

**DEFENCE SERVICES COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE**  
**GRADUATION CEREMONY**

Speech by

**Sheikh Hasina**

Hon'ble Prime Minister

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

DSCSC, Dhaka, Thursday, 25 Magh 1424, 07 February 2018

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Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

My Colleagues,  
Chiefs of three services,  
Commandant of Defense Services Command and Staff College,  
Diplomats,  
Graduating Officers,  
Ladies and Gentlemen.

***Assallamu Alaikum.***

I welcome you at this magnificent occasion of certificate awarding ceremony of the Graduation Course.

Today is a special day for the graduating officers. After about 10 exhaustive months, this day marks the moment of accomplishment and a day to rejoice. I congratulate all the graduating officers of Defense Services Command and Staff College.

***Ladies and Gentlemen,***

At the outset, in this month of our glorious Language Movement, I recall with reverence the fearless language martyrs. I pay my deep homage to the memory of the greatest Bangali of all time, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. I pay my deep respect to four national leaders, 3 million martyrs and 2 lakh women, who lost their innocence, in the war of liberation. I would like to pay my tribute to the martyrs of the Armed Forces. Salam to the freedom fighters.

Our armed forces started their journey through the great liberation war in 1971. After independence, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman emphasized on building a disciplined and professional armed forces in Bangladesh. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman made Defense Policy in 1974.

Defense Services Command and Staff College was established to provide superior training to officers of Bangladesh Armed Forces. At present, our college has been recognized as an international educational institution, beyond the boundaries of the country.

After its establishment, the college has successfully completed 42 Staff Courses for the Army, 36 Courses for the Navy and 38 Courses for the Air Force. A total of 1066 officers from the Armed Forces of our 41 friendly countries around the globe have also graduated from this College. All these graduates are contributing in the defence structure of their respective countries in different capacities. For such splendid success, I congratulate the commandant, faculty members and all staff of this college.

***Dear Graduating Officers,***

You have successfully completed this course by dint of your hard work and perseverance. I believe that the knowledge acquired through this course will make you more confident in discharging assigned duties and in facing any challenge. Not only that, I presume that from this moment you are ready to undertake higher leadership role.

I am very happy to learn that total 7 female officers are graduated this year. It is encouraging to see the remarkable number of female officers graduating every year, which clearly indicates 'Women Empowerment' in the Armed Forces and in Bangladesh as well. I am also pleased to learn about the invaluable contributions of your spouse's in various enrichment

and social programmes as part of the course curriculum. I wish success in your professional, conjugal and social life.

***Dear Graduating Officers from Abroad,***

Bangladesh is a peace-loving country. Our basic foreign policy is 'Friendship to all and malice to none'. We, thus, continue to maintain warm and friendly ties with your countries. Your presence has added more colour to this institution. I firmly believe, during your stay, you have formed positive impressions about the people and culture of this land. I hope that you, as our goodwill ambassadors, will convey in your respective countries the good wishes of our hospitable people and the beauty of this land. Please do convey my regards to your government, all members of the Armed Forces and your countrymen.

***Ladies and Gentlemen,***

The Armed Forces are the symbol of our independence and sovereignty. Alongside the noble responsibility of protecting our sovereignty, the members of our patriotic Armed Forces are also making significant contributions to the fields of tackling natural disasters. They have also been assisting civil administration for country's development activities, construction of infrastructures, elimination of militancy-terrorism and maintaining law and order.

Not only inside the country, members of our Armed Forces have also earned name and fame in foreign lands by their honesty, dedication and professional acumen. Members of Bangladesh Armed Forces are contributing significantly for peace keeping, democracy, social development, healthcare and education in various countries under the emblem of UN mission. Their success has heightened the image of Bangladesh.

You will be happy to know that our government has taken up projects to extend infrastructural facilities of this college. In this connection, this multi-storied academic complex and other installations have already been commissioned.

***Ladies and Gentlemen,***

In pursuance of the farsighted defence policy of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, we have formulated Forces Goals-2030. In the last 9 years, we have increased the capabilities of the Armed Forces as well as the infrastructure development. Combined with modern training and equipment, today's armed forces are much more developed, efficient and intelligent.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman claimed to establish the Naval Head Quarters in East Bengal at his 6-point demand in 1966. After going through international legal procedure, we were victorious in obtaining our rights at vast maritime boundaries. Potential "Blue Economic" door was unleashed in front of us by this endeavor. We made the navy as a three-dimensional force for utilizing this opportunity. It is a matter of great regret that our Navy didn't have a Sub-Marine. Recently we have added sophisticated Sub-Marine warship, which has amplified our capabilities hugely.

F-7 BG fighter aircraft, helicopter and sophisticated Sky Defense missile have been added to the Air Force. New units have been added and manpower has been increased to Air Force. Bangabandhu Aeronautical Center has been approved. Bangabandhu and Cox's Bazar Air Bases have been emerged as a full-fledged base.

As part of the modernization of the Army, establishment of new Divisions, Brigades, Units and Battalions, along with establishment of important institutions like NDC, BIPSOT, AFMC, MIST and NCOs. A large number of APC, ARV, Battle Tank, Armoured Recovery Vehicle, Helicopter and other necessary weapons and equipments have been purchased to increase the operational capacity of the army.

***Ladies and Gentlemen,***

Bangladesh is the Role Model of development in the world. In many fields including poverty alleviation, education, health, technology and women empowerment, we have been able to surpass many developed countries, not just in South Asia.

Our GDP growth rate was 7.28 percent in the last fiscal year. The poverty rate is now 22 percent which was 41 percent in 2005. Per capita income has risen from US Dollar 543 in 2005 to US Dollar 1,610. Foreign exchange reserves have risen from US Dollar 3 billion to US Dollar 32 billion. We are implementing a huge project like Padma Bridge with our own fund.

We will turn Bangladesh into a middle income country by 2021 at the Golden Jubilee of our great independence, and a developed one by 2041, InshaAllah.

I congratulate the Graduating Officers and their family members once again. The contribution of their spouses and family members to the success of Graduating Officers is particularly noteworthy. I wish them progression and sustained success in their careers and lives. I would like to conclude my speech by seeking the success of the Defense Services Command and Staff College. Thank you all.

Khoda Hafez.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu  
May Bangladesh Live Forever.

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