booklet “4 Steps to Control Your Diabetes for Life” in Bangla. BAH distributed the booklet in 2009 during FOBANA convention
- 2009 BAH built a partnership with M.D. Anderson under Minority Cancer Research with health disparity program to start South Asian protocol for various cancers
- 2009 Raised \$2300 under “Zee Memorial Fund” and helped families in crisis
- 2009 Successfully hosted first major Bangladeshi Convention in Houston - FOBANA 2009.
Houston Mayor Bill White proclaimed July 2, 3, and 4 as the FOBANA Day
Honored Freedom Fighters
Displayed Mobile Bangladesh Liberation War Museum in coordination with Bangladesh Liberation War Museum
Declared ‘Houston Declaration against Genocide’
- 2010 Sent proposal to UN Mission to declare Shaheed Minar to be recognized as a symbol of the International

Mother Language Day

- 2010** Handed over engineering drawing of Shaheed Minar to the Ambassador at Washington DC and PR to UN at New York
- 2010** Nobel laureate Dr. Muhammad Yunus was formally invited to the ground breaking ceremony of the Bangladesh-American Center during his Houston visit
- 2010** His Excellency Akramul Qader, Ambassador of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to USA visited Bangladesh-American Center. He also unveiled the newly designed Bangladesh Association, Houston website (<http://www.bangladesh-association.com/>) and the newly designed Shaheed Minar with deck and stage on the Bangladesh-American Center land
- 2010** Bangladesh Association, Houston's history and achievements published

- 2011 BAH membership reached 3000
- 2011 First BAC Donor Conference: Raised over \$250,000
- 2011 Received the best organization in North America award given by FOBANA
- 2011 Raised \$10,000 under “Zee Memorial Fund” and helped families in crisis
- 2011 BAC Fundraising event –Raised over \$28k in pledges and collections.
- 2011 Partnered with Houston Food Bank for Winter Food Drive
- 2011 BAC Fundraising team hosted 12 house parties (no cost to BAC) to promote BAC

- 2011 BAH organized 30 events during the fiscal year 2011
- 2012 Established fee Clinic at BAC Campus
- 2012 BAC Groundbreaking Ceremony inaugurated by Ambassador Akramul Qader
- 2012 BAH lost it's one of the longest serving Volunteer MR Chowdhury Nantu
- 2012 Plea to unify the community honoring late MR Chowdhury Nantu's vision
- 2012 Historic Achievement of BAC Construction Contract Signed with TRZ Company.
- 2012 Bangladesh Center construction began on Monday, July 2nd 2012: “Our journey continues”

- 2012 BAH was among top 196 charities and Received \$10,000 from Chase Community Giving Program

- 2012 2nd BAC Annual Donor Conference and raised \$35,000
- 2012 Constitution Review Committee was formed
- 2012 BAH Board of Directors Election 2012
- 2012 BAH organized 24 events during the fiscal year 2012
- 2013 BAC Interactive lunch fund raising meeting –raised over \$37,000
- 2013 Volunteer Appreciation Day at BAC
- 2013 Artist Rajib Siddiqui's First Ever Sculpture “Victory of Bangladesh 1971” to be installed at Bangladeshi-American Center

- 2013 FOBANA Leadership from North America visited BAC
- 2013 BAH production Bangla Natok "Shubochon Nirbashoney" staged
- 2013 Raised \$7,000 under "Zee Memorial Fund" and helped families in crisis
- 2013 First ever Multi-Cultural Gala to raise fund for Bangladesh-American Center
- 2013 Benefit concert for Savar Victims joint by all Houstonian
- 2013 Jan 1 - Nov 7 together we raised over \$150,000
- 2013 Phase 1 of Bangladesh-American Center has been completed (completion of metal walls and metal roof)
- 2013 BAH organized 25 events during the fiscal year 2013
- 2014 BAH hosted many cultural program including concert by Sabina Yasmin, Andrew Kishore, Konok Chapa and S I Tutul
- 2014 Hosted 3 Affordable Care workshops at Bangladesh-American Center to register members
- 2014 Ambassador of the USA to Bangladesh H.E Dan Mozeena visited Bangladesh American Center and attended dinner at the Petroleum Club hosted by BAH, sponsored by Qasim Sharif of Stratum Energy
- 2014 Hosted Basketball Summer Classics at the Kipp Academy to promote sports
- 2014 BAH joined international organizations to coordinate Houston Iftar by Mayor Parker
- 2014 BAH hosted many sports events such as tennis, bridge and basketball
- 2014 Bangla Pathshala Team enrolled over 30 students for Bangla, music and interfaith
- 2014 BAC Clinic team treated over 50 patients
- 2014 BAH Chair Shah Haleem appointed to serve on Mayor's MITDC Advisory Brd until Dec 2015

