

## *Editorial:*

The second issue of the CBCB Newsletter of 2024 is going to be published in an unprecedented and literally a revolutionary milieu of the country. With the collapse of the long term authoritarian regime through the student revolution that steered the whole country, Bangladesh now looks with hope towards a society and country free from discrimination and injustice. The Catholic Church in Bangladesh, while welcoming the transformation of the country, expressed concern for the safety and security of the minority and the tribal people both living in the hill tracks and the plain and wished that all would enjoy the same status as citizens with religious and cultural freedom.

The 'joy and hope' in the changing situation of the country also accompany the journey of the Local Church in the Synodal process. The CBCB prepared a 10 page Response to the Synthesis of the Synod that were sent to the General Secretariat of Synod, Rome as well as to the FABC in collaboration with the diocesan representatives and their reports. In addition, the Church in Bangladesh was blessed with the visit of Sister Nathalie Beckquit, XMCJ, Under Secretary of the Synod Secretariat at the Vatican, and Father George Plathottam, SDB, Executive Secretary of the Office of Social Communication of the FABC. The CBCB organized a three day long seminar under their guidance where the bishops along with the diocesan representatives, Major Superiors and distinguished persons participated.

This issue of the CBCB Newsletter covers the ecclesial activities on the national and international level that falls under the Episcopal Body through Episcopal Commissions. The Episcopal Commissions undertake various activities throughout the year under the patronage of its Chairman Bishops and in collaboration with diocesan counterparts. This enhances the pastoral love and care of the CBCB for the Church in Bangladesh.

Finally, the Church's concern also extends to the miserable and vulnerable people badly affected by the recent devastating flood in some parts of the country. The Local Bishops had taken prompt measures with all its energy and agencies to rescue and aid the affected people. Most of all the CBCB has decided to raise a special fund with a significant amount for the rehabilitation of the flood victims which would soon be handed over to the Chief Advisor of the Govt. of Bangladesh.

Let us, thus walk together, hand in hand, resolved to face all the challenges that comes on our way and move forward with a renewed hope for a better future and eventually make this journey truly Synodal.



## **CBCB Meeting Held**

The third meeting of the Catholic Bishops' Conference was held on 21-22 Aug. 2024. All the bishops of the CBCB attended the meeting. The meeting started with a prayer and a motion of condolence was moved on the death of Mrs. Teresa Howlader, the mother of Archbishop Lawrence S. Howlader, CSC who passed away on 25th June 2024.

In the beginning Archbishop Bejoy N. D'Cruze, OMI made the presentation on *Instrumentum Laboris* of the second session of the Synod 2024 and noted that the IL is a 'working instrument' for the members of the Assembly due to meet in Rome next October (2-27). Archbishop noted that this orientating text, essentially articulated and designed to encourage prayer, dialogue, discernment and the maturing of a consensus. The document, divided into five sections, includes an introduction, the foundations, and three central parts.

*Following are some other issues that were discussed in the meeting:*

### **❖ The Present political situation of Bangladesh and the role of the Church:**

Archbishop Bejoy N. D'Curze, OMI informed that he had joined the Hindu, Christian and Buddhist Oikko Parisad (union) to meet the Chief Advisor. There the representatives expressed their concern regarding the safety and the rights of the minorities. Archbishop also spoke on the meeting representing the Christian Community and greeted the Chief Advisor and his cabinet members to take up the responsibility of the country in a crucial time. He affirmed that the Christians of this country are its citizens and has love and passion for it. The Christians dream of a democratic country where everyone can practice his/her religion free of fear and discrimination; a country where justice and rule of law will prevail and proceed towards a developed country free from poverty and deprivation; a country with peace, harmony and brotherhood. He also mentioned the contribution of the Church especially with regards to education and health sectors irrespective of cast and creed.

The bishops proposed for a possible meeting of the CBCB along with the Apostolic Nuncio with the present government in order to raise issues of the Catholic Church such as govt. holidays during Christmas and Easter and other issues.

