

Bangladesh Independence Day Special

MD. ABDUL HAMID
PRESIDENT OF BANGLADESH



Today is 26th March, our Independence and National Day. This year we are celebrating the Golden Jubilee of our Independence. On this occasion, I extend my heartfelt greetings and warm felicitations to my fellow countrymen living at home and abroad.

On this historic day, I remember with profound respect the architect of our independent Bangladesh, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. On the fateful night of March 25, 1971, the invading forces of Pakistan suddenly attacked the unarmed Bengalees. In the early hours of March 26, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman officially declared the Independence of Bangladesh. We achieved an independent and sovereign Bangladesh



through a nine-month long liberation war. I recall with deep respect the millions of martyrs who sacrificed their lives in the War of Liberation and we achieved our Independence for their supreme sacrifice. I also recall with deep reverence our Four National Leaders, valiant freedom-fighters, organizers, supporters, foreign friends and

people from all walks of life who made contributions to attain our right to self-determination and freedom movement.

Bangabandhu always cherished a dream of building a happy and prosperous country along with attaining political emancipation. The present government has been rendering untiring efforts in materializing that dream of Bangabandhu. We have achieved enormous success in various areas of socio-economic development including poverty alleviation, education, health, human resources development, women empowerment, reduction of child and maternal mortality rates, elimination of gender discrimination and increase in average life expectancy. Rate of poverty has been dropped. Per capita income has tripled over the past decade. In various indicators of economic and social development, Bangladesh has been able to surpass not only the neighboring countries of South Asia, but also many developed countries.

Despite the negative impact of the Corona pandemic on the world economy, due to the timely and courageous steps

taken by Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the government has been able to maintain the economic growth by countering the effects of Corona. Huge amount of remittances sent by expatriate Bangladeshis has made an important contribution to keep the wheel of the economy rolling during this time. The government has announced 23 stimulus packages worth taka 1 lakh 24 thousand crore (\$14.8 billion) to keep the wheel of economy rolling. Arrangements have also been made to provide COVID-19 vaccine. Bangladesh ranks first in South Asia and 20th in the world in the "COVID Resilience Ranking" compiled by the US news agency Bloomberg for successful handling of corona pandemic, economic revival and maintaining normal livelihoods. Through this, Bangladesh's image has been upheld around the world.

Recently, Bangladesh has received the final recommendation from the United Nations to her emergence from a least developed country to a developing one. It is a unique gift for the nation at the juncture of "Mujibbarsho" and the "Golden



Jubilee" of our Independence. Bangladesh will turn into a developed and prosperous country in the world by 2041 by ensuring continuation of current development process, Insha Allah.

In pursuing our diplomatic objectives,

the government has been consistent in upholding the principle of "Friendship to all, malice towards none" as enunciated by the Father of the Nation. Our achievement in the international arena, including the establishment of world peace, is also commendable. Despite being a densely populated country, Bangladesh has set a unique example of humanity in the world by sheltering millions of Rohingyas who have been tortured and forcibly deported from Myanmar, Bangladesh believes in a peaceful solution to this problem. I call upon the

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YOSHIHIDE SUGA
PRIME MINISTER OF JAPAN



I am Yoshihide Suga, Prime Minister of Japan.

On behalf of the Government and people of Japan, I would like to offer my heartfelt congratulations on the 50th anniversary of

the Independence of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, as well as the centennial birth anniversary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the first President of Bangladesh.

Fifty years ago, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, led Bangladesh to independence with his indomitable spirit. Japan was one of the first countries that recognized Bangladesh as a nation-state right after its independence, and we had a privilege of welcoming Bangabandhu to

Japan.

During his stay in Japan, Bangabandhu visited even farming and fishing villages in rural areas, where he interacted with many local Japanese citizens. He said he considered the development of Japan as a model to follow, and later he made tremendous efforts to strengthen bilateral ties. I understand that it was the idea of Bangabandhu himself to design the Bangladeshi national flag in a way that resembles the Japanese one, just like we are brothers.

Japan and Bangladesh, both having nostalgic yet beautiful landscape of paddy fields, have valued "heart-to-heart exchanges" and have developed profound interactions among citizens at grassroots level.

Just as Japanese children tried hard and collected relief donation for Bangladesh in the aftermath of cyclone at the time of its independence, Bangladesh offered to Japan in the form of relief fund and supplies when the Great East Japan

Earthquake struck us 10 years ago. Our traditional friendship is now tied with a strong and firm bond under the spirit of trust, cooperation, and mutual benefit.

