



# Annual Report

2022-23



**Embassy of Bangladesh  
Tokyo**



### Overview of activities

The reporting period had been remarkable in the annals of the Embassy of Bangladesh. The milestone year, 2022, was celebrated as the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of Bangladesh-Japan diplomatic relations was observed both in Tokyo and Dhaka with a large number of events. The Embassy also arranged the visit of the official visit of the Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina which was an epitome of all the celebration of the year. The Hon'ble Speaker, Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, MP; Hon'ble Foreign Minister, Dr. A K Abdul Moment, MP, several Hon'ble Ministers, the then Principal Secretary, the Foreign Secretary, the Senior Secretary Commerce and from the Armed Forces, the Chief of Naval Staff and the Chief of Air Staffs visited Japan during this period. The Embassy continued to liaise

with different ministries and agencies in Japan in promoting economic, trade and investment relations with Japan, arranged meetings, seminars, and public diplomacy initiatives in relevant areas. Due to the effort of the Embassy the flow of technical intern and specified skilled workers have started to increase in this period. During the community reception held on 27 April 2023, the Hon'ble Prime Minister announced that Bangladesh Biman would resume Dhaka-Narita direct flight in September 2023. The activity of the Embassy is expected to increase manifolds in the coming months since April 29, 2023, travellers from Bangladesh are not required to present a Valid Vaccination Certificate or a Covid-19 Negative Test. Immigration rules have returned to normal from May 8, 2023.

### Developments in political relations

Bangladesh was shocked at the sad and tragic demise of Former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on 08 July 2022. Japan Bangladesh diplomatic relations was elevated to a 'comprehensive partnership' by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and the then Prime Minister Shinzo Abe through the back-to-back visits in 2014. Since then, progressively over the years, Japan contributed significantly in the socio-economic development and has become the single largest bilateral development partner. The Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina extended deepest condolences and heartfelt sympathies at the most tragic demise of the former Prime Minister, Mr. Shinzo Abe, in a letter addressed to H.E. Mr. KISHIDA Fumio, Prime Minister of Japan. Government of Bangladesh observed a one-day state mourning on 09 July 2022, as a mark of respect for the former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. In August 2022, the National Parliament and the Cabinet adopted condolence motions respectively in remembrance of Late Shinzo Abe. The copies of the condolence motions were forwarded through diplomatic channel to the bereaved family member of Late Shinzo Abe. In September 2022, the Hon'ble Foreign Minister attended the state funeral held in



memory of the Late Shinzo Abe. Later, the Hon'ble Prime Minister also met the spouse of Late Shinzo Abe, Mrs. Akie Abe, at Tokyo during her official visit in April 2023. The Hon'ble Foreign Minister visited Japan thrice, in April 2022 for a bilateral meeting, in September 2022 to attend the state funeral of Late Shinzo Abe when he also held bilateral talks with his counterpart, Foreign Minister Hayashi and in April 2023 as entourage of the Hon'ble Prime Minister.

The major achievement of this year for the Embassy was arranging the successful official visit of the Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to Japan on 25-28 April 2023. The Embassy started preparation for the official visit of the Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to Japan in August 2022. The visit planned for 29 November

to 02 December 2022, however, was postponed at the last moment due to Covid-19 pandemic situation in Japan. With the relaxation of the travel restrictions at the end of 2022 by Japan, the two sides worked to arrange the official visit of the Hon'ble Prime Minister to Japan was held on 25 to 28 April 2023.



*Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is welcomed by H.E. Ambassador and spouse on arrival at the Haneda airport, Tokyo on 25 April 2023*



*Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina met His Majesty the Emperor of Japan Naruhito at the Imperial Palace in Tokyo on 26 April 2023*

During this visit the two Prime Minister signed a Joint Statement on "Strategic Partnership". Nine instruments were signed between the two countries to institutionalize cooperation in the areas of Customs, ICT and Cybersecurity, Defense, Industrial upgradation, Agriculture, Metro Rail, Ship Recycling, Intellectual property and Children's Library setup. The successful conclusion of the visit with the signing of the Joint Statement elevating the bilateral relations from "Comprehensive Partnership" to a "Strategic

Partnership" was a watershed event for the two countries' bilateral relations. During the visit, the Hon'ble Prime Minister met with His Majesty the Emperor of Japan Naruhito on 26 April at the Imperial Palace. This was the first meeting by any Head of Government with the Emperor after pandemic. Bangladesh also honoured four distinguished Japanese nationals with the 'Friends of Liberation War' honour during the visit.



*Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina shaking hands with Prime Minister Fumio Kishida at the Prime Minister's Office, Tokyo on 26 April 2023*



*Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina leading the Bangladesh side to the bilateral talks with Prime Minister of Japan, H.E. Fumio Kishida on 26 April 2023*

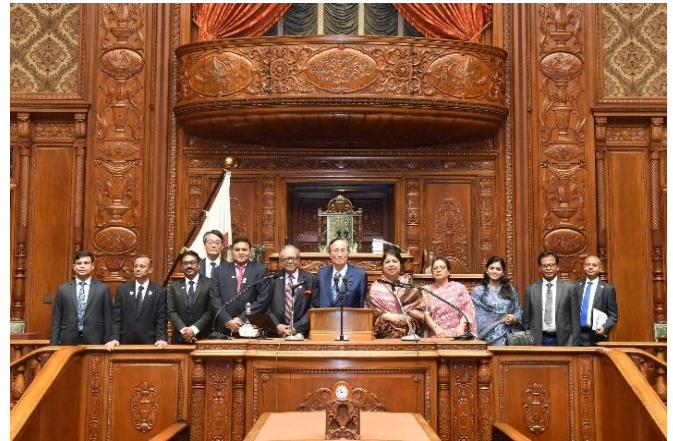


A Bangladesh Parliamentary delegation headed by Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, MP, Hon'ble Speaker of the Parliament of the People's Republic of Bangladesh



Hon'ble Speakers of Bangladesh and Japan inside the National Diet, May 2023

visited Japan during the period 24-29 May 2023 at the invitation of Mr. HOSODA Hiroyuki, Hon'ble Speaker of the House of Representatives.



Besides, the 5th Public-Private Economic Dialogue (PPED) meeting was held in April 2023, 4th regular Foreign Office Consultation (FOC) was held in February 2023, and 5th Bangladesh-Japan Joint PPP Platform Meeting on 4 October, 2022. It is expected that as announced by the Hon'ble Prime Minister during the community reception held in Tokyo on 27 April 2023, the Bangladesh Biman would resume Dhaka-Narita direct flight in September 2023. The Hon'ble Mayor of Narayanganj City Corporation, Dr. Selina Hayat Ivy, visited Japan from 27 March to 02 April 2023. She visited Naruto city where a Friendship City Agreement between Narayanganj City Corporation and Naruto City was signed. Later, she also visited Bangladesh Embassy, Tokyo. H.E. Mr. Shahabuddin Ahmed, Ambassador of Bangladesh to Japan participated at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Japan-Bangladesh Society (JBS) on 02 July 2022. He expressed satisfaction for being able to attend this first in-person AGM after long three years because of pandemic. On 14 December 2022, he also attended a reception organized by Japan Bangladesh

Society to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Bangladesh and Japan. Foreign Secretary Ambassador Masud Bin Momen sent a video message on the occasion. After the official visit of the Hon'ble Prime Minister in April 2023, the Ambassador's article "Leadership matters: beginning of a new journey together under "Strategic Partnership" published in the JBS Mail Magazine in May 2023 and was well received by the readership. On multilateral arena, Bangladesh and Japan supported each other during this period with Japan voting in favour of Bangladesh's membership at Human Rights Council for the term 2023-2025 at the election held on October 2022 and Bangladesh voted for Japan's candidate Ambassador HORINOUCHI Hidehisa, at the election of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS), held in June 2023 in New York. The Embassy also requested Japan to support Bangladesh's candidacy of Capt. Moin Ahmed for the post of Secretary- General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) for the term 2024-27 at the elections to be held in July 2023.

### Economic diplomacy

During the official talks on 26 April 2023, Japan announced to provide 30 billion yen financial assistance to Bangladesh. Japan is the single largest bilateral development partner of Bangladesh. Bangladesh and Japan celebrated the 50 years of journey of JICA in Bangladesh with an event "JICA with Bangladesh: Reaching 50th Year and Way Forward" held at Bangladesh Embassy, Tokyo on 13 July 2022. Under the 43rd Yen loan package, an amount of about USD 2.549 billion was signed for 5 projects. Those are: (a) Southern

