

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



PRIME MINISTER

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF
BANGLADESH

12 Chaitra 1427

26 March 2021

Message

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 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 dishonoured 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.

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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 families have been provided accommodation since 1996. The civic facilities of the city are being delivered to every village. 99% 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, 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.

Sheikh Hasina