



# Samhati

Bangladesh Women's Organization

13107 Laneview Ct., Oak Hill, VA 20171, USA

[samhati.org](http://samhati.org)

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September 10, 2023

Dear Friends,

We hope you had a lovely summer. Please join us for Samhati's Benefit Dinner on **Saturday, October 14, 2023, 6:00 to 9:00 pm**, at the River Road Unitarian Universalist Congregation, 6301 River Road, Bethesda, MD 20817.

Founded in 1984, Samhati is the longest-running organization of Bangladeshi women in the United States. We design and support small projects - focused on education, health, and environmental sustainability - to improve the lives of impoverished women and families in Bangladesh. Samhati is tax exempt (IRS ID Number 52-1390261). As an all-volunteer organization with negligible overhead, Samhati can direct approximately 95% of your contributions to needy families. This is what your contribution will do:

- *If you donate \$75, it will provide a one-year scholarship to ensure that a middle or high school child stays in school and does not have to work.*
- *A donation of \$100 provides adult literacy or vocational classes for a village woman.*
- *A donation of \$125 provides a bicycle and helmet for a girl to help her get to school.*
- *A donation of \$250 provides three months of college costs for a low-income young woman.*
- *A donation of \$500 funds our health clinic in Katakhal village for one month, providing care for the entire Barobaishdia Island of 27,000 people.*
- *Your gift of \$1000 supports 80 families with small cash grants to meet basic needs.*

During the pandemic, Samhati provided critical support to our communities and continued all our programs to empower women and families. All our programs are now running and have even been expanded. We are giving out more bicycles to girls and more high school and college scholarships. We are providing education in eco-farming, computers, and leadership training. Hundreds of women, children, and families have been transformed by Samhati's work. Our focus on literacy has created leadership from within to maintain and grow our projects. Your support is crucial! Please support our work and join us on October 14.

With our best wishes and many thanks,  
*The Samhati Board and Advisors*

## **UPDATE ON SAMHATI'S WORK IN BANGLADESH**

Although our projects and communities were impacted by the pandemic, Samhati worked very effectively to pivot and adapt and assist our communities. We even expanded our work during the pandemic— starting new computer trainings to facilitate online learning, doubling the number of college scholarships, and doubling the number of bicycles distributed to girls. All our projects are fully functioning now.

### **Katakhalī Project in Patuakhali District (plus Modhukhalī Project)**

Since 2000, Samhati has been working to empower women and families in the remote Katakhalī community, a village on an island off the southern coast of Bangladesh. Samhati provides adult literacy classes and leadership and skills training to women in Katakhalī Village and neighboring Modhukhalī Village. The villagers are particularly vulnerable to climate change, and we are providing climate adaptation and advocacy training. In 2023, scholarships were given to 60 students in Katakhalī High School. In 2023, we gave bicycles/helmets to 20 girls. The bikes for girls program is a huge success and has increased female mobility and empowerment.

Our Computer Training Program (started during pandemic) helped our students to learn online. A woman graduate from our program is teaching the current batch of computer students. A youth center was inaugurated in 2023 providing an opportunity for making art (painting and drawing), reading books in our small library, and computer access and lessons. The youth are meeting after school and on Saturdays. Samhati's Health Center has continued to provide medical services to the island's entire population of 27,000, which otherwise would have no medical care.. Our preschool in Katakhalī is thriving and we now have three women working there because of increased enrollment. The new preschool in Modhukhalī (started in 2022) now has a covered shelter so that children can come even during bad weather.

### **Eco-Village Project in Natore**

Our project in Hatianda, Natore District is now in its 16th year. Hatiandah is a Union of eight villages in northern Bangladesh, and our work has brought considerable positive change. Our tailoring classes are booming and approximately 70 women from five villages are coming to learn how to make a variety of women's clothing including undergarments. Our Computer Center continues to teach basic computer literacy. Our computer graduates are easily able to find employment, either in the government or private organizations. Some have set up small shops providing word processing and online services to villages, most of whom do not own computers. We have three adult literacy centers in three villages, where approximately 100 women learn reading, writing, and arithmetic. We gave 300 fruit plants to these women as incentive for literacy. We again gave out scholarships for 30 high school children. Many of our graduates are now in college. We again gave out 20 bikes/helmets to girls this year, which made their parents very happy. Our farming cooperative is teaching vegetable gardening and production of organic fertilizer. Our sewing classes and kantha embroidery groups are very popular.