Chattogram Regional Development Project, (b) Dhaka MRT Development Project, Line 5 (Northern Route) (II), (c) Matarbari Port Development Project (II), (d) Chattogram-Cox's Bazar Highway Improvement Project (I), and (e) Project for the Construction of Dual Gauge Double Line Between Joydebpur-Ishurdi Section (E/S). In addition, negotiation for the policy development loan is in the final stage which will help mitigate the negative economic and social impact of COVID-19 pandemic and Ukraine-Russia war. It may be noted that Bangladesh has



received about USD 685 million budget support loan from Japan in two instalments earlier (about USD 340 million in 2021 and about USD 345 in 2022). On 20 June 2023, an Agreement for Japanese Grant aid (JPY 500 million, about USD 4 million) for the “Fourth Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP4)” have been signed. In March 2023, Prime Minister Kishida announced his New Plan for Free and Open Indo-Pacific where he pledged for new investment. As part of the plan, it is reported that Japan would pledge the \$75 billion via private investment and yen loans and by ramping up aid through official governmental assistance and grants. Bangladesh needs to follow up on this to see how best it can benefit from the available fund. Under the Big-B initiative Bangladesh has already received significant resources in Southern Chattogram from Japan. Japan has assured that it will help Bangladesh develop Moheshkhali-Matarbari Integrated Infrastructure Development Initiative (MIDI) Master

Plan. The Embassy also kept close contact with the JDS and other Japan government scholarship holders, majority of whom belong to the Bangladesh Civil Service Cadre and Bangladesh Bank officials. The Embassy organized orientation program for the incoming students on 31 August 2022 and feedback seminar for the returnee fellows on 26 June 2023. In addition to this, the number of Bangladeshi students studying in Japan has been increasing each year and Embassy arranges visit to the universities regularly. During the period, the Embassy in various meetings requested Japan to resume dispatch of experts/volunteers to Bangladesh under the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) program remained suspended since 2016. During the bilateral talks, the Prime Minister of Bangladesh requested again and the Japanese side informed that they will consider resumption of JOCV programme as early as possible considering the security environment in Bangladesh.

### Promotion of trade & investment

Tokyo Mission organized 15 business promotion events such as Seminars/Webinars/Networking Events during 2022-23. The recent VVIP visit of the Hon'ble Prime Minister to Japan has given a timely push to the ongoing healthy trend of trade and investment between Bangladesh and Japan. During the visit, Tokyo Mission organized CEO's meeting and facilitated Trade and Investment Summit which saw huge turnout of Japanese businessmen. As of May 2023, the Bangladesh export to Japan crossed 1.7 billion US Dollar and the bilateral trade crossing 4.5 billion mark. It is expected that in the near future the bilateral trade will reach 5 billion US Dollar mark. Side by side the presence of Japanese companies in Bangladesh crossed 350 mark. A lot more is expected with the inauguration of the Bangladesh Special Economic Zone-Japan in Araihasar, Narayanganj in December, 2022 by the Hon'ble Prime Minister. It is expected that 30 to 40 companies will invest here with capital to the tune of 1.5 billion US Dollar. The two sides commenced negotiation on the Joint Feasibility Study on the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) eyeing to conclude the negotiation on the draft by 2026, the year Bangladesh is expected to become a developing country. The Joint Study Group was launched in December 2022

and the first meeting of that was held in Tokyo in a hybrid format on 10th and 12th of April, 2023. Besides, the 5th Public-Private Economic Dialogue (PPED) meeting was held online in April 2023 and the 5th Bangladesh-Japan Joint PPP Platform Meeting on 4 October, 2022. On 5 October 2022, Renewal Signing Ceremony of Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) between Bangladesh Public-Private Partnership Authority and Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT), Japan was held at the Embassy of Bangladesh, Tokyo. Bangladesh is also taking necessary preparation to participate in Osaka2025 Expo. Mr. Tapan Kanti Ghosh, Senior Secretary, Ministry of Commerce visited Japan from 24th to 30th October 2022 during which he visited Osaka Expo site and also held meetings with relevant stakeholders. During the period, the Embassy held several seminars and meetings to promote bilateral trade, investment from Japan and human resources recruitment from Bangladesh. With the ease of pandemic restrictions in Japan, Bangladesh also participated in the Fashion World Tokyo (FaW Tokyo) in October 2022 and in April 2023 as well as Japan IT Week held in April 2023 in Tokyo Big Site. On 13 October 2022, the Embassy of Bangladesh in Tokyo co-hosted with ICT



Division, Bangladesh the Launching of 'Bangladesh IT Connect Portal-Japan' (<https://jp.itconnect.gov.bd/>) through an online event to connect investors and

partners, explore business and help attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). Hon'ble State Minister for ICT, Mr. Zunaid Ahmed Palak inaugurated the virtual desk.



