

# Bangladesh Independence Day

## Working together for a happy, prosperous nation

Abdul Hamid  
PRESIDENT OF BANGLADESH

On the occasion of our great Independence and National Day, I extend my heartfelt greetings and warm felicitations to my fellow countrymen living at home and abroad.

The great independence day is a glorious one in our national life. On this historic day, I recall with profound respect the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who



proclaimed our country's independence on March 26, 1971, after inspiring the whole nation with Bengalee nationalism and preparing them for independence. Under his charismatic leadership, we achieved our much-awaited independence through a nine-month-long armed struggle. Today, I offer my deep tributes to the martyrs and valiant sons of the soil, who made the supreme sacrifice in the War of Liberation. I also recall with deep reverence our four national leaders, valiant freedom fighters, organizers, supporters and people from all walks of life for their unmatched valor, immense contributions and courageous acts that accelerated the



The Father of the Nation  
Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

achievement of our victory. I remember with deep respect our foreign friends who extended their wholehearted support directly and indirectly in our War of Liberation in 1971. The contributions of all will be written in

golden letters in the history of our independence forever.

One of the prime objectives of our hard-earned independence was to build a happy and prosperous Bangladesh. Keeping that in mind, the present government has been rendering untiring efforts in materializing the objectives of independence. The growth rate of the GDP and per capita income is increasing constantly and the rate of poverty is decreasing. In the meantime, we have achieved significant progress in the agriculture, education, health, rural infrastructure, communication, energy and power, trade and commerce, information and communications technology and the small and

medium enterprise sectors. It is notable that our country has attained food-sufficiency owing to huge developments in agriculture, and we have also been able to export food grains on a small scale. The pace of advancement in the empowerment of women, youth and sports, women and children, the social safety net and other areas is continuing. The mega project of the Padma Bridge is underway by our own resources. At the same time, we have also attained remarkable development in the private sector, including the area of ready-made

garments, pharmaceuticals, ceramics and shipbuilding. The country's financial sector along with bank-

ing and insurance has also expanded. Bangladesh is now being branded as a role model of development to the outside world. Our achievements in the international arena are also commendable. Our expatriate Bengalees have also been making significant contributions to our national economy through sending their hard-earned remittances. Nevertheless, we have to go a long way for achieving the desired goals of independence. I believe that sincere and concerted efforts from all strata irrespective of party affiliation are imperative to reach the goals.

The people of our country have a great love for democracy, development and peace. They

do not support any sort of violence, including militancy and terrorism. We should keep in mind that the thriving of democracy and its institutionalization is very important for attaining overall development. Therefore, we have to maintain patience, self-restraint and forbearance in our national life along with showing respect to others' opinions in a democratic pluralism. I hope that people from all strata would play their due role from their respective positions to attain the objectives of independence and fulfill the hopes and aspirations of our people. Bangabandhu dreamed of transforming Bangladesh into "Sonar Bangla" (Golden Bengal). The

present government has set "Vision 2021" and "Vision 2041" to materialize Bangabandhu's dream into reality. It is my expectation that people from all walks of life would contribute toward building an IT-based happy and prosperous Bangladesh through implementing the vision by the golden jubilee celebration of our independence.

On this auspicious day of independence, I urge all, living at home and abroad, to work unitedly imbued with the spirit of the War of Liberation and democratic norms to expedite further progress and democratic advancement of the country.

Khoda Hafez, May Bangladesh live forever.

### Important friendship continues to grow

Taro Aso  
PRESIDENT, JAPAN-BANGLADESH PARLIAMENTARY  
FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE

On the occasion of the Independence and National Day of Bangladesh, I would like to express my heartfelt congratulations to the government and the people of the People's Republic of Bangladesh on behalf of the Japan-Bangladesh Parliamentary Friendship League.



Ever since the independence of Bangladesh in 1971, Japan and Bangladesh have been consistently building a close friendship for 45 years. Strong and stable ties that are from the spirit of mutual interest, trust and cooperation have bound both countries. As for myself, I made an official visit to Bangladesh as foreign minister in July 2006, and as the chairman of the historic Japan-Bangladesh Parliamentary Friendship League since 2008, I have been making efforts for the friendly relationship of Japan and Bangladesh. Last year, we welcomed Gowher Rizvi, adviser to the prime minister, Saber Hossain Chowdhury MP, and president of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, as well as Finance Minister Abul Maal A. Muhith, deepening the bilateral exchanges through meaningful exchanges of opinion.

In July, a terrorist attack occurred in Dhaka that claimed the lives of seven Japanese nationals. Terrorist acts cannot be justified by any means and we strongly condemn such acts. The parliamentary league would like to express condolences to the deceased of the terrorist incident, as well as to the bereaved families. In addition to this, we would like to express a sense of strong solidarity to the people of Bangladesh and support the efforts made by Bangladesh to fight against terrorism.