Regarding the economic relations, Japan has consistently supported Bangladesh's efforts toward the realization of "Sonar Bangla" since its independence. Jamuna Multi-purpose Bridge, depicted in 100 taka banknote, and Sonargaon Hotel, built shortly after the independence, have been the symbols of our friendship for a long time.

In recent years, Japan has actively supported infrastructure development of Bangladesh, such as Dhaka MRT, Dhaka International Airport 3rd Terminal, and Matarbari Deep Sea Port for a better regional connectivity, under "the Bay of Bengal Industrial Growth Belt (BIG-B)".

Moreover, Japan also attaches importance to Bangladesh's socio-economic development such as health and education and extends support meeting the needs of Bangladesh.

I am confident that Japan's cooperation in these areas will support Bangladesh's goal to be a middle-income country and then become a developed country, and eventually contribute to further development of our relationship.

Bangladesh, which is located at a key point connecting Southeast Asia and Indian subcontinent and has successfully been achieving high economic growth in recent years, is a very attractive destination for Japanese business community. It is my hope that our economic relations which are marked by a great potential will make a further leap forward in the years to come.

The outbreak of COVID-19 has posed unprecedented challenges to socio-economic activities in the world and between our two countries. In order to overcome this crisis together with Bangladesh, Japan has provided emergency budget support loan, grant of medical equipment, and other emergency support through international organizations for Bangladesh.

The pandemic has also heightened uncertainty, and how we secure peace and stability of the region has become an increasingly important challenge. Building a free and open order based on the rule of law and strengthening connectivity in the Indo-Pacific region will lead to peace, stability and prosperity of the region. Japan will continue to work with Bangladesh to realize a Free and Open Indo-Pacific.

Last but not least, the year 2022 will mark the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Bangladesh. I will join hands with Bangladesh and work together closely to further strengthen our bilateral relationship toward this special year.

I express my sincere wishes for the prosperity of Bangladesh and Japan and further deepening of our friendship.

This content was provided by the embassy. The views expressed here do not reflect those of the newspaper.

SHEIKH HASINA
PRIME MINISTER OF BANGLADESH



Today is the 26th March - our great Independence Day. Bangladesh completes 50 years today since its independence. I extend my heartiest greetings to the countrymen and expatriate

Bangladeshis on the occasion of the golden jubilee of great independence. The 26 March is the day of establishing

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SAKURA SABER
PRESIDENT OF BCCIJ

SALIMULLAH KAJOL ROCKY
GENERAL SECRETARY OF BCCIJ

CONGRATULATIONS

on the Anniversary of the Independence Day of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Due to Bangladesh government efforts combined with the hard work of the people, the economy has been less affected during the COVID-19 pandemic.
2021: A year full of opportunities for sustainable development.

新型コロナウイルス感染症の世界的流行発生時、Bangladesh政府による感染症対策と国民の努力によって、経済への打撃を最小限に抑えることができました。2021年は持続可能な開発に向けてチャンスと可能性に満ち溢れる年。

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman
GOLDEN JUBILEE OF BANGLADESH
The dream and vision of "Golden Bengal" born by the father of the nation is being realized now.
建国の父によって生まれた「黄金のベンガル」の夢と構想は今まさに実現のものになろうとしている。

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on the Anniversary of the Independence Day of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

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on the Anniversary of the Independence of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

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TARO ASO
PRESIDENT OF THE JAPAN-BANGLADESH
PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE



On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Independence and National Day of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and the centennial birth anniversary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh

Mujibur Rahman, I would like to express my heartfelt congratulations to the government and the people of Bangladesh on behalf of the Japan-Bangladesh Parliamentary Friendship League.

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1972, Japan and Bangladesh have supported each other as traditional friends and have maintained a good relationship based on shared values such as peace and democracy. In July 2006, I myself made a memorable official visit to Bangladesh as a

Foreign Minister and since 2008 I have committed to promoting friendship between the two countries as President of the traditional Japan-Bangladesh Parliamentary Friendship League.

The outbreak of COVID-19 brought a great impact on various areas including economic activities and people-to-people exchanges between two countries since last year. Even under such circumstances, a high-level dialogue between Japan and Bangladesh such as a summit telephone talk last August continues and a good bilateral relationship has been maintained. As the Japan-Bangladesh Parliamentary Friendship League, we would like to cooperate continuously for further enhancement of our bilateral relationship.

Bangladesh economy which maintains high growth attracts many Japanese companies. The number of Japanese companies operating in Bangladesh is now more than 300 and this has tripled over the past 10 years. I hope the development of Arahazar Economic Zone will accelerate the investment by Japanese companies.

