

Bangabhaban bids farewell to President Hamid

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The Daily Morning Voice Online Desk : Bangabhaban on Monday bade a grand farewell to outgoing President M Abdul Hamid in a state ceremony through an impressive function, in the first such ceremony for an outgoing president in Bangladesh. A smartly turned-out contingent of the horse-mounted President Guard Regiment (PGR) of the army extended him a guard of honor as part of the ceremony while a band group comprising military, navy, and air force played the farewell tune. “In the last 52-year of Bangladesh’s history, this was the first such farewell extended to an outgoing President of the republic,” a Bangabhaban spokesman said. The outgoing President Hamid, moved into his own residence at capital’s Nikunja along with his family members in a ceremonial motorcade under the supervision of the Special Security Force (SSF). The Bangabhaban officials and staffs queued up in two lines on both sides of the vehicle to bid him the farewell and showered flower petals on his open jeep from Bangabhaban to its main gate, where he got onboard the presidential car to leave the presidential palace. The outgoing President reached his Nikunja residence at about 2pm, where he was welcomed by his family members and relatives with bouquets. Reaching his private residence at Nikunja Hamid expressed his gratitude to the people and particularly to the media for their heartfelt support “in my political life”.

“I’m (also) very much grateful to the Prime Minister and her government for their necessary support in discharging my tasks in perfect manner,” Hamid added. The farewell came shortly after President Mohammad Shahabuddin was sworn in as the 22nd President of the country, an event followed by the swapping of the chairs by the new and the outgoing presidents. The ceremonial change of the chairs was part of the presidential palace ritual to mark the handing over of the charge of the republic to the new president. President Hamid is the lone President in Bangladesh who held the post for two consecutive terms of ranging over 10 years. A veteran politician with a colourful career, Hamid for the first time took the responsibility of the President in-charge on March 14, 2013, when the then President Mohammad Zillur Rahman was under treatment in Singapore and after his death he became the Acting President on March 20, 2013. President Hamid was sworn in as the 20th President in April 2013 and subsequently 21st President for the second term on April 24, 2018.

Earlier today, new President Shahabuddin was administered the oath office by parliamentary Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury at the Durbar Hall of Bangabhaban at 11 am at an event joined by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Chief Justice Hasan Foez Siddique, ministers, lawmakers, foreign diplomats, senior officials and distinguished citizens. After the Bangabhaban ceremony, Shahabuddin went to his Gulshan residence in a presidential motorcade. Bangabhaban officials said he is set to return to the presidential palace at 8:20 pm in the evening. The new President will be given a guard of honour on Tuesday morning as part of the extended installation ceremony.

Hamid was born on January 1, 1944 at Kamalpur in Mithamain upazila under Kishoreganj district and made his debut as a political activist in 1959 by joining the then Awami League student front Chhatra League. He joined the Awami League at the end of 1969. He was elected as Speaker in the Ninth Parliament and served the office from 2009-2013 while was he elected to parliament seven times since 1970.