

# Bangladesh independence day

## Building a prosperous nation

Abdul Hamid  
PRESIDENT OF BANGLADESH

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

The great Independence Day is a glorious one in our national life. We achieved our long-cherished independence through a nine-month-long armed struggle and manifold forbearance and patience. Today, I recall with deep gratitude the heroic martyrs who made supreme sacrifices in achieving our independence. On this historic day, I recall with profound respect the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who proclaimed the country's independence despite myriad challenges and odds. 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 contributions and courageous role that

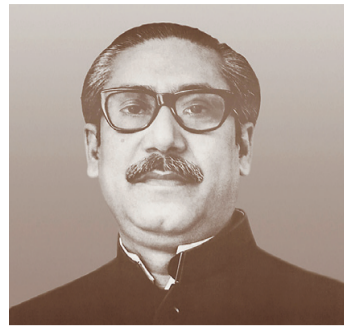


accelerated the achievement of our victory. The contributions of those valiant sons will be written in golden letters in the history of our independence forever.

One of the prime objectives of our hard-earned independence was to build a happy and prosperous Bangladesh. Keeping that in mind, the government has been putting untiring efforts in materializing the objectives of independence. We have achieved some significant progress in the fields of agriculture, education, health, rural infrastructure, communication, energy and power, trade and commerce, ICT, SME, youth and sports, women and children, women empowerment, etc. in our nation. At the same time we have also attained notable development in private sector including the areas of ready-made garments, pharmaceuticals, ceramics and the ship-building industry. The government is also very sincere to establish the rule of law and advance human rights in the country. Our achievement in the international arena is also commendable. Bangladeshi peacekeepers, under the auspices of the United Nations, have brightened the country's image abroad by

presenting their professionalism and competence. Our expatriate Bangladeshis have also been making significant contributions to our national economy through sending their hard-earned foreign currencies home. Nevertheless, we have to go a long way to achieve the desired goals of independence and the building of a happy and prosperous Bangladesh. I believe concerted efforts from all strata irrespective of party affiliation are imperative in this regard.

The people of our country are democratic and peace loving. They reject all sorts of violence including militancy and terrorism with abhorrence. It is imperative that the overall development of the country is not possible without a flourishing democracy. Tolerance, fortitude and mutual respect are the preconditions for a thriving democracy. Therefore, we have to maintain patience, self-restraint and forbearance along with respect for others' opinion in a democratic pluralism. Let us make our Jatya Sangsad a center of excellence in resolving our national issues through discussion. I am confident that every-



Father of the Nation  
Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur  
Rahman

one will play responsible roles in fulfilling the hopes and aspirations of our people. The present government has declared "Vision 2021" for attaining 'Golden Bangla' dreamed by Bangabandhu. It is my conviction that through implementing the Vision, people from all strata would contribute to build an IT-based happy and prosperous Bangladesh from their respective position by the golden jubilee celebration of our independence.

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

Khoda Hafez, May Bangladesh Live Forever.

## Working toward Bangladesh development

Sheikh Hasina  
PRIME MINISTER OF BANGLADESH

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

March 26 is the day of earning self-identity; it's a day of breaking the shackles of subjugation. On this auspicious occasion of the Independence Day, I pay my deep homage to the greatest Bangladeshi of all time, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, under whose dynamic leadership we earned our great independence.

I recall with deep gratitude the 3 million martyrs and 200,000 women who lost their innocence in the War of Liberation in 1971. We earned our desired victory through their supreme sacrifices.

I also pay my humble tributes to four national leaders who led the liberation war. I

pay my respect to the valiant freedom fighters, including the war-wounded ones. I extend my sympathies to those who had lost their near and dear ones, and were subjected to brutal torture. I recall with gratitude our foreign friends who extended their whole-hearted support and cooperation to our liberation war.

The Pakistani occupation forces started massacring innocent and unarmed Bangladeshis, launching a sudden attack on the black night of March 25, 1971. The Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman proclaimed the independence of Bangladesh in the first hour of March 26. Bangabandhu's proclamation was spread all over the country through telegrams, teleprinters and the radios of the then East Pakistan Rifles. The proclamation was also circulated in the international media.

