



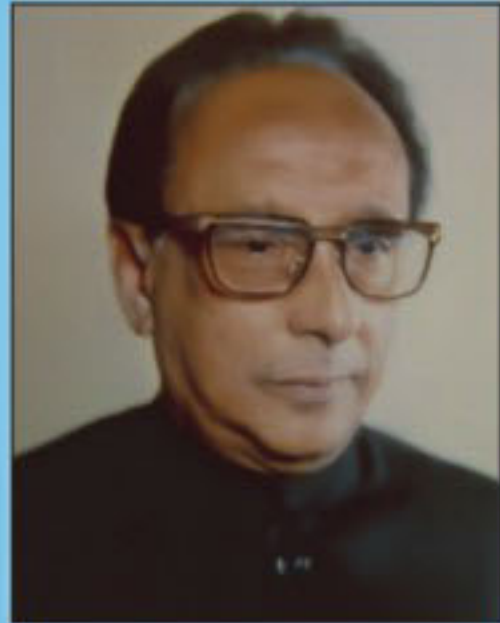
The Glorious Victory Day

2010



Special Supplement

Art & Design : Department of Films & Publications ♦ Assistance : Press Information Department, Ministry of Information



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



**PRESIDENT
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF
BANGLADESH**

Message

Today is December 16, the great Victory Day. On this auspicious day, I extend my sincere felicitations to my fellow countrymen living at home and abroad.

The Victory Day is the most glorious one in our national life. The declaration of independence by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on 26 March 1971 comes true on this very day through a nine-month long armed struggle. This victory, therefore, is mingled with great joy as well as supreme sacrifices of the million of martyrs. This day brings our pinnacle of achievement that comes after many sacrifices. On this solemn day, I pay my profound homage to the memory of the martyrs who laid down their lives for country's liberty. Today I recall with deep respect the greatest Bengalee of all times and Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman whose long struggle and able leadership helps us in achieving independence. I also pay my tribute to all the valiant freedom fighters, organisers, supporters and the people from all strata of life for their direct and indirect contributions in attaining our victory.

One of the main objectives of our Liberation War was to achieve political sovereignty, economic self-sufficiency as well as to build a nation based on equality and equity. We could not yet attain that objective after passing four decades of independence. The anti-liberation force as well as the vested quarters create obstacle in the way of democracy and development by killing Father of the Nation. Our democratic advancement is jeopardised afterwards in absence of people's government. As a result, we lag far behind in anticipated development. Democratic government is now established in the country and has taken various initiatives for the welfare of the people. The government, on the eve of the Golden Jubilee of independence, has declared 'Vision 2021' to build a prosperous Bangladesh based on information technology. We have bright prospects for development. Keeping responsible to the people, I am confident, we would be able to attain our desired goal and materialise 'Vision 2021' by utilising the capabilities through our collective endeavours. Let us work unitedly irrespective of party affiliation and opinion with a view to offering our people the benefits of independence.

On this Victory Day, may it be our pledge to continue our combined efforts to build a happy and prosperous Bangladesh.

May the Victory Day be everlasting.

Khoda Hafez, May Bangladesh Live Forever.

Z Rahman
Md. Zillur Rahman



Declaration of Independence

"This may be my last message, from today Bangladesh is independent. I call upon the people of Bangladesh wherever you might be and with whatever you have, to resist the army of occupation to the last. Your fight must go on until the last soldier of the Pakistan occupation army is expelled from the soil of Bangladesh and final victory is achieved."

[Message embodying Declaration of Independence sent by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to Chittagong shortly after midnight of 25th March, i.e. early hours of 26th March, 1971 for transmission throughout Bangladesh over the ex-EPR transmitter.]



Reflections on the Victory Day

Muhammad Zafar Iqbal

Children belonging to the new generation sometimes ask me about the most joyous moment in my life. Sometimes, I stop abruptly while answering this question - but not because the correct answer is unknown to me. I stop because countless memories crowd my mind immediately after hearing this question; and I become absent-minded for a while. Actually, there is no uncertainty regarding the answer in the minds of myself or any other person belonging to my generation. We all know for certain that the 16th of December, 1971, or our first Victory Day, was the happiest moment in our lives.