### **❖ Uniformity in Bann writing form and the marriage certificate:**

Bishops accepted the proposals of the new printing of the Bann writing forms and marriage certificates which would be done in by the CBCB Secretariat in accordance of the needs of the dioceses.

### **❖ Educational Matters:**

Bishops noted that in the recent changing situation the Christian Education institutes are at risk. There are protests and threats on trivial grounds. There are demands of forced resignation of teachers and administrative authorities of the institutes. In some places the protesters demand financial statements and force a reduction of tuition and other fees. In many ways the protesters are creating obstacles and hindrances to run the institute. Bishops proposed to look for an appointment of the Education Advisor with the representatives of BCEB (a 15 member team) so that the Catholic Educational Institutes might present these concerns to the ministry.

### **Some appointments and renewal of appointments from the CBCB:**

-Bishop Subroto B. Gomes is officially announced as the Chairman of the EC-Youth. At the same time bishops expressed gratitude to Archbishop Lawrence S. Howlader, CSC for dedicated service till date in this important ministry.

- a) The renewal of the appointment of Fr. Paul Gomes as the Rector of the HSMS for another three years
- b) Appointment of Fr. Milton Rozario as the Prefect of Studies in place of Fr. Anthony Hasdak, c)
- Renewal of Appointment of Fr. Rodon Hadima as the Vice rector for another term d) Fr. Sujon C. Gomes- Appointed as the Librarian and the Residential Staff of HSMS. e) Fr. Utpal Ritchil- Renewal of Appointment as the Director of the Bulakipur Spiritual Program. f) The name of Fr. Terence Rodrigues has been proposed as the director of the SSP Course 2024.





## Seminar on 'Synod and Synodality'

From June 27–29, 2024, at the CBCB Center in Dhaka, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Bangladesh (CBCB) successfully organized a three-day Seminar on "Synod and Synodality". The gathering sought to improve knowledge and involvement with the synodality in the Church in Bangladesh. Sister Nathalie Beckquit, XMCJ, Undersecretary of the Synod Secretariat at the Vatican, and Father George Plathottam, SDB, Executive Secretary of the Office of Social Communication of the Federation of Asian

Bishops' Conferences (FABC) helped to moderate it.

About eighty people attended the meeting, comprising of Most Rev. Archbishop Bejoy N. D'Cruze, OMI, His Eminence Cardinal



Patrick D'Rozario, CSC, Most Rev. BP. Gervas Rozario, Most Rev. BP. Paul Ponon Kubi, CSC, Most Rev. BP. James Romen Boiragi, Most Rev. BP. Sebastian Tudu, as well as several fathers, brothers, sisters, and lay delegates from all the dioceses. Inspired by the Biblical story of Jesus going with his disciples to Emmaus, Bishop Paul Ponon Kubi, CSC, the Secretary General of the CBCB emphasized in his introductory comments the need of precisely defining the idea of a synodal Church.

Emphasizing Pope Francis' call to pay attention to the Holy Spirit throughout the synodal trip of the Church, Father George Plathottam underlined how respect,

harmony, and unity might be fostered. In his sermon during the Inaugural Eucharist, Cardinal Patrick D'Rozario, CSC, underlined the need of the Church embracing a prophetic role, so transcending insensitivity and toward a more inclusive and receptive society.



The topics discussed during the conference were: "Synod and Synodality, the journey so far", "experience of the synod, CBCB journey", "listening, discernment and conversation in the Spirit", "presentation on the documents of FABC 50", "fully present", and "synodal leadership: role of youth, women, and laity". Emphasizing the Church's mission to live out the teachings of Christ and to embrace inclusivity and empathy in its pastoral approach, Archbishop Bijoy N. D'Cruze, OMI, shared about the synodal experiences in the Church in Bangladesh. Sister Nathalie Becquart also emphasized the roles young people, women, and laity may play in supporting synodal leadership. In other sessions, Fr. George Plathottam examined synodality within the Asian setting, addressing issues including the effect of Asian cultural norms, the misery of migrants and refugees, and limited participation of women in Church leadership. He demanded a Church that welcomes these particular issues, is friendly, and inclusive.

