

National Consultation on Post 2015 Development Agenda
Inaugural Ceremony

Speech by

Her Excellency Sheikh Hasina

Honorable Prime Minister

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Ruposhi Bangla Hotel, Dhaka, Sunday, 02 June 2013, 19 Jaistha 1420

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

Respected Chairperson Hon'ble Minister for planning,
Dear Colleagues,
Foreign Diplomats and Representatives from Development Partners,
Distinguished guests and Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalamu Alaikum and Good morning, everyone.

The target of achieving the Millennium Development Goals is going to be ended in 2015. The second phase of global development will then be started. The countries across the world, the United Nations and other international and regional organizations have been discussing the pros and cons of the post 2015 development agenda. As an important partner of the discussion, Bangladesh has been contributing to develop the appropriate goals. It is my pleasure to be amongst you at the inaugural session of the national consultation with a view to finalizing Bangladesh's proposals.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Millennium Summit of the UN was held in 2000. As the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, I had the opportunity to participate in the historic Millennium Declaration. Based on the declaration, the MDGs were evolved.

The main target of the MDGs is to achieve socio-economic development of the countries. The greatest Bangalee of all time, the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman continued movement for 24 long years with a target to establish an independent country for Bangalees and their socio-economic emancipation. For this, he had to face imprisonment and repression. He founded independent Bangladesh through a bloody war of liberation and created the scope for socio-economic emancipation of the Bangalee nation. He then started the towering job with the reconstruction of the war-ravaged country. Unfortunately, the anti-liberation forces did not allow him to achieve the goal.

The illegitimate military governments since 1975 gave attention only to grab the power. As a result, the country's socio-economic development spree and democratic practices had been back tracked.

We came in power in 1996 and implemented massive programs for the socio-economic development of the country. The economic growth rate then increased to 6.2 percent. The country became self-sufficient in food production. Poverty had been reduced sharply. Literacy rate had been increased. Infrastructure development was tremendous. The rural economy became vibrant.

After the election of conspiracy in 2001, the BNP-Jamat alliance could not continue the tempo of development. Rather, the country experienced huge shortage of food, gas and electricity; increase of illiteracy and poverty. It made Bangladesh tough to achieve the once easy targets of MDGs.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We placed our vision 2021 before the people of Bangladesh ahead of 2008 election. After we came in power in 2009 we have taken short, medium and long term plan to achieve the target of

the vision 2021. We have formulated 2010-2021 Perspective Plan and 2011-2015 6th Five Year Plan. We have implemented huge development work through the annual development programs.

Despite the global recession, we have achieved 6.5 percent of growth on average. The country is now almost self sufficient in food production. We have achieved tremendous success in electricity and gas production. The villages have got a new look. The average per capita income of the people has been increased to US \$ 950 from US \$ 630 in 2008.

We have strengthened the social safety nets programs. The poverty has been reduced sharply. The rate and quality of education have been increased, gender equality has been ensured. Women are participating equally to the economic activities. Women's empowerment has been earned. The child mortality rate and maternal mortality rate have been reduced sharply. The UN gave us MDG award for this achievement. The country has received South-South Award. We have achieved progress in combating TB and Malaria.

We are very sincere to maintain green environment. Although the developed world did not go much with their pledges to support our climate change adaptation and mitigation programs, we have been implementing 202 projects at this end.

The development of Bangladesh and its success in achieving MDGs have inspired the world. The UN has identified Bangladesh as a role model for the socio-economic development of the developing world. The UNDP has placed Bangladesh among the 18 countries of the world those have made substantial progress in achieving MDGs.

According to the latest demographics of Bangladesh, the active population of the country is about 60 percent of the total populace. It's a golden stage for a country. We have taken steps to utilize the workforce fully.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I hope, the social development goals reflected in vision 2021 would be included in the post 2015 development agenda. The world should find appropriate goals to achieve sustainable development. We will have to give emphasis on science education and research. Digital divide should be eliminated. Supply of sufficient nutritious food should be ensured in addition to achieving food security. The world should give the highest priority to the disaster risk reduction as well as climate change mitigation programs.

Due to reduction of flow of ODA, many initiatives of the developing world could not achieve desired progress. I urge the developed world to increase their supports to achieve MDGs and post 2015 targets.

It is much needed to ensure free access of commodities and services of the LDCs to the markets of the developed world. Availability of enough funds, transfer of technology and research facilities of the LDCs should be ensured.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Sustainable development can only be achieved through ensuring peace. On behalf of the people of Bangladesh, I presented "People's Empowerment and Development" model in the UN General Assembly in 2011 in a bid to achieve global peace. The 193 member states of the UN passed the proposal in last December.

In the model, I identified six mutually reinforcing peace multipliers. These are - (a) Eradication of poverty and hunger; (b) Reduction of inequality; (c) Mitigation of deprivation; (d) Inclusion of excluded people; (e) Acceleration of human development and (f) Elimination of terrorism. I hope, these issues would be considered in the post 2015 development agenda.

I am hopeful that an effective national report would be furnished with the participation of the experts and practitioners in the consultation. We would be able to achieve a poverty-free, hunger-free prosperous Bangladesh by the year of 2021 when we will observe the golden jubilee of Bangladesh. It will help ensure sustainable development and minimize rich-poor gap. Through

the achievement, we will be able to establish Sonar Bangla, the golden Bengal as dreamed by the Father of Nation.

With this hope, I do hereby declare the National Consultation open.

Thank you.

Khoda Hafez.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu
May Bangladesh Live Forever.