### **Project in Laksmichap Union in Rangpur**

Our project in Laksmichap Union, Rangpur, in northern Bangladesh started in 2011. This diverse community includes several religious minority groups. Our computer literacy class is very popular and was started to facilitate online learning during the pandemic and continues to be popular and enrolls mostly women and girls. Samhati is providing 80 high school scholarships, health checkups for girls, and training for women in literacy, sewing, organic vegetable cultivation, poultry rearing, and other small businesses. The project is run by local leadership and is still thriving.

### **Jahanara Ali Memorial College Scholarship for Women**

The Jahanara Ali college scholarship program, honoring a founding board member, is now in its sixth year. We have again increased the number of recipients, giving out nine scholarships in total (last year we gave out six). From Katakhalī, Ashamoni (Economics, BA Honors 3rd year) and Tamanna (Science, Intermediate 3rd year) are attending Patuakhali Mahila College, Shoronika and Mithila are attending Rangabali College (both Intermediate 1st year). From Laksmichamp, Beauty Akhter is enrolled at Rajshahi University, and Purnima Roy is at Nilphamari Government College. From Natore, Mahmouda Khatun is enrolled at Udayan Nursing College (2nd year) in Rajshahi, Sharmin Akhter is enrolled at Shingra Government College (Science, Intermediate final year), and Shuborna Yasmin is at Rani Bhabani Government College (Commerce, 2nd year). This scholarship program allows needy young women to continue higher education and avoid young marriage.

# Samhati's 2023 Benefit Dinner

Saturday, October 14, 2023  
6:00 to 9:00 pm

River Road Unitarian Universalist Congregation  
6301 River Road, Bethesda, MD 20817 (entrance @Whittier Blvd.)

Free parking in lot. Exit 39 from Beltway to River Road. Go towards Bethesda/Washington, take left at Whittier Blvd and venue is immediately on left. Public Transport: Bus T2.

## Featuring:

Dance performance by Maryam Islam

Also featuring: Henna Art/Raffle/Mini Auction

Benefit Chairs: Cima Ali & Alema Siddiky

Catering by Sultana of Aladdin Restaurant

Admission per person: \$75 (**early-bird until September 20**), \$100 (regular) and more (\$40 full-time students only). Includes drinks, dinner, dessert. If you send in your check, we will reserve a ticket for you and your name will be on the guest list at the door. You may also call to reserve tickets and bring check or credit card to event. For information or reservations call **703-618-4618** or email [info@samhati.org](mailto:info@samhati.org). PLEASE SEND YOUR CHECKS NOW OR PAY ONLINE at <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/samhati/966082>  
**DONORS OF \$500 OR MORE WILL BE ACKNOWLEDGED IN OUR PROGRAM AND WEBSITE. YOU MAY ALSO SPONSOR US AND PURCHASE A TABLE WITH YOUR NAME ON IT FOR \$1000.**



I would like \_\_\_ tickets to the Benefit Dinner. I enclose a check for \$\_\_\_\_\_. The price per ticket is \$100 of which \$85 may be tax-deductible. (\$75 early-bird ticket before September 20). **Our costs have gone up and additional donations are very much appreciated.**

I enclose \$1000 as Sponsor of a table and will later send a list of my 8 guests. (Name on table and program.)

I am unable to attend the Benefit Dinner but would like to support Samhati's projects in Bangladesh. I enclose a check for: \$100 \$250 \$500 Silver \$1,000 Gold \$5,000 Platinum \_\_\_\_\_ Other amount (fill in)

Please send me a link to the online event (provide email below!!).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Your email helps us save postage and paper.

Please make your check payable to "Samhati" and mail with this form to Samhati, 13107 Laneview Ct., Oak Hill, VA 20171, USA .

Or visit our website at [samhati.org](http://samhati.org) to reserve tickets/donate.