Inspired by Pope Francis' vision, the valedictory session under Archbishop Bijoy N. D'Cruze, OMI, underlined the need of the Church overcoming internal divisions and factionalism by synodality. While former government official Pius Costa offered his thoughts on using synodal ideas in interfaith settings, Sister Nathalie ended with stressing the need of practical learning and spiritual discernment.

Archbishop Kevin S. Randall, the Apostolic Nuncio to Bangladesh, led a closing Mass at the Seminar praising the Church's attempts to promote empathy and solidarity in keeping with Pope Francis's call for a more synodal Church.

## Annual General Meeting of BDPF 2024



The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Bangladesh Diocesan Priests' Fraternity (BDPF) held at the Holy Spirit Major Seminary from 16th to 19th July 2024. In the inaugural ceremony Fr. Mintu L. Palma, the President of the BDPF welcomed everybody and invited all to participate actively in these three days programs. This year the theme was 'The Church & Priests of 21st Century and Probable Realities'. The AGM began with Holy Eucharist presided over by Most Rev. Bp. Sebastian Tudu. During the AGM there were different presentations on various important topics by different resource persons such as- a) Speeches delivered by Archbishop Bejoy N. D Cruze, OMI on 'Synodality: Bishops & Priests in Different Pastoral Areas'; b) Rev. Fr. Paul Gomes on 'Priests & Clericalism'; c) Rev. Fr. Joyonto Gomes on 'Digital Era: Priests and Future Church'; d) Rev Fr. Mintu L. Palma on 'Marriage & Family in Pastoral Ministry'. In addition, there were open discussions, panel discussions and group sharing of the Priests on 'Different Contexts'. At last there was the AGM. A special vote of thanks was given to the Msgr. Marinko Antolovic the departing Secretary of the Apostolic Nunciature of Bangladesh. He shared his feelings and some thoughts with the priests. Most Rev. Bp. Gervas Rozario was the main celebrant of the concluding Mass.

This year 172 Priests have participated in this AGM including six Bishops. The three day long BDPF AGM of 2024 had been very effective with all its activities as well as a wonder occasion.



For the diocesan priests of Bangladesh it was a wonderful occasion to spend time together all being renewed with the fraternal support and prayer. Fr. Ruben Gomes, Secretary of BDPF had conducted and animated the whole program together with the animating team members.

## The Golden Jubilee of Holy Spirit Major Seminary



Under the theme **“Glorious 50 Years towards the Building of the Local Church in Bangladesh”**, the Holy Spirit Major Seminary has been celebrated the 50th Anniversary of its establishment (1973-2023) in a solemn and cordial manner on April 19, 2024 at the Seminary Premises.

His Excellency Archbishop Kevin S. Randall, The Apostolic Nuncio to Bangladesh, (as chief guest) His Eminence Cardinal Patrick D’Rozario, CSC, (special guest), Archbishops, Bishops, Msgr. Marinko Antolovic, Secretary of Apostolic Nuncio to Bangladesh, a good number of distinguished and honorable guests, seminary teaching staff, rectors of various

formation houses, Vicar Generals, priests, provincials, superior generals, principals, vice-chancellors, sisters, brothers, benefactors of the seminary, seminarians, and some faithful took part in this auspicious occasion.

This was undoubtedly a joyful and communal festival and a very auspicious occasion in the history of the local Catholic Church of Bangladesh. It is worth mentioning that the Holy Spirit Major Seminary is the only Major Seminary in Bangladesh under the authority and guidance of the CBCB. From its inception, especially after the liberation war, the Bishops felt the need to establish a major seminary in



Bangladesh, and that decision became visibly true in 1973. Over the course of 50 years, this seminary has fulfilled the expectations, preparing the majority of priests (Diocesan & Religious), men & women religious, and some lay people who have completed their studies and formation here. Up to

now 446 priests were ordained after completing their studies from this seminary. Apart from them 90 brothers, sisters and lay completed their diploma studies, 43 priests and sisters completed their Philosophy course from this seminary. The Holy Spirit Major Seminary is truly a special, grace-filled continuous blessing from God.

