

Bangladesh Independence Day

Building a happy, prosperous country

Abdul Hamid
PRESIDENT OF BANGLADESH

On the eve of our great Independence and National Day 2016, 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 lives. On this historic day, I recall with profound respect the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who proclaimed the country's independence on

March 26, 1971, after inspiring the entire nation with Bangladeshi nationalism and preparing them for independence over two decades. Under his charismatic leadership, we achieved our much-awaited independence through a nine-month armed struggle. I pay my deep gratitude to the heroic martyrs who made supreme sacrifices 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 contributions and courageous role that accelerated the process of our victory.

One of the prime objectives of our hard-earned indepen-

dence was to build a happy and prosperous Bangladesh. Keeping that in mind, the government has been making untiring efforts in materializing the objectives of independence. In the meantime, we have achieved notable progress in every sphere of our lives. The country has attained food-sufficiency due to huge developments in agriculture and grain is being exported on a small scale. The empowerment of women is continuing, while maternal and child mortality rates have been reduced and life expectancy rates simultaneously rose. The mega-project of constructing of the Padma Bridge is underway through our own funding. At the same time we have also at-

tained remarkable developments in the private sector. The country's financial sector, including banks and insurance, has been expanded. Bangladesh is now being branded as a role model of development throughout the world.

Our achievements in the international arena are also commendable. The longstanding land and maritime boundary disputes with India and Myanmar have been resolved through our successful foreign policy based on "friendship to all and malice toward none." Mutual relations with friendly countries around the globe have been expanded and strengthened. The contribution of Bangladesh in mitigating the negative impact of

global climate change along with protecting the environment is being lauded by the world community. Bangladeshi peacekeepers, under the auspices of the U.N., have upheld the country's image abroad, showing their professionalism and competence. Expatriate Bangladeshis have also been making significant contributions to our national economy through the repatriation of their hard-earned money. Nevertheless, we have a long way to go to achieve the desired goals of independence. I believe that sincere and concerted efforts on all levels — irrespective of party affiliations — are imperative to reach our goals.

Communal harmony is our

tradition. The people of our country do not support violence, including militancy and terrorism. They always uphold peace and believe in coexistence. Exercising democratic norms and values, maintaining tolerance and fortitude and showing mutual respect are the preconditions for a flourishing democracy. Therefore, we must maintain patience, self-restraint and forbearance along with a respect for others' opinions in a democratic pluralism. We have to arouse our indomitable spirit of war of liberation and non-communal values. Bangabandhu cherished a dream of transforming Bangladesh into *Sonar Bangla* (Golden Bengal). The present government has set "Vision



Women work at a garment factory. EMBASSY OF BANGLADESH

2021" and "Vision 2041" to see Bangladesh ranked as a middle-income and a developed country respectively.

On this historic day of independence, I urge all to make

united efforts to accelerate the overall development and democratic advancement of the country.

Khoda Hafez. May Bangladesh live forever.

Consistently building close and friendly relationship

Taro Aso
PRESIDENT, JAPAN-BANGLADESH
PARLIAMENTARIANS' LEAGUE



On behalf of the Japan-Bangladesh Parliamentary Friendship 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 been consistently building 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 the then foreign minister, and since 2008, I have been promoting the friendship between Japan and Bangladesh as the president of the Japan-Bangladesh Parliamentary Friendship League.

After the historical mutual visits by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2014, I am very pleased to see that the bond of the two

countries has been strengthened through the "comprehensive partnership." Last year, the Japan-Bangladesh Parliamentary Friendship League welcomed H.E. Saber Chowdhury, president of the Inter-Parliamentary Union; H.E. Obaidul Quader, minister of road transport and bridges; and H.E. A.H.M. Mustafa Kamal, minister of planning. They participated in meaningful dialogues and discussions, deepening the exchanges between the two countries.

Bangladesh's economy, which is continuing to grow steadily at a rate of over 6 percent, is very attractive for Japanese investment. The number of Japanese companies that entered Bangladesh has increased to more than 230 and the amount of exports from Bangladesh to Japan is increasing, too. I am pleased to see that bilateral economic relations are steadily developing.

Bangladesh, which considers Japan a "true friend," is also an important friend for Japan. The Japan-Bangladesh Parliamentary Friendship League will continue to contribute to further deepening amicable bilateral relations.

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

Remembering the sacrifices of fighters for liberation

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 marking the earning of 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 Bangladeshi of all time, the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, under whose dynamic leadership we earned our great 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 pay my tributes to four national leaders who led the war of liberation. My homage goes to the valiant freedom fighters, including the wounded. I extend my sympathies to those who 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 wholehearted support and co-operation for the cause of our liberation.