Earlier on the 7th of March at Suhrawardy Udyan, Bangabandhu made a fervent call to wage a struggle for independence. He declared, "This time the struggle is for our freedom; this time the struggle is for our indepen-

dence." He directed the nation to resist the enemy. The ultimate victory was earned on Dec. 16 after the 9-month bloody war was carried out under the directives of Bangabandhu.

The independence earned through the sacrifice of millions of people is the greatest achievement of Bangladesh. To make the achievement meaningful, all would have to know the true history of the liberation war and retain the spirit of the independence. It must be spread from generation to generations.

We are celebrating this year's Independence and National Day from a new perspective. The people have again given the Awami League the opportunity to serve the nation in the Jan. 5 elections. We will definitely protect the dignity of the people's confidence reposed on us.

During the last five years, we accomplished massive developments in every sector of the socio-economic front. Our goal is to turn Bangladesh into a middle-income country by the year 2021 and a developed one by 2041. We have relentlessly been working to realize these targets. Additionally, the execution of

the verdicts of the war criminals trials has started. We are committed to bringing the fruits of independence to the doorsteps of the people.

The conspiracy of anti-liberation, communal and anti-democratic forces is continuing to ruin the constitution, democracy and development activities of the government. On this auspicious day, I urge the people to fight any ill-attempts against independence, democracy and anti-country activities.

I hope every Bengali imbued with the mantra of patriotism will engage themselves from their respective positions and with the highest sincerity, dedication and honesty to turn Bangladesh into a peaceful, non-communal and middle-income country by the Golden Jubilee of Bangladesh. Bangladesh will be established as a dignified nation in the comity of nations.

Let us come and build a Sonar Bangla as dreamed by the Father of the Nation being imbued with ideals of our liberation war. This is our fresh vow on this great day.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu May Bangladesh Live Forever.

## Nation continues steady progress to self-reliance

Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali  
FOREIGN MINISTER OF BANGLADESH

On the occasion of the 43rd anniversary of the Independence and National Day, I convey my heartfelt greetings and felicitations to my compatriots living at home and abroad. On this memorable day, I recall with profound respect the greatest Bangladeshi of all time and Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who proclaimed independence in the early hours of



March 26, 1971. Responding to his clarion call, people from all walks of life participated in the War of Liberation and achieved victory on Dec. 16, 1971. On this day, I pay my deep homage to the 3 million martyrs who laid down their lives in the War of Liberation in 1971. I pray to Almighty Allah for the salvation of those departed souls. I also remember the 200,000 mothers and sisters who sacrificed their honor for the sake of freedom for Bangladesh.

It all began with the assertion of a national identity in the face of systematic denial, discrimination and deprivation of an identity rooted in a millennial-

old heritage of language, culture and customs. It evolved through the shaping of political demands for inclusion and equal access to opportunities, against all forms of exploitation of the Bangladeshi people. It was crystallized into the 6-point program put forward by Bangabandhu for the emancipation of our people. The landslide victory of the Awami League in the general elections of December 1970 and the Pakistani military government's refusal to hand over power led to the noncooperation movement culminating in the declaration of independence by Bangabandhu. After the tragic events of Aug. 15,

1975, when Bangabandhu was killed along with most members of his family, Bangladesh lapsed into a long period of military dictatorships and the people under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina had to wage another battle for the restoration of democracy.

After the restoration of democracy, Hasina was elected to office in 1996. She started from where Bangabandhu had left off, and once again the country was restored to a place of honor among the comity of nations. During her first term (1996-2001), Bangladesh marched ahead in many fields. The country witnessed remarkable prog-

ress at home and earned global recognition as well. Following her landslide victory in the December 2008 elections, Bangladesh made major strides during her second term (2009-2013) especially in the social sector, which saw a reduction of maternity and child mortality rates; the education sector, particularly at the primary level; in the empowerment of women; and in the development of infrastructure and power generation. The impressive performance of the government helped earn international recognition and Bangladesh was cited as a role model in many fields. Hasina's tremendous success in the betterment of the lives of the common people led to her re-election in the last elections held on Jan. 5, 2014.