H.E Ambassador Mr. Shahabuddin Ahmed inaugurated Bangladesh Pavilion at Fashion World Tokyo

 Important visits:

Incoming Visit to Japan

- Visit of the Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, 24-28 April 2023
- Visit of the Hon'ble Speaker of Bangladesh, Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, MP, 24-29 May 2023.
- Visit of the Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Mr. Zahid Maleque, MP, to Nagasaki to attend 'Japan Health Systems Flagship Course' program, 14-18 May 2023.
- Visit of the Hon'ble Minister for Food, Mr. Sadhan Chandra Mojumder, MP, 05-09 February 2023
- Visit of the Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives, Mr. Md Tazul Islam, on 11-12 January 2023 and 01-06 October 2022
- Visit of the Hon'ble Mayor of Narayanganj City Corporation, Dr. Selina Hayat Ivy, 27 March to 02 April 2023.
- Visit of the Hon'ble State Minister, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, Mr. Md Zakir Hossen, MP, 26 May-01 June 2023
- Visit of the Hon'ble Foreign Minister, Dr. A K Abdul Momen, MP, 26-27 September 2022
- Visit of the Hon'ble State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Ministry, Mr. Nasrul Hamid, MP, 28 July 2022

From Armed Forces:

- Visit of the Hon'ble Security Adviser to the Prime Minister, Major General Tarique Ahmed Siddique, rcds, psc (retired) to attend the Munich Leaders Meeting, 14 -16 May 2023
- Visit of the Air Chief Marshal Shaikh Abdul Hannan BBP, BUP, nswc, fawc, psc, Chief of Air Staff, Bangladesh Air Force, 17-23 February 2023.
- Visit of the Admiral M Shaheen Iqbal, NBP, NUP, ndc, afwc, psc, Chief of Naval Staff of Bangladesh Navy to attend the International Fleet Review (IFR)2022-Japan and 18<sup>th</sup> Western Pacific Naval Symposium (WPNS), 04-10 November 2022





In April 2023, General S M Shafiuddin Ahmed, SBP (BAR), OSP, ndu, psc, PhD, Chief of Army Staff, Bangladesh Army sent a letter to General YOSHIDA Yoshihide, Chief of Staff, Joint Staff, Japan Self-Defense Force on his appointment and also officially invite to visit Bangladesh.

Outgoing visit from Japan to Bangladesh

- Visit of H.E. Mr. HONDA Taro, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, 25-27 July, 2022
• Visit of H.E. Mr. TAKEI Shunsuke, State Minister for Foreign Affairs, 23- 24 November, 2022
• Visit of H.E. Mr. NAKATANI Gen, Special Advisor to Prime Minister of Japan on International Human Rights, 19-21, 2023
• Visit of H.E. Mr. TAKAGI Kei, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, 12-13 May, 2023

Consular & welfare matters

The Embassy is relentlessly rendering consular services to the service seekers. Since 2020, the Embassy is providing special consular service on first Sunday of every month to facilitate working Bangladeshis to avail consular service. To deliver prompt reply to Embassy has been using Facebook messenger and email services. In addition to the regular services to the Bangladeshi nationals in Japan the Embassy also issues a large

number of visas for Japanese and other nationals in Japan. During the period due to technical difficulty, the Embassy had to shift the Consular Bank account from JP Post to MUFJ Bank. A summary of the consular statement from July 2022-May 2023 depicted below also delineates the active engagement of the Embassy in rendering consular services:

Table with 3 columns: Name of Services, Number of total services, Total Income. Rows include Passport, Visa, Attestation & others, Birth Registration.

In February 2023, Japan started to take skill test of two categories of job in Bangladesh which is expected to further assist the inflow of Bangladesh human resources which is already showing a positive trend since June 2022 and by the end of December 2022 the official figure

of expatriates Bangladeshis in Japan stood at 21,519 (June, 2022) which would further increase when the total figure as of December, 2022 will be available in July, 2023. Up to June 2023, 829 Technical Interns have come to Japan which is the highest number so far in fiscal year.

Public diplomacy activities

Bangladesh Embassy, Tokyo has conducted a good number of activities related to public diplomacy during 2022-23 -which contributed significantly to uphold the image of Bangladesh in Japan. These mainly include publications in different media and participation of the events on education and cultural exchange to promote people-to-people contact. In the new media, the

Mainichi Asia Business Institute covered the Seminar titled "JICA with Bangladesh: Reaching 50th Year and Way Forward" held at Bangladesh Embassy, Tokyo on 13 July 2022. Asia Business Institute covered the National Day reception held on the 52nd anniversary of Independence Day held at Hotel New Otani, Tokyo in March 2023. Japan Forward published Ambassador's