## National Training Program on Interreligious Dialogue



A five day (July 31 to August 4) national training program on Interreligious Dialogue was held at the Diocesan Pastoral and Formation Centre situated in Dinajpur. With near about 75 participants from eight dioceses, from Caritas Central Office and eight regions, from MAWTS Institute and CDI, this national training was organized by the Episcopal

Commission for Christian Unity and Interreligious Dialogue (EC-CUIRD). While the theme of the above stated training was: *Catholic View on Other Religions*, the main goal of conducting this annual training was to offer wide range of knowledge and information about Interreligious dialogue and harmony and to form dedicated workers to serve in this area at grass-root level : parish, Institution, Formation House etc and in all over diocese.

On 31 July evening the national training was inaugurated with welcoming words by Commission Secretary Rev. Fr. Patrick Gomes, welcoming group dance, lighting of the candles, offering flower bouquets , diocese-wise self introducing and speeches by the host prelate Most Rev. Bishop Sebastian Tudu and the Commission Chairman Most Rev. Archbishop Lawrence Subrato Howlader, CSC, Archbishop of Chattogram.

The Subjects relevant to the theme of the training with their respective resource persons were: *Introduction to Interreligious Dialogue* by Rev. Fr. Norbert Gomes; *Spirituality of Interreligious Dialogue and Interreligious Dialogue in Bangladesh Pastoral Plan* by His Eminence Cardinal Patrick D'Rozario, CSC ; *Interreligious Dialogue according to Vatican II and Post Vatican II* by Rev. Fr. Patrick Gomes; *The Asian Theology of Interreligious Dialogue and Asian Councils* by Rev Fr. Proloy Augustine Cruze; *Life Sharing of Interreligious Dialogue as a layman* by honorable Prof. Samson Hasdak from Rajshahi Govt College and *Challenges of Interreligious dialogue* by Sr. Reba Veronica D'Costa, RNDM. Adding to these topics were also *The Interreligious Dialogue and Harmony in the Light of Islam* by Md. Abu Taher Siddiki, Professor of Political Science, Setabgonj Degree College and by Abed Ali, longtime teacher of Islam, St Philip's High School and College. Honorable Swami Bivatmanonda Moharaz, Principal, Ramkrishna Mission, highlighted Interreligious Dialogue according to Hindu religion.

The Training was concluded with action plan chalked out by the participants for their respective dioceses and Organizations followed by the concluding words of Bishop Sebastian Tudu and Archbishop Lawrence Subrato Howlader, CSC. The participants received Certificates at the successful completion of the program.

## Health Seminar Inspired the Workers

Health Commission of Mymensingh Diocese organized a Health Seminar on new charter for health care workers, care of nature, updated information and heat illness management at St. John's Catholic Church, Dhairpara, Dhobaura on 24 May 2024 for the health workers of charitable dispensaries and school teachers. Total 50 participants attended the seminar across the diocese.





Fr. Verywell Chisim, member of National Health Care Commission and Parish Priest of Dhairpara Church organized the seminar in order to increase capacity building and update the Health Care Workers. Dr. Fr. Lintu Francis D. Costa, Dr. Nelson Palma and Lily

Anthania Gomes provided support as resource persons.

On behalf of Bishop Ponon Kubi, CSC, Fr. Ashesh Dio shared the concluding message focusing on the spiritual role of health workers. The participants were pleased to organize such a seminar which was very important to review their knowledge and make inspiration for better care of nature and human life.

## 45th Annual General Meeting of BCNG and Education Seminar



Bangladesh Catholic Nurses' Guild (BCNG), a recognized institution of EC-HC organized its 45th Annual General Meeting of BCNG and an Education Seminar for the nurses from 28-29 June 2024 at Holy Cross Pastoral and Retreat Centre, Vadun. A total of 91 nurses attended

the seminar from all over the country. In the introductory session, Bishop Theotonious Gomes, CSC, Chief Guest, and Bishop Ponon Paul Kubi, CSC, Special Guest conveyed their messages on the important role of nurses for the sick. Fr. James C. Cruze, CSC, Fr. Kunjan Quiah, Fr. Lintu F. Costa, Sr. Lipy Gloria Rozario, Prof. Mabel D' Rozario and Mr. Richard Boby also delivered speeches which encouraged the participants. In the afternoon, an election was organized as per constitution where new Executive Board members were elected by the members of BCNG.

