PRIME MINISTER
GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
24 Agrahayon 1426
09 December 2019

Message

As we observe the 71st anniversary of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and the Prevention of this Crime, I pay homage in remembrance of the millions of victims of genocide throughout history and reaffirm our commitment to prevent genocide.

In the 1971 War of Liberation, Bangladesh endured an extreme form of genocide devised by the Pakistani occupation forces. During the nine-month-long War of Liberation our 3 million innocent civilians were brutally killed and more than 2 hundred thousand women were violated. The ‘operation searchlight’ launched by Pakistan military on 25th March, 1971 was intended to eliminate group of individuals based on their religion, race and political belief.

We observe 25th March as ‘Genocide Day’ to pay homage to the victims of the 1971 genocide and also to uphold our commitment to prevent crime of genocide, every year. We have also ensured that the key perpetrators of 1971 genocide are tried and punished, which has not only healed the wounded memories of the near and dear ones of the victims, it renewed our commitment towards collective actions in preventing and addressing any future or ongoing genocide anywhere in the world.

Bangladesh has demonstrated the highest goodwill by sheltering more than one million Rohingyas who fled genocide in the Rakhine State of Myanmar. While remaining seized with the efforts to ensure the rights of the Rohingya to return to the homeland in safety, security and dignity, we urge the international community to address the allegations of the mass atrocity crimes committed against them. As a state-party to the Genocide Convention and the Rome Statute on the International Criminal Court, Bangladesh will continue to support the initiatives brought under these two legal instruments in pursuit of accountability and justice for the Rohingya people.

I take this opportunity to thank all the Member States, UN entities and other stakeholders working in the field of Genocide prevention to work in addressing the “root causes” to identify early signs, alert the international community and continue to remain vigil in order to prevent recurrence of genocide anywhere in the world.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu
May Bangladesh Live Forever

Sheikh Hasina