

# FOUR YEARS OF CHANGE

## Special Supplement

Art & Design : Department of Films & Publications ♦ Assistance : Press Information Department, Ministry of Information

### Four Years of Epoch-making Successes at a Glance

- Completion of the trial of the brutal killing of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman along with his family members and execution of the death sentences as well as progress in 9 cases at two tribunals in the trials of crimes against humanity and war-crimes with the goal of establishing rule of law.
- Complete freedom of the mass media, formulation of Right to Information Act, setting up of Information Commission and appointment of 13 thousand designated officers for ensuring free flow of information.
- Declaration of film-making as an industry.
- According approval to 16 private television channels, 14 community radio stations and 7 FM radio channels.
- Historic victory at the tribunal on international maritime law, finalization of the maritime boundary between Bangladesh and Myanmar, establishment of just rights of Bangladesh in the sea area extending up to 1 lac 11 thousand 631 square kilometres.
- Adoption of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's model for peace and her daughter Saima Wazed Putul's proposal on autism at the United Nations.
- Demarcation of borders with India, duty-free access of Bangladeshi products into the Indian market and provision of free movement to and from Tinbigha corridor round the clock.
- Successful holding of 5,187 elections since assumption of office by the government.
- High growth sustained in Bangladesh despite global economic recession; the country occupied fifth position in the world among the achievers of high growth rate; average growth rate of 6.4% in four years.
- Revenue collection more than doubled; Taka 94 thousand 754 crore revenue collected in 2011-12 financial year compared to Taka 47 thousand 436 crore in the year preceding the assumption of office by the government.
- Foreign exchange reserve has risen to US Dollar 12.3 billion from US Dollar 5.78 billion at the time of assumption of office by the government.
- Export receipts raised to US Dollar 24.3 billion.
- Per capita national income rose to US Dollar 848 from US Dollar 676 in 2009.
- Agreements on foreign aid commitments for receiving US Dollar 14,898.57 million signed in three and a half years up to June 2012 since assumption of office by the government, which is 83.78 percent higher compared to the preceding three and half years.
- Allocation for the Annual Development Programme raised to Taka 55 thousand crore in 2012-13, as opposed to Taka 23 thousand crore in 2008-09.
- Huge success by fulfilling election pledges on power generation; present production is 8,275 megawatt as against 3,268 megawatt in 2009; production of natural gas per day raised to 2,250 million cubic feet from 1,750 million cubic feet.
- Price of non-urea fertilizer reduced in three stages by 70% to 78%; 8,068 and 28 thousand retail sellers deployed at union and village levels respectively.
- Food-grain production increased by 19 lac 39 thousand metric tons during 2011-12 fiscal year compared to production in 2007-08; now on the way to achieving self-reliance in food-grain production in 2012-13.
- The UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon identified Bangladesh as a model for the developing world during his visit to Bangladesh in 2011.
- Record quantity of food-grain has been produced as a result of agriculture-friendly policies; food security has been ensured by undertaking various programmes related to food security as well as augmentation of stored food.
- Famine-like 'Monga' situation in the country's north has been eliminated; size of agricultural land in the area has increased due to agriculture-friendly policies and crops have been grown their on a massive scale.
- The generic mystery of jute and fungus has been unraveled.
- Fish production has risen to 32.62 lac metric tons from 25.63 lac metric tons.
- The number of beneficiaries as well as amount of allowances has been increased in schemes meant for the aged, the widows and destitute women, insolvent pregnant mothers, insolvent and disabled freedom fighters and families of martyred freedom fighters in order to consolidate the social safety net coverage. Eight crore 84 lac people are being benefited directly by 84 social safety net programmes; Around 4 thousand crore are being spent in the social safety net sector, which includes OMS, VGD, VGF, TR, FFW.
- A sanction of 51 thousand 871 acres of agricultural khas land was made in favour of 1 lac 11 thousand 673 landless families.
- Historic achievement in reducing poverty rate, which came down to 31.5% in 2010 from 40.4 percent in 2005.
- 'National Service Programme' has been launched for the temporary employment of educated unemployed youths.
- Maternity allowances have been distributed among 3 lac 62 thousand 4 hundred females; allowances were given to 22 thousand lactating mothers; rice/wheat were distributed among 15 lac women under the VGD programme and subsistence allowances were given to 1 lac 60 thousand women under the food security programme.
- Steps have been taken to provide credit facilities to women entrepreneurs on easy terms in order to increase the involvement of women in mainstream economy; at least 15% of the refinancing scheme of Bangladesh Bank was meant for allocation among female entrepreneurs.
- Honorarium for insolvent freedom fighters has been enhanced; the number of beneficiaries has been raised to 150 thousand from 1 lac.
- The retirement age of freedom fighters in government service has been increased to 60 years.
- Hundred percent enrolment of children in schools has been ensured in accordance with the election manifesto; success has been achieved in meeting Millennium Development Goal-2; the number of students receiving stipends has risen to 78 lac from 48 lac; free text books for primary and secondary levels are being distributed among primary and secondary students on the first day of each year; under a new curriculum, 27 crore text-books have been distributed on 1 January 2013.
- JSC/JDC and PSC examinations have been introduced as final examinations for classes eight and five.
- 1,624 private educational institutions have been brought under MPO.
- UN prize and Gavy medal have been won for successes in reducing child mortality; 'South South Prize' was won for successful application of information technology in improving maternal and child health.
- Healthcare services have been ensured at the grassroots level by launching 12,203 community clinics throughout the country.