Sheikh Hasina aims for a middle-income, digital-knowledge based "Vision" Bangladesh by 2021. On the international front, we have demonstrated our goal and ability to forge partnerships with our neighbors and

## Celebrating decades of friendly bilateral cooperation

Taro Aso  
PRESIDENT, JAPAN-BANGLADESH PARLIAMENTARIANS' LEAGUE



On behalf of the Japan-Bangladesh Parliamentarians' League, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the government and people of the People's Republic of Bangladesh on the auspicious occasion of the country's Independence Day.

Ever since Bangladesh's independence in 1971, Japan and Bangladesh have consistently built close, friendly relations. Both countries share a strong and stable bond based on mutual interest, confidence and the spirit of cooperation.

I paid an official visit to Bangladesh as then foreign minister, and since 2008, I have sought to promote the friendship between Japan and Bangladesh as the president of the Japan-Bangladesh Parliamentarians' League.

Two years ago, celebrating 40 years of bilateral diplomatic relations, the two countries engaged in many active exchanges in various fields. And last year, more than 100 people, including artists, dancers and craftsmen, came from Bangladesh to join the Art Setouchi festival in Kagawa Prefecture, one of the biggest art festivals in Japan, attracting more than 430,000 visitors.

During the festival, an exhibition of Bangladesh paintings was held, and artworks by craftsmen as well as music and dance performances were introduced at the Port of Takamatsu, Kagawa Prefecture. The Japan-Bangladesh Parliamentarians' League welcomed Minister of Cultural Affairs Abul Kalam Azad, who visited Japan to attend the opening of the festival and had a meaningful exchanging of opinions. Also, upper house member Ichiro Tsukada, who serves as director general of the league, attended the Bangladesh exhibition in Tokyo and, on behalf of the league, visited the Bangladesh Embassy for a seminar, which contributed in enhancing mutual understanding and promoting exchanges.

Bangladesh's economy, which is continuing to progress at a high annual rate over 6 percent, is attractive for Japan. The number of Japanese companies, which have made advances into Bangladesh, has tripled during these seven years, reaching 176 and exports from Bangladesh to Japan are increasing, too. I am glad bilateral economic relations are steadily developing.

Bangladesh, which calls Japan "a true friend," is an important country for Japan. The Japan-Bangladesh Parliamentarians' League will continue to contribute in deepening the amicable bilateral relations.

In conclusion, I would like to extend my best wishes to the people of Bangladesh for their health and prosperity.

**Congratulations**  
on the 43rd Anniversary of  
the Independence of the  
People's Republic of Bangladesh

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to the State and Citizens of  
the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
on Their 43rd Anniversary  
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## Bangladesh marches toward prosperity on back of strong growth

Masud Bin Momen  
AMBASSADOR OF BANGLADESH

On the auspicious occasion of the 43rd Independence and National Day of Bangladesh I have the honor to convey our deepest reverence to their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko. I also take this opportunity to convey our warm greetings to H.E. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Mrs. Akie Abe. On this great day I recall with solemn fervor, the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman for his vision-



ary leadership and legendary statesmanship that eventually led to the creation of a sovereign and independent Bangladesh. I would like to recall that it was the visit of Bangabandhu to Japan in 1973 which laid the foundation of the ever growing friendly relations between the two countries. I also pay my deep homage to the sacrifices of our national leaders, valiant freedom fighters, 3 million martyrs as well as the 200,000 women and child victims of the War.

