

# *Embassy of Bangladesh Mexico City*

**JANUARY 2022**

**MONTHLY DIGITAL BULLETIN**



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## **Key Points:**

- Prime minister Sheikh Hasina addressed the nation on the third anniversary of Awami League government.
- Rohingya crisis: pressure on the UN and support from international community.
- “Products of the year 2022”
- Technology and international collaboration.
- Commercial relations with Germany and Singapore.
- The recognition from the us-based Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention of the brutal slaughter of Bangladeshis by the Pakistani occupation forces in 1971.
- National campaign to distribute free textbooks.
- Virtual inauguration of a two-day "Climate Camp 2021”
- Environment and promotion of renewable energy
- The 20th Dhaka International Film Festival
- Mission Activities
- **And more...**

News January 2022



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressed the nation on the third anniversary and the third consecutive term of her government and highlighted the achievements of the nation during her tenure. The Premier said that Bangladesh secured the number one position in terms of GDP in South Asia with 5.43 per cent growth during the last fiscal, also heightening the per capital income to US\$ 2554 in 2021. The Prime Minister said that different global watchdogs praised Bangladesh's economic performance with World Economic Forum predicting the country to be 24<sup>th</sup> largest economy by 2030 while the Economist placed it in ninth position in a list of 66 successful emerging economies.

Bangladesh has urged the UN to play an effective role in adopting a durable solution to the protracted Rohingya crisis during a virtual meeting between Bangladesh Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen and newly appointed UN's



Special Envoy on Myanmar Noeleen Heyzer in January 2022.

Commending Bangladesh's exceptional humanitarian gesture, the special Envoy conveyed her sincere thanks and gratitude to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for demonstrating the highest

level of humanity by hosting more than a million persecuted Myanmar nationals.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina declared ICT products and services as the "products of the year 2022" and urged the country's businessmen to concentrate on research for product diversification and own branding to boost export and business growth while virtually inaugurating the month-long Dhaka International Trade Fair (DITF)-2022. She also briefly described the



government's steps and stimulus packages taken to keep the wheels of the economy moving.

Turkey will stand beside Bangladesh in facing the Rohingya crisis and will continue to extend its cooperation until the crisis is solved amicably, Turkish Interior Minister Suleyman Soyly said this while inaugurating a 50-bed field hospital, funded by Turkish government organization AFAD at Balukhali Rohingya camp in Ukhaia Upazila in Cox's Bazar district.



Turkey also signed a MoU with counterpart Bangladesh on cooperation among the law enforcement agencies of the two countries on security issues after a Home Minister-level meeting of the two countries in Dhaka. Turkey also agreed to assist Bangladesh in strengthening the police, the Border Guard

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Bangladesh, the Coast Guard and the Ansar and VDP with providing training and intelligence sharing between the two sides.



Foreign Minister Dr. A K Abdul Momen has urged the UK government and British Parliamentarians to continue their efforts in early repatriation of forcibly displaced Rohingyas to their motherland Myanmar after the visit of the British Parliamentary delegation to the Rohingya camps in Kutupalong and Bhashan Char.

The UK Conservative Party MPs Thomas Patrick Hunt and Paul Bristow noted that the international community had a responsibility to stand by this large group of people generously supported by the government and people of Bangladesh. During the meeting the British delegation also exchanged views on further enhancing trade and investment between the two countries in the post-BREXIT context.

South Korea expressed its interest to work with Bangladesh on drone technology and



establishment of geo-specialized labs, as

South Korean Ambassador to Bangladesh Le Jang-keun held a bilateral meeting with State Minister for ICT Division Zunaid Ahmed Palak at ICT Tower. Terming South Korea as a real friend of Bangladesh, the State Minister said, effective measures will be taken after coordination with ICT and other ministries for the use of drone technology.

Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi sought German support in enhancing trade capabilities and continuing Generalized System of Preference-GSP facilities to meet the post-transition challenges from the LDCs, as the German

Ambassador to Bangladesh Achim Troster met him at his office. Lauding Bangladesh's



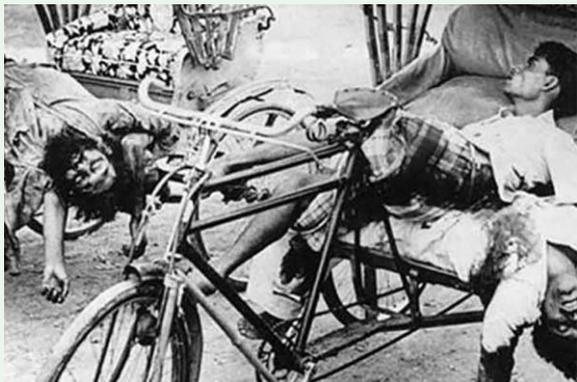
huge development under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina the German Ambassador expressed interest to cooperate Bangladesh for building positive image of the country's development across the world.