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A nation requires a vision for its cherished development and progress. Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman dreamt for a 'Golden Bengal' free from hunger, poverty, exploitation, inequality and injustice. The manifesto of Bangladesh Awami League, the main ally of the present government, has also set a unique vision for the nation. Now we are ambitious to be a middle income country by 2021 when we will be celebrating the golden jubilee of our glorious independence. 'Golden Bengal', the very dream of Bangabandhu, has been rebranded as 'Digital Bangladesh'.

Under the able leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the country is put right on the track defying the global economic crisis. Bangladesh is advancing towards fulfilling Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) related to poverty alleviation, gender equality and health & education. The government has placed poverty alleviation at the forefront of its development strategy. In order to strengthen the social safety net programmes, Old Age Allowance, Widow, Divorced and Distressed Women Allowance Scheme, Allowances for the Insolvent Disables, Education Scholarship for disabled students and honorarium of insolvent freedom fighters have been increased and in order to meet the food demand of the hardcore poor, the coverage of the Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF), Vulnerable Group Development (VGD), and Gratuitous Relief (GR) programmes have been widened.

In order to build a Digital Bangladesh, the government has taken digital technology as the tool. In addition to expanding bandwidth capacity, the main porter of internet, its price has been reduced about 70%. The government has rendered digital facilities starting from digitizing the delivery and payment (purji) system of sugarcane growers to different other services like agricultural information, healthcare information, educational information, admission and examination results of educational institutions up to the union and individual levels. District information portals and one-stop service centres have been established in all districts. Land related services are being provided without any delay or harassment from these one-stop service centres. Arrangement has been made to pay electricity, gas and phone bills through mobile phone. Railway tickets can also be purchased through mobile phone. Half of the country's population now own mobile phones.

The activities of the present government has laid a strong foundation to fulfill the vision of making an information technology based middle income modern 'Digital Bangladesh' by the year 2021. If this trend of development and progress continues, we can hope that Bangladesh will make an enviable instance of progress in the world by 2021, the year of the golden jubilee of our Independence. A brief account of the four years development activities and progress of the government is furnished below.

#### Prime Minister's Office

Programmes are underway to establish a coordinated e-service structure from the union level up to the ministries in order to reach services to the doorsteps of people of all classes and professions in society quickly, cheaply, transparently and without hassles, so that people can obtain those services from anywhere irrespective of their places of origin. Groundbreaking initiatives have been taken like setting up of Union Information and Service Centres, District E-service Centre, e-Asia etc. under the Access to Information (A2I) programme. Under this project, work on installing 20,500 multimedia classrooms in secondary schools is ongoing. Around 800 thousand people have collected information from the website of National Information Portal during 2012 and 4 million people on an average are getting services each month from the Union Information and Service Centres.

Through the Asrayan-2 project implementation of rehabilitating 50 thousand landless, dispossessed and uprooted families is in full swing.

