



# INNOVATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL SOCIETIES

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SCHALKWYK: Today is the 24<sup>th</sup> of February 2009, I'm with Mr. Delwar Hossain, the Secretary for the Ministry of Land in Bangladesh, at his offices in Dhaka. Before we start talking about administrative reform and civil service reform in Bangladesh, can you give me a brief history of the work that you've done and your current responsibilities?

HOSSAIN: *Okay. I think you know, Bangladesh started its new journey from Pakistan and it started an independent country from 1971. Bangladesh also started its bureaucracy, administrative structure from 1971, from the legacy of the British colony. Perhaps you know the British government was in existence almost for 200 years in our country including Pakistan and India. Originally we were part of India, later on we separated from Pakistan and we got a bureaucracy from Pakistan. That bureaucratic structure was, in fact, a kind of regulatory administrative setup, or a kind of colonial setup of bureaucracy. Necessarily it was not pro-People or pro-GDP (Gross Domestic Product) or pro citizen and basically it was regulatory from the inception of '71.*

*We started our journey from '71 to say 2009, almost 37 years gone. Also we could not make a substantive and qualitative change in the administrative area. So far we're gradually making a shift. For example, now, after 37 years, we are taking care of our citizen charter. We are also taking care of the administration taking to the doorstep of the poor people, and also taking care of responsiveness. We're also taking care of the mindset changes. We are also taking care of a huge paradigm shift from regulatory administration to responsive, pro-people administrative set up in our country. Also we are trying to strengthen local government institutions. For example we have got at the grassroots level a kind of Union Parishad, village level distinct institution elected by the people, directly elected by the people. Also in the urban area we've got a municipal or urban kind of thing elected by the people. Also in the large cities we have a city corporation elected by the people, directly elected by the people.*

*We have also a very innovative kind of administrative setup in between the urban area and the rural area, we call it upazila or sub-district administrative setup elected by the people. At this time, recently, after this induction of the government, we have already elected sub-district units in almost 500 units in our country, directly elected. We call them Upazila Parishad chairmen, or chairpersons elected by the people. Therefore we are trying to double up, strengthen our local government institutions, which have been largely ignored during the last one hundred years or so.*

*Therefore, during the last 37 years, the bottom line is that at the moment we are not strict, or we are not prone to develop a regulatory administration. We have a paradigm shift for a kind of responsive, pro-people citizen-oriented administration. Also bottom line is that we are having decent relationship, customer-focused, citizen-focused, responsive kind of management we are trying to develop. Perhaps two years before 2009 was the time for major reforms in Bangladesh, kind of caretaker government constitutionally allowed, approved caretaker government over the legislation for two years. Caretaker government has made some huge administrative reform. They have ventured in the area of say the Election Commission, the area of the Anti-Corruption Commission, in the area of Regulatory Reforms Commission, in the area of Better Business Forum. Therefore they also tried to make huge changes in the administrative area.*

*Gradually we are also, basically the administration and management in this part of the world is basically not based on performance and incentive but gradually we*

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*are also developing a kind of management and administration in this part of the world that is also performance and incentive based. In our country we can give some examples. We have got law enforcing agencies like police, the police, but we have also created a RAB, Rapid Action Battalion. In them the normal—people are getting salary but apart from that they are also getting 70% extra allowance, those people who will be working in RAB. Those people are recruited in the Rapid Action Battalion based on merit, activities, sincerity and responsiveness to the people. Therefore they are rewarded, 70% extra salary in RAB.*

*In the National Board of Revenue, NBR, we call it NBR. In some of the areas, say for example who are working the customs side or taxes side, they collect the money for the government and some percentage, one or two percentage, they are given as a reward apart from salary and any other normal, traditional incentive structure. Therefore we are creating also, in defense, say Army or Bangladesh Rifles and many other defense or quasi-defense area, say for example Coast Guard, we are also giving, not only salary, also some extra incentive.*

*Therefore, in a country like ours, although the economy is, it's a very poor country, but at the same time we are also developing a kind of performance-based, merit-based and incentive-based administration. Some of the examples I've already given. Bottom line is NBR, bottom line is RAB, Rapid Action Battalion, borderline in defense, bottom line in some other—oh, in Training Academy also. In Bangladesh, say for example, PATC, Public Administration Training Center, or Bangladesh Civil Service Administration Training Center where I work, these kinds of training centers use people who are going from the central government to those places on deputation, on lien, on borrowing basis. They're also given 30% extra allowance.*

*Another incentive-based administration recently has been developed in our country, those people will be working on say some other organization. For example, BCIC, Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation. For example, when Joint Secretary, one Secretary will be working in that place, they will be given extra 20% and it will apply both to the civil and the military official who will be working on the deputation.*

*Therefore during the last 37 years or so we made also a paradigm shift, both theoretically and practically and operationally. In a kind of a smaller way we are also developing a kind of incentive-based, performance-based and also merit-based administration so far.*

SCHALKWYK: Who has been driving the reforms?

HOSSAIN: *Actually it is a multi-sectoral, multi-denominational. In some cases politicians, in some cases, during the last two years caretaker government has vigorously ventured reforms. In some cases within the bureaucracy, in some cases development partners, for example DFID (Department for International Development). DFID is having a very ambitious and a very wide-covering project now going on, they call it MATT-2, Managing At The Top-2. They have started basic operations in 2006, they will go to 2013. UNDP (United Nations Development Program) also. So far as MATT-2 is concerned it is a very good project in the sense that MATT-2 is started in 2006. Initially they will go to 2013 and after that we are also motivating DFID and other development partners to go forward beyond 2013.*

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*Another very interesting point of MATT-2 project is that MATT-2 is for making incremental change, mindset changes. MATT-2 is also venturing on stakeholder analysis, risk analysis. MATT-2 is also going for poverty reduction, gender equality, especially women empowerment. You know in third world countries people, especially women's empowerment is a big question. Therefore one of the MATT-2 policy or strategies is to empower women, reduce poverty and mainstreaming poverty reduction and empowering women are the major—. Also change the mindset of the bureaucracy because there are originally embedded in regulatory framework. Now we are shifting for a management perspective and pro-people. Therefore they need to change their mindset. There would not be a ruler of the people, they are servants of the people.*

*Therefore basically in some cases politicians are dragging, in some cases bureaucracy. In a bureaucracy, in some cases the caretaker government, being two years, they have driven it. In some cases the development partners have. But basically they are influenced also by ongoing mainstream changes in the reforms in many other countries, third-world countries.*

*You know countries like USA, Japan, Singapore, all the European countries, they have made the administration management totally different. They developed a kind of KPI, Key Performance Indicators, performance-based indicators. Therefore we are lagging behind. But we are also trying to catch up. Therefore bottom line is that, okay, multisectoral, multidisciplinary institution, NGO, civil society, development partners, academicians. In our country the electronic media is very strong nowadays. They are also driving for reform changes, mindset, improvement change.*

SCHALKWYK: Is there a central set of reform goals or targets?