It happened thirty-nine years ago, but even then it seems to me that the episode took place only a few days back. I remember passing my time with the children of a family inside a trench dug below the soil at Jatrabari. Some tanks accompanied by a motorcade of the Pakistani military travelled through the sprawling road in front of us. The sounds of a battle nearby reverberated throughout the whole area. There were fighter jets in the sky, which dropped leaflets for the Pakistani army, 'Surrender immediately, otherwise the freedom fighters will catch you.' There were no humans on the road, only some corpses lay scattered on it.

The scenario suddenly changed on the Sixteenth of December; the tanks started to roll back by making hoarse sounds. Truck-filled and war-battered Pakistani military were coming back along with the tanks. The Bihari families, Razakars and Al-Badr were fleeing alongside them. For the first time, their faces exuded helplessness and fear. I experienced the happiest moment of my life, just when the sun was going down; I heard somebody shouting 'Joy Bangla' from a nearby place.

(Contd. on page 24)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



**PRIME MINISTER
GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S
REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH**



Message

I extend my sincere greetings and warm felicitations to all citizens of Bangladesh at home and abroad on the occasion of our great Victory Day, December the 16th.

I recall with great reverence the sacrifices of 3 million martyrs and two lakh women, who lost their chastity, in achieving the independence of our beloved motherland. I salute the freedom fighters, who fought to free the country from the occupation forces.

My deepest respect goes to the greatest Bengalee of all time, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, following whose call the Bengalee nation earned the ultimate victory on December the 16th in 1971 when the Pakistani forces and their local collaborators- Rajakars-Al-Badr-Al-Shams- were bound to surrender ending the 9-month blood-spattered Liberation War.

At this auspicious moment of the Victory Day, I also recall the four national leaders, who under the guidance of Bangabandhu and elected Awami League government, conducted the War of Liberation. The history of our Freedom Fighting was not a casual event. In fact, the freedom fighting was the culmination of the struggle of the Bengalee nation for 23 years under the indomitable leadership of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The Banglali nation arrived at the juncture of the crucial 7th March of 71 voyaging a long path of struggle of the Language Movement of 52, the election of the 54, the Education Movement of 62, the six-point Demand of 66, the Mass Uprising of 69 and the election of 70. The champion of freedom Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in front of a million of people at the then Race Course Maidan declared that: this time the struggle is for independence, this time the struggle is for our freedom. In fact, the new chapter of freedom struggle got momentum from that day.

Thirty nine years have been passed since the independence but the desired dreams and aspirations of the independence are yet to be achieved. The defeated forces of the 1971 snatched away the peoples' right through killing, coup and politics of conspiracy after the assassination of the Father of the Nation along with his 18 family members on the 15th August and the four national leaders inside the Dhaka Central jail on the 3rd November in 1975. Through the killings, the defeated forces wanted to undo the greatest achievements of the War of Liberation-the constitution, democracy, humanity, culture and development.

The nation which has earned its independence through bloodbath, it reestablished democracy and rights of the people through a long struggle and unfathomable sacrifice.

In 2008, the nation gave verdict in favor of the spirit of the Liberation War, development and charter of change in the parliamentary elections. Time has now come to reach the fruits of the freedom struggle to country's each household. Our government has been working relentlessly to fulfill the aspirations of the people.

We have already established the rule of law and human rights. The death sentence to self-confessed killers of Bangabandhu has been executed. We are hopeful that the trial of the war criminals and all killings, including the killings of the four national leaders inside the jail, will soon be held.

We are going to celebrate the golden jubilee of Bangladesh's independence in 2021, I urge all, irrespective of party affiliation, opinion, class and profession, and caste and creed to work together for building a happy and prosperous country. Let us build a state where each citizen will get guarantee of a decent and secured life. Let us build a golden Bangladesh as dreamt by the Father of the Nation, where horizons of prospect will usher in for our future generations. Best wishes to all once again.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu
May Bangladesh Live Forever

Sheikh Hasina
Sheikh Hasina

Friends, near and far

Hasan Ferdous

In 1971, renowned American singer Joan Baez wrote a song about Bangladesh. The first few lines of this remarkable song read like this:

*The story of Bangladesh
Is an ancient one again made fresh
By blind men who carry out commands
Which flow out of the laws upon which nation stands
Which is to sacrifice a people for a land.*

Joan Baez wrote this song for the "Concert for Bangladesh," held at New York's Madison Square Garden, on 1st August 1971. She was joined there by several other prominent performers, among them, are George Harrison, Bob Dylan and Ravi Shankar. From the glittering Manhattan, Bangladesh was a far off country, unknown and unfamiliar to most of the artists and people in attendance. Yet, they readily felt a deep sense of solidarity with the struggle of a people aspiring to be free. It was the support of these and other people that built a shield of global solidarity for the people of Bangladesh in their struggle for political independence. That struggle ended with victory on 16 December 1971.

