

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON Foreign Policy of Bangladesh as dreamed by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

Organized by : International Centre for Sheikh Mujib Studies, UK

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শেখ হাসিনা



প্রধানমন্ত্রী

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

১০ মাঘ ১৪০৭
২৩ জানুয়ারি ২০০১

বাণী

জাতির জনক বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমানের কর্মবহুল জীবনের বিভিন্ন দিক নিয়ে লন্ডনভিত্তিক আন্তর্জাতিক গবেষণা প্রতিষ্ঠান 'International Centre for Sheikh Mujib Studies' ঢাকা 'The Foreign Policy of Bangladesh as dreamed by Bangabandhu' একটি আন্তর্জাতিক সেমিনার আয়োজন করেছে যেনে আমি আনন্দিত। এ ধরনের উদ্যোগ আমাদের পরবর্তী প্রজন্মকে দেশের স্বাধীনতার ইতিহাস ও বঙ্গবন্ধুর আদর্শ সম্পর্কে ঘনিষ্ঠভাবে জানা ও বোঝার ক্ষেত্রে সহায়ক হবে বলে আমার বিশ্বাস।

আমি এ সেমিনারের সার্বিক সফলতা কামনা করি।

জয় বাংলা, জয় বঙ্গবন্ধু
বাংলাদেশ চিরজীবী হোক

শেখ হাসিনা

International Centre for Sheikh Mujib Studies (ICSS)

An Introduction

The Organisation was set up in London in December, 1997 with the active support of All Europe Bangabandhu Parishad and inspired by its Chief Patron Hon. Sheikh Hasina.

Primary Aims & Objectives are as follows:

1. It will research, compile and publish books and articles on Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.
2. It will organise conference, seminars, workshops, symposiums etc. to bring students and scholars from all over the world to study, research and promote Sheikh Mujib's Philosophy.
3. It will house an archive of official and unofficial documents, photographs, tape recordings, videos etc starting with the history of Bengal before the war of liberation of 1971. This archive will be open to bonafide researchers, students, writers, journalists etc.
4. The ICSS will have a library of books, pamphlets, newspaper cuttings (National and International), government papers/reports, etc on Bangladesh before, during and after the war of liberation for ready reference of the researchers.
5. It will ensure that the documents related to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman now scattered all over the world are collected and housed in the proposed archive in Central London. It is hoped that copies of such documents will also be similarly housed in Dhaka, the Capital of Bangladesh.
6. The overriding concern of ICSS is that Bangladesh, one of the youngest states in the world, is able to preserve the vital documents and literature, without which it will be difficult for contemporary and future historians to have an authoritative and factual view of the circumstances in which the founding father of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Bangabandhu had to lead the struggle for independence from Pakistan and to create the independent Republic of Bangladesh.



The All Europe Bangabandhu Parishad organised a memorial lecture on Bangabandhu in London. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was the Chief Guest and addressed the Parishad. Seen in the photograph are Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who is also the Chief Patron of the All Europe Bangabandhu Parishad, Dr. Mohammad Selim M.P. Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Advisor to International Centre for Sheikh Mujib Studies, UK, and Dr. Zaidul Hassan Zahid, Secretary General, All Europe Bangabandhu Parishad & Hon. Secretary, International Centre for Sheikh Mujib Studies, U.K.

7. The international dimension of the conflict that gave rise to the birth of Bangladesh is vital to its historiography; accordingly efforts are being made, and will continue to be made, to secure official U.N. British, American, Indian and Russian views, documents and related actions during the war of liberation, reaction during that war, and policies necessitated by the new situation.

8. The ICSS is non-political as befits an institution dedicated to the service of scholarship.

শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান



পররাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রী

MINISTER FOR
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
GOVERNMENT OF THE
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
DHAKA

বাণী

বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান এর জীবনাদর্শের ওপর লন্ডনভিত্তিক আন্তর্জাতিক গবেষণা কেন্দ্র কর্তৃক ঢাকায় একটি আন্তর্জাতিক সেমিনার উপলক্ষে ক্রোড়পত্র প্রকাশিত হচ্ছে যেনে শ্রী হয়েছি।

