

# Full text of PM's address to the nation

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday addressed the nation to mark the completion of four years of the five-year tenure of her government. Following is the English rendering of her address:

**Dear countrymen,**  
Assalamu Alaikum.

The present government elected by you with a huge mandate has completed its four years on January 6 last.

I thank you and convey my gratitude to you for keeping confidence and trust in the Awami League, the pro-liberation forces, and idea of Vision 2021 and digital Bangladesh in the polls of December 29, 2008.

After four years, we can proudly say that despite multifarious adversities and limitations, we have been able to meet most of the pledges made before election.

We achieved more than the targets in some areas too. Taking you with us, our forward march will continue in the days ahead.

Despite the global economic recession, the country's economy is now founded on a strong footing. All the macroeconomic indicators are showing positive trends.

International agencies, including the United Nations, have lauded socio-economic advancement in Bangladesh. Bangladesh is now a role model of development in the world.

On behalf of the people of Bangladesh, I presented "People's Empowerment and Development Model" in the UN General Assembly in 2011 in a bid for global peace. The 193 member states of the UN passed the proposal last month.

Our proposal "Culture of Peace" presented in 2011 was also passed this year.

At the initiative of my daughter Saima Hossain Putul to create "Autism Awareness" across the globe, we presented another proposal at the UN General Assembly last year.

It was adopted by the General Assembly last month. It is a rare honour for Bangladesh.

The Bangalee nation stood with their heads high as a nation of heroes in the world in 1971. After 41 years, Bangladesh has again been appreciated in the international arena.

I congratulate the people for this.

**Dear countrymen,**

In this pleasant time of the nation, I recall the greatest Bangalee of all time, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who had been steadfast in realising the rights of the Bangalee nation even after suffering imprisonment, oppression, repression and torture for 24 years.

Under his unequivocal leadership, the Bangalee nation achieved the independence through the Liberation War.

I recall with profound pain 18 members of my family, including my mother, father and three brothers, and all martyrs who fell victims to the history's most heinous carnage on August 15, 1975.

I recall four national leaders -- Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, M Mansur Alam and AH M Quamruzzaman -- who were brutally killed in a solitary prison cell on November 3, 1975.

**HOMAGE TO FREEDOM FIGHTERS**  
I recall three million martyrs, in exchange of whose lives we earned independence, a sovereign territory, a red-green flag and our own national anthem.

I express my profound respect towards the best sons of the soil, the freedom

fighters. I convey my sympathy to two lakh mothers and sisters, who were dishonoured by the Pakistani occupation forces during the Liberation War in 1971, and the wounded freedom fighters.

I recall the leaders and workers of Awami League, including Ivy Rahman, who were killed in a barbaric grenade attack on Bangabandhu Avenue on August 21, 2004.

I recall 22,000 leaders and activists of the Awami League, including former finance minister Shah AMS Kibriya, MP, and labour leader Ahsanullah Master, MP, and the innocent people who fell victim to murder, killing, repression and misrule of BNP-Jamaat alliance.

I recall those who sacrificed their lives in the Bangalees' movement for vote and bread since the Language Movement of 1952.

**FOOD SECURITY**  
You can remember that when we assumed office on January 6, 2009, an extreme miserable condition was prevailing across the country.

There was panic and fear everywhere. The prices of foodstuff were skyrocketing. Public life was devastated by load shedding.

Businessmen and investors were in panic. Farmer brothers and sisters could not afford arranging irrigation, fertilisers and seeds for high prices.

The people were passing their days amid serious insecurity. Human rights were jeopardised. There was no scope for freedom of expression.

There were financial crisis and recession in the international arena. Prices of all commodities, including food items, were rising.

We faced an acid test after forming the government. Hence on the first day, we held a meeting of the cabinet and determined our instant, short-term, mid-term and long-term programmes. Then started the government's extensive activities.

The government worked tirelessly in the last four years. You have extended all out cooperation. The country progressed fast. Development has taken place in every family.

**ECONOMIC GROWTH**  
We have achieved 6.5 percent growth on average despite global economic recession. In four years, 20,40,000 manpower have been employed abroad. It was 10,00,000 lakh during the four years of the previous government.

Nearly \$4,800 crore have been received as remittance in four years. It is four times higher than the same period of the previous government. The export earning has increased at \$2,430 crore from \$1,411 crore between last fiscal year and 2008.

Our foreign currency reserve has reached at \$13.11 billion. It is highest reserve in the history of Bangladesh. It was \$3.88 billion in 2006 during the BNP government.

The income of Speaker, members of cabinet and the government officials have been brought under tax net. The revenue collection has been doubled in four years. As a result, we could be able to spend more money in development programmes. The socio-economic development has been expedited.

