

**International Business Conference (Destination Bangladesh)  
Inaugural Ceremony**

Speech by

**H. E. Sheikh Hasina**

Honorable Prime Minister

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Bangabandhu International Conference Centre, Dhaka.

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Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

The Chair,  
Dear Colleagues,  
Diplomats,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Business Leaders,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

**Assalamu-Alaikum and a very good morning to you all.**

I welcome you all at the International Business Conference titled "Destination Bangladesh" on the occasion of 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

I pay deep homage to the greatest Bangalee of all times, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. I recall with gratitude the four national leaders, 3-million martyrs and 200 thousand women, who sacrificed modesty for the cause of independence.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The private sector has been consistently contributing to trade, industrial and investment growth, creating massive employment generation and economic development of Bangladesh. I would like to thank DCCI for organizing such a timely event to portray the pace of growth of our dynamic Private sector and position Bangladesh as an attractive investment destination.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Bangladesh government has envisioned to be a middle income country by 2021 and developed economy by 2041 and made visionary roadmap in this regard. According to this roadmap, Bangladesh is progressing as one of the emerging economies in the world. Bangladesh has achieved average 6 percent plus GDP growth over the last decade and achieved 7.86 per cent growth this year. GDP of Bangladesh has increased to USD274 billion this year from USD100 billion in 2009. During this time, our foreign exchange reserve has grown by four fold up to USD33 billion. Due to the consistent improvement of our investment environment, in last fiscal year our export earning has already reached to about USD37 billion. In continuation with this trade growth trend, Government is working hardest to realize USD60 billion export earnings by 2021 and implement the goals of the 7<sup>th</sup> five-year plan of Bangladesh.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Bangladesh has been globally recognized by many leading international organization including World Bank due to inclusive development in socioeconomic indicators. Meanwhile, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) in its "The World in 2050" report identified Bangladesh as an emerging economy and has potential to be the 28<sup>th</sup> largest economy by 2030 and 23<sup>rd</sup> largest economy by 2050 – exceeding many developed economies like The Netherland, Australia, Spain and Malaysia.

To increase the investment potential, employment generation and create a conducive business environment for developing high priority industries, Government has been providing

all sort of fiscal and non-fiscal support needed. We have taken initiatives to develop 100 economic zones by 2030. These will create 10 million new employment opportunities. It will further add USD40 billion export earnings every year. To achieve this target and overcome the forthcoming challenges associated with LDC graduation, we have undertaken a program to prepare a transitional strategy at the cost of BDT 900 million.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

To increase per capita income, human development and to enhance economic vulnerability preparedness and inclusive economic development mechanism, Government has put high priority in crafting pro-private sector policy development and economic course of actions.

Our entrepreneurs have improved our trade and business competitiveness and created strong brand image of our Textile, Leather, Ship building, Pharmaceuticals, Light engineering, diversified Jute products and IT-enabled Services across the world. To sustain the strong brand image of our local products and incremental export earning trend, Government is pledged to continue cash incentives and other policy supports to ensure continuous development of the private sector.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

To continue our economic growth spree, Government has been prioritizing the infrastructure development since FY2011-2012 and increased the infrastructure investment three fold so far. Alongside, Government is planning to invest another USD40 billion in infrastructural development within next 5 years. Government has initiated many projects to fasten our local and international trade mobility and reduce the cost of doing business, such as expansion of Dhaka-Chattagram Highway and Dhaka-Mymensingh Highway to four lane, Chattagram and Mongla port capacity development and uninterrupted Industrial energy and power supply to support investment growth in Bangladesh. Besides, capacity enhancement of Mongla port and Padma Bridge development, Metro Rail, Roopur Nuclear Power Plant, Rampal thermal Power Plant, Matarbari Power Plant and Payra Deep Sea Port and LNG Terminal operation under fast track projects are underway to expand the economic operation.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

We have managed to begin and complete 60 percent of the Padma Bridge project. I believe, this Padma Bridge will contribute 1.2 percent additional GDP growth to economy and strengthen our transport communication connectivity between Dhaka and 21 districts of South Western part of Bangladesh. It will further create 10 million new employment opportunities.

Jute is our national resource and heritage. Diversification of jute sector and jute products is critical for improving the socioeconomic condition of Bangladesh. In realizing SDG 2030, jute has been considered as an environment friendly product with a positive implication and importance. As far as I know, DCCI is working very hard on Jute pulp and paper.

We would also like to extend cooperation for the concept of green jute pulp paper development and implementation. Green jute paper has multiple positive macroeconomic implications including rural entrepreneurship, employment generation and diversification.

Infrastructural development is a critical prerequisite for FDI growth in Bangladesh. Meanwhile, Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources of Government has initiated to realize USD3.75 billion from capital market to implement more power plants projects. Alongside, Chinese, Japanese and Korean and India Governments have invested and expressed deep interest to invest in Bangladesh more in Railway, Road, Bridge, Power, Port and Telecom sectors. Bangladesh is very realistic and for which deeper engagement of the private sector is needed to fund USD300 billion by 2030 for infrastructure development.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The success of Bangladesh in achieving Millennium Development Goals was internationally recognized. Following this footmark, Bangladesh is moving forward in planned way to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) within 2030. Besides, Government is working closely with Private sector to increase their contribution in attaining SDG.

Development of mutual relations with international organizations and neighboring countries is essential to reach our economic visions. Besides, getting more integrated with regional and sub regional blocs e.i. BCIM, BBIN, SAARC, ASEAN and BIMSTEC will help accelerate the access of Bangladeshi products into their market thereby expanding trade and business. Especially, implementation of BCIM corridor will help Bangladesh to be connected with ASEAN bloc. Furthermore, Bangladesh can be integrated with Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC) to get regional cooperation in the sector like tourism, transport and communication, culture and education.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Climate change risk and vulnerability are severe challenges for Bangladesh. Delta plan -2100 has been prepared in order to ensure water management, fishery, food safety, agriculture, forest management. The master plan has been taken with the experience of delta plan management of the Netherlands in order to prepare strategies and ensuring smooth river management, tackle river erosion, water supply to both urban and rural areas and efficient waste and sewage management. We believe **Delta Plan 2100** will be an effective and long-term plan for socio- economic development of Bangladesh.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

We are working sincerely and diligently to minimize our limitations to achieve our desired industrial growth. To strengthen our industrial base and improve our image internationally as an attractive investment hub we are working to lift our position better in ease of doing business.

To develop our investment atmosphere, we have passed the 'One Stop Service Act' under the auspices of Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) and gradually implementing all services.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I hope, the outcome report prepared to incorporate the views of the speakers of the conference will help tap the economic potentials and to implement the socio economic development plans of Bangladesh.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Let us build 'Golden Bangladesh' as dreamt by the greatest Bangalee of all times, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

I am declaring the inauguration of the international conference on 'Destination Bangladesh' on the occasion of 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of DCCI open.

Thanks you all.

Khoda Hafez  
Joy Bangla, Joy Bangabandhu  
Long Live Bangladesh.

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