HOSSAIN: Yes, there is a central set of goals, reform targets on behalf of government.

SCHALKWYK: Who set those up?

HOSSAIN: *Basically, it is the political regime who runs the country but operationally it is the main job in our country human resource development ministry. Basically two ministries are involved, actually three, the Ministry of Establishment, Cabinet Division and the office of the Prime Minister's office. These are the three focal points for all the targets, reforms.*

*Another thing I must mention. During the last 37 years also the different governments including the present government, they are also trying to develop human resource development, training, curricula, exposure to other countries. Say for example now there are certain areas of global warming, climate change going on. These are very important topics around the world. Therefore WTO (World Trade Organization), globalization, marginalization, inclusive globalization and exclusive globalization, global warming, fallouts, meltdown, financial crisis, you know, everything. Therefore, including the present government, different regimes have also tried to focus on the human resources development. This is a very important area while the officials in the bureaucracy in the civil service or in the army, they have to face exposure in terms of knowledge, experience, expertise.*

*Therefore one of the most important aspects of the reforms also is the human resource development. The caretaker government and present government have taken a very ambitious reform area so that the young officials can go to the other country, have a Master's Degree, have a Ph.D., short training, have medium-*

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*term training for all the important issues, like again I say global warming, fallouts, adaptation, mitigation. Then globalization, financial crisis, meltdown, credit crunch effects, export, import, balance of payment, all these things. Therefore this is also a very important area of reform, exposure to other countries and the knowledge-based society.*

SCHALKWYK: I wonder if I could talk to you a bit about MATT-2.

HOSSAIN: Okay.

SCHALKWYK: How did MATT-2 go about achieving its goals, what is the structure of MATT-2?

HOSSAIN: *MATT-2, right now, MATT-2 say already I told you MATT-2 started operation in 2006. Stage 1, they call it stage 1, they basically covered from Assistant Secretary to Secretary in our country. Those who have joined as Assistant Secretary and will be ending up at a high level or at the policy level, we call it in our country Secretary. The top executive of a ministry or a division, there are as many as fifty Secretaries in our country and as many as, starting from Assistant Secretary to upper is 5-6,000 people. Their main intention is to cover from Assistant Secretary to Secretary. They are also trying to pick out those officials who have more working left so that they can make a contribution.*

*Their sustainability is also a very important point. Therefore in Stage 1 what they do they basically recruit some officials and give the exposure of English language test. For example, ELTC (English Language Training Center) in our country, for that purpose they can go for TOEFL (Test of English as Foreign Language even. ELTC or English Language Test, they are to obtain minimum scores. For example out of 10 a 5 or 5.5 or 6. After that they select, say out of 70 they select 40 people in Sage 1.*

*In Stage 1 they do two things. For four weeks they undergo a kind of, you cannot call it a training, you can call it a workshop or very real-life situation. The administration, the management, the mindset, the flexibility, the risk analysis, stakeholder analysis and also optimize time, resources and changing of the mindset for the people, for the poor people. This is a very good idea, a very nice idea, innovative idea. Actually nothing is imposed from the other side or from development partners.*

*MATT-2 evolved some of the issues from our, core issues from our country, from real life situations, from say women who are working at the grassroots level or for some elected people working at the grassroots level or say changes in the quality of life at the grassroots level. Therefore they go to the grassroots level, take some of the issues and they come to the training academy and talk about and give some innovative triggers to the participants. So the participants themselves involve themselves. It is very much participatory, lively, interactive, counter, sharing and everything and enriching. You can call it winning, very much winning.*

*After six weeks here is Stage 2. They screen some of the people, out of say 40, they screen ten people based on performance to which they are also committed to performance-based administration and management they'd like to develop. In this way their intention, MATT-2 intention is to develop the reform-minded bureaucracy on a continuous basis, on a sustainable basis. Also there are incentives. So that the first, Stage 1, the people who take it very seriously, because if someone is going to have the intention in Stage 2, they take it very seriously.*

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*In Stage 2 they have another six weeks absolutely to other countries. Say for example, most of the people in Stage 2 they are going right now to the UK, Manchester or Bedford, or London. They are given a kind of world-class exposure. What's going on in London, what's going on in Manchester in terms of management, in terms of ideas, in terms of the administration. Doorstops to the people, client-focused, citizen-focused. What can you learn from other countries. It is still relevant to changes, unpredictability so that you can contribute to your country. This is the main aim of MATT-2, Stage 1 and Stage 2.*

SCHALKWYK: I understand that part of MATT-2 is the development of performance improvement projects.

HOSSAIN: Yes.

SCHALKWYK: You went through MATT-2.

HOSSAIN: Yes, both these stages.

SCHALKWYK: Could you describe your performance improvement project?