The occupation forces launched sudden attack and started killing innocent and unarmed Bangladeshis on the black night of March 25, 1971. Bangabandhu proclaimed the independence of Bangladesh at the first hour of March 26, 1971. Bangabandhu's proclamation was spread all over the country via telegrams, teletypewriters and EPR wireless. The international media also circulated Bangabandhu's proclamation of independence.

Earlier, Bangabandhu, in his March 7 historic address at the

Suhrawardy Udayn, made a fervent call of independence. He said, "The struggle of this time is for freedom, the struggle for this time is for our independence." He instructed the Bangladesh nation to resist the enemies and, 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 the Bengali nation. To ensure that this achievement remains meaningful, all should know the history of our great liberation war and retain the spirit of independence. The history should be passed on from generation to generation.

Whenever the Bangladesh Awami League formed a government, it remained committed to developing the country and the nation, upholding the spirit of our great independence

and freedom struggle. During the last seven years, we have implemented vast development programs in all sectors, including agriculture, education, health, law and order, information technology, energy and power, communications, sports, foreign relations, urban and rural development, human development, social safety nets and female development. As a result, our purchasing capacity, per capita income, foreign currency reserves, exports, investment and employment have multiplied many times. Bangladesh has emerged as a role model of development and various countries and organizations, including the U.N., have lauded Bangladesh and honored our achievements.

We have executed the verdicts for the killing of Bangabandhu and most of his family members. The verdicts against those who committed crimes against humanity are also being executed. The defeated anti-liberation, communal

forces are still engaged in undoing the democratic and development process of the country. On this auspicious day, I urge the countrymen to foil any plot of the evil forces together.

We are committed to bringing the fruits of independence to every corner of the country. Our target is to turn Bangladesh into a middle-income country by 2021, and a developed and prosperous one by 2041. We have been striving hard to accomplish this target.

I hope all citizens of our country will engage themselves with the utmost sincerity, honesty and dedication to build Bangladesh as a peaceful, non-communal, developed and prosperous country and help place it in a prestigious position in the comity of nations.

Let us take a fresh vow, imbued with the spirit of the war of liberation, to build a Golden Bangla as dreamed by the father of the nation.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu. May Bangladesh live forever.

Congratulations
on the 45th Anniversary of
the Independence of the
People's Republic of Bangladesh

<http://www.marubeni.com>

Congratulations
on the 45th Anniversary
of the Independence
of the People's Republic of
Bangladesh

MITSUBISHI
AIRCRAFT CORPORATION

Congratulations
on the 45th Anniversary of
the Independence of the
People's Republic of Bangladesh

MITSUI & CO.

Congratulations
on the 45th Anniversary of
the Independence of the
People's Republic of Bangladesh

YKK
Little Parts. Big Difference.™

<http://www.ykk.co.jp>

Fastening Products Group

Congratulations
on the 45th Anniversary of the Independence
of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

The honorable members:

| | |
|--|---|
| SAKURA SABER (PRESIDENT) | MAMUNUR RASHID (TREASURER) |
| KHORSHEED ALAM MICKEL (VICE PRESIDENT) | NABIULLAH ASIF (INFORMATION) |
| ILIAS MUNSHI (VICE PRESIDENT) | SAKAI PAUL (PUBLICATION) |
| HASHIMOTO MASUD (VICE PRESIDENT) | KAJI MAHFUJUL HUQ LAL (EXECUTIVE MEMBER) |
| SALIMULLAH KAJOL (GENERAL SECRETARY) | SAHIDUR RAHMAN KHAN (EXECUTIVE MEMBER) |
| DR. ZAKIR HOSSAIN MASUM (JOINT SECRETARY) | MD. LUTFAR RAHMAN SHIPER (AUDITOR) |

BANGLADESH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY IN JAPAN (BCCIJ)
4-15-16 Meguro Meguro-ku Tokyo

Congratulations to the People's Republic of Bangladesh
on their 45th Anniversary of Independence

মহান স্বাধীনতা দিবস উপলক্ষে সবাইকে জানাই আন্তরিক শুভেচ্ছা

PADMA CO. LTD.

