

Congratulatory Remarks by Prime Minister KISHIDA
at the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the establishment
of diplomatic relations between Japan and Bangladesh

H.E. Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

On February 10, 1972, soon after the independence of Bangladesh, Japan recognized Bangladesh as a state and established diplomatic relations as one of the first countries to do so. Today, 50 years since that day, I am very pleased to celebrate this milestone with Prime Minister Hasina and the people of Bangladesh.

Today, Japan and Bangladesh enjoy closer ties than ever before. This is the result of wide ranging exchanges, including those in the private sector and at the grassroots levels. The similarity of the flags of the two countries symbolizes our special relationship.

During my visit to Bangladesh as Foreign Minister in 2014, I received a warm hospitality from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and the people of Bangladesh. During that visit, I also felt directly our cordial relationship based on mutual trust, as well as the excitement that was brought about by the remarkable economic development. The "Comprehensive Partnership" announced in the same year has further developed into a more strategic one in recent years.

Especially, I am very proud that Japan has continuously supported Bangladesh's graduation from the LDC category and its further development through various infrastructure projects under the initiative of the "Bay of Bengal Industrial Growth Belt (BIG-B)."

Furthermore, the rapidly developing economy of Bangladesh is an attractive investment destination, and the number of Japanese companies investing in Bangladesh has been increasing year by year recently. I hope that the establishment of special economic zone for Japanese companies and the improvement of the investment environment will further strengthen the bilateral economic relationship.

Japan and Bangladesh are true friends who have helped each other in difficult times

such as those caused by disasters like earthquakes and floods. Following the spread of COVID-19, Japan has supported Bangladesh's efforts to counter the pandemic through 75 billion yen loan and the provision of more than 4.5 million doses of vaccine. Japan will continue to do its utmost to support Bangladesh.

Located at the nodal point between Southeast Asia and the Indian subcontinent, Bangladesh is an important partner in realizing a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific."

In this year of milestone, I am determined to work with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and the people of Bangladesh even more closely to elevate our bilateral relations to new heights.

I express my sincere wishes for the prosperity of our two countries and further deepening of the friendship between the peoples of Japan and Bangladesh.

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