

**The Inaugural Ceremony of  
Payra Thermal Power Plant Rehabilitation Project-‘Swapner Thikana’**

Speech by

**HE Sheikh Hasina**

Prime Minister

Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh

Payra, Patuakhali, Saturday, 12 Kartik 1425, 27 October 2018

---

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

The Chair,  
Colleagues  
Ladies and Gentlemen;

**Assalumu Alaikum**

I welcome you all at the inaugural ceremony of Payra Thermal Power Plant Rehabilitation Project-‘Swapner Thikana’.

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.

Elected by your spontaneous mandate, the 5-year tenure of the present government is going to be successfully completed soon. I would like to express my heartfelt thanks and gratitude to you all for bestowing your trust and confidence on Bangladesh Awami League in the last two general elections.

The Power Sector of Bangladesh was extremely vulnerable in 2009. The total power generation barely exceeded 3200 MW that prolonged the dark hours and obstructed the economic growth. Presently, power generation capacity has gone over 20,000 MW.

During our tenure of the last ten years in the government, a remarkable number of agreements have been signed to generate 24,346 MW of electricity and of which 12,250 MW of electricity has already been added to the national grid and 101 new power plants have been commissioned during the same period. Before 2009, only 27 power plants were installed in more than 100 years. Installation of so many power plants is greatly a shining example in the history of our socio- economic development.

On top of that, the present government is proficiently realizing its long term visionary plans and strategies to attain the power generation capacity to 24,000 MW by 2021, 40,000 MW by 2030 and 60,000 MW by 2041.

We are executing our long-term master plan through establishing some power generation hubs. Several mega projects are being implemented at different locations considering the practicability of fuel transportation, optimum load centers, balanced development of all the areas of the country, and least resettlement risks. As a part of that, the Payra 1,320 MW thermal power plant project (1st and 2nd phase) is being implemented in Dhanakhali union of Kalapara Upazila of Patuakhali district. For the accomplishment of these projects, Bangladesh-China Power Company (Pvt.) Limited (BCPCL) was formed in 2014. More than 55 percents works are accomplished of the plant and electricity to be supplied from the first Unit to the nation grid by June 2019.

**Dear Listeners,**

In order to install the proposed Payra power plant, nearly one thousand acres of land with a relatively less population density was acquired in Dhanakhali Union of Kalapara Upazila of Patuakhali District. From the humanitarian ground, our pro-people Government has decided to

provide houses and other facilities for all the 130 affected families and also have compensated them.

Designed to ensure all citizen facilities, the 'Swapner Thikana' rehabilitation project will include 130 semi-structured houses of 1,000 to 1,200 square feet, school, playground, mosque, graveyard, 48 (forty-eight) tube wells and 2 (Two) water bodies, office-cum-community center, community clinic, shops, bazaar, internal road, drainage system, boundary walls and electricity connection have been facilitated to every home. Beside these, the implementation of common facilities of the project area of 16 acres, the overall maintenance cost of common facilities will also be borne by the BCPCL. The planned housing project 'Swapner Thikana' will be considered as a model for such resettlement in the future. We shall consider the replication of this model in all the future mega projects to be implemented. It can be regarded as a timely and sensible extension of the government's 'Ekti Barhi Ekti Khamar' and 'Ghore Fera' programs. We are committed to ensure housing facilities to all citizens of the country.

### **Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

We are giving due importance to improve the power transmission and distribution systems along with the generation capacity as well. During the last ten years, the transmission network has been expanded from 8,000 circuit kilometers to 11,293 circuit kilometers and distribution lines from 2 lakh 60 thousand kilometers to 4 lakh 71 thousand kilometers. In 2009, the access to electricity was only 47 percent, which is now elevated to 92 percent.