HOSSAIN: *Performance project, PIP they call it, MATT-2 calls it PIPs. For example two years back in our passport office hundreds of people were queued and there was a huge demand for passports and less supply. You know in economic terminology, there is a huge demand and lesser supply, price will be very high. There was also kind of blackmarketing or a malpractice. You can bluntly call this also corruption. Getting a passport was a very time consuming, not productive, not optimized at all and also corruption emerged. But MATT-2, one of the intentions of the MATT-2 program was take it, a grassroots level example. For example passport office and make a PIP, performance improvement project there. This PIP group innovated a kind of idea. Can it be simplified, can it be people oriented? Can it be focused? Can it be citizen, client-focused? They made it successfully and they have showed. Nowadays the passport office is one of the most transparent, reform-minded offices in our country. MATT-2 actually has shown the path where. Nowadays we are getting passports by banks, we are getting passports by post office. We are getting passports almost hassle free and bottom line is that it is very efficient now, pro people, pro client and less time and optimization, all the optimization. Time optimization, resource optimization, and the satisfaction of the poor, these optimization are being done.*

*Therefore, although all the PIPs are not generating huge reform but some of the PIPs, passport improvement was an example passport office, for example Chittagong Port office, for example internal container depot in Kamalapur, Dhaka, these office. For example, in my Land Ministry case also, say digital mapping. That was started in MATT-2. In some cases, some performance improvement projects actually are generating huge reforms in our country. I think if it is made sustainable, if it is made sustainable than this PIP and Super-PIP will go a long way.*

*I'll give you another example. I'm one of the members of the Super-PIP. I have gone to Manchester, I was exposed to their country. In terms of poverty reduction, in terms of client-focus, in terms of citizen-based management there, developed there in Manchester. Then we came back. Now we are—now are PIP, Super-PIP, we are doing something, say for example, in our country the people, the poor people go abroad. In Saudi Arabia, in Malaysia, in USA, UK, Japan, many other countries, we send people. But these poor people take a huge form*

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*in the informal market. You know informal money lenders, these people are very intelligent, smart and they take these people after you spend huge money.*

*For example, in our currency, 5 lakh taka for going to abroad.*

SCHALKWYK: How much is a lakh?

HOSSAIN: *Five lakh, 500,000 taka. A very poor country, 5 lakh taka is a huge amount. But now, our group is trying to send these people by taking loans from the institutions, from the banks, without collateral. You know collateral free? Nothing. They will show the valid papers, documents, for Saudi Arabia, for USA, for other countries and go to the banks, take only taka one lakh, in place of 5 lakh. Therefore 4 lakh taka is saved by the poor people. In this one our PIP group is trying to make reforms along the lines of the Grameen Bank. Or also made some reforms in banking sector, Kerala, India, and some of the states of India.*

*In the future our PIP might show a path of creating a separate bank for the people who like to go abroad and take loans and they will send back all the loans to the bank. Therefore, we are also trying to hassle-free institutional loan without collateral. Here also optimization, things will happen because there will be less money, there will be less time. There will be less hassle and therefore there too we spend less amount of money. Now they're already spending 500,000 money, or Taka and in our redistribution, if we are successful, they will have to spend only 100,000 Taka. Then at least five times or four times less money than in the roles of the money lenders.*

*Therefore this, so far this is a concern. Some of the PIPs have made a brilliant contribution in reforms, but I'll say at the same time 90% of the PIPs are just stuck on the shelf, in the almari (closet) or some other place. MATT-2 authorities should look into those PIPs who cannot make a huge contribution for all administrative—and they should make it as such. There was wrong. But, I can easily say 10% of the PIPs are epoch-making, history-making, and reform making. It should be sustainable. This kind of MATT-2 program should be sustainable not only to 2013, my suggestion will be up to 2021 where we'll make a golden jubilee of our country.*

*The present government including honorable Prime Minister of the present government, she is very much in favor of reforms, changes, IT, digitalization and a dream digital country, digital Bangladesh by 2021 when we'll celebrate 50 years of golden jubilee of our independence. Therefore political regimes including the present government is supportive of full reforms which are consistent with the MATT-2 program and PIP and Super-PIP.*

SCHALKWYK: Why do you think 90% of the PIPs are not going forward, are stuck?

HOSSAIN: *Okay, I call it listen they made 100 PIPs, but so far as reforms are concerned, my idea goes only 10% PIPs have already made a huge contribution in terms of reforms, in terms of changes, in terms of other things. But 90% PIPs stuck up in sense that okay, these reforms are not visible. Civil society, political liaison, they do not know what is going on about the 90%. Therefore MATT-2 authority should also make a separate program. You know why? Ninety percent or 80% PIPs are not making a huge difference or huge reforms in the area and why 10% of the PIPs, I've already cited some of the examples, passport, Chittagong Port Authority, internal container depot. In my case we were trying to send some people, very poor people to abroad without any collateral, a free loan, like a*

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*Grameen Bank, a rural, credit bank, already brought by Nobel Laureate Professor Yunus. But most of the PIPs are not doing huge changes.*

*MATT-2, I'll request MATT-2 to make a separate program research what's going on. It's very important.*

SCHALKWYK: How are the PIPs related to MATT-2, can you clarify?

HOSSAIN: *MATT-2 agenda and PIP agenda are almost the same in this sense. The MATT-2 authority has bottom line agenda is reform the mindset of the process of the civil servant and also make it sustainable. MATT-2 has made a very innovative smart idea in this sense. Okay, America and some other countries they're also thinking, let the political regime change the structure, salary and all other things. But it is very time consuming. Also political regime may not be agreeing to change all these structures on one night. Therefore the MATT-2 authority has made it innovative in the sense that it is incremental change.*

*Let us change passport office. Let us change port office. Let us change banking. Let us change one poverty reduction in one place. Let us change, strengthening local government institution in one case. Their intention is to let us flourish one success story in one place, then roll out. Then whole country will be under incremental, incremental winning situation. Then for PIP performance project, improvement project, and MATT-2 agenda are very much correlated. They want to show some success story one place, replicate it in other, roll out other, and the trick also, the credibility of the policy makers. Their whole usual routine seminar, workshop, among the top brokers, among even in some cases politicians so that it becomes sustainable win-win basis, continuous basis. Therefore PIP is an idea of changing the bureaucracy, mindset, gender equality, poverty reduction, which are the MATT-2 agenda and the country agenda and PIP is operational mechanism or module to show some good changes so that we can take lessons from those PIP and locate and replicate, and roll out throughout the country.*

*It is a very subtle, intelligent smart way because you cannot change the whole structure, incentive structure, salary structure and bureaucracy. There are so many laws and rules and regulations. In one night you can't change all that. That's why I like this very subtle, intelligent way. The MATT-2 agenda, PIP, are very much correlated. Both are in favor of reforms. Both are in favor of changing the mindset, flexibility. They are very, very smart also. They take also risk analysis, stakeholder analysis and the participatory approach and they do not impose anything on the participants. The participants are automatically triggered, innovated by the MATT-2 agenda.*

SCHALKWYK: So when you were chosen for MATT-2—.

HOSSAIN: *Pardon?*

SCHALKWYK: When you were chosen to be part of MATT-2—.

