

Text of President's address to nation

The following is the English rendering of the address to the nation by President Ziaur Rahman on Sunday night, reports BSS.

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim
My dear brothers and sisters,
Assalamu Alaikum:

Since the parliamentary elections in last February the country is progressing ahead. Full democracy has been established in the country. People of this country repeatedly gave their unequivocal verdict in favour of democratic rule. They have rejected politics of violence and destruction and alien political philosophy. I congratulate you for establishing the Bangladeshi nationalism solidly in the soil and the hearts of the people of this country. Compared to any time in the past whether politically or in respect of democratic values, we have achieved much strength. Consciousness of nationalism has taken deep roots among the people in the country irrespective of men, women and children.

National image of a country is fully reflected in the way it faces a challenge—internal or external—or in the way it confronts a natural catastrophe. In hours of national crisis the people have demonstrated their undaunted morale again and again. The entire nation unitedly came forward to face the challenge during the last season when drought caused huge damage to crops. The united efforts of the people led by the Bangladesh Nationalist Party and the Government could save the people from starvation and loss of life, despite speculation by experts in and outside the country that lakhs of people would die of starvation. This success of the people of Bangladesh has been greeted all over the world. Transition from military rule to democracy was similarly welcomed throughout the world.

PEACE, STABILITY

Peace and stability have been restored to a large extent and the full credit for this goes to the people. But we know that law and order problem is prevailing in some parts of the country. We also know that there exists corruption in the administration and in our social life. We are also aware of the existing poverty and unemployment. But after the establishment of full democracy and restoration of political stability we have been trying to solve the problems in a planned way. We ourselves are responsible for these problems of today. Laziness, inactivity and foreign rule over the centuries had brought us face to face with these problems. The entire people irrespective of men and women consciously must unite today to work for our collective welfare and emancipation. Help and co-operation that we will receive from friends abroad will not help solve our problems. Only through hard labour with a sense of dedication and in the interest of the nation, we can overcome those problems.

REVOLUTION

The nation today is standing on the threshold of a revolution. Source of this revolution is our constitution. We must hold aloft this awareness and must also translate it into practice in all spheres of our national life. This revolution will usher in national unity, consolidate national independence and sovereignty and shall bring about speedy

prosperity in our life as it will be accomplished with the people, by the people and for the people. The standard of living must be improved. By bringing about reforms in the agricultural system through the revolution we can double our agricultural production within the next five years. Wide reforms will be made in the education system, administration, law and in the field of labour. By training our manpower we will make them self-reliant and also find out and extract our natural and mineral resources to utilise them for the welfare of the people.

POPULATION CONTROL

Besides, we shall be able to ensure our economic development by making our population control programme a success. This revolution will enable us to devote ourselves to work for the welfare of the people in accordance with the principles and provisions of our constitution, remaining steadfast to our sacred religious belief.

We had placed the blueprint of this revolution during the last presidential and parliamentary elections. You have supported it fully. I told you that all of us must have to work hard, because there is no other alternative way to ensure national development. Time had now come to fulfil our national responsibility and keep the promise of overall national development.

I have the faith that all men and women of the country will devote all their energies for achieving this goal. Revolution will be a part and parcel of our mode of existence and it must be made successful by peaceful, democratic means and

through the parliament.

To us, the meaning of the revolution is the rejection of all that are filthy moth-eaten rotten and degraded—all that are polluting our society and our national life. It means total re-awakening for the overall welfare of the people. The success of this revolution is essential because if we fail we will inevitably be destroyed and our existence will vanish.

AGRI UPLIFT

To make the revolution successful, we should first of all plunge ourselves into work for agricultural development. It is really unfortunate that though we have fertile lands we are to contend with food shortage. We should have exported lakhs of tons of foodgrains today as in the past. If we still put in our efforts we can double our food production in five years and be known as a foodgrain exporting country. It is really possible. Two years ago when we had talked about doubling food production, many did not believe it and many experts and foreign agencies expressed their doubts. But now, our entire people, experts, project-planners and our friends abroad have realised the truth of what we had said. They now firmly believe that within the coming five years, food production in the country could be

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doubled. Indeed, we should have realised it much earlier that we have uncomparable fertile land-resources, but it is a matter of great regret that we could not utilise it properly. To achieve this goal we must go to the people and inspire and mobilise them. We cannot sit idle within the four walls in Dacca and waste our time. Now we must utilise our entire population and must not rely only on the project-planners. We must keep faith in the people as they alone are capable of facing this challenge. It is not possible to face this challenge by a handful of people like us sitting idle in a limited periphery. We need wholehearted cooperation and direct participation of our people. For this we need to imbibe our people with the national urge to the highest extent and leading cadres must go amongst them, merge with them, everyone of us—whether man or woman—are committed to work in the fields for national progress.

BOONPULU