Japan has been the largest donor for Ban-

ladesh and the 41st yen loan package signed last August renewed the largest ever annual yen loan towards Bangladesh. I and other members of the Parliamentary Friendship League are pleased to learn that Japan's support for infrastructure development such as deep sea port, power plant, and roads in Matarbari area, and socio-economic development of Bangladesh has contributed to its growth and that this cooperative relationship between the two countries is also widespread among citizens.

The year 2022 will be the special year marking the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Bangladesh. Once the pandemic of COVID-19 calms down, we, the Japan-Bangladesh Parliamentary Friendship League, would like to visit Bangladesh. The Parliamentary Friendship League will continue to contribute to the enhancement of friendly and cooperative ties between the two countries.

I would like to conclude my message by wishing further prosperity of the people of Bangladesh.

A. K. ABDUL MOMEN
FOREIGN MINISTER OF BANGLADESH



On the occasion of 26 March, the 50th anniversary of the Independence and National Day of Bangladesh, I extend my heartfelt greetings and warm felicitations to all Bangladeshis living both

home and abroad. The golden jubilee of our independence and the Birth Centenary of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman are being celebrated this year. This is a rare occasion in our history.

On this auspicious day, I recall with profound reverence the greatest Bangali of all time, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Under the dynamic, courageous and charismatic leadership of the Father of the Nation, the people of this territory brought the red sun of the independence breaking the shackles of sub-

jugation of thousands of years. I pay my profound homage to the 3 million martyrs and two hundred thousand mothers and sisters whose supreme sacrifice ushered us an independent and sovereign Bangladesh coloured in red and green. My respectful salute goes to all freedom fighters including the wounded war heroes. I also pay my profound gratitude to the diplomatic front that, during and after our Liberation War, played a vital role in gaining international recognition. I also acknowledge, with deep gratitude, the enormous contributions of our foreign friends in the emergence of independent and sovereign Bangladesh.

The charismatic leadership of the Father of the Nation united the whole nation like a solid rock under one umbrella. The seeds of development of the country were sown under the leadership of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. He took over the leadership of a war-ravaged and economically backward country. Bangabandhu accomplished the formidable tasks of rehabilitation and rebuilding the nation just in three and a half years. Conspirators and enemies committed the heinous crime on 15 August 1975 to thwart our advancement.

Following the guided path of Bangabandhu, his able daughter Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is determined to build a knowledge-based and prosperous

→ *Continued from page 5*

United Nations and the international community, including Myanmar, to take early and effective measures for permanent solution to this problem.

Japan is one of the pioneering countries that recognized Bangladesh on 10 February 1972. Since then, the relations between the two countries grew strength to strength setting an excellent example of trusted friendship, co-operation and development partnership. Japan is actively involved in several mega projects including Dhaka Mass Rapid Transit Development Project, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Railway Bridge Construction Project, Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport Expansion Project etc. Japan and Bangladesh are going to celebrate the 50th anniversary of

country. As a result of various pragmatic initiatives taken by the present government, Bangladesh has been transformed into an economic miracle with a sustained high growth during last 12 years. Bangladesh, with its pro-investment policies, huge domestic market, strategically important geopolitical location, political stability and its hard-working skilled people, has become a lucrative destination for foreign investment. According to the Center for Economics & Banking Research, a London based think-tank, Bangladesh is expected to be the 25th largest economy in the world by 2035. Bangladesh under the able leadership of Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has done a remarkable job in tackling the COVID-19 global pandemic while keeping our economy on almost at full functionality. Even amid the COVID-19 pandemic, Bangladesh achieves a GDP growth of 5.24% which is the highest among all Asian countries.

I hope that the Bangladeshi expatriate will participate and support on the ongoing advancement of the government. I thank all the members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and our Missions abroad who have been working with deep commitment to uphold our national interest across nations.

On this historic day of Independence, let us all vow to transform Bangladesh into a prosperous, technology based, developed Sonar Bangla.

diplomatic relations in 2022. I thank the people and the Government of Japan for being with us always and firmly believes that the friendship between the two countries will reach at greater heights in the days to come.

On the eve of "Mujibbarsho" and the Golden Jubilee of our Independence, with the joint efforts of all, may our beloved motherland become a developed country free from hunger and poverty - this is my expectation on the great Independence Day.

Joi Bangla.
Khoda Hafez, May Bangladesh Live Forever.

This content was provided by the embassy. The views expressed here do not reflect those of the newspaper.

MD. SHAHRIAR ALAM
STATE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF BANGLADESH



Today, March 26, is the glorious Independence and National Day of Bangladesh and the Golden Jubilee of our glorious Independence. On this very day in 1971, the greatest Bangali of all time, Father of

the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman declared country's independence by breaking the chain of subordination. On this auspicious occasion, I extend my heartfelt greetings and warm felicitations to all Bangladeshis living both home and abroad.