HALAL FOOD IMPORTER, DISTRIBUTOR AND PROMOTER
ONLINE SHOP: <http://www.padma-tr.com>, Email: info@padma-tr.com
Address: 8-30-4 Waseda, Misato-shi, Saitama 341-0018
Tel: 048-950-5050; Fax: 048-950-5057; Cell: 080-4477-1896, 080-3590-1897

Bangladesh Independence Day

New avenues of investment

Rabab Fatima
AMBASSADOR OF BANGLADESH

It is my great pleasure to extend my warmest wishes to the readers of The Japan Times on the occasion of the 45th Anniversary of the Independence and National Day of Bangladesh.



I pay my deep homage to the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who led us in our struggle for independence. I also pay tribute to the martyrs and heroes of the war of independence on this auspicious day.

Japan remains one of our most important development partners. The exchange of visits in 2014 by our two prime ministers have taken our relations to new heights. We deeply appreciate Japan's support and investment in various mega-projects and development initiatives in our country. This growing partnership between our countries places infrastructure development, trade and investment at the forefront.

Japanese investment in Bangladesh by both the public and private sectors is growing, but we would like to do more business with Japan and see our trade grow. Bangladesh has one of the friendliest foreign investment and trade policies, and is blessed with a large skilled-labor pool. A recent survey by JETRO (2016) on business conditions of Japanese companies in Asia and Oceania found Bangladesh to be the most economical in terms of wages in both manufacturing and non-manufacturing sectors, with the cost of production less than half (49.5 percent) compared to Japan. The same survey ranked Bangladesh the highest in the region at 63 percent in terms of business confidence of Japanese CEOs. The bright outlook of the Bangladesh economy is also reflected in a number of other studies and reports of reputable organizations such as PricewaterhouseCoopers, Goldman Sachs and McKinsey & Company.

Bangladesh is a huge market of 160 million people with a growing middle class and rising consumerism. We have duty free access to 47 countries, including major markets such as the EU, India, Australia, New Zealand, Norway, Japan, Turkey, Canada and Russia. I invite Japanese investors to explore business opportunities and take advantage of the special incentives being provided such as special economic zones exclusively for Japanese investment.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's development and growth road map, "Vision 2021," places an inclusive and participatory development model at the center of all national development efforts. This has resulted in Bangladesh making notable prog-

ress in a number of areas such as public health and sanitation, women's participation and empowerment, maternal mortality, life expectancy at birth, primary education and poverty reduction. We have maintained a steady GDP growth of around 6 percent on average for the last decade, and have recently attained the status of a lower-middle-income country.

There has been what may be called a revolution in agriculture in Bangladesh. A tiny land of 147,570 sq. km is now exporting food after feeding a vast population of around 160 million. This has been possible through the optimum use of arable land through diversification of crops, along with rapid modernization of farming methods. Agriculture and agro-processing industries are now fast-growing areas of investment.

Our industrial sector is also witnessing steady and rapid growth along with necessary infrastructure and linkages. We are the second-largest ready-made garment producer in the world. The prevalence of strong backward and forward linkages supported by a large pool of less-expensive skilled labor have made this sector highly attractive for foreign investment and also a top sourcing country for the major markets of the world. In recent years, we have also emerged as a major exporter of pharmaceutical products, exporting to over 90 countries after meeting domestic demand.

Leather and footwear, light-engineering, ship-building, ceramics, glassware and steel are some of the other export-oriented industries experiencing rapid growth. Demand for jute products, an organic but affordable replacement for non-biodegradable and environment-harming packaging materials is also growing. Bangladesh, being the world's top jute producer is reviving the diversified use of this natural fiber (called the "golden fiber") and exporting to many countries.

Under Vision 2021, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has placed top priority on digitalization and a "Digital Bangladesh" is now within our reach. Over 131 million people are now using mobile phones in Bangladesh. The growth of Internet use is rapidly rising, making us a leading IT outsourcing country.

We are observing 2016 as the "Visit Bangladesh" year and I invite all our Japanese friends to visit Bangladesh and discover its charm and beauty.

I would like to conclude by conveying my profound respect to their Imperial Majesties, Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko. I convey my most sincere good wishes to the government and the friendly people of Japan, and the members of the Japan-Bangladesh Parliamentary Friendship League. I also congratulate and extend warmest felicitations to my fellow Bangladeshis in Japan.



Padma Bridge, which is currently under construction EMBASSY OF BANGLADESH

Best Wishes From

ROKKO SAREES & FABRICS CO., LTD.

Batra Insurance
Agent for New India Assurance Co., Ltd.

TOKYO (Ebisu Stn. East Exit)
Pinecrest 107, 1-7-3, Hiroo,
Shibuya-ku, Tokyo
Tel: 03-3400-6887 Fax: 03-3400-6889
Mobile: 090-9848-4373