লন্ডনভিত্তিক আন্তর্জাতিক গবেষণা কেন্দ্র International Centre for Sheikh Mujib Studies ১৯৯৮ সাল থেকে জাতির জনক বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমানের কর্মময় জীবন ও মুক্তিযুদ্ধের ঐতিহাসিক ঘটনাবলী নিয়ে যে গবেষণা ও প্রচার কাজ চালিয়ে যাচ্ছে তা প্রশংসার দাবী রাখে। এই সংগঠনের মাধ্যমে প্রবাসে আমাদের তরুন সম্প্রদায়, তাদের মহান নেতা ও দেশ সম্পর্কে অবহিত হতে পেরে গর্ব অনুভব করতে পারবে বলে আমার বিশ্বাস। এই গবেষণা কেন্দ্রটি বাংলাদেশ, বাংলাদেশের স্থপতি বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান সম্পর্কিত যাবতীয় তথ্য সংরক্ষণের জন্য একটি মহাফেজখানা নির্মানের পরিকল্পনা নিয়েছে যেনে আমি খুবই খুশী হয়েছি।

মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী শেখ হাসিনার সরকার মুক্তিযুদ্ধের চেতনা ও জাতির জনকের রূপ বাস্তবায়নে নিরলসভাবে কাজ করে যাচ্ছে।

বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান অনুসৃত বাংলাদেশের পররাষ্ট্র নীতির ওপর একটি আন্তর্জাতিক সেমিনারের আয়োজন করায় ধন্যবাদ জানাচ্ছি ও উদ্যোগীদের সাফল্য কামনা করছি।

জয় বাংলা, জয় বঙ্গবন্ধু
বাংলাদেশ চিরজীবী হোক

আলিহাঙ্গু আব্দুসসাদ খাঁজীদ

Bangladesh - A Country of democratic triumph of reason

This International seminar is a reminder to our friends abroad of the distinctive nature of the Revolution that created the state of Bangladesh.

The treasured independence of Bangladesh which many within and outside Bangladesh, believed to be a distant and unattainable chimera, came into being through the vision, sacrifice, integrity, and dynamic planning masterminded by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The immortal Bangabandhu has taken his place among the great nation builders of the world.

Our people, denied the inalienable right to peace, prosperity and happiness under the Pakistani occupation, overthrew that regime in a bloody and costly war. It is estimated that three million people of Bangladesh, men, women and children perished in that terrible conflict.

Most revolutions are nationalist and bourgeois. They often overthrow foreign and native fascist occupations of their country with clear ideas of freedom. This generally translates into the replacement of foreign, highly elitist and privileged rule by native elitist rule. But the Bangladesh Revolution was very different. Bangabandhu fought for an entirely new and just order in which the humble of the Bangladesh Earth would be the true masters.

The occupiers hoped that the people of Bangladesh would be so

several thousand years- contempt for dictatorial self-serving bureaucratic regimes. When successive, brutal military dictators took over, they never lasted long. This is, and always will be, a declaration by the people of Bangladesh people against misrule by tyrants who have imposed themselves on the people. The people will never be brought to heel, even by dictators with the most powerful weaponry at their command. This message was reinforced by the Bangabandhu legacy. That is powerfully evident in the consistency and clarity of our foreign policy, the basic principles of which were enunciated by Bangabandhu.

You will hear from distinguished scholars, especially those from abroad like Lord Peter Shore, Lord Dholakia, Dr. Cynac Maprayil, Chris Mayant and Dr. Zaidul Hassan, about the essence of the foreign policy that owes so much to the vision and dynamism of Bangabandhu, why we have today a government of the people, elected by the people and a foreign policy for which we should feel proud of.

For us, what is of supreme importance is the democratisation of society, the empowerment of all the people of Bangladesh, the rejection of an elitist syndrome, in which a tiny minority will impose its will on the people for its own greedy ends. Often have we been portrayed as a nation of supplicants in the media abroad, newsworthy only when there are calamitous

governance of all regardless of their status.

It would be pretentious to suggest that we have come anywhere near the Bangabandhu's vision of a stable, peaceful and prosperous nation. But what we will proudly assert is this that we have not lost sight of that wonderful vision which under our present leader, Sheikh Hasina, is acquiring greater significance.

The goal may be far away-but of crucial importance is that we have not lost our way. I am very proud that we have an organisation like the International Centre for Sheikh Mujib Studies (ICSS) which is not only explaining to our foreign friends and our people in the Diaspora the real facts of our history but is also highlighting our efforts to be free, fair, friendly, not just in a political but equally importantly, economic and cultural sense.