The Education Seminar for the nurses was held on 29 June 2024. The main topics of the seminar were *Building resilient mental health, Climate change and its impact on health, Professionalism in Nursing, Correction of dehydration by ORS*. The facilitators were Ms. Mala Reberio, Fr. Liton Hubert Gomes, CSC, Prof. Mabel D Rozario and Mr. Raphael Biswas. The participants were active and discussed many things openly as all topics were very much related to the nursing profession.

## EC-Youth: Chaplains and Animators Training Course-2024



The Episcopal Youth Commission organized the 3rd National Chaplain and Animator Training Course on July 09-10, 2024. A total of 67 people including 8 chaplains, 8 secretaries, 30 young animators and 15 young female animators participated in it from the eight dioceses of Bangladesh. The Theme of the Workshop was: *"Synodal Leadership: Empowering and Engaging Chaplain-Animators."* Rev. Father Patrick Shimon Gomes, the former National Youth Coordinator, spoke very beautifully and eloquently on the subject. He said, "The main excellence of Synodal leadership is: "listening to the word of God and each other, openness, understanding, and continuing the efforts to establish a harmonious society even in the midst of conflict." He added, "The duty of a Catholic chaplain is: to awaken in his young followers faith and hope toward God; To help them realize that serving God is a greater calling beyond ordinary living."

Sharing detailed insights and experiences on Chaplaincy and Guidance, former President of the Youth Commission, Most Rev. Archbishop Lawrence Subrato Howladar, CSC, noted, "A chaplain will be a man of intercultural and intercultural perspective in his spiritual life—in words, in behavior, in meditation, in study, even in thought; One who will be Christian in principle and modern in vision." The participants, in expressing their feeling noted that the training course was highly effective and animating and would be very fruitful in their own lives as well as in their respective fields of service.

At the closing ceremony, Most Rev. Bishop Subroto B. Gomes was officially welcomed as the newly appointed president through the Holy Mass. Expressing his feelings, the new chairman said, "20 years ago, I worked as a youth coordinator of Dhaka Archdiocese, but my journey at the national level might be a bit tough. I promise to inspire and encourage the youth to be God-faithful and God-oriented with my experience and fellow journeyman leadership and new work experience." At the same time thanks and gratitude were expressed to the former President Most Rev. Archbishop Lawrence Subrato Howladar, CSC. He said, in the last 12 years (2012-2024), I have been trying to change, renew and rejuvenate the youth commission through the infrastructure of the Episcopal Youth Commission, new activities, creative work methods and participatory leadership while facing many new challenges. I wish that the current president will continue this trend and play a leading role in the transformation of life and society among the youth. Finally, the workshop concluded with the cutting of the cake and birthday floral wishes to Rev. Father Bikash James Rebeiro, CSC, Executive Secretary and National Youth Coordinator of the Episcopal Commission for Youth.



## Caritas Internationalis Secretary General Alistair Dutton Visits Bangladesh Urges Global Support for Rohingya Refugees



Alistair Dutton, the Secretary General of Caritas Internationalis, visited Caritas Bangladesh from June 4 to 6, 2024 for a deeper understanding on the programs implemented by Caritas Bangladesh, including the Emergency Response Program for Rohingya refugees in Ukhiya, Cox's Bazar. His visit

commenced with a tour of the Child Drop-In Center (DIC) in Arambag, Mirpur, Dhaka, where Caritas Bangladesh is committed to safeguarding the rights of street children. He also visited the Rajonigondha Slum in Hazi Goli, Mirpur, to observe the organization's urban disaster risk reduction program, which aims to improve the lives of slum residents.

A significant focus of Mr. Dutton's visit was the ongoing crisis involving Rohingya refugees. He met with the Additional Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (ARRRC), representatives from various UN agencies, and the NGO Platform—a coordination system for both international and national NGOs in Cox's Bazar. During these meetings, he also engaged with staff and visited the Rohingya refugee camps to gain a deeper understanding of the current challenges faced by the displaced Myanmar nationals.