- 2014 Bangladesh Embassy Mobile Consular Services @ BAC serviced over 200 members
- 2014 Zee memorial Fund donated over \$5100 to the needy community members
- 2014 BAC interior framing Phase 2 construction has been completed
- 2014 BAC plumbing and outside RCP drainage pipe was installed between BAC and church
- 2014 Eid-UI Fitr & Eid-UI Adha was hosted at BAC by Eid Namaz cmt over 1500 attended
- 2014 BAH BoD attended FOBANA along with BAH Cultural team in Los Angeles, CA
- 2014 Second floor design to add 3000 sf to add Library, BAC Clinic and Contemplation
- 2014 “Victory of Bangladesh 1971 Sculpture” coming to BAC site selection
- 2014 BAH joined Houston Food Banks and ABC 13 for holiday food drive to help the needy
- 2014 In 2014 total donations received for Bangladesh-American Center is \$72,319.22
- 2014 37 different events or activities & initiatives for BAH for the year of 2014
- 2015 Ekushe Feb and International Mother Language Day @ BAC celebrations with many local and International cultural organizations
- 2015 BAH hosted 2nd Multicultural Gala in Sugarland Marriott for BAC to benefit education, healthcare and culture. Gala was Chaired CEO of Stratum Energy Mr. Qasim Sharif
- 2015 Ambassador of the BD to US H.E. Mohammad Ziauddin toured the progress of our center
- 2015 BAH joined the international organizations leadership’s team to coordinate Houston Iftar by Mayor Parker for 2000 Houstonian at the Bayou Event Center

- BAH Chair and BAH Directors attended many meetings with US Congressional representatives, FBI, local law enforcement's including Mayor and Senate Offices to represent Bangladeshi community.
- 2015 BAH leaders attended meetings at Texas State Capital to voice our community concerns to the legislatures
- 2015 Hosted 3 Affordable Care workshops at Bangladesh-American Center
- 2015 BAH Bridge Tournaments at Bangladesh-American Center
- 2015 Bangladesh Embassy Mobile Consular Services @ BAC serviced over 300 services provided
- 2015 BAH Graduation and career fare –Class of 2015 reception at Maharajah
- 2015 Zee memorial Fund helped 4 families donated over \$6000 to the needy community
- 2015 BAH hosted first annual Bangla pathshala day to help promote Bangla culture among our students
- 2015 BAH Tennis Doubles Tournament at UH
- 2015 BAC Clinic team treated over 50 plus patients by Dr. Amirul Islam
- 2015 BAH hosted Ramadan Iftar party for the Muslim community @ Maharajah
- 2015 BAH BoD attended FOBANA led by Syeda Kushum Kali and Dr. Rafiq Khan
- 2015 BAH hosted spring and fall picnic at Cullen Park
- 2015 BAH joined Houston Food Banks and ABC 13 for holiday food drive to help the needy.
- 2015 Bijoy Dibosh Celebration took place at Maharajah with live concert by Rumana Islam Sraboni 2015 Attended many international events, forum, leadership eceptions to promote BAH and Bangladeshi-American community.

- 2015 Honorable Houston City Councilman Richard Nguyen and BD Cabinet Minister Mr. Rashed Khan Memon and many other local and BD govt delegates visited BAC
- 2015 BAH acquired certified accounting firm to manage BAH/BAC book keeping and accounting
- 2015 Dr. Selina Ahmed family reserved the right for BAC Interfaith/Contemplation room for the life and BAH to host annual interfaith dialogue starting in 2016.
- 2015 BD NTV reporting team led by Mr. Ahmed Pipul toured Bangladesh-American Center. Documentary was broadcasted from Bangladesh to all NTV outlets worldwide audience.
- 2015 BAC Phase 3 construction has been completed. Construction has been –Framing, stucco, glass windows and doors completed. Project has been over-sighted by BAC Chief Engineer Mr. Sa.
- 2015 32 different events or activities & initiatives for BAH for the year of 2015
- 2015 BAH team raised \$348,000 for Bangladesh-American Center
- 2015 Bangladesh-American Center construction team completed internal framing, installed doors and windows, stucco
- 2015 Initialed fundraising for civil developments received multiple under Saddam Ahmad Leo

Major Activities throughout the year

Fund raising for Bangladesh-American Center
International Mother Language Day (IMLD) celebration
Youth activities and educational seminars
Free Medical Clinic
Bangla School and literature activities
Bangladesh Mobile Consular Services
Emergency Fund for those in need during unforeseen emergency
Bangladesh Independence Day Program and Festivities
Bangladesh Victory Day Program and Festivities
Picnics and outdoor activities
Bangla New Year Celebration (Boishakhi Mela, Rabindra/Nazrul Jayanti)
Magazine Publication
Sports activities and competition (Tennis, Basketball, Bridge, Table Tennis etc.)
Children Sports Activities
Graduate Reception

Facts

Serving the people of Bangladeshi origin living in Houston since 1978

Members vary between 750-1000 families

Owns a 4 acre land (all paid for) for community center - Bangladesh-American Center

Successfully held Federation of Bangladeshi Associations in North America (FOBANA) Convention in 2009

Successfully held North America Bangla Literature and Culture Convention (NABLCC) in 2005

Celebrates national and international events with other community organizations

Liaison to the United States Justice Department and FBI and Houston Mayor's International Affairs and International Development

Closely Work with City, State, and National in variety of community services

Helps needy family and arrange funeral regardless of membership

Holds free and fair election every two years

Secular with respect for all religions

Received numerous proclamations and citations from city and state

Email group and website serves as a hub to disseminate information regarding community affairs and emergencies

The web site <http://www.bangladesh-association.com/> is on #1 spot in Yahoo! and Google search for Bangladesh Association

For more information

www.bangladesh-association.com



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