Bangladesh and Singapore have agreed to accelerate the process for concluding the signing of Free Trade Agreement-FTA to further strengthen the trade and commerce ties between the two nations during a telephonic conversation between Foreign Minister Dr. A K Abdul Momen and his Singaporean counterpart Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan. During the conversation, the HFM sought Singapore's and ASEAN's proactive role in bringing a sustainable and permanent solution to the Rohingya crisis and more investment from the country.

The US-based Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention has recognized the brutal slaughter of Bangladeshis by the Pakistani occupation forces in 1971 as a 'genocide or mass killing'. Touhid Reza Noor, the son of

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martyred journalist Serajuddin Hossain, had petitioned for the recognition on Nov 15. On the night of March 25, 1971, the Pakistani



occupation forces attacked the unarmed people of Bangladesh in an attempt to wipe out the Bengali independence movement once and for all. Under the name 'Operation Searchlight', the Pakistani occupation forces began a massacre that would spur a war and kill 3 million Bengalis in the span of nine months. But, it was through that same war that Bangladesh earned its own independence.

The distribution of free textbooks started across the country including the capital, as part of the government's efforts of reaching new books to the students on the first day of the New Year. In this academic year, a total of 34 crore 70 lac 22 thousand 130 copies of textbooks are being distributed free of cost among 4 crore 17 lac 26 thousand 856 students. Braille textbooks for visually impaired students will also be given while 5



ethnic groups will also get books printed in their respective mother tongues this year.

Post offices must be digitalized in digital Bangladesh and postal officials must acquire minimum digital skills within a specified time frame, said Posts and Telecommunications Minister Mustafa Jabbar. The Minister instructed the authorities concerned to accelerate the implementation of the initiatives taken for building digital post offices, including training for its employees and officials.



The government has decided to increase the cash incentive on sending remittance to 2.5 per

cent from the existing 2 per cent in order to encourage sending remittances through legal channels. Expatriate Bangladeshis will now enjoy 2.5 per cent cash incentive if they remit five categories of service benefits-pension fund, provident fund, leave salary, bonus and other gratuities, and retirement benefit paid by employers, in the form of remittance through legal channels, as per a BB circular. Besides, BB has extended another two-year moratorium to the shipbuilders to pay back loans, to help the industry tackle adversities derived from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

This increase of cash incentives against remittance is a gift from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to the expatriate Bangladeshi workers marking the New Year.

Bangladesh sent 6, 17,209 workers overseas and received a record US\$



22,070.87 million as remittance in 2021 amid the COVID-19 pandemic according to the Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Ministry. Never before, so much remittance came to the country in a single year. Bangladesh has become the 8th largest remittance-receiving country and the 6th largest migrant-sending country in the world, according to the World Migration Report 2022.

The Country's export earnings grew a record 48.27 per cent year-on-year to stand at US\$4.90 billion in December 2021 riding on massive apparel shipments. Earnings were \$4.72 billion in October last year, \$4.16 billion in September and \$4.04 billion in November, according to Export Promotion Bureau-EPB. During the first six months (July-December) of the current fiscal year, the exports recorded a robust growth of 28.41 per cent to \$2,469.85 crore, which was up by \$546.51



crore from the same period of last fiscal year.

The government is distributing agricultural machineries among farmers



at 50-60 percent subsidized prices aiming to accelerate the mechanization of agriculture in the country said the Agriculture Minister Dr. Md. Abdur Razzaque at the inaugural session of a conference titled 'Use of Power and Energy Saving Technology for Sustainable Development of Agriculture', marking the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the golden jubilee of the country's independence.



Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman laid the profound of our foreign policy, said Foreign Minister A.K. Abdul Momen in a seminar on the occasion of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Homecoming Day celebrations at Foreign Service Academy. The Minister said, in the case of foreign policy, Bangabandhu

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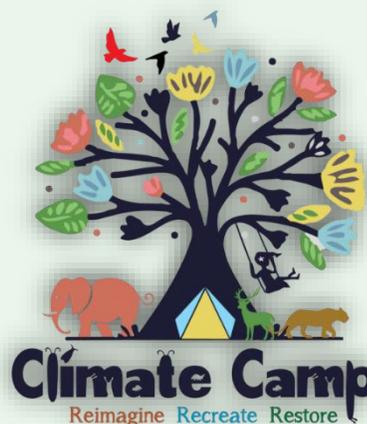
Sheikh Mujibur Rahman believed in the motto of “friendship to all, malice to none” and introduced foreign policy based on values and ideals during his lifetime, that brought international recognition and appreciation to Bangladesh as a war-torn independent country. In a very short time after gaining independence, Bangladesh was able to gain the recognition of most of the countries in the world and Bangabandhu’s foreign policy was also praised by the United Nations and International organizations, he further added.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved the draft of "Export Policy 2021-2024", setting the US\$80 billion export target for FY-2024. The approval came from this year's 1st meeting of the CCEA held virtually with Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal in the chair and he informed that that the existing export target of Bangladesh is \$60 billion.

Bangladesh is expected to be the 24<sup>th</sup> largest economy of the world by 2030 despite the adverse impacts of COVID-19 pandemic that has taken huge toll on life and livelihood globally, the findings of the National Human Development Report-NHDR prepared by the Economic Relations Division-ERD, revealed that. Bangladesh has also become a digital economy and the nation envisages that it will be a developed economy by 2041. The report said, the country maintained a comparable GDP growth rate for the most recent past 10 years (of FY2010-FY2019) is more than 6.7 per cent as a result, a mere \$35 billion economy of the mid-1990s has grown to a sizeable one of almost \$330 billion. During the same period, the per capita gross national income has registered a more than seven-fold rise from just \$300 to above \$2,064. The headcount poverty fell from 58 per cent in 1990 to about 20.5 per cent in FY2019, it said.



Women empowerment has been ensured under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, said Jatiya Sangsad (JS) Speaker Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury while addressing as the chief with members of parliament on 'what to do to prevent violence and rape on women and children'. The Speaker called for raising awareness and punish the perpetrators to stop rape and violence on women and children including CCTV surveillance of workplaces and public places to ensure safety and security of women. Males should be conscious and responsive in preventing rape and violence on women and guardians should instill positive outlook into male offspring since childhood, she added. Awareness raising leaflets containing appropriate guidelines should be distributed at female schools and colleges, she further added.



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During the virtual inauguration of a two-day "Climate Camp 2021 " organized by a local NGO named Earth Society, marking World Environment Day, Foreign Minister Dr. AK Abdul Momen said that Bangladesh needs to build embankments with renewable energy facilities along the coastal belt as part of "Climate Mitigation" to save its people from becoming climate migrants due to the rising sea level. He also added that mangrove forestation around these embankments would work both as buffers during natural calamities like cyclones and surges, while also working as carbon sinks.

Environment, Forests and Climate Change



Minister Md. Shahab Uddin while addressing the seminar said that his ministry has taken initiative to prepare a working paper on plastic management.

The Department of Environment has already adopted a 10-year action plan for plastic management and a three-year special program to stop the use of single use plastics in coastal areas, he said. At present 40 per cent plastic is being recycled, the remaining 60 per cent will have to be brought under it, he added.



The government is exploring options like rooftop and floating solar power plants as alternatives to land-based ones due to scarcity of lands, State Minister for Power,

Energy and Mineral Resources Nasrul Hamid made the remarks while presiding over the virtually held "Member Interventions" session of the 12th assembly of the International Renewable Energy Agency-IRENA. He mentioned that



Bangladesh has been making all its efforts with limited resources to promote renewable energy. Over 20 million people of the country have been brought under the electricity facilities through setting up over 6 million solar home systems, he added. Moreover, people of the remote areas are being given electricity through installing 26 solar mini-grids while 2000 diesel-run irrigation pumps were converted into solar-run pumps to reduce the use of liquid fuels, he said. Currently, the country is generating 650 MW electricity from solar energy while 8 grid-tied solar parks, having 231 MW capacity, were set up across the country, he informed.



Industries Minister Nurul Majid Mahmud Humayun has urged the small and medium

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entrepreneurs to register in electronic database to get services easily, as he inaugurated the pilot program of SME e-database in four upazilas at a function. At present, around 99 per cent of the industry and business, including cottages, in Bangladesh are covered by MSME sector which controls 70 per cent of the country's economic activities. The SME sector accounts for 80 to 85 per cent of the total industrial employment and supplies 30 to 35 per cent of the total domestic industrial demand.