Special Contribution after the Prime Minister's Visit to Japan titled "Japan and Bangladesh: Leadership Matters: Beginning of a New Journey Together as Strategic Partners" on 9 June 2023. Earlier, the Ambassador's article "Leadership matters: beginning of a new journey together under "Strategic Partnership" published in the JBS Mail Magazine in May 2023 and was well received by the readership. National Day Supplements have been published in renowned Japanese Newspaper including the Japan News and the Yomiuri Shimbun. Besides, on 25 April 2023, the Japan Times published special supplement on the official visit of Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to Japan with an article from the Hon'ble Prime Minister, followed by one from the

Ambassador and Chairman, JBCCEC. During the visit, the Embassy organized interviews of the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina by NHK TV and Nikkei-CNBC TV which were broadcast later on. In addition, Embassy of Bangladesh, Tokyo has published Newsletter in every month of this fiscal year and posted them on website. The Embassy has also actively participated in 2023 International Exchange Fair organized by Chiyoda City on 25 May 2023 and Global Festa Tokyo 2022 on from 1 to 2 October 2022. In addition the Embassy organized visits to Tokyo International University in Saitama, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU) in Beppu, Oita and Kyushu University in Fukuoka during the period.



H.E Ambassador Mr. Shahabuddin Ahmed visited Global Festa Japan, 2022 held at Tokyo International Forum. Many visitors from different countries visited Bangladesh stall

*✍* **Observance of important days**

Bangladesh Embassy observes all the scheduled national days with the ceremonial national flag hoisting. A befitting reception was also hosted on the National and Independence Day. The Embassy also observes other designated important days namely 10<sup>th</sup> January, the Homecoming Day of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, 16<sup>th</sup> December Victory Day, 21<sup>st</sup> February Shaheed Dibash and International Mother Language Day, historic 7<sup>th</sup> March, 17<sup>th</sup> March Birth Anniversary of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and National Children's Day-2023, 25<sup>th</sup> March the 'Genocide Day', 52<sup>nd</sup> Independence and National day, 05<sup>th</sup> August the 73rd Birth Anniversary

of Shaheed Captain Sheikh Kamal, 08<sup>th</sup> August the 92nd Birth Anniversary of Bangamata Fazilatun Nessa Mujib, 15<sup>th</sup> August National Mourning Day, 18 October Sheikh Russel Day 2022, 18<sup>th</sup> December International Migrants Day and Bangla Nobobrosho and other days as per government instruction. In addition to those Bangladesh Embassy encourages and participates in the various events organized by the expatriate Bangladeshis in Japan as well as with diplomatic community in Tokyo. Following some of the important occasion celebrated during the period.





H.E Mr. Shahabuddin Ahmed, the Ambassador of Bangladesh to Japan, accompanied by the officers of the Embassy and their spouses, attended this year’s Tokyo Boishakhi Mela, the largest Bangladesh community

gathering in Japan on 30 April 2023. The Ambassador graced the program as Chief Guest. H.E Mr. IWAMA Kiminori, the Ambassador of Japan to Bangladesh attended the program as Special Guest.



*H.E Mr. Shahabuddin Ahmed delivered speech in the Mela*



*A segment of the participants at the Tokyo Boishakhi Mela*

H.E. Mr. Shahabuddin Ahmed, Ambassador of Bangladesh to Japan inaugurated a colorful kite festival, known as ‘Shakrain, on 04 May 2023, at the Ōmiya Daisan park of Saitama, Japan organized by the

Bangladeshi expatriates from old Dhaka. A large number of Bangladeshi expatriates living around Tokyo and Saitama attended the event.



*H.E. Mr. Shahabuddin Ahmed, Ambassador of Bangladesh to Japan inaugurated kite festival in Saitama*



*H.E. Mr. Shahabuddin Ahmed, Ambassador of Bangladesh enjoying Shakrain kite festival*

H.E. Mr. Shahabuddin Ahmed, Ambassador of Bangladesh to Japan attended 14th Tokyo Spring Festival as the Chief Guest (টোকিও বসন্ত উৎসব) held at Tokyo Green Hall. The event was organized by Bangladesh Art Forum.



H.E. Mr. Shahabuddin Ahmed, Ambassador of Bangladesh to Japan attended 14th Tokyo Spring Festival as Chief Guest



Colourful performance at the 14th Tokyo Spring Festival

International Women's Day 2023 was observed at the Bangabandhu conference room of the Embassy of Bangladesh in Tokyo on 8th March 2023. Mrs. Shahina Akhtar, the spouse of Ambassador of Bangladesh to

Japan, H.E. Shahabuddin Ahmed, hosted a reception at Bangladesh Embassy where a significant number of guests attended.



Mrs. Shahina Akhtar, the spouse of Ambassador Shahabuddin Ahmed hosted reception on the International Women's Day 2023



Cake cutting by the participants of the International Women's Day 2023

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