On this day, I recall with deep reverence the greatest Bangali of all time, our Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman by whose clarion call the Bangali started the War of Liberation against the Pakistani occupation forces. I pay my profound

homage to the 3 million martyrs and 2 hundred thousand mothers and sisters whose supreme sacrifice and dishonor ushered us an independent and sovereign Bangladesh colored in red and green. My respectful salute goes to all freedom fighters including the wounded war heroes. On this memorable moment of Independence Day, I express sincere gratitude to all foreign friends, expatriate Bangladeshis, members of diplomatic front who accelerated our victory by extending all possible support during the Liberation War of Bangladesh.

Pakistani Occupation Forces committed one of the worst genocide indiscriminately on 25 March, 1971 to silence the Bengali Nation forever. Diabolical mass killing during Liberation War is a black chapter not only in the history of Bangladesh, but also in the history of world humanity. In 2017, the National Parliament of Bangladesh declared March 25 as National Genocide Day to commemorate the genocide carried out by the atrocious Pakistani Forces on the black night of March, 1971. Bangabandhu, the Architect of Bangladesh, declared the independence of Bangladesh at

the wee hour of 26 March in 1971. Bangladesh made its place in the world map as an independent and sovereign state with self-esteem through the nine-month long Liberation War. Before that, on 7 March in 1971, Bangabandhu in his historic speech declared, "The struggle this time is the struggle for our emancipation; the struggle this time is the struggle for liberation". Being started on 26 March, the bloody war ended fruitfully through the emergence of an independent and sovereign Bangladesh on December 16, 1971.

This year we are celebrating the golden Jubilee of our glorious Independence. At the same time, we are celebrating the Birth Centenary of our Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. These occasions give us opportunities to uphold the image of our beloved motherland.

Our Father of the Nation, the great architect of our Liberation War dreamt for a happy, prosperous, exploitation free and equitable "Sonar Bangla" (Bengal of Gold). Following the guided path of Bangabandhu, his able daughter Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has been working relentlessly to turn

Bangladesh into a developed country by the year 2041. Along with economic growth, Bangladesh has become a global role model for poverty alleviation, women empowerment, coping with climate change and curbing child mortality rate significantly.

On this auspicious Day, I thank all the members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and our Missions abroad who have been working with sustained dedication and commitment in achieving our foreign policy objectives and promote national interest of Bangladesh on the world stage.

On this glorious day, being imbued with the spirit of our great Liberation War and with a view to building Bangabandhu's dream of "Sonar Bangla (Golden Bengal)," let us take a fresh vow to devote ourselves to work from our respective positions in advancing the ongoing development efforts of the present government to strengthen the hands of Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and build a better world for our future generations.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu.
May Bangladesh Live Forever.

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self-identity of our nation. It's the day of breaking the shackles of subjugation. On this Independence Day, I recall with deep gratitude the Greatest Bangalee of all times, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, under whose undisputed leadership we have earned our independence. I pay my tributes to four national leaders, three million martyrs and two hundred thousand dishonored women of the War of Liberation. My homage goes to all 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 Liberation War. I recall with gratitude our foreign friends who had extended their support during our liberation war.

On the occasion of the golden jubilee of independence, colorful programs have been chalked out from 26 March 2021 to 16 December 2021 and the period from 17 March 2020 to 16 December 2021 is being celebrated as "Mujib Year" marking the birth centenary of the Father of the Nation. In the wake of coronavirus pandemic, the Golden Jubilee of Independence and the "Mujib Year" are being celebrated avoiding public gathering following the protocols of hygiene.

The Bangalee nation had fought against oppression and deprivation of Pakistani rulers for long 23 years under the leadership of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib. They were compelled to hold general elections in 1970. Bangladesh Awami League led by Bangabandhu won absolute majority in the elections. But the Pakistani rulers adopted repressive measures instead of handing over power to the majority party representatives. Calling for independence at the then Racecourse Ground on 7 March 1971 Bangabandhu declared, "The struggle this time is the struggle for our emancipation; the struggle this time is the struggle for independence, *Joi Bangla*." He instructed the Bangalee Nation to resist the enemies.