In Dhaka, Mr. Dutton held discussions with Vatican Ambassador Archbishop Kevin S. Randall; Archbishop of Dhaka, Bijoy N. D'Cruze, OMI; and Cardinal Patrick D'Rozario, CSC. On June 6, at a press briefing held at the Reporters' Unity in Dhaka, Mr. Dutton made a compelling appeal for global support to address the ongoing needs of the Rohingya refugees.

Later that evening, Caritas Bangladesh hosted a reception in his honor at its central office. The event was attended by Cardinal Patrick D'Rozario, CSC, Most Rev. Bejoy N. D'Cruze, OMI; Caritas Bangladesh's President Most Rev. James Romen Boiragi; Caritas Asia's President, Dr. Benedict Alo D'Rozario; along with Caritas Bangladesh's Directors and staff. Mr. Dutton departed Bangladesh early on June 7, 2024.

## Workshop on Safeguarding the Children and the Vulnerable Adults



On 25-26 April 2024, Episcopal Commission for Justice and Peace in collaboration with the Justice and Peace commission of Rajshahi diocese organized a seminar on Safeguarding at

the Rajshahi Pastoral Centre. The participants were priests, religious and social leaders of Rajshahi and Khulna dioceses. The 85 participants including Bishop Gervas Rozario, president of ECJP, Fr. Liton H Gomes CSC, secretary of ECJP, Fr. Sagor Corraya, secretary of JPC-Rajshahi, Fr. James Mondol secretary of

JPC-Khulna, vicar generals, religious and social leaders from Rajshahi and Khulna dioceses were present at the seminar. On the first day, Fr. Liton shared on the Goal and objectives, Fr. John Ray (Principal of St Louis School) shared on the Child Protection Policy of the diocese and effective of it in the schools/organizations. On the second day, the sessions were given by Fr. Uttom Rozario on the Catholic Teaching of Child Protection; advocate Awrongojeb Kakon, on Government policy for Safeguarding of Children and Women in Bangladesh; and Fr. William Murmu on Canon Law. Mrs. Stella Rupa (National coordinator of child Protection World Vision) shared on the management & reporting of Safeguarding issues. Bejoy Kumar Boshak (additional DIG of Police- Crime Management) shared on the safeguarding of children and women.

## Capacity Building Workshop on Human Rights in Thailand



On 23-31 July, 2024 Caritas Thailand organized a Capacity Building Workshop on Human Rights and Justice at the International Youth Training Center (IYTC) in Chiangmai, Thailand. The workshop was attended by participants from India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Philippines, Indonesia

and Malaysia. Fr. Sagor Corraya represented Bangladesh in this workshop.

Part of the workshop was to experience the lifestyles of three indigenous communities. These three tribal communities have similarities. They are used to living close to nature. In order that no one can cut down the trees, every year Buddhist and Christian practices of Tree Ordination (religious ceremony, tying Buddhist monks' robes and Christian crosses to the trees on the hill) are held. They believe that 'sharing food with others means sharing life'. They have a beautiful idea that 'nature and nature's animals save them; taking care of nature and animals is everyone's responsibility'.

## Pope Francis Museum: An entity of the Catholic Church of Bangladesh



The Museum, situated in the premise of the Holy Spirit Major Seminary, was officially inaugurated on 22nd Sept. 2024 by H. E. Cardinal Patrick D'Rozario, CSC along with all the bishops of the CBCB. H. E.



Cardinal recalled in the inauguration program that there had been a balanced amount from the Papal visit fund which enhanced the thought of building a national museum which would include archive, library, research work and dormitory building. Later on, in the CBCB Meeting Archbishop Bejoy N. D'Cruze, OMI said that he would present a financial statement in the following CBCB Meeting. It was decided that a committee would be formed to prepare a guideline for the operation of the museum.