141 income generating projects of the size of small and cottage industries have been taken up in 141 upazilas under the programme titled 'Development Assistance for Special Areas' (outside Chittagong Hill Tracts) aimed at developing the living standards, preservation of cultural heritage, improving the rate of education, construction and repair of religious institutions, sanitation etc. of small ethnic populations living in the plains. Under this programme, 100 thousand people belonging to ethnic minority groups have been brought under social safety net coverage through this programme.

The role of Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (BEPZA) has been strengthened for quick expansion of the industrial sector. Work on two private EPZs called Rangunia and Korean EPZ is in progress in addition to the 8 EPZs at Chittagong, Dhaka, Mongla, Comilla, Ishwardi, Uttara (Nilphamari), Adamji and Kamaphuli. Various financial and non-financial incentives are offered to industrial establishments set up in the EPZs. During 2011-12 financial year, 409 industrial units having owners from 37 countries exported commodities worth US Dollar 4.21 billion, which is around 17.24% of total national exports. The EPZs have provided direct employment to around 339 thousand Bangladeshi citizens, of whom 64% are women.

The Board of Investment continues to play an important role in increasing investments in the country by promoting industrial investments and rendering policy and advisory services on setting up industries. Real foreign investments during the three year period of 2009 to 2012 have been over 2.85 billion US dollars.



Workers at a garment factory

As a one-stop service centre, the NGO Affairs Bureau undertakes various tasks including registration and renewal of NGOs, release of funds, audits etc. As a result, 1,077 projects with an outlay of Taka 4,347 crore have been implemented during 2011-12 financial year. As a result, 166 thousand people found employment, 4.32 million students received education, around 80 million people received healthcare and 213 thousand individuals received training for self-employment. Besides, services like installation of deep tube-wells and sanitary latrines as well as construction and repair of residential houses have also been provided.

#### Cabinet Division

Thirty-one individuals and three institutions have been awarded 'Swadhinata Purashkar' in recognition of their extraordinary contributions in different fields including independence and the liberation war. The then Prime Minister of India Mrs. Indira Gandhi was awarded the 'Bangladesh Freedom Honour' (posthumous), 10 eminent persons from different countries have been awarded 'Bangladesh Liberation War Honour' and 126 individuals plus 7 institutions have been awarded 'Friends of Liberation War Honour'. The Division of Rangpur, 'Bijoynagar' upazila in Brahmanbaria district and 'Rangabali' upazila in Patuakhali district have been created. Ministry of Railway has been set up by separating the Railway Division from the Ministry of Communication; two separate ministries have been constituted through reorganization of the Science and Technology Division, and Information and Communication Technology Division; two separate ministries have been constituted by reorganizing Food Division and the Disaster Management and Relief Division. 'Law and Justice Division' and 'Legislative and Parliamentary Affairs Division' have been formed under the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs; 'Bank and

Financial Institution Division' has been set up under the Ministry of Finance and the Statistics Division has been renamed as 'Statistics and Information Management Division'. A 'National Integrity Strategy' has been approved for upholding integrity and ethics in public and private organizations as well as for curbing corruption.

#### Ministry of Public Administration

A total of 212 thousand posts have been created in different ministries and 203 thousand personnel have been recruited. Of them, around 6 thousand have been appointed in cadre services. Arrangement has been made for introducing performance-based evaluation in place of ACRs for ensuring posting and promotion on the basis of merit and qualification. A total of 10,127 officials have been provided training at home and abroad including master's, diploma and short courses and 539 individuals were sent overseas. Progress has been made in introducing e-filing. Sixty officers have been promoted to the rank of secretary, 293 to the post of additional secretary, 688 to the post of joint secretary and 665 to the post of Deputy Secretary.

The retirement age of government employees has been raised to 59 years and that of freedom fighters to 60 years.

#### Ministry of Finance

Bangladesh has been included among the top 5 countries of the world in the field of economic growth by achieving an average growth rate of 6.38 percent during the past four years. Collection of Revenue has more than doubled. Law and policy have been framed for curbing money laundering. The foreign exchange reserve stood at US Dollar 12.3 billion. The rate of inflation currently hovers around 7 percent as a result of measures taken for controlling inflation. Pledges for foreign assistance worth US Dollar 14,895 million have been made, of which around US Dollar 6,977 million have been released. Some new banks are being set up for taking the banking services to the rural areas.

