

Closing Ceremony of the 6th International Flight Safety Seminar 2019

Speech by

Sheikh Hasina

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Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

Chair of the Ceremony,

Colleagues,

Excellencies, Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen present.

Assalamu Alaikum and a very good morning to you all.

I welcome you all at the closing ceremony of 6th International Flight Safety Seminar 2019 jointly organized by the Bangladesh Air Force and Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh.

With deepest tribute, I remember the greatest Bangali of all times, Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Our long-cherished freedom and independent Bangladesh was achieved through nine months Liberation War under His leadership. I also remember the national Four-Leaders, 30 lac martyrs and 2 lac abused mothers and sisters during the liberation war. Salam to all freedom fighters. I mournfully remember all martyrs of 15th August 1975.

Dear Audience,

Bangladesh Air Force was born on 28 September 1971. During that time many civil pilots joined with Air Force pilots to a special flying unit named 'Kilo Flight' and contributed significantly during the Liberation war.

Biman Bangladesh Airlines was born on 19th day of our independence. The Tejgaon Airport was prepared operational for landing international flights and welcomed our Father of the Nation at 25th day of our independence on 10 January 1972, which was a symbol of dexterity and dedication of all who were related to civil aviation matters at that time.

Dear Audience,

Only in three years Father of the Nation reconstructed war-ravaged Bangladesh and transformed into a developing country. He dreamed to build a modern, powerful and professional air force considering the geographical location, military strategy and potentials for economic development of Bangladesh. Bangabandhu through his visionary and firm decision stepped up modernizing the nascent Air Force by including supersonic fighter aircraft MiG-21, transport aircrafts, helicopters, air defence radar system etc.

During our terms in government in 1996, we started modernizing Air Force as an able force of time and undertook different programs. That time onward, we included Fourth Generation MIG-29 Fighter Aircraft, YAK-13, C-130J transport aircraft, L-410 and AW-119 and AW-139 maritime search and rescue helicopter in the Air Force. Later in 1999 and in 2000 we purchased two DC-10 for inclusion in civil aviation sector.

While, we came into power again in 2009, we concentrated on capacity building for manufacture, maintenance, repair and overhauling of various types of aircraft and other equipment. We established 'Bangabandhu Aeronautical Centre' in 2011. We are expecting that all types of air craft both civil and military will be fixed in this centre shortly. State of the Art 3D Helicopter Simulator has already been inducted in BAF to ensure realistic training of our pilots. Besides, 'Forces Goal 2030' are being implemented as a part of expansion and modernization of BAF.

We passed a bill in the parliament on 'Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Aviation and Aerospace University' on 28 February 2019. With a goal to develop skilled human resources in aviation sector this institute will start its world class academic function shortly.

Dear Audience,

We purchased ten passenger carriers in last ten year and three quarter which includes four B-787 dreamliners, two B-737 and four B-777 from Boeing. These most modern aircrafts

are suitable for carrying long distance flights for example from Dhaka to New York, Toronto, Sydney etc. and we are eager to do that. Keeping this in mind our civil aviation authority has been working faster to upgrade it as a category-1 authority.

After the independence, Air Force and Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh have been working hand in hand and therefore, have been ensuring safe take off, flying and landing. This has set an extraordinary example of sharing aviation related training and operation methodologies.

Our government is working hard to build the Air Force as a strong force and also to modernize Biman Bangladesh Airlines through purchasing state of the art fighter aircrafts, aircrafts, radar systems and other complementary equipments phase by phase.

Our government has taken a number of efforts to make air trip accessible, comfortable and safe. As part of this, construction of a third terminal at Hazrat Shah Jalal International Airport is in progress. After implementation of the project, it will be possible to provide service to approximately 12 million passengers per year which will be two and a half times more than that of existing capacities.

We are implementing a project to turn Cox's Bazar Airport into an International Airport through extension of its runway upto 12,000ft. We are constructing Khan Jahan Ali Airport in Bagerhat at estimated cost of 544.75 crores. A feasibility study is underway for establishment of Bangabandhu International Airport. We have adopted Civil Aviation Authority Act, 2017 to upgrade our civil aviation authority.

With an ambition to increase connectivity in the neighboring countries, a project on modernization of Saidpur Airport is in progress to convert it into an International Airport. Our steps will provide comforts to the air travelers and also will help creation of new and new air-routes in future in the region. As a result, we are optimistic for faster flourishing in our tourism industry.

Dear Participants,

Flying is highly technical profession, where expertise is a must. This professionalism brings confidence for himself and simultaneously brings glory and honor for the organization. You must ensure utmost care for safe flying and maintenance of the aircraft purchased by hard-earned revenue and foreign currency. Please remember, there is no alternative of professional skill and honesty.

Our government has been implementing special programs for development of Aviation sector. Bangladesh Air Force and our civil aviation authority have been maintaining comparatively better and satisfactory standard in flight safety in the region. Recently Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh has obtained coveted 75.46% marks in a Flight Safety survey conducted by ICAO which is the highest in Asia. Recently, Biman Bangladesh Airlines also has achieved international Five Star award in safe aviation standard.

Therefore, the declaration of civil aviation in Bangladesh as Category-1 is just a matter of time under the International Safety Assessment Program by the US Federal Aviation Authority.

Dear Audience,

I am happy to note that participants of 16 Air Forces from different countries of four continents and representative from International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) are taking part in this seminar. There has been an open floor discussion on new concepts of flight safety for last two days. A platform for sharing of experience also has been created among the participating local-foreign military-civil agencies to curb against aeroplane crash. Our national agencies have been benefitted on this opinion exchange program, which would greatly help ensuring flight safety in our country.

The theme of this seminar 'Team effort can ensure Team Safety' has been proven befitting with regard to flight safety matters. We expect our aviation sector would be enriched day by day.

Bangladesh is now termed as a 'Development Miracle' in the world. By this time, we have graduated from Least Developed Country into a Developing one. We have lowered the poverty rate from 41.5 percent in 2005 to 21 percent in recent time. We will be a middle-income country in 2021. We are working hard to transform Bangladesh a developed-prosperous country by 2041.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Bangladesh Air Force, Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh, relevant persons and agencies for successful arrangement of the 6th International Flight Safety Seminar.

Khoda Hafez.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu.

May Bangladesh Live Forever.

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