

# Bangladesh independence day

## Working to create a prosperous country

Abdul Hamid  
PRESIDENT OF BANGLADESH

On the eve of our great Independence Day 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. On this historic day, I recall with profound respect Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who proclaimed country's independence on March 26, 1971 after inspiring the whole nation with Bangalee nationalism and preparing them for independence for over two decades facing various ups and downs. Under his leadership, 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 the war of liberation for achieving our independence. 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 process of our victory. The contributions and those valiant sons would 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 is making untiring efforts in materializing the objectives of independence. In the meantime, we have achieved some significant progress in the fields of agriculture, education, health, rural infrastructure, communication, energy and power, trade and commerce, ICT, SME sectors. It is notable that country has attained food-sufficiency owing to huge development in agriculture. We have also been able to

export food grains in a small scale. The pace of advancement in the sector of youth & sports, women and children along with empowerment of women is continuing. Maternal and child mortality rate has been reduced and life expectancy rate has simultaneously been raised. At the same time we have also attained remarkable development in private sector including the area of readymade garments, pharmaceuticals, ceramic and ship-building industry. Country's financial sector along with Bank and Insurances has been expanded. Bangladesh is now being branded as a role model of development in the outside world. Our achievement in international arena is also commendable. Bangladeshi Peacekeepers, under the auspices of the United Nations, have brightened the country's image abroad presenting their professionalism and competence. Our expatriate Bangladeshis have also been making significant contributions to our national economy through sending their hard-earning 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 are democratic and peace loving. They do not support violence including militancy and terrorism. We should keep in mind that the overall development of the country would not be attained without functioning and institutionalizing democracy. Continuous practice for democratic norms and values, maintaining tolerance and fortitude and showing mutual respect are the preconditions for thriving democracy. Therefore, we have to maintain patience, self-restraint, forbearance along with showing respect to others' opinion in a democratic pluralism. Let us make our Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) a centre of discussion to resolve all national issues. I am confident that everyone would play one's responsible role from respective position in fulfilling the desired goals of independence and hopes and aspirations



Father of the Nation  
Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

of our people. The Father of the Nations Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman cherished a dream of transforming Bangladesh into Sonar Bangla. The present Government has taken up a 'Vision 2021' for materializing the dream into reality. It is my expectation that people from all strata would contribute to build 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 war of liberation to expedite overall development and democratic advancement of the country.

Khoda Hafez, May Bangladesh Live Forever.

## Role model for development

Sheikh Hasina  
PRIME MINISTER OF BANGLADESH

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



March 26 is the day of earning self-identity and it is a day of breaking the shackles of subjugation. On this auspicious occasion of Independence Day, I pay my deep homage to the greatest Bangalee 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 1971 liberation war. 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. 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 in our liberation war.

The Pakistani occupation forces started killing innocent and unarmed Bangalees 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 early hours 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 international media.

Earlier on March 7 at Suhrawardy Udyan, Bangabandhu made a fervent call for waging the independence struggle. He declared, "This time the struggle is for our freedom, this time the struggle is for our independence." He directed the Bangalee nation to resist the enemy. The ultimate victory was earned on Dec. 16 after a nine-month bloody war 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 must know the true history of the liberation war and retain the spirit of the independence. It must be spread from generation to generation.

Since the Bangladesh Awami League came to power it has remained devoted to taking the country forward with the spirit of independence and freedom. During the last six years, we implemented huge development works in all sectors, including agriculture, education, health, communication, energy and power, ICT, urban and rural de-

velopment, human resources, social welfare and female empowerment. As a result, people's purchasing power, per capita income, foreign reserves, exports, foreign direct investment and employment opportunities have all multiplied manifold. Bangladesh has turned into a role model for development and various nations and world bodies have lauded and recognized our achievements.

The trials of war criminals are ongoing and verdicts are being handed down. The conspiracy of the anti-liberation communal and anti-democratic forces is continuing to frustrate the trials, democratic process and development spree. The BNP-Jamaat hoodlums are carrying out subversive activities in '71-style and they are killing people by hurling petrol bombs. On this auspicious day, I urge my countrymen to unite to face any attempts against independence, democracy and anti-country activities.

We are committed to reaching the fruits of our independence and we have a target to turn Bangladesh into a middle-income country by 2021 and a developed one by 2041. We have relentlessly been working to realize these targets.

I hope that every Bangladeshi 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 our independence. This would establish Bangladesh as a dignified nation in the comity of nations.

Let us come and build Sonar Bangla as was dreamed by the Father of the Nation. This is our vow on this great day.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu. May Bangladesh Live Forever

## Contributing to further development of friendly bilateral relationship

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 the spirit of mutual interest, confidence and cooperation. I myself paid an official visit to Bangladesh in July 2006 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' Friendship League.

Last year marked an important milestone for the both countries as Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina paid an official visit to Japan in May, and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visited Bangladesh in September as the first Japanese prime minister to visit the country in 14 years. Through these mutual visits by the two leaders, our bilateral relationship has entered into a new dimension to be called "comprehensive partnership" and I am pleased to see that various exchanges and avenues of cooperation are being promoted.

The Japan-Bangladesh Parliamentarians' League welcomed the Speaker of the Bangladesh parliament Shirin Sharmin; the Minister of Civil Aviation and Tourism Rashed Khan Menon; and the Minister of

Health and Family Welfare Mohammed Nasim, who visited Japan and participated in meaningful dialogues and discussions, deepening the exchanges between the two countries.