Power connections have been provided at the fastest possible time among several infrastructures established for the forcibly displaced Rohingya people from Myanmar including registration centers, relief distribution centers, and medical camps for them. In 2009, the total number of subscribers was 18.8 million, which now stands at 31.1 million. At this moment, 92% of the total population is getting electricity facility. By the year 2021, 100% population will be brought under electricity coverage.

With the sincere efforts of the present government, the per capita power generation of the country has increased from 220 kWh (2009) to 464 kWh in 2018. The system loss in power distribution has been pared down from 18.45 percent to 11.87 percent. In the last ten years, 1 lakh 30 thousand new irrigation connections have been provided. As a result, food security is well established for our people. Undoubtedly, every achievement in the power sector is praiseworthy.

In order to ensure future energy security and to prevent global warming, our government is making continuous efforts to generate electricity from renewable energy sources. Across the country, 53 million solar home systems have been set up. Besides, two grid based solar power plants have been set up with about 30 megawatt generation capacities. Various sustainable initiatives are being consistently undertaken and implemented to ensure energy efficiency and conservation.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The government has signed a number of MoU's and agreements in the last ten years laying emphasis on the bilateral and regional cooperation in power development.

Under Bangladesh-India Regional Cooperation Agreement, Bangladesh-India Power Transmission Center was inaugurated on 5 October 2013. With the introduction of the first grid interconnection from India, 500 megawatt electricity was first imported and then this capacity has been upgraded to 1000 megawatt in this year. We are also importing 160 megawatts of electricity through the inauguration of Bangladesh-India Second Grid Interconnection on 23 March 2016. Currently, 1,160 MW of electricity is being imported through two grid interconnections from India. Further 1,000 MW of electricity will be imported soon. Alongside, efforts are being made to import hydro-electricity from Nepal and Bhutan. We have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Nepal in this regard. A tripartite MoU among Bangladesh, Bhutan and India is at the final stage of inking.

**Distinguished Guests,**

To ensure quality customer service, various ICT and e-governance programs have been put into operation in the power sector. Good governance has been established in the power sector by setting up smart pre-paid meters and providing online services. About 1.4 million pre-paid meters have already been set up.

During the last ten years, unprecedented achievements have been attained in the power sector, which has a significant role in the development of the socio-economic conditions of the country including creating job opportunities, eliminating unemployment, increasing food production, establishing new industries, increasing rate of education, ensuring social security, poverty reduction and enhancing women empowerment.

Enormous expansion of the electricity in the rural areas of the country made it possible to set the Union Information Services Centers and the rural health centers well in operation and to promote the use of modern technology including computers in all educational institutions among the remotest premises of the country. Therefore, the doorways for raising public awareness on environment, health, women rights, social security, sports, and scope of entertainment have been opened through internet and electronic media.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

Payra Port law-2013 has been passed in the National Parliament. This will bolster the overall advancement of the country including the south and south-western region of the country. The infrastructural developments are made for partial operational activities of the port. The full fledged operation of the Payra sea port will be started by 2021 implementing the four mid-term projects.

So far, we are on the right track to realize the Vision 2021. We also have embarked on the Vision 2041 to complete the unfinished work of Bangabandhu. The entire world now acknowledges that the present government's comprehensive development activities are pushing Bangladesh forward on the road to peace and prosperity. Through these diverse activities, we will develop as to be a hunger-free, prosperous, fair, equitable and peaceful digital Bangladesh, Insha'Allah! To achieve such a noble goal, government's continuity is required. In the interest of maintaining this continuation of development, we hope to have your all-out supports in the upcoming future.

**Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Let us march forward together to build a beautiful Bangladesh for our next generations. Wishing you all a better tomorrow, and urging you all to strengthen us to exert our united effort to build 'Sonar Bangladesh' of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. With all these, I hereby, declare the inauguration of the Payra Thermal Power Plant Rehabilitation Project – 'Swapner Thikana'.

Khoda Hafez  
Joy Bangla, Joy Bangabandhu.  
Long live Bangladesh.

...