

GRADUATION CEREMONY OF NDC AND AFWC – 2017

Speech by
HE Sheikh Hasina
Prime Minister

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Dhaka, Monday, 04 Poush 1424, 18 December 2017

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim.

Members of the Cabinet
Chief of Staffs of the three services
Distinguished Members of Parliaments
Excellencies
Commandant, National Defence College and Members of the Faculty & Staff
Graduating Course Members of National Defence Course and Armed Forces War Course 2017
Ladies and Gentlemen.

ASSALAMU ALAIKUM.

I welcome you all at the graduation ceremony of NDC and AFWC-2017.

December is the month of victory and pride. The peace loving people of this land under the leadership of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman earned their ultimate victory in this month after a 9-month bloody war against Pakistani occupation forces.

I pay my deep homage to the *Father of the Nation*. With profound respect, I remember four national leaders who carried out the independence war in absence of Bangabandhu. With deep sorrow and gratitude, I also recall with reverence three million martyrs, and the two hundred thousand women who sacrificed their modesty for our liberation. I extend my humble gratitude to the war-wounded freedom fighters and the members of the martyred families. My felicitations and salute go to the heroic freedom fighters.

Dear Graduates,

Please accept my sincere congratulations on the eve of successful completion of the one-year long hectic and challenging National Defence Course and Armed Forces War Course.

I am very happy to know that you have learned different aspects of a state, including socio-political culture, economy, international relations and national security. You have also studied problems of governance and different solutions to this problem.

You must be aware of the fact that the strategic importance of Bangladesh in international arena is gradually growing. Bangladesh is playing a significant role in promoting international and regional fraternity and unity. The core tenet of our foreign policy is: Friendship to all, malice to none. Inspired by the spirit of this outstanding policy coined by our father of the nation, we are committed to promoting par excellence of international relations.

Despite various limitations, we have never hesitated to respond humanitarian calls. We have given shelter and humanitarian assistance to over one million Rohingya refugees displaced from Myanmar. Bangladesh has now been lauded as a compassionate and respectable member in today's world.

Besides international realm, in the domestic sector, our government has been setting impressive footprints in the fields of human resource development, female education, women empowerment and sustained economic development for the people of Bangladesh as a whole. To keep pace with globalization and technological advancement, we are relentlessly working to realize the dream of digital Bangladesh. We have already crossed the threshold of the poverty and promoted ourselves into a middle income nation. We hope to transform ourselves into a middle income country by 2021 and a developed one by 2041, Insha Allah.

Despite our continuous efforts, there remain certain challenges. However, with the training that you have just completed, I believe, you will be able to contribute better in mitigating those challenges.

Dear Officers,

Prior to 1996, there was no institution for the higher training of senior and mid ranking officers of armed forces in the country. We established the National Defence College during our 1996-2001 tenure. This institution has turned into an internationally reputed training institution. It is indeed a matter of pride for us.

Beyond the boundaries of our armed forces, NDC as an institution of strategic importance, has been equally accepted and acclaimed in the nonmilitary domain of Bangladesh. Having trained by this institution, quite a number of high officials from civil administration are making remarkable contribution at national and international arena.

Apart from NDC and AFWC, Capstone courses run by this organization have been imparting significant knowledge, on the functions of state machinery, international affairs and other quintessential issues related to the governance, to the participants representing the policy making echelon of the state. Verily, NDC has been working as an important milestone along the complex highway of Civil-Military relations.

We have been working to establish professional and well-trained armed forces. We closely monitor the ever-changing war-crafts and technologies; continuously review the capabilities of our Armed Forces and take timely actions to modernize the Armed Forces to meet the multi-dimensional challenges of 21st century.

Dear Course Members

Bangladesh is proud of its Armed Forces which were born during the war of liberation.

We have ensured that our Armed Forces will have access to latest technologies and equipment. Adequate training facilities have been established and made operational. The Armed Forces members have always worked with integrity, commitment and diligence to help the people in times of natural and other calamities and disasters; they have implemented strategic infrastructure projects and worked with very high standards at both home and abroad.

I am happy to note that the National Defence College is dedicated to train the operational and strategic leaders from home and abroad, from militaries to civil services and the policy makers. They are contributing to the promotion of a culture of peace, accountability and transparency.

The officials have been carrying out high responsibilities in their respective services. I am also glad to note that ex-graduates from this institution have been becoming cabinet secretary, chiefs of services or chief of police. Even successful businessmen and professors of the country, members of parliament are showing interest to participate in the NDC Capstone Course. The college would have to maintain the standards and continue its development.

Dear Foreign Graduates,

During your yearlong stay in Bangladesh you have gained valuable experience and understanding. You have stayed, worked and made friends among Bangladeshis and foreign officials. I hope you are satisfied with the traditional Bangladeshi hospitality. I hope that you have gained empathy and appreciation for Bangladesh and will act as our valuable ambassadors at your respective positions.

I am also happy to know that the college is actively promoting democratic values, rule of law, political culture and human rights among the course members. I hope, you will work to spread the same message across our nation-states.

Dear All,

I strongly believe that having been inspired by the NDC motto "Security through Knowledge", the graduates of this institution, will take the nation towards self-reliance and sustainable development.

Finally, I thank the Commandant and members of the faculty and staff of NDC for their excellent standard of professionalism. I wish good luck for the success of this institution and pledge my government's full support for all times to come. Finally, thanks to all for your presence and patient hearing.

Thank to you all again.

Khoda Hafez.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu.

May Bangladesh Live Forever.

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