

AIT's 128th Graduation Speaker

Brief Biography of Ambassador Ms. Saida Muna Tasneem

HE Saida Muna Tasneem has been serving as Ambassador of Bangladesh to Thailand and Cambodia since 14 November 2014. She is also serving as Bangladesh's Permanent Representative to the UN ESCAP in Bangkok. A career diplomat, Ambassador Saida Muna Tasneem joined the Bangladesh Foreign Service in 1993 topping merit list. Prior to her assignment in Thailand, Ms. Tasneem headed the United Nations Wing and the External Publicity Wings at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh as a Director General. Earlier, Ms. Tasneem served as Minister (Political and Press) at the Bangladesh High Commission in London and Deputy Head of Mission and Counsellor at Bangladesh's Permanent Mission to the United Nation in New York. Tasneem also served Bangladesh Foreign Office in different capacities including in the UN, South Asia, SAARC, BIMSTEC, West Asia, Americas and Administration Wings.

As Ambassador to the Kingdoms of Thailand and Cambodia, Ms. Tasneem has been continually promoting Bangladesh's stronger diplomatic, political, economic, cultural and tourism ties with these two important regional and predominantly Buddhist ASEAN nations. Having extensive experience in South and South East Asian Regional Cooperation and security issues within the ambit of SAARC, BIMSTEC, ARF and ACD, Tasneem has specially dedicated efforts to promoting greater political and cultural understanding and confidence-building, as well as interfaith dialogue and interactions between Bangladesh and the Kingdoms of Thailand and Cambodia. She has organized several trade and public diplomacy events to revive Bangladesh's Buddhism friendship and ancient cultural, trade and linguistic linkages with the two Kingdoms fostering secular cultural friendship between the two peoples.

A progressive at heart, during her long years of dedicated service to the nation, Ambassador Tasneem has consistently promoted Bangladesh's national and international image firmly based on the Republic's fundamental values of democracy, secularism, Bengali nationalism, progressive and liberal values, religious tolerance and interfaith harmony, conservation of nation's cultural heritage, rights of minorities and the disadvantaged, empowerment of women, conservation of nature, oceans and seas and upholding the values of the State's War of Independence of 1971.

A security and human rights expert, Ambassador Tasneem has dedicated 23 years of diplomatic service in promoting Bangladesh's foreign policy interests especially in the areas of maintenance of national, regional and international peace, security and strategic stability, UN Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding operations, countering terrorism, financing of terrorism and money-laundering, targeted UN sanctions regime, disarmament and non-proliferation, trafficking in persons and host of other transnational crimes. She had also worked extensively as focal points for international humanitarian and refugees law, human rights law, Protection of Civilians, International War Crimes Law, MDGs and as senior team member for post-2015 development agenda and SDGs at the MOFA. Ambassador Tasneem has had the honour of serving as senior expert in key National Committees on security issues including on Drafting of National Defence Policy of Bangladesh, Revision of Bangladesh's War Book, Member and Member Secretary to the National Committee on UN Security Council Resolutions, Chair of Verification Task Force for Monitoring of Chemical Weapons, National Task Force on Repatriation of Myanmar Refugees and Undocumented Nationals from Myanmar, National Committee on Anti-Money Laundering and Countering Financing of Terrorism(AML-CFT), National Task Force on Repatriation of laundered resources, National Committee of IHL , National UN Peacekeeping Strategy, and Women in Development (WID) focal point for MOFA.

Apart for regularly accompanying Prime Minister of Bangladesh to several UNGAs and other Summits as expert and senior delegate Ms. Tasneem negotiated regional and international documents for Bangladesh in a large number of global summits and Conferences including Commonwealth Summits, NPT Review Conferences, UN General Assemblies, OPCW Conferences, major UN Development Conferences of 90s, Beijing+5, SAARC and BIMSTEC Summits. Tasneem has drafted a number of periodic reports for Bangladesh including 2nd UPR at UN Human Rights Council, CERD, CEDAW, CRC, CSW, ICRMW etc.

Ms. Tasneem obtained a BSc. degree in Chemical Engineering from the Bangladesh University of Engineering & Technology (BUET), Dhaka and a MSc. Degree in Public Policy and Planning from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. Before joining the Foreign Service, she worked as an Industrial Planning Engineer at the Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation

An avid enthusiast on media, communications and public diplomacy, Ambassador Tasneem has been the editor of several of Bangladesh Foreign Office publications including on Bangladesh Foreign Policy Perspectives (2009), Bangladesh at the UN(2012), Bangladesh promoting peace, democracy and development on UN Peacekeeping(2011), Celebrating Bangladesh on cultural heritage(2010), Bangladesh Beckons on tourism(2010), and the Foreign Office monthly Journals.