**The Inaugural Ceremony of the Hotel Intercontinental Dhaka**

Speech by

**HE Sheikh Hasina**

Prime Minister

Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh

13 September 2018, Thursday, Shahbag, Dhaka

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

The Chair,

Dear Colleagues,

Distinguished Guests and

Ladies and Gentlemen.

**Assalamu Alaikum and a very good afternoon to you all.**

I welcome you all at the inaugural ceremony of the Hotel Intercontinental Dhaka.

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 the 4 national leaders, 3 million martyrs and 2 lakh women.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Today, we are performing this program at the time when we have been honored as a developing country in the world. Bangladesh is now known as the role model for development. The Father of the nation not only gave an independent country, but also had a vision to develop every sector of the country and build a golden Bangladesh. We are moving towards the destination of his dream. By breaking all records of the past, the success achieved by the present government has taken Bangladesh to a unique height.

There is a history of surpassing difficult path to build the war-ravaged country. With the aim of building an exploitation-free happy and prosperous society, the Bangalee nation achieved the independence under the great leadership of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

After independence, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib started the work of development for every sector with the dream of building Golden Bangladesh. But because of his assassination by the conspiracy of the defeated force of ’71, his dream nipped in the bud. The development wheel of Bangladesh stopped. Politics of murder, coup, conspiracy and distortion of histry began.

We have been implementing comprehensive plans for overall development of the country. We approved Delta Plan 2100. Under this plan, the next 100 years of sustainable development plan has been adopted. This plan will be implemented by turns. If this is implemented, food security and tackling the risk of climate change will be ensured.

Forming government after 21 years in 1996, Bangladesh Awami League concentrated on the development of the country on the path shown by the Father of the Nation. Short term, mid term and long term projects were taken and we led the country towards planned development.

90 percent of the people are getting electricity facility today. We have launched Bangabandhu Satellite-1 in less than 50 years of the birth of the country.

Under present government's visionary leadership, Bangladesh has now set a record for success in different fields like MDGs achievement, education, implementation of SDGs, health, gender equality, agriculture, poverty reduction, export oriented industrialization, establishment of 100 special economic zones, garment industry and so on.

The construction of the Padma Bridge with own fund, Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant, Paira deep sea port, tunnels under the Karnaphuli river, Dhaka Metro Rail and mega projects of the country have now made the world astonished.

Now it is necessary to maintain the continuity of these development activities. It is needed to build a developed, happy and prosperous Bangladesh for the next generation unitedly irrespective of party requirements.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

In this continuation of development, the Hotel Intercontinental has added a new dimension to the success of Bangladesh. The unique history of Bangladesh's great liberation war in 1971 and the emergence of Bangladesh are closely related to the Hotel. This was the first five-star hotel in the history of Bangladesh. When it was opened in 1966 named as Intercontinental Dhaka, the name of East Pakistan capital was Dhaka then. This hotel is witness to many important political events during the liberation war of Bangladesh.

After 1970 election, it has caused many political incidents in the hotel. During our liberation war of 1971, two attacks were carried out here by the Crack Platoon Guerillas under Sector-2. The team of freedom fighters of 17 youths came here to launch the first guerrilla operation named 'Operation Hotel Intercontinental-Hit and Run' in Dhaka against the West Pakistani invading forces. Through the very successful operation, the whole world was able to know about the resistance of the Bangalees.

Today, while speaking at the inaugural function of Intercontinental Dhaka, I remember those heroic freedom fighters, who are involved in many memories of the War of Liberation. It is heartening for us that the hotel is going to be relaunched with more modern services and facilities.

60 years old building is renovated as a five-star hotel. Maintaining the original structure of the building properly, local culture, heritage and Mughal architecture have been added. Infrastructural changes have been brought to meet the time needs. This is a long year old hotel. Currently our country has more international standard hotels. The hotel is needed a new look to survive in competition.

In order to maintain international standards, the hotel officials and employees have been given training in foreign countries. The services and facilities that are available in intercontinental worldwide, this hotel has also been renovated in the same manner as guests.

I believe, as a complete green hotel and with the latest facilities, this hotel will be able to create a new surprise to the global customers. This hotel will attract foreign tourists and visitors for their business and personal purposes. This will add extra dimension to the GDP of the country.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

During the Awami League government, people got back their voting right. The glory that people lost after the assassination of the Father of the Nation in 1975 has returned. The power of democracy has been established today on strong foundation. Looting, terrorism and militancy stopped. Poverty has decreased rapidly. The rate of education has increased. Business has improved. People of the grassroot level are getting the benefit of development today. This government is the government of people. Keeping this trend of development, we have to move forward in the future.

In last nine years, we made unprecedented progress in every sector of the country. We have employed 15 million people in our time. Five million people have been elevated to the middle class. More than 1 million people have got jobs abroad in 2017.

Over 6.7 million marginal people are being benefitted from the activities of 142 social safety net programs. Bangladesh has not only achieved self-sufficiency in food, but also has been the food surplus country. Food production has been increased to 4 crore metric tons. Healthcare is now at the doorstep of people. Health services are being provided to people from 18,500 community clinics and union health centers. The poor are getting 30 types of medicine at free of cost. The average life expectancy of people has increased to 72 years.

Digital Bangladesh has been established. We have entered the 4G era. Now mobile SIM subscribers are about 13 crore. Internet subscribers are more than 8 crore. 200 types of digital services are being provided from 5275 union digital centers and 8500 e-post offices.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Bangladesh has set a bright example in every sector in the world today. In that continuity, I believe that the newly renovated Hotel Intercontinental will be able to earn reputation in home and abroad.

With these few words, I declare open the Hotel Intercontinental Dhaka.

Thank you all.

Khoda Hafez.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu

May Bangladesh Live Forever.

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