The Pakistani occupation forces unleashed a sudden attack and started massacring innocent and unarmed Bangalees on the fateful night of 25 March 1971. They killed thousands of people in different places, including Dhaka. Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman formally proclaimed the Independence of Bangladesh at the first hour of 26 March 1971. Bangabandhu's proclamation was spread all over the country through telegrams, tele-printers and EPR wireless. The international media also had circulated Bangabandhu's proclamation of Independence. The first Government of Bangladesh took oath on 17 April 1971 in Mujibnagar with Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as President, Syed Nazrul Islam as Vice President, Tajuddin Ahmed as Prime Minister, Capt. M Mansur Ali and AHM Kamaruzzaman as ministers. The resistance war against the occupying forces

began. After a 9-month of blood-shedding liberation war, the final victory was achieved on 16 December.

In the 50 years since independence what we have achieved has been achieved by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the Awami League. In just three and a half years of his government, he rebuilt the war ravaged country. Destroyed roads, bridges, culverts, railways, ports were rebuilt to revive the economy. In 1975, the GDP growth rate exceeded 7%. Bangladesh gained recognition from 116 countries and got the memberships of 27 international organizations.

Our constitution was made on the basis of the spirit of the liberation war under his direction within just 10 months. In just three and a half years, he took war-torn Bangladesh to the list of least developed country. While Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib was advancing to build an exploitation-deprivation-free non-communal democratic "Sonar Bangla" overcoming all obstacles, the anti-liberation forces brutally killed him along with most of his family members on 15 August 1975.

After the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib, the development and progress of Bangladesh came to a halt. The politics of killing, coup and conspiracy started in our beloved motherland. The assassins and their accomplices promulgated the Indemnity Ordinance to block the trial of this heinous murder in the history.

Getting the public mandate in 1996, Bangladesh Awami League formed the government after long 21 years. After assuming the office, we took the initiatives to establish Bangladesh as a self-respectful in the comity of nations. Through the introduction of social safety net programs, poor and marginalized people are brought under government allowances. We made the country self-sufficient in food production with special emphasis on agricultural production. The Ganges Water Sharing Treaty was signed with India in 1996. We signed the historic Peace Accord in 1997 with the aim of establishing peace in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. By repealing the "Indemnity Ordinance," we started the trial of Bangabandhu's assassination.

Forming government in 2009 in consecutive three-terms, Bangladesh Awami League has relentlessly been working to improve the fate of the people inspired by the spirit of the great liberation war. We are implementing the unfinished works of the Father of the Nation. Today, Bangladesh is self-reliant in food production. The poverty rate has come down from 42.5% to 20.5% in the last 12 years. Our sovereign rights over a vast area in the Bay of Bengal have been established through the peaceful settlement of maritime disputes with Myanmar and India.

The implementation of the Bangladesh-India Land Boundary Agreement has put an end to the protracted inhuman life of the enclave people. The nation has become free from stigma by executing the verdict of Bangabandhu murder case. The trial of war criminals continues and the verdict is being executed.

We have formulated the Second Perspective Plan for 2021-2041 and adopted the 8th Five Year Plan. We have started the implementation of 100-year 'Delta Plan 2100' for the first time in the world. Today, the benefits of "Digital Bangladesh" have been expanded from urban to remote village level.

On the occasion of "Mujib Year," some 8 hundred 92 thousand homeless people are being provided houses. 70 thousand houses have already been handed over. Another 50 thousand houses are under construction. A total of 9 lakh 98 thousand 346 (about 1 million) families have been provided accommodation since 1996. The civic facilities of the city are being delivered to every village. Ninety-nine % people are taken under electricity coverage. To keep the economy going offsetting the impacts of coronavirus, we have so far announced 23 stimulus packages worth Tk 1.24 lakh crore (\$14.8 billion), which is 4.44% of our GDP.

The independence earned through supreme sacrifices of millions of people is the greatest achievement of Bangalee Nation. To ensure that the achievement remains meaningful, all have to know the true history of our great Liberation War and respect the spirit of independence. The spirit of the Liberation War has to be propagated from generation to generations.

The persistent efforts of the last 12 years of the Bangladesh Awami League government have brought the final recommendations for Bangladesh to become a dignified developing country on the eve of the Golden Jubilee of Independence. This is a huge achievement for us.

Under the leadership of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib, the brave Bangalees liberated the country through the war of liberation within just nine months. I firmly believe that if this trend of development continues, Bangladesh will soon be established as a developed-prosperous country in the world, *Inshaallah*.

Let us take oath on this auspicious occasion of the golden jubilee of independence- imbued with the spirit of the Great War of Liberation, we all together will build hunger-poverty-illiteracy-free Golden Bangladesh as dreamt by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu May Bangladesh Live Forever.

This content was provided by the embassy. The views expressed here do not reflect those of the newspaper.

Congratulations
to the People's Republic of Bangladesh
on the occasion of Their Independence Day

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