

# Nation set to welcome New Year 2024

December 31, 2023

**Online Desk:** The nation bids adieu to the outgoing year 2023 forgetting all odds and sorrows of the past and welcome 2024 with new hopes at midnight tonight through different programmes along with the global community.

Jubilant people, particularly the youngsters, will join different New Year programmes when the clock strikes 12 midnight.

In separate messages, President Mohammed Shahabuddin and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina greeted the countrymen on the eve of New Year 2024.

On this special occasion, people have already conveyed their best wishes to their friends and beloved ones through different messaging applications and social media platforms.

Usually the New Year's Eve comes as an occasion for huge celebration across the globe, bidding farewell to the outgoing year.

As 2023 draws to a close, Tonga, Kiribati and Samoa- tiny Pacific island nations- are the first to ring in a new Calendar year.

Corporate and government officials and various organisations also did the same thing as they do every year to greet their nearest ones.

The day is also a moment of looking back to the outgoing year for reviewing the successes and failures and planning strategies to reach new goals for the New Year, with accomplishing the unfinished tasks those need to be done in the coming days.

The year 2023 was a significant year for Bangladesh as the country saw many successes in major areas, including infrastructure development, economy, agriculture and driving the IT sectors towards attaining the middle-income status.

Arranging the 12th Jatiya Sangsad (JS) elections slated for January 7, 2024 has added a new dimension to the celebration of the New Year as candidates of different political parties were seen engaging in different programmes in festive mood to encourage the people to exercise their voting rights.

Marking the general elections, Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina on December 27 announced her party's polls manifesto, vowing to build a developed, prosperous and Smart Bangladesh by 2041.

Despite global unrest situation and economic downturn due to Russia-Ukraine and Gaza wars, Bangladesh witnessed some milestones in the outgoing year that are ushering the hope of taking the country forward further with economic progress to become a developed and smart nation by 2041.

There are some of the milestones below.

## **BANGABANDHU TUNNEL:**

The Bangabandhu Tunnel, first of its kind in South Asia, constructed under the river Karnaphuli opened in October, ushering in a new era in road communication and a hope of contributing to the country's GDP growth. The 3.315km tunnel connects the Chattogram port city on the north end of the Karnaphuli with Anwara upazila on the south of the river.

### **THIRD TERMINAL OF HAZRAT SHAHJALAL INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT OPENS:**

The third terminal at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport was inaugurated partially in October with the slogan “connecting dreams to reality” towards making Bangladesh as an aviation hub.

### **FIRST ELEVATED EXPRESSWAY IN CITY:**

The much-awaited 11.5 km Dhaka Elevated Expressway’s Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport-Farmgate section opened to the public in September, is serving as an alternative route to and from the airport road, one of the busiest roads in the city.

### **COX’S BAZAR RAIL STATION:**

Cox’s Bazar rail station opened to the public on the first day of December in a development that will attract more tourists to the country’s renowned destination, the Cox’s Bazar sea beach.

### **PADMA RAIL LINK:**

On October 10, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the 82-kilometre rail line from Dhaka to Bhanga via the Padma Bridge, opening a new horizon for rail communication with the country’s southwestern region and touching another millstone to boost the country’s economy.

### **UNIVERSAL PENSION SCHEME:**

In August, the government launched the Universal Pension Scheme to bring all the people of the country aged between 18 and 50 under the scheme. Initially four different schemes were introduced as part of the plan.

### **TAKA PAY CARD LAUNCHED:**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on November 1 unveiled Bangladesh’s first ever local currency card, “TakaPay”, aiming to reduce dependency on international cards such as Visa, Mastercard as well as to save foreign currencies.

### **MINIMUM WAGE FOR GARMENT WORKERS INCREASES:**

The minimum wage board set Taka 12,500 as the minimum salary for the garment workers, which was Taka 8,000 fixed in 2018. The board also reduced the number of grades of the wage structure to four from five grades.

On the occasion of celebrating the New Year, Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) issued some directives over 31st night to avoid any untoward incident in the capital.

As per the directives, in order to ensure security and maintain law and order in the city, no gathering or festival can be held at road intersections, flyovers, streets and public places.

DMP issued a ban on flowing, buying and selling firecrackers, crackers and lanterns. No outsider or vehicle will be allowed to enter the Dhaka University area after 6 pm.