



Bangladesh Parliament



All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG)



People's Empowerment Trust (PET)

Launching Ceremony
on
*Leadership Orientation Programme for the
Members of Parliament*

Held at
Dhaka Sheraton Hotel (Winter Garden), Dhaka
on 26 May 2009, Tuesday

Supported by:



Grand Launching on Leadership Orientation Programme held **Parliamentarians act together to End Poverty** **Hunger and Injustice** **231 MPs across the party showed their highest commitment**

The Speaker of Bangladesh Parliament, Mr. Md.Abdul Hamid Advocate, MP urged the Hon'ble Members of Parliament (MPs) of both the Treasury and Opposition to initiate lively discussions and debates on national issues relating to development and forge a strong national unity. He mentioned that an effective democratic system paves the way for attaining peace, stability and development. A dynamic and active parliamentary democracy is the precondition for consolidation of democracy and attainment of development.

The Speaker was addressing at the launching ceremony of the Leadership Orientation Programme for the Hon'ble members of parliament, which is to be implemented in the next five years, the full tenure of the 9th Parliament of Bangladesh. The Grand Launching Ceremony was jointly organized by the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) and People's Empowerment Trust (PET) and held at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel on the 26th of May 2009. The programme was organized in partnership with Bangladesh Parliament, concerned ministries of Bangladesh Government, UNDP Bangladesh, UN Millennium Campaign (UNMC), DFID, Oxfam and Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF). The function was chaired by the Deputy Speaker and Chairperson of two APPGs Mr. Shawkat Ali, MP and conducted by APPG Secretary General and Executive Director of PET Mr. Shishir Shil. 231 Hon'ble Members of Bangladesh Parliament (out total 345) including Hon'ble Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Deputy Leader of the House, Chief Whip of Parliament, Minister's & State Minister's, Chief Whip of the Opposition in the Parliament, Whips, Chairs of Parliamentary Standing Committees on different ministries of the government, renowned personalities of different professions, eminent citizens, dignitaries, celebrities, Heads of various Development partners and representative from civil society organizations attended the function while high-profile elected representatives in the Parliament, ministers and dignitaries spoke on the session.

Addressed by

- Md.Md.Abdul Hamid Advocate,MP
Hon'ble Speaker,Bangladesh Parliament
- Mr.Shawkat Ali,MP
Hon'ble Deputy Speaker,Bangladesh Parliament
- Ms. Syeda Sazeda Chowdhury MP
Deputy Leader of the House
- Vice Principal Abdus Shahid MP
Chief Whip and Chairperson of APPG
- Mr.Faruk Khan MP
Hon'ble Commerce Minister
- Mr.Zainul Abdin Farooque MP
Chief Whip of the Opposition and first Vice-Chair, APPG
- Mr.Tanjim Ahmed Sohel Taj MP
State Minister for Home Affairs
- Mr.Shahiduddin Chowdhury Annie MP
Vice-Chair, APPG
- M. Khandaker Asaduzzaman MP
Chair,Parliamentary Standing Committee on Establishment Ministry
- Mr. Saber Hossain Chowdhury MP
- Mr. Promode Mankin MP
Chair, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Cht.Affairs Ministry
- Mr.Shishir Shil
Secretary General, APPG
- Ms. Reneta Lok Dessallien
UN Resident Coordinator in Bangladesh
- Stefan Priesner
Country Director,UNDP Bangladesh
- Ms. Heather Blackwell
Country Director, Oxfam GB
- Professor Mustafizur Rahman
Executive Director, Center for Policy Dialogue
- Ms. Shahin Anam
Executive Director, Manusher Jonno Foundation
- Mr. Azim Manji
Chief Operating Officer, DFID-SHIREE

In his long and passionate speech, the Speaker said that Hon'ble members of parliament are regarded as the "Light House" of the nation. The rays of light springing out from the parliament would enlighten the society and the state. Steering wheels of our country is in the hands of MPs. Parliament should be the centre of debate and discussion on development issues and it will give appropriate policy directions.

He said tremendous economic growth and social sector development have been recorded during the last couple of years. However, despite such achievements, still we are living with stark poverty, illiteracy, mal-nutrition, disparity and deprivation, natural disaster etc. He mentioned that ensuring peace, stability and advancement of a nation is potentially linked with fighting poverty. Poverty is multi-dimensional. It cannot be reduced simply raising the level of income; economic growth does not automatically ensure reduction of poverty. Often, faulty development policies and programs cause poverty to happen. Hence, we need to carefully review and analyze the policies and programmes. Terming them as constitutionally designated "policy directors", Speaker asked the MPs to take the responsibility to give directions to national development and initiate debate and discussion in the parliament with authentic information and relevant substance.

He reminded the audience that we need to achieve the UN declared Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015 and the whole nation intends to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of its national independence in 2021 being a prosperous and proud nation free from poverty, hunger and injustice.