We have allocated Tk 55,000 crore to Annual Development Programme in the current fiscal year which was Tk 22,000 crore in 2008.

Nearly \$382 crore came as foreign investment in four years. It was \$187 crore during the same period of the previous government.

Different international organisations termed economic advancement of Bangladesh as a huge achievement. The organisations praised economic management of the government.

Bangladesh is now in top five countries of the world in terms of achieving long-term growth. Bangladesh has been seen as future growth-engine.

**FIGHTING CORRUPTION**  
We have taken a firm stance against corruption. Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has been strengthened. The ACC is now working independently.

The ACC has been summoning ministers, advisers, MPs for investigation and is able to interrogate them frequently for filing cases. Was it even imaginable during the BNP-Jamaat alliance government? The countrymen, you will judge.

The persons involved in embezzlement of money in Hallmark and Destiny have been arrested to eradicate irregularities. The drive against irregularities and corruption is going on and it will continue.

We have framed Anti-Money Laundering Act to check misuse of money. The Securities and Exchange Commission has been restructured to propel capital market.

Presently, the trial of war criminals and anti-liberation elements has become a demand of mass people. Every people of Bangla including children, adolescence, youth, elderly person and all mothers and sisters want trial of war criminals.

BNP has come out to save war criminals ignoring the demand. They are creating anarchy. Jamaat has chosen the path of destruction.

BNP's unity with the war criminals is not new. Their founder Ziaur Rahman had formed illegal marshal law government in 1975. After that, he had started rehabilitation of the war criminals and anti-liberation elements.

He had freed them from the jail. He had brought back many of them in the country and gave citizenship. He had established them in politics and appointed as prime minister, advisers and ministers.

The trial of the war criminals, who violated the dignity of mothers, sisters, killed intellectuals, looted, set fire and committed torture from house to house of Bangalees, will be held on soil of Bangla despite all conspiracies and ill attempts of BNP-Jamaat.

I want cooperation from all of you, want your blessings.

The trial against 6,041 personnel of 57 units has been completed on charge of committing BDR mutiny and 5,926 have got imprisonment in different durations.

The trial of 850 personnel, charged for committing murders and different criminal offences, has been continuing. The trial will be completed in a speedy manner, Insha Allah.

The trial of the 21st August grenade attack and 10 trucks arms haul cases are at the final stage.

**GOOD GOVERNANCE**  
Right to Information Act, Whistle Blower Protection Act and Human Rights Commission have been formed to establish good governance. Nearly 41,000 helpless poor people are getting legal support under government finance.

Seventy-one judges at high court and 125 judges in lower court have been appointed to reduce backlog of cases. The judicial department has been working with full freedom in establishing justice.

The public administration has been made efficient and accountable. We have framed domestic violence

resistance and protection law to protect women's rights.

We have extended maternity leave to six months from four months. Women and children trafficking have been stopped. Acid violence has been reduced.

Law and order situation of the country has improved. Eid, Durga Puja, Buddha Purnima, Christmas have been celebrated as universal festival.

A record number of 1,10,000 Muslims performed holy hajj in 2012.

Gazette on vested property has already been published, and the tribunal and district committee have started work aimed at handing over the properties.

Minimum wage for workers in readymade garments and other industrial sectors was almost doubled to protect their interest.

**ARMED FORCES**  
Work on modernisation and



restructuring of the Armed Forces under 'Forces Goal-2030' is going on in the light of Defence Policy framed under the directives of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Fourth generation tank, self propelled gun, weapon locating radar, modern helicopter and armoured recovery vehicles have been purchased.

We have purchased Maritime petrol aircrafts, helicopters, frigates, corvette large petrol crafts and hydrographic survey ships. Special force has been formed.

Missile (surface to air) has been added to the Air Force and new Biman base has been set up. Work on Bangabandhu Aeronautical Centre at Kurmitola are progressing fast.

We have modernised police force too. Thirty three thousand police members have been appointed. Posts of sub-inspector and town sub-inspector have been upgraded to class-II from class-III and post of inspector has been upgraded to class-I.

Helicopter has been purchased to make law enforcement agencies dynamic. For Ansar and VDP, 2,235 posts have been created.

Bangladesh has now become the highest peacekeepers sending country to the UN peacekeeping missions. Our women police are now engaged in UN peacekeeping missions.

Fire service department has been strengthened by introducing modern technology for fire fighting management and post-earthquake rescue. Work is on to set up fire station in each upazila.

**DIGITAL BANGLADESH**  
Sustainable socio-economic development is not possible if the country lagged behind in the field of technology. So, we have fixed the goal to make a 'Digital Bangladesh' by 2021 in our electoral pledge.