#### Ministry of Planning

A medium term sixth five-year plan have been formulated and approved in the light of a 10-year perspective plan (2010-21) for achieving the goals of Vision-2021. The plan has incorporated themes like poverty alleviation, employment generation, power and energy, education, health, food security, communication, urbanisation, climate change, Digital Bangladesh, etc. A total of 759 projects with financial outlay of Taka 388 thousand crore have been approved during the past four years.

#### Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs

Nine cases are now under trial in the two tribunals constituted for trying the war-crimes and crimes against humanity. Trial of BDR mutiny and brutal killings are underway in accordance with existing laws. Around Taka 22.10 million were sanctioned in favour of legal aid committees in 64 districts, through with 40,624 individuals got legal assistance. A project is underway for construction of court buildings of chief judicial magistrates in 34 districts and acquisition of land in the remaining districts. 196 acts, 22 ordinances and 1,450 SROs have been framed including the Constitution (15th Amendment) Act.

#### Ministry of Agriculture

After assuming office, the government halved the price of non-urea fertilisers and reduced its price by 70% to 78% in three stages. Around 10 million farmers were given agricultural input assistance cards and 9.50 million farmers could open bank accounts by depositing Taka 10, which were used for providing them financial assistance. Different research institutes of the ministry invented high yielding varieties of rice that are resistant to salinity, water-logging and drought; high yielding and hybrid varieties of different crops including wheat, potato, mustard, vegetables, fruits, spices, etc.; and 75 improved crop management techniques. Unraveling the genetic mystery of jute and its fungus has been an epoch-making success in the agriculture sector. Seventy-six growers' and wholesale markets have been constructed for ensuring fair price for farmers and creating a modern marketing network in the country. A total of 95 agriculture information and communication centres have been set

up and work on another 150 is underway.

#### Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief

Disaster Management Act, 2012 and National Plan for Disasters have been framed. Disaster-resilient model villages have been established in Khulna by providing rehabilitation assistance including provision of pure drinking water. Eighty days of employment has been generated for 2.80 million people. A total of 64 lakh 66 thousand metric tons of food-grains and 673 crore taka have been distributed through test relief, food for works, VGF and TR programmes. 724 cyclone-resistant barrack houses and 74 flood shelters have been built all over the country. Fire Service and Civil Defence Department has procured rescue equipment worth Taka 690 million.

#### Ministry of Food

Food security is being ensured through various programmes including storage of food. The storage capacity of food warehouses has increased to 1.70 million tons from 1.40 million tons over the past four years. Import of rice has not been required during the previous and current fiscal year. Almost 2.40 million metric tons of rice was distributed among the low-income people through open market sales (OMS). The government started to sell wheat alongside rice since 2010 to control its price. Food-grains (rice-wheat) are being distributed at a cheap price among 8.20 million low-income families.



A farmer puts fertilizer in the land

#### Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives

The district council act, upazila parishad act, municipality act, union parishad act and relevant rules have been updated and amended for strengthening and decentralisation of local government system. One hundred and 39 thousand water sources of different types have been dug and 450 thousand sets of sanitary latrines have been distributed among the poor people. 16,250 kilometres of roads and around 131 thousand metres of bridges/culverts have been built, 1,052 growth centres and hat-bazaars have been developed, 16 new upazila complex buildings and 765 union complex buildings have been constructed. Work on 10 kilometre long Jatrabari-Palashi 'Mayor Mohammad Hanif Flyover' is nearing completion. Plans have been chalked out for producing electricity from 5 thousand tons of wastes produced in Dhaka city everyday. Four new city corporations including bifurcation of Dhaka City Corporation into two and 16 new municipalities have been created; classifications of 50 municipalities have been upgraded. Around 10 million people of rural areas are lifting their condition through 'One home one firm' project, 'Coastal livelihood' project, economic empowerment of the ultra-poor, participatory rural development project, establishment of cooperative markets all over the country and expansion of activities of Milk Vita.

#### Ministry of Education

Free text-books have been handed over to the students of primary and secondary levels for three consecutive years in a row. 270 million text-books have been distributed under the new curriculum on 1 January 2013. The National Education Policy 2010 was framed. Initiatives have been taken for establishment of technical

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