During our war of independence many Japanese friends, led by a lawmaker, the late Takashi Hayakawa, and the late professor Tsuyoshi Nara, extended their support for our cause. Recognizing their invaluable contribution,

the government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina conferred the Friends of Liberation War State Honors to a number of Japanese nationals in recent times. The government of Japan recognized Bangladesh immediately after our liberation on 4 February 1972. Ever since then, the friendly relations between the two countries have grown from strength to strength. Today, Japan is the most important development partner of Bangladesh. Recently, trade and investment figures are also growing significantly. Many important Japanese brands are making their products in Bangladesh. Following the recent elections in Bangladesh, the new government led by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is consolidating democracy

and development. During the latest visit of Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida to Bangladesh on March 22 he conveyed Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's commitment to continue his government's engagement in this march towards prosperity based on mutual interest.

Today Bangladesh is seeing sustained economic growth, stable macro-economic indicators and has over \$19 billion worth of reserves. The government has created a congenial atmosphere and offers attractive terms to attract foreign investment. Light engineering, food processing, leather and leather goods, jute-based products and the IT sector are some of the areas where Japanese investors are showing keen interest.

Congratulations to the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
on the 43rd Anniversary of Independence

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## Friendship for all, malice toward none

Md. Shahriar Alam  
STATE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
OF BANGLADESH

Today, we celebrate the 43rd glorious independence of Bangladesh. On this day, Bangladesh woke up to the horrendous genocide, heretofore unknown to Bengalis. This darkest episode in our history turned into a full-fledged people's war which helped us become a sovereign country. The heroic struggles of our freedom fighters against the enemy, their sacrifices and their ultimate success in defeating our enemies make us hold our heads high.

On this historic occasion, I express my heartfelt felicitations and greetings to my compatriots living at home and abroad. On this solemn day, I recall with deep respect the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who led the great War of Independence in 1971. I pay my deep homage to the martyrs who made supreme sacrifices to liberate the country. I also recall the brave women who sacrificed their honor to see the country free from subjugation. I also recall with deep respect those valiant freedom fighters of the soil would be borne in the minds the Bangladesh forever.

Cherishing the true history of the liberation war, the present government has made giant strides to achieve the objective of change, which will make Bangabandhu's Sonar

Bangla, the golden Bengal, a reality. Under the dynamic leadership of the Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, we aim for a middle-income, digital, knowledge-based Bangladesh by 2021.

Bangladesh remains committed to bring to end to the culture of impunity and establish the rule of law. The present government will bring all the perpetrators who committed crimes against humanity to justice. No one can deter us from this onerous task as the people have given us a mandate.

On the international front, Bangladesh follows the foreign policy principle of "Friendship for all and malice toward none" as outlined by Bangabandhu. In line with that, Bangladesh has been playing a constructive role in promoting international peace and stability. The Ministry remains deeply focused on subregional, regional and international issues apart from its engagements.

I express my appreciation to the expatriate Bangladesh nationals who are continuously contributing to building an economically viable Bangladesh. I also congratulate the officers and officials working at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and at Bangladesh Missions abroad for their dedicated services to implement the foreign policy objectives of the government. On this great occasion, I urge all to work together to turn Bangladesh into the Sonar Bangla envisioned by the Father of the Nation and achieve middle income country status by 2021, as set out by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Joy Bangla, Joy Bangabandhu.



## Moving toward self-reliance

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

beyond. We are deeply involved in the process of multilateralism, through global and regional commitments. But the defeated anti-liberation, communal and irredentist forces are trying to destabilize the democratic and development process. We are however determined to end the culture of impunity. The government remains pledge-bound to bring to justice all the crimes committed against humanity during the War of Liberation in 1971. We urge the international community to extend their support and cooperation for this just cause.

On this very day, I take this opportunity to thank all our officers and staff at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and our missions abroad

who have devoted themselves to achieving our foreign policy objectives. I also congratulate the Bangladesh Diaspora who have contributed greatly to the buoyancy of the economy of their country of origin as well as to further development of their host countries.

Today, Bangladesh is marching ahead in all fields under the leadership of our dear Bangabandhu's daughter, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. On this great Day, I urge all to work together imbued with the spirit of the War of Liberation to expedite economic self-reliance and democratic advancement of the country for the realization of Bangabandhu's dream of Sonar Bangla-Golden Bengal.

Joy Bangla, Joy Bangabandhu.



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