



Press Statement by Prime Minister during the State visit of Prime Minister of Bangladesh to India

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**Excellency,
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina,
Members of the media,**

It is a true pleasure to welcome Her Excellency Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to India.

Excellency,

Your visit to India comes at an auspicious time, just before the advent of पोयला बोइशाख. I take this opportunity to wish you and the people of Bangladesh শুভে নবা বর্ষে. Your visit marks another শোনালী অধ্যায় (golden era) in the friendship between our people and our nations. The extraordinary transformation in our relationship and achievements of our partnership are a clear recognition of your strong and decisive leadership. Your decision to honour Indian soldiers who laid down their lives in the Liberation War of 1971 has deeply touched the people of India. Every Indian takes pride in the knowledge that Indian soldiers and বীর মুক্তিযোদ্ধা fought together to liberate Bangladesh from the reign of terror.

Friends,

Today, Excellency Sheikh Hasina and I held productive and comprehensive discussions on the full range of our partnership. We agreed that the agenda of our cooperation has to remain focused on purposeful action. We specifically looked at charting new avenues and tapping fresh opportunities in advancing our relationship. We want to build cooperation in new areas, especially some high-technology areas, that have a deeper connect with the youth in both our societies. These would include working in the fields of Electronics, Information Technology, Cyber Security, Space exploration, Civil Nuclear Energy, and others areas.

Friends,

India has always stood for the prosperity of Bangladesh and its people. We are a long-standing and trusted development partner of Bangladesh. India and Bangladesh are also determined that the fruits of our cooperation must benefit our people. In this context, I am happy to announce a new concessional Line of Credit of 4.5 billion dollars for the implementation of projects in priority sectors for Bangladesh. This brings our resource allocation for Bangladesh to more than 8 billion dollars over the past six years. Energy Security is an important dimension of our development partnership. And, our energy partnership continues to grow. Today, we added an additional 60 Mega Watt of power to the 600 Mega Watt of power already flowing from India to Bangladesh. The supply of another 500 Mega Watt has already been committed from the existing inter-connection. We have also agreed to finance the diesel oil pipeline from Numaligarh to Parbatipur. Our companies are entering into a long-term agreement for the supply of high speed diesel to Bangladesh. We have also agreed on a time table for regular supply till the pipeline is constructed. We are encouraging private sectors in both our countries to enter this space. Several agreements for investments in the energy sector in Bangladesh are expected to be signed by the Indian companies in the coming days. India will continue to be a willing partner in meeting the energy needs of Bangladesh, and its goal of achieving 'Power for all by 2021'.

Friends,

Connectivity is crucial for the success of bilateral development partnership, sub-regional economic projects and for the larger regional economic prosperity. Today, together with the Honourable Chief Minister of West Bengal, we have added several new links to our growing connectivity. Bus and train links between Kolkata and Khulna, and রাধিকাপুর-বীরোল have been restored today. In-land water-ways routes are being optimized. And, steps are being taken to put into operation the Coastal Shipping Agreement. We are also happy to see the progress being made in two-way trans-shipment of goods. We look forward to early implementation of the B.B.I.N. Motor Vehicles Agreement. This would usher in a new era of sub-regional integration.

Friends,

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and I recognize the need to diversify our commercial engagement. Not just to forge wide-ranging business partnerships between our two economies. But also for greater regional benefit. In this, a major part of the effort has to be from the business and industry of the two countries. We are happy to receive the high powered business delegation accompanying the Prime Minister. Our agreement to open new Border Haats will empower border communities through trade and contribute to their livelihoods.

Friends,

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and I have noted the success of our capacity building and training initiatives. The training of 1500 Bangladesh civil servants in India has almost concluded. We would undertake training along similar lines for 1500 Judicial Officers of Bangladesh in our judicial academies.

Friends,

While our partnership brings prosperity to our people, it also works to protect them from forces of radicalization and extremism. Their spread poses a grave threat, not just to India and Bangladesh but to the entire region. We have the greatest admiration for Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's firm resolve in dealing with terrorism. Her Government's 'zero-tolerance' policy towards terrorism is an inspiration for all of us. We agreed that peace, security and development for our people and for the region will remain central to our engagement. Today, we have also taken a long overdue step by signing an agreement on close cooperation between our armed forces. I am also happy to announce a Line of Credit of US dollars 500 million to support Bangladesh's defence related procurement. In implementing this line of credit, we will be guided by Bangladesh's needs and priorities.

Friends,

Our two countries share one of the longest land boundaries. During my visit to Dhaka in June 2015, we had concluded the Land Boundary Agreement. Its implementation is now underway. Along with our shared land boundaries are our shared rivers. They sustain our peoples and their livelihoods. And, the one that has attracted the greatest attention is the Teesta. This is important for India, for Bangladesh and for India-Bangladesh relationship. I am very happy that the Chief Minister of West Bengal is my honoured guest today. I know that her feelings for Bangladesh are as warm as my own. I assure you and the people of Bangladesh of our commitment and continuing efforts. I firmly believe that it is only my government and Excellency Sheikh Hasina, your government, that can and will find an early solution to Teesta Water Sharing.

Friends,

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was a dear friend of India and a towering leader. As a mark of our respect and deep admiration for the father of Bangladesh, a prominent road in our capital city has been named after him. We have also agreed to jointly produce a film on the life and works of Bangabandhu which will be released on his birth centenary year in 2020. Along with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina ji, I am also honoured to release the Hindi translation of Bangbandhu's 'Unfinished Memoirs'. His life, struggle and contribution to the creation of Bangladesh will continue to inspire future generations. To mark the Golden Jubilee Year of Bangladesh's independence in 2021, we have agreed to jointly produce a documentary film on the Liberation War of Bangladesh.

Excellency,

You have successfully carried forward the vision and legacy of Bangabandhu. Today, under your leadership, Bangladesh is marching on a trajectory of high growth and development. We in India rejoice in our ties with Bangladesh. Ties that have been forged in blood and generations of kinship. Ties that seek a better and secure future for our people. With these words, Excellency, I once again welcome you and your delegation to India.

Thank you.

Thank You very much

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