HOSSAIN: *Stage 1 2006.*

SCHALKWYK: Did you start to develop your PIP then? How did you develop—?

HOSSAIN: *At that time, it was three weeks time in Savar PATC (Public Administrative Training Centre), they have given some idea. You can take some performance improvement project and we made a choice and they have given some theoretical ideas also. You make a choice among the core issues, say poverty*

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*reduction, say gender empowerment, women's empowerment. You can make a choice. There are a lot of areas we're given and we made a choice.*

SCHALKWYK: Who were you?

*HOSSAIN: Say for example the Joint Secretaries, we are the Assistant Secretaries, we are the Secretaries, we are Division Secretaries at that time. Also at least another three-year job you must have, otherwise no money. Therefore, out of twenty core issues, in our group we made a choice, for example women's empowerment and income-generating activities of the women at the grassroots level. We call that place Manikganj, 50 km from Dhaka.*

SCHALKWYK: And how many people were in your group?

*HOSSAIN: We had been at that time seven people. All the participants in bureaucracy. We visited the place by members and we talked to them for the stakeholder analysis and we motivated them to—some of the money, government money is allocated for say rural women from the government side. In the sub-district we call it upazila and that money is for small cottage industries. Seven and 1/2 percent money is allocated for those people, but this money, 7-1/2% money is not utilized properly. We made our PIP to say make this 7-1/2% okay and also see what the things are going on in terms of poverty reduction and empowering women. We made, out of five months, we made that, we had a stakeholder, we participated, we talked to them. We made sure the 7-1/2% of the total money is spent for this small scale industry, especially for the women.*

*After that we made a presentation and the MATT-2 people visited that place. Even some UK people visited that place to see actually what is going on. This is the way we made our PIP, first Stage 1 PIP. In total there are six to seven PIPs in that group. Out of forty people or fifty people, MATT-2, they made a choice of only ten people in Stage 2. They made certain indicators for knowledge, for participation, for expertise, for high quality, for professionalism, for the reforms they already made. Out of forty they made ten choice for another six weeks to Manchester.*

*In this way things are motivated, things are triggered, things are for women, things are for performance based, things are for better quality. I take care. If I am to be included in first stage then I have to show my professionalism very high. I have to show my reforms. Therefore the Stage 1 PIP is a generalized one. The Stage 2 PIP or Super-PIP is a very exclusive one, performance-based one and merit-based one. Although I have also something to say about the screening methodology. But it basically is a very nice way to attract and trigger the better ones.*

SCHALKWYK: So you developed your PIP plan while you were at Savar?

*HOSSAIN: At Savar, yes. We developed there.*

SCHALKWYK: And there was help there from the trainers?

*HOSSAIN: The MATT-2 authority just triggered, given some benchmarks, some ideas, some indicators of what they want, the MATT-2 authority, what they want. Therefore, within the local framework, we worked and we found it very productive.*

SCHALKWYK: And DFID funded the training?

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HOSSAIN: *DFID funded the whole project up to 2013.*

SCHALKWYK: But did they fund the implementation of the PIPs?

HOSSAIN: *Pardon?*

SCHALKWYK: Did they fund the implementation of the PIPs?

HOSSAIN: *They usually do not. This is the problem. If you like I will also highlight some of the challenges of the MATT-2 program, that should be changed. If you like I can share with you.*

SCHALKWYK: We'll get to that later. What sort of cottage industries were created and how did you ensure that that money was being spent?

HOSSAIN: *Actually, the first improvement was that out of total money 7-1/2% was not utilized at that time for small cottage industries. Later on we made it, exclusive supervisor, made the PIP, we made sure 7-1/2% first one.*

SCHALKWYK: How did you make sure?

HOSSAIN: *Make sure in the sense—we talked to the local upazila parishad chairmen, they're elected. They're not supposed to comply with us, they're independent. We motivated them. We talked to them. Also we had a participatory discussion with the stakeholders, especially the poor women who used the sewing machine, who used to have a small cottage industry products sold out in the market. We have given attention to marketing facilities. We have given attention to the product development qualities. We have given attention to transportation facilities. We have given attention to their loan facilities. They were there, everything was there but not in a better way. Not in a methodical way, not in a professionalized way.*

*Therefore we supplied all the inputs of their small scale industries, cottage industries for income generating, marketing facilities, awareness, loan facilities, and also on behalf of government, 7-1/2% full utilization. But we had to struggle because usual upazila parishad chairmen or upazila parishad local representatives are not willing to give full 7-1/2% of the total allocation. They usually shift the money from 7-1/2%, usually they spend 4%. Therefore we were struggling to motivate them. Hey man, here, honorable chairperson, you should elevate—this money is allocated for poor people. Why should you allocate it for bridge, call port, and other things. Therefore we were successful in motivating them and therefore make sure 7-1/2%, make sure all these facilities, and loan facilities. Make sure also we have given the idea to local government ministry for sustainable basis. Hopefully if all the 500 upazila parishad chairpersons are spending 7-1/2%, also empowering women, I think it will be very used changes, reforms in the whole country.*

SCHALKWYK: What did you do to motivate the chairman?

HOSSAIN: *We motivated the chairman in this way. These people are your voters, your stakeholders, your clients, your citizens. We are coming from outside. But if you help them, if you elevate them or say reduce poverty, these people will be happy and they will be voting the next time. You will be voted next time. Therefore it is your responsibility to help them, empower them, the women. You know women empowerment is basically very good, highlighted by media, electronic media,*

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*print media, civil society and your development partners. It is a very struggling area, very difficult area.*

*Thirty years back we could not say a lot of things about women's empowerment especially the poor women. Nowadays you know, Grameen bank, a lot of other institutions, World Bank, IMF (International Monetary Fund), ADB (African Development Bank), and your academic people are coming to this country and motivating all the people and therefore they are part of that. Bureaucracy in general is lagging behind always. But this time with the MATT-2 program we successfully motivated our local elected people and the whole country, it will be a huge change I tell you.*

SCHALKWYK: Is there anything you would do differently if you were to go back and do it again?

HOSSAIN: *Pardon?*

SCHALKWYK: Is there anything you would do differently in that PIP if you were to go back and do it again?

HOSSAIN: *If I go back?*

SCHALKWYK: And do it again.