The Bangladesh economy, which has been marking stable growth with a growth rate of over 6 percent, has been very attractive to Japan. The number of Japanese companies operating in Bangladesh has reached over 240 now. With sufficient security measures to protect Japanese nationals, as well as Japanese companies, the parliamentary league sincerely hopes the ties of the two nations will continue to be strengthened under the comprehensive partnership.

Bangladesh is an important friend for Japan and refers to Japan as "a true friend." The parliamentary league would like to continue to contribute to further strengthen the relationship of the two countries and to advance the bond of friendship and cooperation between them.

Last but not least, I would like to conclude by wishing further prosperity for the people of Bangladesh.

Sheikh Hasina  
PRIME MINISTER OF BANGLADESH

I convey my heartiest greetings and congratulations to my countrymen, as well as to all expatriate Bengalees, on the occasion of the great Independence and National Day of Bangladesh.



March 26 is the day of earning self-identity of our nation. It's the day of breaking the shackles of subjugation. On the eve of the independence day, I recall with deep gratitude the greatest Bengalee of all time, the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, under whose undisputed leadership we earned our beloved independence. I pay my deep homage to the 3 million martyrs and 200,000 women who lost their innocence in the War of Liberation. I also

## Development seen across many sectors

pay my tribute to the four national leaders who led the War of Liberation. My homage goes to the valiant freedom fighters, including the wounded ones. I extend my sympathies to those who had lost their near and dear ones, and were subjected to brutal torture during the war. I recall with gratitude our foreign friends who had extended their whole-hearted support and cooperation for the cause of our liberation.

The Bengalee nation had fought against Pakistani oppression and deprivation for a long 23 years under the leadership of Bangabandhu. They were compelled to hold general elections in 1970. The Bangladesh Awami League led by Bangabandhu won an overwhelming majority in the elections. But the Pakistani rulers, instead of handing over power to the majority party in a democratic way, launched repressive measures against them. Bangabandhu in his March 7 historic address at the

then Racecourse Maidan declared, "The struggle of this time is for freedom, the struggle for this time is for our independence." He instructed the Bengalee nation to resist the enemies.

The occupation forces unleashed a sudden attack and started killing innocent and unarmed Bengalees on the black night of March 25, 1971. They killed thousands of people in cities and towns, including Dhaka. Bangabandhu officially proclaimed the independence of Bangladesh in the first hour of March 26, 1971. Bangabandhu's proclamation was spread all over the country through telegrams, teleprinters and EPR wireless. The international media also circulated Bangabandhu's proclamation of independence. Under the brave and dauntless leadership of Bangabandhu, we earned the ultimate victory on Dec. 16, 1971, after a nine-month bloody war.

The independence earned

through the supreme sacrifices of millions of people is the greatest achievement of Bengalee nation. To ensure that this achievement remains meaningful, all have to know the history of our great Liberation War and retain the spirit of independence. The history has to be passed on from generation to generation.

Being imbued with the spirit of the freedom struggle, the Awami League government has been working relentlessly to develop the country. During the last eight years, we have implemented expected development programs in all sectors. As a result, Bangladesh has emerged as a role model of socioeconomic development. We will turn Bangladesh into a middle-income country by 2021 and a developed one by 2041, Insha Allah.

We have executed the verdict of the killing case of Bangabandhu and most of his family members. The verdicts of cases against those who

committed crimes against humanity are also being executed. Our government is maintaining a zero tolerance policy to tackle militancy and terrorism. We have stopped taking over in an undemocratic way through the 15th amendment of our constitution. On this auspicious day, I urge my countrymen to foil any plot of the anti-liberation, communal forces and anti-development and anti-democracy forces together.

Being imbued with the spirit of our great Liberation War, let us take fresh vow to advance our country's development and democracy. Let us join hands to build a non-communal, hunger and poverty-free, happy and prosperous "Sonar Bangla" (Golden Bengal) as dreamed by the Father of the Nation. On the historic day, this is our commitment.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu.  
May Bangladesh live forever.

### Congratulations on the 46th Anniversary of the Independence of the People's Republic of Bangladesh



The honorable members:

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**KHORSHED ALAM MICKEL** (VICE PRESIDENT)  
**ILIAS MUNSHI** (VICE PRESIDENT)  
**HASHIMOTO MASUD** (VICE PRESIDENT)  
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# Bangladesh Independence Day

## On target to meet key objectives

Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali  
FOREIGN MINISTER OF BANGLADESH

On this day, 46 years ago, the greatest Bengalee of all time and Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman proclaimed independence of Bangladesh in the early hours of March 26, 1971. People from all walks of life responded to his clarion call, participated in the Liberation War and achieved victory on Dec. 16, 1971, to give us an independent Bangladesh. On the occasion of the 46th anniversary of our Independence and National Day, I convey my heartfelt greetings and warm wishes to my compatriots living at home and abroad.

I recall the supreme sacrifices made by the 3 million martyrs.



