The man with a mission

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15th August 1971, Daudkandi, Comilla. No one was supposed to stay awake at that hour of the night. However someone was not only awake, but was also anxious. Suddenly frightening sounds of an explosion broke the dead silence of the night. The sound reverberated again and again while the inhabitants of that neighborhood panicked. But someone had a strange smile in his face. His heart was filled with joy and his eyes were flooded with ecstasy. He knew what was going on. He was the man with a mission, the leader of a suicide naval commando team. He was Mr. Shahjahan Siddiqui, the patriot who was entitled the merit of Bir Bikram after the war.

He took the fragmanship training at West Bengal and took an oath not to return home without achieving the freedom of Bangladesh. His mission was to attack the Daudkandi Ferighat near Dhaka-Chittagong highway and destroy all the ferries and pontoons. His team consisted of nine members. All of them were expert divers and were willing to die for their beloved country. It is important to mention that Mr. Shahjahan Siddiqui BB was the only Bangladeshi who had the honor of leading a commando team in the war.

All the members carried a gun, a commando knife and a limped mine, and the team leader Mr. Shahjahan Siddiqui had to carry an extra item - a transistor. A unique technology was used in this mission. The transistor Mr. Shahjahan Siddiqui BB was carrying was to be used for receiving orders sent through Akashbani Radio Station. Two songs were selected as the order for attack. Only Mr. Shahjahan Siddiqui BB was told that if he heard the song "Ami tomai joto shuniachilam gan, tar



boodle chaini kono protidan" he had to understand that he had been ordered to attack the target after 48 hours and if he heard the second song which is " Amar putul ajke jabe shoshurbari, tora shob uludhoni kor" he had 24 hours to hit the target. No other member of the team knew about the involvement of the transistor.

They were given a guide who took them to a house arranged for their hiding. As the commandos waited Mr. Shahjahan Siddiqui BB listened to the radio day after day. Then one day the first song was played. He then took his deputy and observed the target area and formed the plan of attack and a quick get away. Next day the second song was played and he then informed all the members of his team that they were going to hit the target the very next day.

But luck turned on them. Due to heavy storm and freezing cold they were slowed down. The brave men kept going ignoring the rough weather and all of them dived into the water with a limped mine tied on their belly. After setting the mines they returned to the boat and in 45 minutes the explosions began one after another. They made serious damage to the ferighat, and sunk two ferries loaded with arms and ammunitions of the Pakistani army. They proudly announced to the Pakistanis that we would keep our land clean from the Pak army.

Mr. Shahjahan Siddiqui is now a retired Government Official. He is still proud of his success, still proud of his team and proud for the freedom of Bangladesh. As for me he is not only a role model. He is the man who made a dream come true - the dream of a free Bangladesh.

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Deshi politics through my eyes

IT's rather funny, how Bangladeshi politics reminds me of my childhood. No, no, I wasn't corrupt at birth, nor am I corrupt now. And no, I do not and will not murder for personal gain.

But our leaders do remind me of myself in some respects. Now this is a matter of pride for me. Or is it?

Our leaders painfully remind me of how I hated to lose or give in. I remember when we were young, my cousin saw a toy at Gulshan market which she really wanted. Incidentally, I really wanted it too. Therefore, I literally threw myself down on it and yelled "MINE!" as an act of defiance. But that was me about 15 years back. Now I have learnt to deal with losses and failures, in one word I have "grown-up".

But it really is amusing, how our leaders have not yet grown out of their childlike fancies. And their fancy happens to be nothing else but our beloved nation, Bangladesh. I don't remember how many elections I have witnessed in my 20 years of life; but for as long as my memory goes; all of them were games of tag.

While it's great to never accept defeat, showing determination to reach the much wanted goal, our leaders take it a bit too far, swearing to never give in