Dr. Hasan Mahmud addressing the closing ceremony of the 20th Dhaka International Film Festival at the National Museum in the capital yesterday said, films could play a unique role in building a beautiful society, a state, and the world as well. Terming the film industry 'one of the oldest media in Bangladesh', he said, the industry started its journey at the initiative of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1957.



Foreign Minister Dr. AK Abdul Momen while speaking at the inter-ministerial meeting of the Committee on "Branding Bangladesh Abroad" on Preparation, Planning, Implementation and Monitoring of Possible Challenges of Bangladesh in the context of graduation from LDCs, called upon to build a



stronger coordination amongst stakeholders for branding Bangladesh abroad correctly through identifying the country's strengths as a nation. Prime Minister's Private Industry and Investment Advisor Salman F Rahman and Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen also attended the meeting held at the Foreign Ministry. During the meeting, it was decided that a common branding platform would be set up upon which the country's all government and non-government organizations could find complementary support systems for branding Bangladesh from their respective fields.



The government is planning to build a world class shipyard near Payra seaport in Patuakhali costing around Taka 14,000

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crore with the financial support from Gentium Solutions, a Singapore and Australia-based company, and Damen Shipyards Group, a Netherlands-based company.

Bangla Academy announced names of 15 individuals to be conferred with the 'Bangla Academy Literature Award-2021' for their illustrious contribution in different fields of Bangla literature. The awardees are expected to receive the prizes from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on the inauguration of the Ekushey Book Fair.

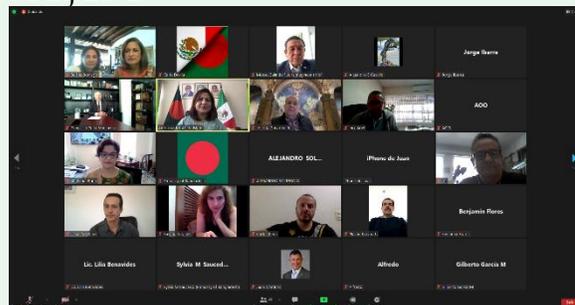
Mission Activities January 2022

The historic 'Homecoming Day' of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the architect of independent Bangladesh, was observed with due solemnity by the Embassy of Bangladesh in Mexico City on January 10, 2022, through a Webinar with the participation of Mr. Yogendra Sharma, Coordinator of South Asian Module for University Program for Asian and African Studies of the UNAM University.



The business leaders of Guadalajara, the third-largest metropolitan city of Mexico, expressed their interest in ICT, apparel, furniture, processed food, and import of decorative lights from Bangladesh during the webinar titled "Bangladesh & Mexico: Potentials & Opportunities" organized by

the Embassy of Bangladesh in Mexico City on 13th January 2022 with the assistance of a local dignitary named Mr. Francisco Pena Manjarrez.



On January 17, 2022, the Embassy of Bangladesh Mexico held a meeting with Mr. Agustín García Rechy, Vice President of Asia Pacific Region at COMCE and Dr. Aribel Contreras from the Iberoamerican (IBERO) University, with the objective of strengthening our bilateral business cooperation.



On January 19, 2022, a supplement on Bangladesh was published by the Magazine *Mundo Internacional* in commemoration of Golden Jubilee of the Victory Day of Bangladesh with information on the country's history, culture & impressive socio-economic development under the dynamic leadership of



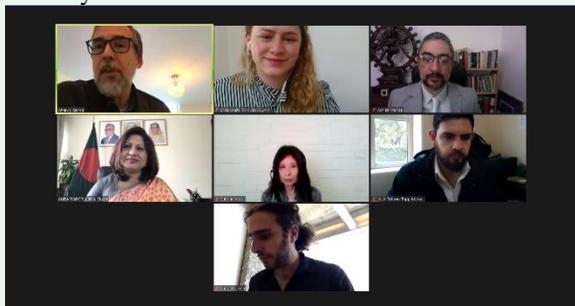
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the Hon. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina

On January 27, 2022, the Embassy of Bangladesh held a fruitful virtual dialogue with the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industries to expand the bilateral trade & investment relationship between Bangladesh & Mexico.



On January 28, 2022, the Bangladesh Embassy and the Center for Asian and African Studies of the Colegio de México University held a dialogue for expanding the relationship between the Embassy and the University, its students and faculty to increase the presence of Bangladesh and its history and culture in their Center.



On January 30, 2022, the Bangladesh Embassy exchanged views with Bangladeshi students pursuing higher studies at different universities in Mexico.



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