HOSSAIN: *Do it again? Yes, there would be some changes. I'd say this present PIP, say, for example, at the moment, the PIP or the intake of the people, they take Assistant Secretary and Secretary, but largely some of the very important persons who are very important for reform, they are ignored. For example, the people working say in the taxes department, there are a lot of people who are not covered in this program, the tax department, the customs department, forest department. The Chittagong port area, port department. They are very important persons in the reform area. For example the port area, the customs area, the taxes area, the forest area, many people are not covered by this program. Therefore, if I get a chance I will cover—it is now an exclusive program for assistant secretary because only assistant secretaries are not making reforms. Also you heard land port authority is very vital in our country, Benapole Port on the Indian border is a unit of customs.*

*You perhaps know, we are importing from India about 3 billion dollars worth of products every year, 3 billion dollars. We are not exporting even one billion dollars per year to India. But we are importing from India 3 billion dollars. Therefore importers, exporters, are very important client of the Land-Port Authority. Your MATT-2 program is not covering those people. Port people, customs people, taxes people, forest department people, they are also very vital. They are also very vital. They're not covering police. Police is very important for reforms.*

*Therefore if I get a chance to rethink or revisit MATT-2, I'll do, first I'll cover, now it is exclusive, I'll make it inclusive, covering all the people who are also important in the whole framework, whole policy making. This I'd do, one thing. I'd do another thing, I'd do a kind of research. The last three, four years what has happened to PIPs. What is wrong with those people who could not generate a lot of reforms. What are the measures, good points or better points which are successful. I'll participate. I'll take, I've tried to take lessons from the failures and from the success.*

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*Another thing I'd do if the funding problem is there I'll motivate other development partners. I'll motivate other development partners to make it at least sustainable for 2021. I'll do other areas also to see, for example, I'll make another research. Those people who were the participants in Stage 1, Stage 2. What is the visual outcome in their workplaces. For example, I have taken two stages training program. Is there any way to understand whether I have changed my mindset, whether I have flexibility, whether I have become more client-focused, whether I have become more reform-based, whether I have become more pro-people oriented. My contributions are, say measurable way in some kind, indicated based? Whether my contributions are also substantial for the country people.*

*I'd make a secret research. My guess is that those people who go to Singapore, go to Manchester, go to Savar, go to other places, do a lot of PIPs and come back to poor places. There is no way to judge, assess, how my whole program is making contributions to my country. Therefore, some kind of research, data collection, some kind of UN or third party organization should be entrusted for this research. Not the Establishment Ministry, not cabinet division. Okay, it should be joint.*

*Say for example out of five people at least three people should be devoted from DFID. And DFID, not own people. DFID outsource. Say for example they will hire one person from Princeton, one person from Harvard, another person from say London School of Economic, or Oxford, or something like that. Okay, two people from GOB (Government of Bangladesh) or three people from GOB. Also GOB will outsource, not me.*

SCHALKWYK: Government of Bangladesh.

HOSSAIN: *Yes, not—yes, meaning government of Bangladesh. They will outsource, independent. As they have done something. DFID and MATT-2 has done something, this time, the last two years, they have sent one DFIF or so, another person came from the UK. Both the persons are not directly related to MATT-2. Okay? They have outsourced. They are sent to Bangladesh. They have seen, they have assessed how things are going on. Therefore, if I am to go for second, third PIP or third MATT program, I'll do three or four or five things separately also, in addition to existing one. The coverage, other people, very important and the sustainable up to at least 2021, research, innovation and some kind of independent assessment by outsourced people, not be these people.*

*I'm a stakeholder, I would be biased. I may be biased. Therefore some independent assessment. Also try to rule out the best example. Whole country, and try to take lessons from the failures.*

SCHALKWYK: When you started implementing your PIP did you have to get it approved from anybody?

HOSSAIN: *Did you?*

SCHALKWYK: Did you have to get the PIP approved when you started implementing it?

HOSSAIN: *Yes, some kind of, I think the governmental authority, GOB authority. In that sense the Ministry of Establishment approved it. They saw and approved it and they said go ahead.*

SCHALKWYK: Which ministry did you come back into when you finished your program at Savar?

HOSSAIN: *Which ministry I have come back?*

SCHALKWYK: Yes.

HOSSAIN: *After finishing?*

SCHALKWYK: Yes.

HOSSAIN: *I was working at that time, after Savar, I was working in BCS Administration Training Academy which is under the Ministry of Establishment. This was totally consistent because it is a human resource development center which is totally consistent with the MATT-2 programs, workshop, training and the skill negotiation, feasibility, stakeholder, the participants and the Administration Academy is entrusted to groom up young officials for future leaders. Therefore it is totally—but so far as Land Ministry is concerned, also relevant to Land Ministry reform. In Land Ministry also, a lot of PIPs are going on, digital mapping, reforms in computerization and land management, modern data map of—we call it ROR, Record of Rights, land ownership. Now this is very manual. People are just changing and everything.*

*But in MATT-2 reform areas, they can be easily applied also in the Land Ministry. Therefore, whatever, after the PIP or MATT-2 program that posted, they can make a contribution. But whether MATT-2 programs are making a huge difference you'll have to wait, only three years. Therefore seven years go, then research, then assessment, then go forward. If this kind of program is stopped at 2013, I guess it will not be sustainable; it will not be a very long-term basis. Therefore I will request all development partners including World Bank, ADB, even academic institutions, DFID, to come forward, even after 2013 so that it becomes sustainable it becomes a continuous reform-minded civil service coming.*

*A kind of alumni has already been formed. I think it will catch good reforms in this society.*

SCHALKWYK: So do you have people below you who have been through MATT-2 who are working for you, additional Secretaries?

HOSSAIN: *Yes, Joint Secretaries, Additional Secretaries. Right now in my ministry there are some but in many ministries there are many people who are working under a Secretary. But another major challenge is that those people who are at the moment working as a Secretary of the Ministry, all the people are not covered by MATT-2 program. That is a major challenge. Some days back, who are the establishment, who is a very important for MATT-2 program, in some cases the establishment secretaries were not also covered by MATT-2 programs. For example, one minister, also land secretary here, he was made establishment secretary. He stayed there seven to eight months, but probably he was not covered in MATT-2 programs.*

*Later on the person who was on the other day, yesterday, also, Mr. [Indecipherable], he was also not covered by MATT-2 program. Therefore, especially he came in as Secretary, Establishment Secretary, home secretary, election commission Secretary, Land Secretary, Finance Division Secretary, ERD Secretary, IRD Secretary. These people should be covered because they play a very vital role in reforms in the country, in the civil service, in the whole*

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country. Therefore if accidentally these people are not covered, MATT-2 authority should make a focus, especially.