Being the Chief Patron of the APPG, he delightfully declared that the APPG is going to organize Leadership Orientation programs for the MPs on various developmental issues including, among others- Poverty Eradication, Rights of the Women and Children, Climate Change, Food Security, Trade Policy, Gender, Human Rights, Education-health, Rights of the Ethnic and Minorities, Right to Information and other issues related to poverty and hunger. He emphatically urged the MPs to ensure their active participation in this program to become enriched in terms of conceptual clarity and relevant current information potentially helpful for their embarking on the task of developing policies and programs and to show strong policy leadership in the parliament.

Deputy Leader of the House and former minister for Environment Ms. Chowdhury said Bangladesh was suffering mostly because of Climate Change and urged the rich countries to take effective measures to control environmental pollution. Opposition Chief Whip Mr. Farooque said many flaws remain in the laws due to lack of adequate attention of the MPs and conventional mind-set of the bureaucrats. He noted that appropriate laws and policies could be framed with the better knowledge-base of the MPs. UNDP Resident Coordinator; Ms. Renata Lok Dessallien termed the programme as the beginning of a set of policy orientation to foster debate and discussion among the MPs on key issues that affect the lives of citizens across the country. Applauding APPG's initiative to include MDGs in discussion series, she said it would both harness the country's creative thinking and develop cross-party commitments to make substantial progress against all the MDGs before the deadline in 2015.

At the very beginning of the programme, the Speaker of the House Mr. Abdul Hamid Advocate formally inaugurated the programme through handing over the copy of the Constitution of Bangladesh among two youngest MPs of 9th Parliament- Mr. Zunaid Ahmed Palak MP and Mr. Ashrafuddin Nizan MP, one from treasury bench and the other from the Opposition And soon after Hon'ble Speaker signed on a big canvass (the canvass was lamented with the National Flag, National Map and National anthem) as part of the formal inauguration. All MPs were asked to put their signature on the canvass as a sign of their commitment to work together.

The nature and organization of the programme looked something first of this kind as more than two-third MPs of Bangladesh Parliament, both from Treasury bench and Opposition, showed their physical presence in an event attended by high-ranking Parliamentary Leaders of Bangladesh Parliament, Chairs of various Parliamentary Standing Committees, Ministers, dignified personalities, renowned people of different professions and Heads of development Partners. All the participants particularly the MPs seem to be on the same boat and showed their utmost interest and commitment to work together for the progress and advancement of the country. It was quite unprecedented in the recent political and parliamentary history in Bangladesh that MPs across the board echoed the same message that they would work together on national development issues to end poverty and no narrow partisan interest could hinder the process of attaining development for Bangladesh.

A cordial and festive mood was seen in almost every where in the Winter Garden of the Sheraton Hotel. Even during the break, MPs of both tents were greeting each other and having fun, chatting in groups and taking snaps while Speaker, Deputy Speaker and others were moving from one group to the other clearly showing the sign of a grand festival. The whole programme went beyond the scheduled time and no one seemed to be hurry to quit.

The Grand Launching Ceremony was followed by the First series (1st batch) of Leadership Orientation on Climate Change for 38 MPs that started at evening and continued till 9:30 pm. Participating MPs and renowned panellists discussed and shared relevant ideas, information and concerns on the issue in a participatory way, while Panel Chair of APPG and Commerce Minister Faruk Khan MP facilitated the Orientation.

Speech of Mr. Md. Abdul Hamid Advocate MP, Honorable Speaker of Bangladesh Parliament and Chief Patron of APPGs delivered in the Launching Ceremony of Leadership Orientation Programme for the Hon'ble Members of Parliament to be implemented during the next five years

26 May 2009 Tuesday, Winter Garden, Sheraton Hotel, Dhaka

Hon'ble Chair of the Launching ceremony of the Leadership orientation Programme, Deputy Speaker of the Bangladesh Parliament and Chairperson of two All-Party Parliamentary Groups- Mr. Shawkat Ali MP, Special Guests- Deputy Leader of the House Hon'ble Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury MP, Senior Minister's & State Ministers of the Cabinet including Hon'ble Agriculture Minister Begum Motia Chowdhury MP, Hon'ble Home Minister Ms. Sahara Khatun MP; Hon'ble Chief Whip of Bangladesh Parliament & Chair of APPG Vice-Principal Md. Abdus Shahid MP, Adviser's to the Hon'ble Prime Minister, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Bangladesh H.E. Ms. Renata Lok Dessallien, Whips, Chief Whip of the Opposition in the Parliament and First Vice-Chair of APPGs- Mr. Zainul Abdin Farroque MP, Chairs of Parliamentary Standing Committees, Members of Parliament, Secretary General of APPGs Mr. Shishir Shil, Secretaries of government ministries and departments, Eminent citizens, Heads of Development Partners, Experts, Journalists, Ladies and Gentlemen- Assalamu Alai E Kum.