I also pay my deep respect to the 200,000 women who sacrificed their honor for our freedom. My sympathy goes to those families who lost their near and dear ones during the war. We also express our gratitude to the wounded freedom fighters.

I also pay my gratitude to people from all walks of life and especially the members of the diplomatic corps who, during and after the war, played a courageous role that created the grounds for obtaining moral, financial and military support from global community in favor of the war. Enormous contributions from our foreign friends have been written in golden letters in the history of our Liberation War, and we are privileged to recognize their contribution and bestow upon them the honor as "Friends of Bangladesh."

Bangabandhu's daughter and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has declared "Vision

2021," which aims to build a middle-income country by 2021, and "Vision 2041," the goal of which is to create a developed country by 2041, in line with the spirit of the Liberation War and the dream of Bangabandhu to build a "Sonar Bangla" (Golden Bengal). We have attained the status of a lower middle-income country and are on track to become a middle-income country well before 2021.

Bangladesh was acclaimed as a role model after successfully achieving many of the U.N.'s Millennium Development Goals. The 71st U.N. General Assembly last year adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Even before that we had already started working to align our national plan in line with the U.N.'s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. With Bangabandhu's daughter and the prime minister at the helm, Bangladesh will be on course to meet

the objectives and targets under the SDGs.

I thank all the members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and our missions abroad that have been working with sincerity, dedication and commitment in achieving our foreign policy objectives and implementing development goals. I also congratulate the Bangladeshi diaspora in every corner of the world that is immensely contributing to the strengthening of the image of Bangladesh.

Additionally, the Bangladesh parliament on March 11 has unanimously adopted a resolution declaring March 25 as the "Day of Genocide." We should, therefore, renew our pledge to work for the country from our respective positions imbued with the spirit of the Liberation War to build the Sonar Bangla of Bangabandhu's dream.

Joy Bangla!  
Joy Bangabandhu!

## Socioeconomic growth remains steady

Rabab Fatima  
AMBASSADOR OF BANGLADESH

I extend my warmest wishes to the readers of The Japan Times on the occasion of the 46th Anniversary of the Independence and National Day of Bangladesh.

On this auspicious occasion, I convey my profound respect to their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akhito and Empress Michiko and my warm greetings to the government and the friendly people of Japan.

I pay my deep homage to the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who led the nation in our struggle for independence. I also pay tribute to the martyrs of the War of Independence for their supreme sacrifice.

This year, we celebrate the 45th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Bangladesh and Japan.

Bangladesh-Japan relations have endured the test of time and Japan has emerged as one of our most important development partners and trusted friends. The exchange of visits in 2014 by our prime ministers and the participation of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the G-7 summit outreach program in Japan have taken our relations to new heights. We deeply appreciate Japan's support and investment in important projects and development initiatives in Bangladesh under our comprehensive partnership, and we wish to have Japan by our side as we move to the next stage of development, with increased investment in infrastructure development and growth in trade relations.

The prime minister's development and growth roadmap, "Vision 2021," places an inclusive and participatory development model at the center of all national development efforts. This has resulted in significant progress in public health care, food security, education, female participation and poverty reduction.

Our GDP growth has remained steady at over 6 percent for the last decade, crossing 7 percent last year, and we expect that to grow even further this year.

Our industrial sector is also witnessing steady growth. We are the second-largest ready-made garment producer in the world. We export pharmaceutical products to more than 100 countries after meeting domestic demand. Leather and footwear, jute, light engineering, shipbuilding, ceramics and steel are some of the other export-oriented industries growing rapidly. Bangladesh has one of the fastest growing IT sectors, making us now one of the leading IT outsourcing countries and our goal of "Digital Bangladesh" appears to be well within our reach.

Bangladesh has one of the most liberal investment regimes in the region. Our investment-friendly policies have turned us into a favored destination for foreign investment. Risk factors for foreign direct investment are small in Bangladesh. We allow for 100 percent foreign equity

with an unrestricted exit policy, easy remittance of profits and protection of foreign investments. Our demographic advantages combining a large pool of young skilled labor and a huge market of 160 million people, with a growing middle class and rising consumerism makes us an attractive destination. We are making concerted efforts to promote and establish regional connectivity and Bangladesh is emerging as an important regional hub connecting South and Southeast Asia. The number of Japanese investors in Bangladesh is growing and we are also seeing a steady growth in bilateral trade. I invite Japanese investors to explore further the business potentials and take advantage of the special incentives we provide.

I conclude by congratulating and extending warmest felicitations to my fellow Bangladeshis in Japan who continue to make important contributions to promote friendly relations between Bangladesh and Japan.

Long live Bangladesh-Japan friendship.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe meet at the G-7 Ise-Shima summit outreach program in Mie Prefecture in May. EMBASSY OF BANGLADESH



Bangladesh is exporting pharmaceutical products to more than 100 countries. EMBASSY OF BANGLADESH

### Congratulations

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