UNITED NATIONS NATIONS UNIES

UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SIERRA LEONE
(UNAMSIL)

Ref. No.: UNAMSIL/PIOR 052/2003 *11 December 2003*

FORCE COMMANDER COMMISSIONS BANGLADESH BATTALION 9 PROJECT AT SOUTHERN PROVINCE

The Force Commander and Chief Military Observer of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), Major General Sajjad Akram, December 10 commissioned Bangladesh Battalion 9 Quick Impact Project at the Seventh Day Adventist Primary School, Bo. The project, began on November 1, 2003, consists of four newly constructed classrooms and six rehabilitated classrooms.

Gen Akram commended the Bangladeshi contingent for its selfless service to the people of Bo.

The Bangladeshi contingent and Sector Centre Commander, Brig Gen Habib Ahssan named other projects the contingent had successfully completed as including church, mosque and school buildings. Brigadier Ahssan said they had also donated food items and drugs to the people. "Stopping fighting is not only bringing peace, but involvement in humanitarian projects contribute towards consolidating peace," he said.

The representative of the regional minister, Mr Salia Ishaka, thanked Banbatt 9 for the project and urged the population of Bo to emulate the Bangladeshi peacekeepers by constructing similar projects that would bring direct benefit to the people.

The Commanding Officer of Banbatt 9, Colonel Mohammed Fazlul, thanked the FC, the community leaders and other senior UNAMSIL staff for attending the ceremony. The pupils of Seventh Adventist School entertained the guests with a cultural display.

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Meanwhile the FC also visited Magburaka to bid farewell to the departing Bangladeshi staff officers at the Sector Centre Headquarters. He commended the excellent performances, remarkable achievements and the professionalism the Bangladeshi contingent has displayed in carrying out their tasks in accordance with UNAMSIL mandate. "As the FC, I am satisfied with the good work done by the staff officers of Sector Centre. I wish you all a successful journey back home."

The staff officers of the Bangladeshi contingent arrived the mission area in December 2002 and they are due for rotation as from 15 December, 2003 having completed their one-year tour of duty.

Gen Sajjad later paid a familiarization visit to 5 Brigade Headquarters of the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) in Gondama where he was told by the Brigade Commander, Colonel Anthony Mansanray that the security situation in the area was peaceful. There is a cordial relationship between the MILOB, Banbatt 9 and the RSLAF Brigade, Col. Mansaray said.

The FC commended the Brigade Commander and his staff for what he referred to as the "excellent work" they were doing within their area of responsibility.

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