Although the war in 1971 was confined to the territory of Bangladesh, its soldiers were spread world-wide. Some of them are well known. For example, French writer and statesman André Malraux wanted to take up arms and fight side by side with the Bengali guerrilla fighters. We also know of American poet Allen Ginsberg, who after visiting refugee camps along the India-Bangladesh borders, wrote his celebrated poem "September on Jessor Road."



British parliamentarian Peter Shore was another, whose staunch support, within the British parliament and outside, touched the hearts of the Bengali freedom fighters. We have heard about the sixty international personalities who signed the "Testimony of Sixty" circulated by OXFAM in September 1971. The signatories included Mother Theresa, US Senator Edward Kennedy and British journalist Claire Hollingworth. And we know about the American Consul-General in Dhaka, Archer Blood, and his colleagues who risked their career to protest the US silence over the genocide in Bangladesh.

Add to this list the countless others who remain unknown or less known. In neighbouring India, ordinary citizens - their names never publicized - welcomed into their homes hundreds of thousands of Bangladeshi refugees. In London and Paris, students, intellectuals and factory workers marched to protest the massacre in Bangladesh. Dozens of Americans spent nights in make-shift manholes in front of the White House to remind the world of the plight of Bangladeshi refugees. Young pioneers in Kharkov - in what is now Ukraine - sang on the streets to raise funds for Bangladesh. Members of "Friends of Bengal" in Baltimore with small dingy boats risked their lives to "blockade" a huge marine vessel ready to ship arms to Pakistan.

These and other people - known and unknown, of far and near - stood by the people of Bangladesh in 1971. Their act of courage and solidarity transformed what essentially was the struggle of a single nation into the struggle of freedom-loving people everywhere.

(Contd. on page 24)



Victory of Joy Bangla

Mobassera Kadery

December 16, 1971. Bangladesh has come into being from Pakistan. It was Thursday. That afternoon, Lt. General Niazi, the commander of eastern of Pakistan occupation army surrendered to Lt. General Aurora, the commander of eastern command of the allied forces at the Racecourse field in Dhaka. This surrender ushered in a new chapter of the sun of victory drenched in the bloodshed of our sacrifice.

Ever since the partition in 1947, the Bangalis sacrificed their lives over and over in order to wrest control of their legitimate rights and position of honor and prestige. The new colonialists of Pakistan replacing the British colonial rule, crippled the Bangalis politically and economically by its despicable misrule and oppression manifested by its wanton and brutal attack on the Bangalis on the dark night of 25th March, 1971. From that cruel slaughter and infernal genocide, millions of people of this land have paved the way of independence by shedding their blood. While this independence is littered with the glory of the sacrifice of the lives of millions of people, it has given us the pride of a new national identity and beckons us to build a future prosperous Bangladesh.

Three million men, women and children have been rendered martyrs of a well planned savage attack of the Pakistani predators. Thirty million people were left homeless and destitute. The ruthless attack of Pakistan army left millions of people of this land as refugees. Besides, these abominable human beasts dishonored chastity of mothers and sisters. The independence earned at the heavy cost of blood and tears has proved that the indomitable spirit of Bangalis cannot be defeated. The victory that was achieved in 1971 has brought about a sense of stability, security and peace in our lives. The sweet dream of a prosperous future was realized in the oppressed and anguished life of the Bangalis.

'Joy Bangla', the weekly mouthpiece of Bangladesh Awami League was published on 16th December 1971. It headlined the story of hoisting of Bangladesh flag in the official and non official buildings of Dhaka: the full throated slogans of long live Bangabandhu rent the air. The headline also covered the retreat of Pakistan army faced with the advances of heroic freedom fighters of Bangladesh along with Indian soldiers into Dhaka city. The deserted and destroyed life of Dhaka city returned to normal activity and pulsation. The air was full with slogans of 'Joy Bangla', 'Long live Bangladesh-India friendship and

(Contd. on page 24)