Bangladesh's economy, which is continuing to grow at a high annual rate over 6 percent, is attractive for Japan. The number of Japanese companies, which have made advances into Bangladesh, has increased to 223 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 further deepening amicable bilateral relations.

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



Female officers in Bangladesh army EMBASSY OF BANGLADESH

## Building meaningful partnerships with neighbors and beyond

Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali  
FOREIGN MINISTER OF BANGLADESH

On the occasion of the 44th 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 Bangalee 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 liberation war and achieved victory on Dec. 16, 1971.

On this day, I pay my deep homage to the three million martyrs who laid down their lives in the 1971 liberation war, as well as those who received severe injuries on the battlefield. I also remember the nearly 200,000 mothers and sisters who sacrificed their honor and dignity in the cause of our freedom. It all began with the assertion

of our national identity in the face of systematic denial, discrimination and deprivation of an identity rooted in a millennia-old heritage of language, culture and customs. It evolved through the shaping of political demand for inclusion and equal access to opportunities, against all forms of exploitation of the Bangalee people. It was crystallized into the six-point program of action 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 non-cooperation movement culminating in the declaration of independence by Bangabandhu. After the tragic events of August 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 as prime minister in 1996. She started from where Bangabandhu 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 witnessed remarkable progress 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 in such areas as the reduction of maternity and child mortality rates, revolution in the education sector particularly at the primary level, empowerment of women, development of infrastructure and power generation. The impressive performance of the present government helped earn international recognition and Bangladesh has been acclaimed as a role model for its success. Hasina's tremendous achievements for the improvement of the lives of the common people led to the re-election of the Awami League and its alliance on Jan. 5, 2014.

Hasina has set forth a vision of a middle-income, technologically advanced and knowledge-based Bangladesh by 2021, which we expect to attain even before the target date. She

has also put forth a vision for 2041 when Bangladesh will take its place on the world stage as a developed country. On the international front, we have demonstrated our ability to forge partnerships with our neighbors and beyond. We are deeply involved in the process of multilateralism, through global and regional commitments. But the defeated anti-liberation, communal and reactionary forces are engaged in destabilizing the democratic, noncommunal and nonconfrontational ethos of the country and impeding the development process. The government remains pledge-bound to bring to justice all those who committed crimes against humanity during the 1971 liberation war and end the culture of impunity. The international community has extended their full support and cooperation for this just cause.

You are perhaps aware that Bangladesh won a record number of elections in the U.N. and other international organizations in quick succession in 2014. The notable victories of Bangladesh include the memberships

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to the State and Citizens of  
the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
on Their 44th Anniversary  
of Independence

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# Bangladesh independence day

## Comprehensive partnership

Masud Bin Momen  
AMBASSADOR OF BANGLADESH



On the auspicious occasion of the 44th anniversary of the 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 his wife Akie. On this great day I recall with solemn fervor, the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman for his visionary leadership and legendary statesmanship that eventually led to the culmination of a sovereign and independent Bangladesh. I would like to recall that it was the visit of Bangabandhu to Japan in 1973 that 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.

In recent times the relationship between our two countries has blossomed. Last year Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visited Japan at the invitation of Abe. At the bilateral meeting in Tokyo the two leaders launched a "Comprehensive Partnership." During the visit Abe committed ¥600 billion over the next four to five years in bilateral assistance. Abe and his wife paid an official visit to Bangladesh on Sept. 6 and 7. On that occasion, 22 top business leaders accompanied the Abe delegation in exploring business opportunities. The Honorable Speaker of Bangladesh Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury visited Tokyo at the invitation of Abe to attend "WAW! Tokyo 2014," a symposium dedicated to female empowerment. The Parliamentary Friendship League was reconstituted with 65 members under the leadership of Deputy Prime Minister Taro Aso. To further enhance people-to-people contacts and understanding, the Japan-Bangladesh Society was also launched last year.

Because of sustained economic growth and a sound investment environment, bilateral trade and investment are on the rise. 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. Taking into account their interest, we have decided to establish exclusive economic zones for Japanese investors.

Last but not least, I must commend our expatriates for boosting the economy by sending their hard-earned foreign currency, as well as facilitating investment and technology transfers, to Bangladesh.

## Realizing foreign policy

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

On the UNICEF Executive Board for the 2015 to 2017 term, the U.N. Human Rights Council for the 2015 to 2017 term, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) for the 2015 to 2018 term and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Council for the 2015 to 2018 term. Bangladesh was also successful in becoming Chair of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Director General of the International Mobile Satellite Organization (IMSO), President of the High-level Committee of South-South Cooperation and Deputy Member of the Governing Body of the International Labour Organization (ILO).

On this day, I take this opportunity to thank all the officers

and staff at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Bangladesh 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 motherland as well as to further development of their host countries.

Today, Bangladesh is marching ahead in great strides in all fields under the leadership of our dear leader, Bangabandhu's daughter, Hasina. On this great day, I urge all to work together imbued with the spirit of the liberation war to expedite our economic development, self-reliance and democratic advancement of the country for the realization of Bangabandhu's dream of Sonar Bangla (Golden Bengal) in a "Digital Bangladesh."

Joi Bangla!  
Joi Bangabandhu!



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