2. At first, I congratulate the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) and People's Empowerment Trust (PET) for taking a noble initiative to organize Leadership Orientation Programme for the hon'ble Members of Parliament to be implemented during the next 5 years. I also extend my gratitude to the Bangladesh Parliament, different ministries of the government, UNDP Bangladesh, United Nations Millennium Campaign (UNMC), DFID-SHIREE, Oxfam and Manusher Jonno Foundation for their benevolent support and cooperation.

3. At the outset, I express my deep shock to those who lost their valuable lives yesterday in the in the coastal area by the onslaught of the Cyclone.

Hon'ble Members of Parliament, ladies and gentlemen,

4. I am delighted to have you all here at this afternoon outside the Parliament sessions. It is expected that Parliament will be the pivotal point of all activities in a democratic country. We have once again started our journey towards democracy through a general election held on 29th December, 2008. People have great expectations from this Parliament. Against the backdrop of changing world scenario, the role of the members of this Parliament has been increasing in an unprecedented way. The MPs have to perform their tasks with utmost patience, responsibility and intellect.

Hon'ble Parliamentary leaders, Deputy Leader and Ministers,

5. A small territory, called Bangladesh, is home to about 140 million people. Tremendous economic growth has been recorded during the last decades. We had GDP growth rate of around 6% during the last couple of years. Tremendous development in various social sectors has also been shown- particularly in the areas of primary education where gender gap has got reduced to a great extent. Despite such achievements, still we are living with stark poverty, illiteracy, mal-nutrition, disparity and deprivation, natural disaster etc. As we all know that ensuring peace, stability and advancement of a nation is potentially linked with fighting poverty. Poverty is multi-dimensional. It cannot be reduced simply raising the level of income; economic growth does not automatically ensure reduction of poverty. Often, faulty development policies and programs cause poverty to happen. Hence, we need to carefully review and analyze the policies and programmes. Being the

constitutionally designated “policy directors”, Hon’ble members of the parliament should take the responsibility to give directions to national development.

Hon'able guests,

6. Terrorism and religious militancy have become one of biggest challenge before us. Blind religious militancy intends to push us back to the dark, women to a middle age. Fighting militancy requires going beyond our national territory as it has become a global phenomenon now. Nationally, we are also exposed to a number crisis. Terrorism is still prevalent. The adverse impact of global climate change is gradually causing us too much. A large number of people particularly who live in the coastal areas are the worst victim of climate change loosing their assets and livelihoods. In addition, the issues of food security and the rights of the small farmers has become one of the biggest challenges of the time.

7. There are obvious reasons for touching upon all these issues because we intend to build our nation a prosperous one before the year 2021. Even before that, by 2015, we have to achieve the UN declared and Bangladesh promised Millennium Development Goals. By this set time line, we have to attain certain indicators pertaining to poverty and some other social development goals. If we can successfully attain all these indicators by the set time line, we would be able to move one step forward towards attaining our ultimate goal.

Hon'able Members of Parliament,

8. Undeniably, effective democratic system paves the way for attaining peace, stability and development. A dynamic and active parliamentary democracy is the precondition for consolidation of democracy and attainment of development.

9. Hon'ble members of parliament- you seem to be the "Light House" of the nation. The rays of light springing out from the parliament would enlighten the society and the state. Steering wheels of our country is in your hand. This is my heart-felt believe that the Parliament should be the centre of debate and discussion on development issues and it will give directions accordingly. Hon'able members of the parliament will initiate debate and discussion in the parliament with authentic information and relevant substance. The result could be envisaged as: appropriate policy direction and national consensus. Narrow partisan interests always eat up the very fundamental essence of democracy. We do not want to bring back the bitter experience of our recent past. I firmly believe that, we could get rid of narrow partisan interests if we strongly base ourselves on the universal values of Patriotism and peoples' welfare.

Honorable members of the Parliament,

10. I am pleased to declare that the APPG has successfully taken an initiative to organize Leadership Orientation programs on various developmental issues to be implemented during the next five years- the full tenure of the 9th parliament. The thematic developmental issues include, among others- Poverty Eradication, Rights of the Women and Children, Climate Change, Food Security, Trade Policy, Gender, Human Rights, Education-health, Rights of the Ethnic and Minorities, Right to Information and other issues related to poverty and hunger. This programme is designed for all the Hon'ble members of parliament and it is hoped that through active participation in this program the Hon'ble members of the parliament will be enriched in terms of conceptual clarity and relevant current information as far as those issues and policies are concerned. I strongly believe that it would help you embark on the task of developing policies, programs and monitoring of development activities. It would also ensure your strong policy leadership in the parliament.