Say, for example, if not possible in 45 days, they can make it two weeks and they should. Establishment Secretary, this present Establishment Secretary, Mr. Iqbal Mahmud, is a participant of the MATT-2. Therefore he will have less difficulty in understanding reforms and MATT-2 programs than others.

SCHALKWYK: Who chooses people for the MATT-2 project?

HOSSAIN: *The Ministry of Establishment and DFID and MATT-2 authority jointly, they do make the choice jointly.*

SCHALKWYK: Other people within government know about MATT-2 and do they give the PIP support when people come back to work in their ministries?

HOSSAIN: *What do you mean by other people?*

SCHALKWYK: Secretaries who haven't been through MATT-2 or other people who haven't been through MATT-2.

HOSSAIN: *They usually support but my guess is that in some cases they're also reluctant because they haven't any exposure to dynamics, core issues, changes, flexibilities. Therefore in some cases they also show reluctance. In some cases they do not. But the ideal situation will be all the joint secretaries, all the additional secretaries, all the secretaries should have coverage of MATT-2 programs so that when they come back in the workplace there's no gap. Basically we are among the mindset, I want the flexibility, I want the ideas of the core issue. Therefore, if possible MATT-2 authorities should go for, at least—they've actually done some short courses. The people who are being made secretaries.*

*I think after 2013 it would not be a major problem at all because by that time most of the people will already be covered. But at the moment there is some kind of problem there but I think it will be okay. MATT-2 also routinely conducts seminars, workshops, even if you are not a participant of the MATT-2 program. In this way they try to involve in the whole process, in the whole logical framework.*

SCHALKWYK: As I understand it MATT-2 also involves a human resources development team, planning and a performance management scheme. What do you know about that?

HOSSAIN: *So far human resources development is concerned they are doing a wonderful job. In terms of training, in terms of changing mindset, in terms of reform-minded bureaucracy. Also in terms of exposure to other countries which have already been developed. They're trying to also give some input to KPI, key performance indicators and performance evaluation. So far human resource development is concerned MATT-2 is doing, to my eyes a wonderful job, very good job. But so far motivating the policy maker or triggering the main key people to make sustainable one, they have to go a long way. They have to go a long way, therefore in terms of human resource development it is okay, it's fine. But sustainability is a major issue in a country like ours, therefore they have to be very focused on the sustainability issue for human resources development.*

*Also, shift some of the focus. For example they are now doing 45 days in Savar, Singapore, Thailand, Stage 1. Stage 2 they are going for Manchester, UK. I have*

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*a suggestion, why only UK in Stage 2? Because UK experiences are not 100% relevant. They're more relevant in say a country with a large populations, let's say Japan, almost 150 million Japanese, also tiny land. Why don't they go for Japan, why they do not go for China. China is at one point three billion people. China is struggling and doing a wonderful, miracle GDP growth last 30 years, 12%, 10%. They can learn from China, they can learn the people of Bangladesh bureaucracy. They can learn from Japan because it is a huge population.*

*My extreme case suggestion also is Brazil. Brazil is 250 million people, also doing a wonderful job in terms of the economy, in terms of performance. I'm not so much eager to send MATT-2 people to UK, USA. They're quite developed. They per capita income 35, 37 (thousand) US dollars capita. But I'm more interested, those countries with huge population but being also at the same time very good job, for example Japan, China. This is one aspect. They can shift the focus in Stage 2.*

*Another suggestion I have got, why only 45 days? They can have, say, out of their own money they can have, for incentive, out of say 100 people they can send ten people for Ph.D. So that Ph.D. is also important. As a knowledge-based society, IT-based society, digital society of Bangladesh. Therefore in a poor country like ours, bureaucracy people mostly have very ordinary knowledge, expertise, in IT. So my suggestion will be two ways, focus of country in Stage 2, why UK, why not Japan, Brazil and China because they will have more relevant exposure to this country, not USA or UK. These are very far developed countries.*

*Another suggestion why only 45 days, why don't they go for some Ph.D., some Masters that DFID fund. Okay? They might say it is an incremental change, it is a workshop, it is a kind of seminar workshop and therefore knowledge is not so much important. I would argue with them. Bangladeshi people have a lot of knowledge they say but my idea is no. Young people are very much interested to do some theoretical knowledge, some ideas around the world, some globalized issues, WTO, global economy, financial—a lot of things are going on. Therefore my suggestion will be country shift, focus-based so experiences are relevant.*

*Another suggestion, if it is possible they should go for, at least, out of 100 people, five people for Masters, five people for Ph.D.s so if they know I'll be rewarded in terms of say Princeton, in terms of Harvard, in terms of London School of Economics, I think it will give a huge help. But this program should be given to younger people, not to me. I'm already a senior guy. Therefore these people should be given, this facility should be given to younger members of the bureaucracy.*

*Another suggestion to cover all the people who do not belong to Assistant Secretary, other people should be brought. Otherwise you see when I go to Chittagong Port and report they are very reluctant. Oh you're the man, you have gone to Manchester, you have gone to Singapore by MATT-2 but we are second-class citizens, we are third-class citizens. We are never considered as one of the very important persons of the whole program. Therefore these changes should be made, the country focus, the knowledge-based society focus to Ph.D. and Masters and then cover all other people so that the whole program becomes inclusive.*

SCHALKWYK: I understand that they're also being a part of MATT-2, the training, the career planning and training wing of the Ministry of Establishment are trying to establish performance management. What do you know about that and how has that—?