Our Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the daughter of Bangabandhu, has remained loyal to the foreign and domestic policy tenets of her father. She makes no secret of the fact that she has a hard fight on her hands. But I am sure all of you will agree that she is not only Mujib's daughter emotionally but she is also Mujib's daughter in spirit. We are full of admiration for her passionate, sublime, selfless drive to create a just and prosperous economic, social and cultural order. It all goes to show that you can kill people but you can never kill the noble and humane principles that they stood for.

I hope the discussions at the seminar will be stimulating and thought provoking for the participants and no doubt the outcome of the seminar which will be published in due course will provide useful material for the policy makers.

Joy Bangla, Joy Bangabandhu

Dr. Mohammad Selim M.P

Chairman

Parliamentary Standing Committee on

Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Advisor to ICSS



Dr. Mohammad Selim M.P.



In a recent meeting of the International Centre for Sheikh Mujib Studies, the Secretary General of the All Europe Bangabandhu Parishad and Hon. Secretary, International Centre for Sheikh Mujib Studies, Dr. Zaidul Hassan Zahid, noted journalist and writer Mr. Abdul Matin, Vice President of the All Europe Bangabandhu Parishad, Lord Peter Shore, Chairman of the All Europe Bangabandhu Parishad and Dr. Cynac Maprayil, Hon. Director of the International Centre for Sheikh Mujib Studies, U.K. are seen among others in the picture.

cowed and terrorised by naked military might that they would submit to permanent servitude. Our people may not be the most educationally sophisticated or wealthy in the world. But one thing they are resolutely and unshakably committed to is the democratic triumph of reason. They have always had-for

natural disasters. But what about us a people, proud, dignified and always striving, not for charity but for self-reliance and self-help. That is what Bangabandhu set out to do - to harness the tremendous intellectual, scientific and technological and material resources of the people of Bangladesh for the

new, authentic voice in a world divided along political strategic alliances. He did not hesitate to join the non-aligned movement (NAM). The NAM was stoutly opposed to colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism and imperialism and to Western and Eastern military blocs with their calamitous stores of nuclear weapons arsenals. What the father of the nation strongly adhered and incorporated in the state policies over two decades ago, his able daughter the present Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina is now giving a more firm and dynamic shape to NAM principles by hosting the NAM conference in Dhaka this year. Bangabandhu initiated and patronised various regional co-operation organisations. He also extended its solidarity with the oppressed peoples of the world including the victims of racism, apartheid, Zionism and imperialist exploitation. Bangabandhu appreciated and made mutually-beneficial friendship agreements with countries that actively supported

the liberation like India, USSR etc. In the national interest he invited all the countries of the world to assist the newly born country. Despite strong opposition he attended the OIC meeting to show his solidarity with the Muslim countries whose oil wealth enables them to help Bangladesh with its development programmes.

America had supported Pakistani rulers during Bangladesh war of independence which in turn remained loyal to their anti-socialist foreign policy. China, which traditionally professed ideological solidarity with small nations fighting for national liberation, strangely enough, aligned itself with its arch enemy America where Bangladesh was concerned. Saudi Arabia, being a Muslim country, who claim itself to be guardian of Islam, was in a position to act as an independent peace mediator, was not only being unsympathetic to Bangabandhu's liberation war but was reluctant to open diplomatic relations with the new state. They totally ignored the fact that around 85% of the population of Bangladesh are Muslim. Despite all these, Bangabandhu bore no grudges against anyone. Bangabandhu extended his friendly hand to USA, Pakistan, China and all other countries whom for some reason or another happened to support Pakistan. Sheikh Mujib stood firm to his principle of 'friendship to all malice to none' and deployed a team of highly professional diplomats who had launched a diplomatic offensive which soon broke down barriers and paved the way for reconciliation and diplomatic acceptance of Bangladesh by most of the countries in a record short time which was so rare an event for all newly independent and liberated countries of the world.

Bangabandhu's prudent diplomacy secured recommendation from the Security Council in June 1974 and General Assembly unanimously admitted Bangladesh as its 134th member state of the United Nations on 17th September 1974. It was an outstanding achievement on the part of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to secure recognition of so many countries within only two years of independence. Bangabandhu envisaged that his country has enormous human potential, would eventually be able to play a larger role in the international stage promoting peace and understanding among nations by cultural exchange, trading relationships, providing peace keeping force and sharing of technological



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is seen amongst some of the members of the All Europe Bangabandhu Parishad, Italy recently. Seen in the photograph is Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who is also the Chief Patron of the All Europe Bangabandhu Parishad, Dr. Zaidul Hassan Zahid, Secretary General of the All Europe Bangabandhu Parishad and Hon. Secretary of the International Centre for Sheikh Mujib Studies, U.K. (CPI from left).