Hon'able Members of Parliament,

11. Undeniably, effective democratic system paves the way for good governance. The main functions of the Parliament are to make laws, to monitor their activities of the Executive and to take decisions on important issues relating to state. Along with making laws, Parliament also performs representative and oversight activities. By introducing the question-answer sessions,, attention-drawing sessions, discussion on matters of public

importance the accountability of the government can be ensured to a great extent. The MPs have a chance to ventilate the demands of their respective constituencies as well as they can inform the Parliament of any issues of national interest within very short span of time. Due to these, the Parliament sessions can be levelled public welfare session which keeps the whole session lively and vibrant.

Hon'able Members of Parliament and distinguished guests,

12. You all know that in the first session of the 9th Parliament, all the standing committees have been formed and they are now working. These committees can play laudable role to make the Parliament effective and dynamic. With their proper functioning, irregularities and corruption will be reduced to a considerable extent, accountability will be enhanced and good governance may be ensured.

13. I also like to mention here that for enhancing the aptitude of the hon'ble MPs, for the accelerating their official task and to have a closer contact with the people of their constituencies, we have taken initiative to provide office space for all the MPs. Due to fund constraint, we are now not in a position to provide furniture and other logistics to these offices, still we hope, proper steps will be taken to equip these offices gradually.

Hon'able Members of Parliament

14. I firmly believe that the aim of our Parliamentary democracy is to establish the right of the people and to ensure their welfare. Mutual respect and trust among the members both from treasury and opposition, can flourish our hard-earned democracy. It is my humble request, that you will initiate a quality and live discussion and debate in the parliament on various issues of development concern. I believe that successful implementation of this leadership Orientation programme would result in ensuring quality discussion and debate in our national parliament. The practice of parliamentary democracy will be qualitatively enhanced. Instances will be created to work together on issues of national priority moving beyond our narrow partisan or group interests. The foundation of our parliamentary democracy will be consolidated and extended; people will be empowered; nation will get rid of poverty, hunger and deprivation- we will be confident enough to survive as a proud and self-reliant nation.

I wish for the every success of the Leadership Orientation Programme.

Thank you all.

Long live Bangladesh!



In the Grand Launching Ceremony on Leadership Orientation Programme for the Members of Parliament on 26 May, 2009, Hon'ble Speaker of Bangladesh Parliament, Mr. Md. Abdul Hamid Advocate, MP, handing over the copy of the Constitution to Zunaid Ahmed Palak MP, the youngest member of Bangladesh Parliament.



Hon'ble Speaker of Bangladesh Parliament and Chief Patron of APPG, Mr. Md. Abdul Hamid Advocate, MP speaking at the grand launching ceremony of the Leadership Orientation Programme for the Hon'ble Members of Parliament held on 26 May, 2009 at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel.



Grand Audience: A portion of Hon'ble Members of Bangladesh Parliament in the Grand Launching Ceremony on Leadership Orientation Programme for the Members of Parliament held on 26 May, 2009 at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel.



Hon'ble Chief Whip of the opposition and first Vice-Chair, APPG Mr.Zainul Abdin Farooque MP and Mr.Shahiduddin Chowdhury Anne MP, Vice-Chair of APPG showed their solidarity and commitment through signing on the 'big canvass' lamented with the National Flag, National Map and National anthem in the grand launching ceremony on Leadership Orientation Programme for the Members of Parliament on 26 May, 2009 at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel.



Hon'ble Deputy Speaker, Bangladesh Parliament and Chairperson of APPGs-Mr. Shawkat Ali MP speaking at the grand launching ceremony of the Leadership Orientation Programme for the Hon'ble Members of Parliament held on 26 May, 2009 at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel.



Hon'ble Ms. Syeda Sazedra Chowdhury MP, Deputy Leader of the House speaking at the grand launching ceremony of the Leadership Orientation Programme for the Hon'ble Members of Parliament held on 26 May, 2009 at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel



Hon'ble Chief Whip of Bangladesh Parliament and Chairperson of APPG, Vice-Principal Md. Abdus Shahid MP speaking at the grand launching ceremony of the Leadership Orientation Programme for the Hon'ble Members of Parliament held on 26 May, 2009 at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel.



Hon'ble Chief Whip of the opposition and first Vice-Chair, APPG Mr.Zainul Abdin Farooque MP speaking at the grand launching ceremony of the Leadership Orientation Programme for the Hon'ble Members of Parliament held on 26 May, 2009 at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel.



Ms. Renata Lok Dessallien, UN Resident Coordinator in Bangladesh speaking at the grand launching ceremony of the Leadership Orientation Programme for the Hon'ble Members of Parliament held on 26 May, 2009 at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel.



Mr. Shishir Shil, Secretary General of APPG speaks at the grand launching ceremony of the Leadership Orientation Programme for the Hon'ble Members of Parliament held on 26 May, 2009 at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel.