

## **The Inaugural Ceremony of the 'Toshakhana Museum'**

Speech by

**HE Sheikh Hasina**

Prime Minister

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

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Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

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The Chair,

Dear Colleagues,

Excellencies, Ambassadors and High Commissioners,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Assalamu Alaikum and a very good morning to you all.

I welcome you all at the inaugural ceremony of the 'Toshakhana Museum'.

At the outset of my deliberation, I pay my deep homage to the greatest Bangalee of all times, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. I recall with deep respect the 4 national leaders, 3 million martyrs and 2 lakh women. I pay my deep homage to the martyrs of the 15th August of 1975.

The establishment of a State Toshakhana was a timely decision of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Immediately after the homecoming of Bangabandhu, the decision regarding the setting up of State Toshakhana was taken at the 5th meeting of the Cabinet held on 23 and 24 February 1972, as quoted in serial number 11 of the minutes of the meeting: "All gifts received by the Ministers and Officials in their official capacity should be deposited to the State Toshakhana located in Cabinet Division."

This kind of precise directive for ensuring the accountability and transparency of the government remains as a unique example of Bangabandhu's farsightedness.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The gifts kept in accordance with the Toshakhana (Maintenance and Administration) Rules, 1974 formulated in line with Bangabandhu's directive stipulated establishing of a State Toshakhana in a suitable place preferably in the Prime Minister's Secretariat, where gifts would be properly displayed so that the public could have an opportunity to see those.

I think, under that system, only a small number of people will get the chance to see the beautiful gifts received by the state. If the gifts are preserved in Toshakhana Museum and open for all people, a new door of history and education will be exposed along with good entertainment. In consideration of that, I gave approval for constructing the Toshakhana Museum near the Prime Minister's Office under the Bangabandhu Military Museum project beside the Bijoy Sarani.

This is my dream project. I saw the animation video of this format on 18th January of this year. In my directive, I said that it should be international standard. The air-conditioner must have de-humidifier for proper preservation. Drainage system should be appropriate. Fire fighting system will be sophisticated. The lighting should be like the lighting of the museums of the developed countries, so that the color of the displayed gifts is properly understood and protected.

The dream of the Father of the Nation regarding a Toshakhana has now assumed a concrete shape. For this, I extend my sincere thanks to all concerned officers and employees involved in the project, including those from the Cabinet Division, the Ministry of Defence and Bangladesh Army.

In particular, I thank my Military Secretary General Abedin, who closely supervised the project for the right implementation of my guidance.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib had dreamt of a hunger-poverty-free Golden Bangladesh in the light of the spirit of our liberation war. On the path of materialising that dream, Bangladesh has already been graduated to a developing country. Through adoption and successful implementation of timely, public welfare-oriented and inclusive development plans, we will turn Bangladesh into a middle-income country by 2021 and a developed-prosperous one by 2041, InshaAllah. We have also joined the elite club of the satellite technology as the 57th nation through the launching of Bangabandhu Satellite-1.

Bangladesh has become a Role Model for development in the world. Our GDP growth rate is now 7.86 percent, the highest in our history. The poverty rate in the country has now declined to 21.8 percent, and the hardcore poverty rate stands at 11.3 percent. Our per capita income is US Dollar 1751. Our students are getting textbooks at free of cost. The literacy rate is now 73 percent. Ninety percent people are under electricity coverage. We hope, the rate would rise to 100 percent very soon. Healthcare facilities have reached the doorsteps of the common people. The average life expectancy of the people has jumped to 72 years.

Digital Bangladesh is now a reality. Massive programmes are being implemented for infrastructure development. We are constructing the Padma Bridge with our own fund. Construction of the metro-rail is progressing fast. Our government has been working on 'Zero Tolerance' policy to eliminate militancy, terrorism and drugs. For the first time in the world, we have promulgated a hundred year ahead future plan named 'Delta Plan 2100' to build a prosperous country.

Bangladesh is one of the five countries in the world in economic development. 90% of development work is done by our own fund. Due to the continuation of 10 years Awami League government, grassroot people are now getting benefit from the development. Bangladesh is moving forward and it will go forward. The next generation will get a prosperous Bangladesh. Be aware that this process of the country should not be hampered. I urge all to come forward to the path of development.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

A dream of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib is going to be materialised through the inauguration of this Toshakhana Museum. The people are curious to have a glimpse of the gift items received by the state. The masses will now be able to look at these gift items easily due to the construction of this Museum. I believe, the Cabinet Division will preserve and manage the Toshakhana Museum well. The galleries will be kept open to the general people and the safety and preservation of gift items will be ensured properly. The Museum environment for learning in enjoyment for the general people, especially the school-college students has to be created.

With these few words, I declare the 'Toshakhana Museum' open.

Thank you all.

Khoda Hafez.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu  
May Bangladesh Live Forever.

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