

Global Education First Initiative

Address

By

Her Excellency Sheikh Hasina

Hon'ble Prime Minister

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

New York

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Bismillahir Rahmanuir Rahim

Secretary General Mr. Ban ki-Moon,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,

Assalamu Alakium and Good Day to you all.

I congratulate Secretary General Mr. Ban ki-Moon on the first anniversary of his "Global Education First Initiative". His initiative to "put every child to school"; "improve the quality of education"; and "foster global partnership for education" is inspirational. We are honored to be one of the "Champion States" of this initiative. It matches with the Father of our Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's declaration that "Education would be our first and foremost tool for national development".

Education is a lead "agent of change" in our vision and development agenda to turn Bangladesh as a middle income country, by 2021. Our Education Policy 2010 ensures education to all by 2014. The 2011 National Women's Development Policy", lays strong focus on education of girls recognizing the famous quote, "If you educate a boy, you educate a person, if you educate a girl, you educate a family and a whole nation".

We achieved gender parity in primary and secondary schools, a target of MDG-3; providing, among others,

- ICT to schools;
- stipends to 11.90 million students every year;
- 915 million free text books to students in four years;
- financial support from the "Prime Minister's Trust Fund" to poor students for higher studies;
- school feeding program funded by local donors to schools;
- modern curriculum to Madrassahs;
- teaching those with "autism" and other developmental disorders.

Our efforts are assisted by our development partners, the UNDP and other agencies.

I believe political leadership and diversion of funds from armaments for a world of educated citizens is the solution to real peace. I, therefore, thank the Secretary General for his wise "Education First Initiative." To the leaders of the world and to our development partners, I appeal, "let us redouble our efforts to place education at the heart of our global development mission". Our efforts would certainly realize an educated, and therefore, a safe and secure world for our future generations.

I thank you all.