Bangladesh gets respect in world for Padma Bridge: PM

BSS- Describing the Padma Bridge as a symbol of pride, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today said the international community now shows due respect to Bangladesh as the bridge was constructed with own finance.

“People now show respect when they heard the name of Bangladesh on the international stage. The people of Bangladesh have reached a dignified position,” she said while addressing a civic rally as the chief guest marking the closing of the Padma Bridge construction work at Mawa end this afternoon.

She said that the mentality about Bangladesh that it can’t do nothing without their (foreigners) support has changed through the construction of the Padma Bridge with own finance.

“The Padma Bride is a bridge of our pride…. one decision (to build Padma Bridge with own finance) has given Bangladesh dignity. Those who always did bossing on us and thought that Bangladesh would not move on without them have changed their mentality,” she said.

The Prime Minister recalled the local and international conspiracies to stop the construction of the Padma Bridge.

“We had to build the Padma Bridge overcoming many barriers. We have built the bridge entirely with the money of the people of Bangladesh,” she said.

The Padma Bridge has opened the door for making socio-economic advancement of the south-western part, she said.

Sheikh Hasina said Bangladesh was internationally considered

as the country of beggars because the post 1975 governments did nothing for the development of the country.

“It was very disgraceful because we were considered as the nation of beggars,” she said.

After assuming power in 1996, the Prime Minister said they have only one target to reach Bangladesh to a dignified position on the global stage, adding,” We have done it successfully.”

The Premier said a nation which liberated its country shedding blood, never move ahead keeping their head down.

The Prime Minister vowed Bangladesh will march on to become a developed, prosperous and Smart Bangladesh by 2041 with an indomitable pace confronting all the hurdles.

“We must march ahead overcoming all the obstacles whatever come with implementation of the ideal of the Father of the Nation,” she said.

The Premier said her government has been implementing the perspective plan 2021-41 and Delta Plan-2100 to provide improved and better life to generations after generations.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader, MP, presided over the function.

Former Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam and Senior Secretary of the Bridges Division Md. Monjur Hossain and Director of Padma Multipurpose Bridge Project Md Shafiqul Islam also spoke on the occasion.

A documentary on the Padma Bridge, a symbol of Bangladesh’s pride and capability, was screened at the function.

Local artistes performed choreography on the theme song of the Padma Bridge and the history along with culture of Munshiganj.

On June 25, 2022, the Prime Minister opened the country's largest bridge – 6.15-km Padma Bridge – over the mighty river.

The Padma Bridge project was completed with entirely own finance on June 30, 2024 at the cost of Tk 30,770.13 crore, saving Tk 1,835.28 crore from the cost of Tk 32,605.51 crore estimated in the revised development project proposal (RDPP).

A total of Tk 1,661 crore was collected as toll from the Padma Bridge since its operation on June 26 in 2022.

The construction works of the Padma Bridge began on December 12 in 2015 with inaugurating river training and main construction works of the bridge at Jajira point in Shariatpur district by the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister formally laid the foundation stone of Padma Bridge at Mawa in Munshiganj on July 4 in 2001.

Sheikh Hasina expressed her gratitude and extended sincere thanks to consultants, workers and all others who were engaged in the implementation of Padma Multipurpose Bridge Project as well as the local families who lost their houses and lands for the project.

She also recalled the contribution of former communication minister Syed Abul Hossain and Dr Jamilur Reza Choudhury.

"I have come here today mainly to thank all involved in building the Padma Bridge," she said.

The Prime Minister came down heavily on Dr Muhammad Yunus due to his role regarding the withdrawal of the Word Bank's funds from the Padma Bridge Project citing a corruption allegation.

The Prime Minister said she challenged the global lender that no corruption was committed in the Padma Bridge project asking it to prove the corruption and decided to build the bridge with own finance.

Later, a Federal Court of Canada in its verdict in a case involving the Padma Bridge graft, said the corruption allegation in the Padma Bridge construction project was false, baseless and fabricated, the Premier mentioned.