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**HOSSAIN:** *Yes, they have gone some small experiments in some other places but to my knowledge it has not been formalized or activated or approved thoroughly by the Ministry of Establishment. It is a very struggling area. They are also thinking about risks if we shift from present Annual Confidential Report (ACR) writing to performance based. They also want to see how much risk is there. Therefore policy makers are still not sure how far they will go for performance-based indicators or management. It is a very struggling area.*

*Also the total country policy is involved. Therefore, although MATT-2 is trying, but to this point I do not think I can take as a success story. But so far human resource development is concerned I can take it as a success story but performance management development, career plan, indicator-based forward planning like which are working in the army, in our army. The career plan, the total forward looking, way forward, roll out, everything is pre-planned, almost going also very methodically. But in civil service these things are not being done.*

*But MATT-2 is trying, struggling. That's why I praise them and appreciate. But to this area I do not think a lot of things are success stories.*

**SCHALKWYK:** What sort of risks would be involved?

**HOSSAIN:** *Yes, the risks are very huge. In our country there are a lot of career service, 29 divisions of the civil service. Administrative one, foreign service one, customs one, taxes one, even forestry is one, even the education sector is one. You're not finding many countries around the world, so many divisions, cadre, we call it cadre, 29. In Singapore you get only five. Say for example administrative, foreign service, customs, internal resource, there are only five. Education, forestry, fisheries, everybody, no. This is not the way. Therefore this gets too much high in the sense many people are involved. Therefore it is very, say it is very difficult to motivate all the people number one. So many people.*

*Another thing is there is no clear-cut definition of performance indicators. In say forestry, how do you develop? In say education ministry, how do you develop? Totally different. In police department it is totally different. Tax department, totally different. If your career service is a smaller number than on average you can qualify, you can make some of the indicators acceptable to some smaller groups. But this is large, say 100,000 people in career service, for example including teachers, including forestry, including fisheries, including police, including many others, foreign service. Therefore two front challenges. One is too many numbers and it is unmanageable for a minimum kind of KPI, key performance indicators.*

*Also, wide diversity in indicators. Also sometimes in our country the vested interest also created pressure. Therefore for sustainability risk is more if we go for performance indicators. But I'm a very stalwart or ardent supporter for performance. But, before that the policy makers are to take a decision, how many cadres they will keep in cadre, whole numbers. Like Singapore, only five? Then it would be possible to develop indicators, possible to develop sigma, possible to develop a helicopter view, possible to develop 360 degree. Another measure area in performance area. Salary structure in Bangladesh for the civil service, one of the lowest, one of the poorest in the whole world. Therefore many people are not interested to listen to changes, flexibility and pro people.*

**SCHALKWYK:** I understand that members of the administrative cadre move around a lot.

**HOSSAIN:** Yes.

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SCHALKWYK: How relevant was your MATT-2 training to the various ministries that you've been a part of?

HOSSAIN: *It changes and it's shifting. Not in all cases relevant, not at all. But their assumption is that if MATT-2 training programs, let's say, material inputs are given to one gentleman or lady one time, if they can sustain for five years, they can utilize it and say NBR, internal resource, external resource, establishment, finance ministry, agriculture ministry. In general conceptual frameworks will be working and therefore they think in that way. But frequent shifting is a major challenge in our country and therefore not always relevant to MATT-2 training programs. Okay, maybe this government has come in new therefore changes are quite expected. But after months I think it will be initiated. Therefore I personally do not support frequent changes because it will create a lot of imbalance. Basically we are among the working pattern, action plans and I want to replicate all the learning in the MATT-2 program. At least if possible two, three years all together. But it is a major challenge and therefore, also MATT-2 is basically development, management, too. Therefore also not always their posting or say career planning, also designed in that way. But, largely it works. Largely it works because basic things are everywhere relevant.*

SCHALKWYK: What have you—how long have you been in the position of Land Secretary?

HOSSAIN: *Only thirty days.*

SCHALKWYK: Have you attempted any reforms in the ministries you've been in subsequent to MATT-2 that have not been the PIP or the Super-PIP that you were involved in?

HOSSAIN: *You mean, land ministry for example, I have been here and in Super-PIP it is basically a project of sending some people abroad by taking some loan without collateral, without hypothecation. In that sense my best workplace would have been, say for example in finance division, banking sector or say Ministry of Expatriate, you know that is a separate ministry, Expatriate, Welfare, who looks after sending the people abroad. But Super-PIP, in general some of the concepts also can be applied in the Land Ministry. MATT-2 programs, also some reform things also applied in Land Ministry, say land management, computerization, modernization, digital mapping, aborting the manual way of mapping data, that kind applies. I think Land Ministry will be very flourishing and very valuable center place for all the reforms of MATT-2. But, I don't know, government or policy makers should think. The people who are doing, who will be doing MATT-2 programs, they also place some of the MATT-2 participants in Land Ministry and keep them at least two to three years. That would be very productive, very important.*

SCHALKWYK: So do you have any ideas about what sort of reforms you would like to do in the Land Ministry?

HOSSAIN: *Yes, I've already told you. For example, digitalization of mapping of the land, coastal joining, we are already doing coastal joining. We are handing over some record of rights and maps to the people but manually. We can do it by MATT-2 program by more modern management, on line, digital reform. Also there is a serious problem of say alleged perception of this society about the land management corruption, bribery. Therefore if I can make reforms in terms of IT, computer, modernization, digital on line, cyber, I think that will help with huge reforms in terms of less corruption, less bribery and better management, better service, delivery, everything. I think Land Ministry will be very flourishing place for huge reform by MATT-2 programs.*

SCHALKWYK: In terms of general administrative reforms in Bangladesh, what have been the most important reforms over the last couple of years that you've experienced?

HOSSAIN: *I think in my mind the most important administrative reform, value carrying, I think, the restructuring the Election Commission, very high quality professional, good quality and integrity people who are placed in the Election Commission. You see my statement also is supported by very high quality election and very high rate, ranking, acceptability toward the whole world, say December 2008 election. This is one area they have made huge reforms in the Election Commission.*

*Another reforms, in the recent couple of years they have made Anti-Corruption Commission. They made it, the caretaker government made it really independent and accountable, although there is a lot said about the ACC and other, obviously because the people who are indicted or implicated by criminal cases, they might have a different view. But, in general, it was not operating independently. But the last couple—the Anti-Corruption Commission was made independent, the Election Commission, and also the Better Business Forum. Also the Regulatory Reforms Commission is working. They made a lot of recommendations for changing the old laws or guillotining the age-old, century-old laws.*

*Bottom line, also motivating policy makers and also motivating the international organizations, development partners, come forward. They are inviting UNDP, they are inviting the academics. They are inviting DFID, World Bank, IMF, ADB, to come forward for human resource development and also changing the mindset. Also sending the young people abroad for greater exposure, what's going on in development, management, IT, infrastructure, globalization, trading, input, export, credit cards, everything.*

*I think recently both the government and the nongovernmental entities including your development partners are doing reasonably, pretty good job in the administrative reforms.*

SCHALKWYK: Have there been any changes to the structure of the administrative cadre or the civil service?

HOSSAIN: *Not in the structure but in a certain way, in an innovative way, they are also exploring the options of incentive-based, performance-based and also aborting the age-old—trying, not in a really generalized way, but in a certain way, innovative way, smart way, they are also trying to change some indicators of the administration management. But in general if you cannot change the incentives, the salary, one of the poorest in the whole world, my personal idea, most of the brilliant people lose their hopes in coming to bureaucracy.*

*Let's say out of 100 maybe ten people are very brilliant. I've already shown one person here. She is extraordinarily brilliant. But say in terms of personnel, 10% are brilliant are coming in this salary structure. Comparing to India and Pakistan and many other neighboring Asian countries, not to compare Singapore, Singapore is one of the best in the world in terms of salary incentive structure.*

*But comparing even in there, Pakistan, people are getting very low salary. Therefore it is a matter of a challenge on behalf of the policy makers to attract. Therefore if you say in terms of huge changes in the administrative cadre structure, not a huge change, but we are hoping.*

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SCHALKWYK: Do you have anything else you'd like to add before we finish?

HOSSAIN: *I'd like to say in a bottom line way, can I call my co-worker and you talk to her?*

SCHALKWYK: We'll do that afterwards.

HOSSAIN: *Afterwards, okay. I'd say the MATT-2 program or this kind of program or similar program, should be continued, not by 2013, it should be continued to at least 2021. It should be a sustainable one. I'm just giving you the bottom line. Coverage should be wider, not only Assistant Secretaries and Secretaries and other people, very important, poor people, customs, tax people. Also another shift, the country focus, not on the UK, Manchester, it should be Japan, Brazil, China. Another one that I said it should be, if DFID is reluctant I'll through you, I'd urge World Bank, IMF, ADB and other international development organizations, they should come forward to Bangladesh and change this. It is a very good thing. Government has got not so much resource to change all this structure, incentive and other things. Therefore DFID and other international partners should come forward.*

*Another thing I must say, they also think about say, knowledge-based society, IT-based society, computer-based society, so that they should offer some Master's, Ph.D., out of say one hundred five or ten. Another thing I must say, also they should have a credibility or buy in network with the politicians. This kind of program is not shared by the politicians in general. Therefore, they should change their paradigm by MATT-2 or this kind. They should not only, the bureaucracy people, they should also induct some public representatives, some members of Parliament, some upazila chairmen, some ministers even. There are some pretty good number of ministers right now who are very educated in our country also. They should induct some women ministers, women MPs, so that gender and other things are automatically taken care of.*

*MATT-2 also makes it, say a multi-sector, multidisciplinary framework with other development partners. Now they are doing it unilaterally. They should make a comprehensive holistic approach to say human resource development. Some things are being done by ADB, some things done by World Bank, some things done by some other universities independently, bilaterally. MATT-2, I'd request MATT-2 should make a comprehensive, multidisciplinary, multi-sector, holistic approach to all other people and inclusive of politicians, policy makers into the whole gamut. It should be at least continuous for another twenty years so that the result, outcome based, [time-based, or say indicator-based administrative management is a very struggling area. It is not possible overnight. You understand.*

*Therefore in the UK I was asking questions, they say only restructuring the tax administration took 70 years in a country like the UK. Therefore, in a country like hours where per capita GDP is only \$500 or \$600 and salary structure is one of the lowest in the world, therefore that is very struggling, very difficult area. Therefore my suggestion, would be the multi-sectoral, holistic, inclusive of everyone, politician, orientation, knowledge-based society and win-win and continue at least for another twenty years. Gentleman, another twenty years. That would be very helpful.*

*The methodology or the screening methodology of Stage 1, Stage 2. In some way or other, sometimes it found forty. They are only based on, the Stage 2 is based on certain performance in Stage 1. But they should also take care of psychological consistency or some kind of talking before sending to some other*

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*country. Because in Stage 1 they have done a wonderful result, in Stage 1. But in some cases we are finding very difficult places in other countries when they talk, when they interact, when they share, their psychological consistency is also important, whether they can cope, they can resist, or resilient or share. The sense of proportion is also.*

*Therefore, before sending to Stage 2, apart from all other indicators used by MATT-2, they should also take, at least half an hour verbal interview with the participant so that they can have an exact idea. This man or this woman will not be having much difficulty in other countries. Because in some cases, in the Stage 2, we find here they have done wonderful, but when they were sent to other countries, UK, Manchester or Oxford or for that purpose the USA, some people are in total 45 days, some people are kept mum. They did not share, not activated, not something. Okay, they're brilliant in their inner side of mind, but how people are outside, people don't understand their brilliance. Therefore before sending I would request MATT-2 take some half and hour verbal interview before sending them to other countries so that they can have an idea there is no difficulty, no sharing, no problem, no challenge.*

*Okay? Must be global, must be very high quality. So that Manchester people can easily understand, oh, my God, MATT-2 has a—Stage 2 is a wonderful person, very global, very expert, can talk, intellectual, performance-based, world-wide outlook performance and everything. The Manchester people might have some—my God, some people are very brilliant, some people are just keeping mum, there's something wrong with this. Therefore I will also urge that people sent to other countries at least, apart from all others.*

*I'm sorry, I talk too much.*

SCHALKWYK: That's great.

*HOSSAIN: An apology for all the talk too much. Thank you very much for taking all the trials from US to Bangladesh, for taking the interview and everything. I hope you, you are to go a long way for our countries development. I hope you don't forget Bangladesh. Bangladesh is economically very poor country, but non-economically we're not poor. In terms of heritage, tradition, culture, in terms of IQ, brilliance, we may not be poor. In terms of economy, 150 million, too much people and therefore our GDP and historical and many other reasons we are very poor. But we want your support, whole world support for our bureaucracy, country, pp and poverty reduction. Thank you Andrew, thank you for all the troubles you have taken for us.*

SCHALKWYK: Thank you.