## Aid to the Flood affected people

Since 22 August 2024, heavy rainfall, combined with the release of water from upstream sources, has led to severe flooding in several districts of Bangladesh including Moulvibazar, Habiganj, Sylhet, Feni, Cumilla, Noakhali, Khagrachhari, Brahmanbaria, Chattogram, Lakshmipur, and Cox's Bazar. These floods, the worst in eastern Bangladesh in 34 years, have affected 5.6 million people.

The bishops of Bangladesh have invited all the Faithful to come forward wholeheartedly from their own respective areas of support to the aid of those ruined by the flood. The CBCB has also initiated to raise a significant amount of fund for the rehabilitation of these people to be handed over to the Chief advisor. Following are only a few endeavors some of the Church's agencies for the aid to those people devastated by the flood:



**Caritas Bangladesh** has assisted more than 60,000 flood-affected people in 35 unions of 17 upazila in seven districts (Khagrachari, Chattogram, Feni, Cumilla, Noakhali, Lakshmipur, and Sylhet) as of 11 September 2024, with the provision of dry and cooked food, hygiene kits, ORS saline, soap, water purification tablets, drinking water, jerry cans, and food packages.

### Caritas Dhaka Region and

**Notre Dame College, Dhaka** jointly distributed food packages among 640 flood affected families of 5 No Pirjatrapur union, Burichang sub-district under Cumilla district on 14 September, 2024.

**Bangladesh Catholic Students' Movement (BCSM)** had initiated a fund raising program for the flood affected people. On 1st September BCSM has provided food supplies to 125 Tripura and Chakma families at Khagrachori. On 7th September BCSM distributed aids to the 135 families at Paikgacha of Khulna.

A medical team of **St. John Mary Vianny Hospital** went to Cumilla and provided medical aid to the flood affected people.



## The Apostolic Nuncio Meets the Chief Advisor:



On 9 September the Apostolic Nuncio to Bangladesh, His Excellency Kevin S. Randall, met with Muhammad Yunus, Chief Advisor to the interim government of Bangladesh.

At the Rashtriya Guest House Jamuna in Dhaka, the two discussed various issues, related to Bangladesh's religious minorities, inter-faith dialogue, Rohingya humanitarian responses and the UN General Assembly where Prof Yunus is expected to speak later this month.

The Vatican envoy said they had proposed an inter-faith dialogue between the Islamic scholars of Bangladesh and a delegation from the Holy See's Dicastery on interreligious dialogue.

The envoy also underscored the need for scaling up assistance for over one million Rohingya people who live in the camps in Bangladesh's southeast.

## Thanksgiving to Msgr. Marinko Antolovic:



The Bishops met the Monsignor at the Nunciature on 22nd of August 2024. He expressed his joy for the blessing of the 'Pope Francis Museum'. He noted that a museum is a very important place which encapsulates the history, heritage and memory. He congratulated the CBCB for this achievement and observed that the former Nuncio George Kocherry would be very happy who dreamed of its fulfilment.

Secondly, the Monsignor thanked the bishops for this gathering as it was the only opportunity for him to meet all bishops together before moving forward to his new mission in Singapore. Msgr.

expressed his gratitude to all the bishops for cooperating in his service in first two years as secretary under Archbishop George Kocherry and, one and a half year as Charge d'affaires a.i. and later with Archbishop Randall. He noted that it was a unique experience for him with a Nuncio who was going to retire and a Nuncio who would start his diplomatic ministry as a new Nuncio.

Bishop Ponien Kubi, CSC thanked the Monsignor, for all his dedication and contributions in the Local Church of Bangladesh despite difficult situation, atmosphere and weather. He noted that Msgr. Marinko was always ready and generous in responding in any sort of need of the bishops and as well as of the local Church in Bangladesh. Finally, all the bishops wished for his fruitful ministry in Singapore and assured him of their prayers. Bishops also offered him some gifts as a token of remembrance.

### Board of Editors:

Fr. Tushar James Gomes, Fr. Bikash James Rebeiro, CSC, Fr. Peter Chanel Gomes, Mr. Manik Willver D Costa, Mr. Sukumar Mullick

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Email: cbcsec@gmail.com, Website: www.cbcsec.org