অধ্যাপক আবু সাইয়িদ
প্রতিমন্ত্রী
গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
তথ্য মন্ত্রণালয়
বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা-১০০০

বাণী

লন্ডনভিত্তিক আন্তর্জাতিক গবেষণা কেন্দ্র জাতির জনক বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমানের স্মৃতিতে অমর করে রাখার যে কর্মপ্রচেষ্টা চালিয়ে যাচ্ছে তা অত্যন্ত প্রশংসনীয়। বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান শুধু বাঙ্গালী জাতির জন্যই দীর্ঘ সঞ্চার করেননি। তিনি সঞ্চার করেন বিশ্বশান্তির জন্য, মানবাধিকারের জন্য এবং নিরস্ত্রীকরণের লক্ষ্যে। লন্ডনে অবস্থিত গবেষণা কেন্দ্রটি বাংলাদেশ, বাংলাদেশের স্বাধীনতা সঞ্চার ও মুক্তিযুদ্ধ এবং বাংলাদেশের প্রতিষ্ঠাতা বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান সম্পর্কিত যাবতীয় তথ্য সংরক্ষণের জন্য একটি আর্কাইভ প্রতিষ্ঠা এবং এতে বঙ্গবন্ধু সম্পর্কে যাবতীয় তথ্য সংরক্ষণের ব্যবস্থাটি নিঃসন্দেহে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ভূমিকা পালন করবে বলে আমার বিশ্বাস।

লন্ডনস্থ আন্তর্জাতিক গবেষণা কেন্দ্র কর্তৃক বঙ্গবন্ধুর রাষ্ট্র পরিচালনাকালীন বাংলাদেশের পররাষ্ট্র নীতির ওপর ঢাকায় যে সেমিনারের আয়োজন করেছে, তা সর্বমহলে প্রশংসিত হবে বলে আমার দৃঢ় বিশ্বাস।

গুরুত্বপূর্ণ এই সেমিনার যাতে সঠিকভাবে অনুষ্ঠিত হয় সেই শুভ কামনা রইল আমার।

জয় বাংলা, জয় বঙ্গবন্ধু।
বাংলাদেশ চিরজীবী হোক।

অধ্যাপক আবু সাইয়িদ
১৭/১/২০০১

Bangladesh Foreign Policy as dreamed by Bangabandhu

We are delighted to have the opportunity to host a historic Seminar in Dhaka, the first ever-International Seminar on the Foreign Policy of Bangladesh as visualised by the founder of Bangladesh Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Bangabandhu was not only a great statesman but also a brilliant diplomat for his country. He realised that the country had to have a foreign policy in which the dominant factor would be national sovereignty with enlightened self-interest. International diplomacy is also crucial to the country's drive towards self-sufficiency and the termination of underdevelopment, not just in Bangladesh but universally. Despite internal and external pressure he boldly outlined his country's foreign policy as he visualised. The core elements in the new state's policies were strict adherence to the UN Charter, upholding the principles of the sovereign equality of all states, peaceful co-existence with neighbours, non-interference in the internal affairs of other states, peaceful resolution of all disputes and without use or threat of use of force in resolving such disputes. Bangabandhu's foreign policy was to project an image of Bangladesh as a



Dr. Zaidul Hassan Zahid

skills with other nations. He strongly believed that every people has its own traditions, feelings, individuality and personality and all people have a role to play in the revolutionary transformation of international relations. Following the assassination of Bangabandhu, over two decades Bangladesh had only witnessed usurpation of power by the successive undemocratic regimes. Things now have started moving in the right direction as visualised by the father of the nation. Under the able leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina we are sure Bangabandhu's dreams will be implemented in the days to come. The Seminar's humble intention is to stimulate thought and debate on the future of a small but proud and self reliant nation in its quest for prosperity, liberty, equality and fraternity.

Joy Bangla, Joy Bangabandhu.

শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান
(আবুল হাসান চৌধুরী)

Dr. Zaidul Hasan Zahid
Secretary General
All Europe Bangabandhu Parishad
& Hon. Secretary ICSS