Application of information technology has been ensured in all economic activities including banking

sector, service sector, education, health and agriculture. People of all ages accepted the technology.

Internet service and information service centres have been introduced in each union, and 40 lakh rural people are getting the e-service every month.

Internet speed has been increased and internet expenditure has been reduced. Internet subscribers have been increased to seven fold to eight crore.

Ten crore mobile SIMs are now being used in Bangladesh. 3G mobile phone has been launched. Subscribers are getting improved digital services including video call.

Bangladesh's sovereign rights have been established on 1, 11,631 square kilometres on the Bay after the maritime victory against Myanmar.

**ACHIEVEMENTS IN POWER SECTOR**



We have so far set up 54 power plants to generate 3,845 MW electricity. Highest 6,350 MW electricity has been supplied. The power production has been increased to 8,525 MW.

More 26 power plants with the capacity to generate 5,287 MW electricity have been set up. Agreement has been signed with Russia to set up a nuclear power plant to generate 1,000 MW electricity.

We are encouraging solar power production. Work has started to set up coal and gas-based big power plants. Soon, 500 MW power would be imported from India.

**TEXTBOOK DISTRIBUTION**  
We always give importance to education. 27 crore free textbooks have been distributed, 78 lakh students are being given stipends, 26,200 primary schools were nationalised and jobs of 1.4 lakh teachers were simplified.

Posts at government secondary schools have been upgraded to class two from class three.

Bangladesh has achieved success in sports sector. Bangladeshi tigers clinched the series in one-day international cricket against West Indies.

Steps have been taken to develop the quality of football and other sports. Inter-school football tournament has been launched.

**RURAL PEOPLE'S WELFARE**  
Rural people are getting healthcare facilities through 15,000 community clinics and union healthcare centres aimed at delivering healthcare facilities to doorsteps of all.

Doctors and health providers have been appointed. Hospital beds have been increased. Steps have been taken to ensure treatments for cardiac, burn, cancer, kidney patients and children.

75 lakh people from both public and private sectors were employed.

Social safety net has been created through *ekti bari ekta khamar*, old age allowance, dowry allowance,

maternity leave, freedom fighter allowance, disabled allowance, VGD, VGF, test relief and food for work programmes.

These steps helped decrease country's rate of poverty by 10 percent.

Rural economy has been boosted up. We have restarted the closed jute mills. Export of jute and jute goods increased. Jute's genome sequence has been invented.

Fish production has been increased by 20 percent. Fishermen were distributed ID cards. Afforestation has been increased by 13.28 percent to face climate change risks.

A total of 3.4 crore tonnes of food grains were produced, while special incentives were given to farmers to produce pulses, spices, oilseeds and vegetables.

Bangladesh is now almost at the brink of attaining food sufficiency as steps were taken to ensure food and nutritional securities.

Roads, pools and bridges are being extensively constructed in order to improve the communication systems. New rail lines are also being constructed with the introduction of new rail services in different routes.

Substantial improvements have already been made at Chittagong and Mongla seaports as well as other land ports across the country. River routes have been enlivened through dredging and it would continue in future.

**FOCUS ON DHAKA**  
Steps have been taken to improve the quality of utility services including supply of electricity, gas and water as well as easing traffic congestions, water logging and sewerage in Dhaka, where inhabitants are growing everyday.

The city has also been given a major touch of beautification.

Meantime, the Banani Flyover has been opened to traffic, while Mirpur-Airport Road Flyover, Gulistan-Jatrabari Flyover and Banani-Kuril Flyover are awaiting finishing touches.

Steps are also underway to build more flyovers and the Airport-Jatrabari elevated expressway. A number of by-pass roads have been constructed. Hatirjheel project work has just been completed and it has brightened the beauty of the city.

The second water treatment plant having capacity of 22.5 crore litre per day has been made operational at Sayedabad in the city recently. An identical water treatment plant will also be built in the city's Khilkhet at an estimated cost of Tk 5,200 crore.

Steps have been taken to launch dredging in the river Buriganga, Balu, Turag, Pungli and Dhaleshwari.

An agreement has already been signed with Japan to introduce metro-rail system.

**PEOPLE'S VOTING RIGHTS**  
BNP, while in power, was not able to hold a single credible election in a free and fair manner. Instead, it set a record of massive vote rigging and terrorism during the by-polls in Magura and Mipur in the capital.

They resorted to major poll manipulation during February 15, 1996 Jatiya Sangsad elections and paved ways for Col Rashid and Major Huda, two killers of the Father of the Nation, to become parliament members.

And they passed the caretaker government system in that controversial parliament, but the people rejected the entire parliament. The BNP government had to step down under a major mass upsurge on March 30, 1996.

BNP again did the same thing in 2006. It published a

national voter list with 1.23 crore fake voters in the list. A controversial person was made chief election commissioner.

It formed the caretaker government with a party loyal as its chief adviser, who happened to be the then president. Its motive to grab the power through vote manipulation was clear to people.

The people got together against BNP's all misdeeds and manipulation, raised protests and forged strong movement against it. Advisers after advisers were appointed, much of whom resigned after they repeatedly failed to conduct a credible national election.

At one stage, the then president Iajuddin Ahmed announced the state of emergency in the country. As a result, the 1/11 came into being. Troops were mobilised across the country.

Basic human rights were engraved. Arrests and harassment at mass scales began with teachers, students, businesspersons and political leaders were put into custody.

Haat-bazaars were bulldozed at rural and urban areas, while businesses were targeted. They got fed up with such a situation.

A three-month caretaker government held the power for two years and made further attempts to stick to the power forever. Fake cases were lodged in order to implement their 'minus two formula'.

Tortures continued by the intelligence agencies. Bangladesh nationals at home and abroad staged waves of strong protests.

The caretaker government was forced to declare elections as pressures mounted internationally and domestically. Democracy returned through general elections.

**MINUS 2 FORMULA**  
One thing you all must keep in mind that persons who were active to implement the so called 'minus two formula' are still active and they want to show off their existence whenever they get scopes.

I would also urge the people of the country to pay special attention to another issue -- Bangladesh has never seen a peaceful transfer of state power since the gruesome killing of August 15, 1975.

Only Awami League government had, however, handed over power peacefully to caretaker government on July 15, 2001. It is Awami League that believes in people's empowerment.

**CREDIBLE ELECTIONS**  
In last four years, the country witnessed 5,509 credible elections, including 14 parliamentary by elections, several city corporation elections as well as upazila, pourasabha and union parishad polls under direct supervision of the Election Commission.

With the elections, 14 parliament members, 57,373 chairmen, members and public representatives in 4,421 union parishads, 1,443 chairmen and vice chairmen in 481 upazilas, 3,782 mayors and councillors in 282 pourasabhas, as well as four mayors and 171 councillors in four city corporations got elected.

In addition to it, 307 more local government representatives were also elected during the period. Finally, a total of 63,194 people's representatives got elected under the present government.

Every election was free, fair and neutral and there was no allegation in this regard.

Our candidates were also defeated in different elections, including local government and by-elections,

but the government did not interfere at all and we have accepted the people's mandate.

Such peaceful elections were never held in the past during the regimes of other governments. The main objective of our government is to ensure the people's right to vote for protecting constitutional right of the people.

The transparency and accountability of the government can be ensured in such way. Consequently, the people will get proper service from the government and people's right would be ensured.

The government has strengthened the election commission.

It was for the first time in Bangladesh that the honourable president formed a search-committee based on the opinions after discussion with all the parties while there was no obligation in this regard.

He formed the Election Commission as per the recommendations of the search committee.

Financial autonomy of the Election Commission was ensured. The manpower has been increased as per demand of the commission. The election offices have been launched in districts and upazilas.

Administration and law enforcement agencies worked under the Election Commission during the election. Appointment and transfer happened as per the order of the Election Commission.

Free and fair working environment has already been created at the Election Commission. People's voting rights is always ensured by the party, which faces repression for protecting the voting rights of the people in movements and sacrifice their lives.

People will elect the government whoever they like. People should be conscious so nobody can snatch their constitutional rights in future.

**VISION-2021**  
We had liberated the country under the leadership of Father of the Nation. He started work for economic emancipation of the country. The anti-liberation forces stopped him in the midway.

We are implementing Vision 2021 for completing the unfinished tasks of Bangabandhu. The world now says that the huge developments works of the present government are taking Bangladesh in the way of prosperity.

We will establish digital Bangladesh, which will be free from poverty and hunger, a prosperous, non-communal and peaceful one through the development work, Insha Allah.

We need continuation of the government to achieve the goal.

**DON'T TRY TO SAVE WAR CRIMINALS**  
You can give us that chance. It will help us to continue the bright potential of the economic emancipation of Bangladesh.

I urge the opposition to avoid conflict. Don't try to save the war criminals, as the nation will never forgive you.

Come forward and we all work together with the spirit of Liberation War for building a prosperous and enormously potential Bangladesh.

Build a 'Sonar Bangla' as dreamt by Father of the Nation.

Let us build a beautiful Bangladesh for our future generation. I wish your success and you too pray for us.

Khoda Hafez.  
Joy Bangla,  
Joy Bangabandhu.  
Long Live Bangladesh.