

## In the Heart of Bangladesh

Lutfor Rahman Riton

One Mujib drives away enemies of the *Mother Bengal*  
 One Mujib comes forward and extends his hands forward.  
 One Mujib twinkles in the stars far in the sky  
 One Mujib comes forward with his chest exposed.

One Mujib spreads far and wide as slogans  
 One Mujib resides in everybody's house.  
 One Mujib is framed in the picture across the walls  
 One Mujib is there in the inspiration for love and rebellion.

One Mujib is the blazing words of protest.  
 One Mujib is the last resort, and ray of hope.  
 One Mujib is daringly the conqueror of death  
 One Mujib is the *Joy Bangla, Banglar joy*.

One Mujib is firm, steadfast and immortal  
 In the hearts of Bangladesh remains Sheikh Mujibur.

Translation: Abu Turin Tahsin

## A Tribute

Aslam Sani

The first ray of sun of comes  
 And says, "Listen, O Poet  
 On the day of the Father's birth  
 Put aside all works  
 Call on the children  
 And ask them to make some garlands."

Let the floral message  
 Roll along with a chariot  
 From the heart of Tungipara of Gopalganj  
 To the fields, market places and roads  
 And spread his dream and his message.

His bosom treasures this soil, land, map and the flag  
 His bosom hoards the eternal joy and sorrow of the people  
 The memory of his sacrifice  
 Is voiced out by all!

The blessed son of history  
 Graced as the greatest man  
 That this land, nation and age have ever seen.  
 All the people of the land

Are grateful to him and  
 On the day of his birth, we vow  
 That never ever shall we forget  
 The great sacrifice of  
 The greatest son of the soil!

Says the sky, says the wind  
 Glows the moon and glows the stars,

Says the wood, say the hills,  
 Flow the rivers and the seas,

Say the peasants, the workers, and the boatmen  
 Of an independence that cannot be separated from  
 The name of the Father of the Nation

The children of Bangladesh  
 Join me on the day of birth of the Father of the nation  
 With our humble tribute  
 To the golden Bangla of Bangabandhu

Translation: Abu Turin Tahsin

## Tragedy of an Epic

Tokan Thakur

We need tragedy. Otherwise an epic is not complete. The country-roads knew you; you were the son of a rural homestead! The villages lit by kerosene lamps knew you. The Banyan tree at the road's bend also saw how far you walked. The people on the riverbank were aware — your boat surged ahead at each turn, in the pages of our riverine history. The seventy million people drew a map by waging war; you are the greatest hero of that map. Many of your ribs were broken because of the struggles, but you stood up again. Your dream became stronger, sovereign. Your blood spilled ceaselessly due to relentless assaults, but you turned around bravely. You said, 'We shall sacrifice more blood...'. A blood-drenched habitat then lay on your chest, the Bay of Bengal in your heart, a flag in your breast; your heart was then the country's sky — history itself was watching you intensely.

An epic is composed by man. The colloquial words pronounced in households become an epic. But an epic cannot be complete without a tragedy. You spilled all your blood for that epic. Should I not then assume that the last martyrs of the liberation war were you, your family? The epic was finished with the blood of your heart. The epic became complete with the blood of women and children. The intensity of your absence is a great tragedy, and an epic cannot be complete without a tragedy.

I dream every day, none can 'hold us at bay' — living is not possible bereft of dreams. Just as there cannot be a mother without a child, a tiger without a jungle, paddy without a field, and fish without any water, there cannot be any Bangladesh without you.....

Translation: Helal Uddin Ahmed

## National Children Day

## The New Generation and Bangladesh

(From Page-25)

when within some days everyone will find that none of these questions common in the real examination, this guide book business will go to the dogs). The most important thing in our country is handing over brand new books to the children on the very first day of the year. None can ever imagine how inspiring it is for a child. And the number of the books is also astounding - 24 crores. Interestingly enough, if we put these books side by side, this will round the globe twice! Not only that number of books is so big, these books are newly written and published and several of them are printed in four colours. If these books please us this much, we can feel what the degree of joy they bring for the children! In one or two years when all these books will be written in new curriculum in new way, it will bring a great revolution in the country.

At the beginning of this millennium, the Time Magazine published an article. On its cover, the introduction of a big report read that the resource of the new millennium is knowledge. Neither petroleum, gas, uranium, neither automobile or aircraft factories, neither electronic industries or war weapons factories, nor diamond or jewels, but the resource of the new millennium is knowledge. I was over-whelmed with reading this. Because, all on a sudden, I could visualize, we have stood as the most potential country of the world. Only the total number of our school going children is about three crore. If these three crore kids solve a single mathematical problem a night, the country will be a little richer than it was a little while ago. We don't need anything else, if we can give proper education to them, then who will be able to stop us from being the most resourceful country in the planet.

Even though there is not any pain in heart, it is not like that. We all expect the budget allocation for education will be more than it was earlier but it's not happening.

Who is the wisest man of the world? There might be debate over the issue but Einstein will undoubtedly be amongst the top ones of the list. Einstein once said a very beautiful thing, imagination is more important than knowledge. How beautiful the saying was because, if we think about it we can realize how true it is and his saying is hundred percent true. A man who has no imagination, it is as if he has knowledge but not in real sense. It is as if he does not have the best way of using his knowledge. The knowledge he possesses cannot come to any use. Man can use his knowledge only when it is



Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is in loving care of his mother

us?

Hence, it is very important that we build that pot of culture in our children at their early life so that all their education is properly preserved. For that we need to build beautiful libraries in the schools, give them environment for practicing art and culture. We have to raise them as cultured human beings.

Among all these, our country must be at the centre. How will it be if we do not make a small pledge on this special day, the birthday of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the architect of this beautiful country Bangladesh. I have seen in many places children remain silent not putting their lips together and stand still when our sweet national anthem is being sung. It hurts me. It hurts me more when I see people singing it wrong. All may not have that melodious voice but shouldn't we at least utter the lyric correctly.

Right at the beginning of the text books of the school children, there is given instructions on how the national anthem is to be sung. All the children of the state must learn it, doesn't matter whether the elders do it or not. Everyone wants to do something for their country. By showing honour to the country the process can begin and by singing the national anthem properly that honour can be given a start.

We should not draw the end point of showing honour to the nation. Let us see how far the new generation can proceed.

Translation: Sharif Hasan

## The Way the Little Boy Grew Up

(From Page-25)

During the agitation for language, many students were rounded up by police. For many of these students, it was the first time inside the jail. When the students were queued up for a head count, some of the students were playing pranks with the non-Bengali sepoy in charge. They were changing queue much to the confusion of the sepoy who started yelling at the students. Instantly, the students mobbed him up, and the warden rang the alarm sensing danger. When other sepoys stormed in, Mujib realized that the students would get beaten up over a trivial issue. He stood between the students and the sepoy with stretched arms and took control of the situation: "Everything is alright. Take away your sepoy." The guards were already pointing gun to Mujib's chest, but he remained calm as ever. By that time, the jailor had also arrived and the students had produced the sepoy who was doing the head count.

The mental strength, the dedication and concern for his people, and the willingness to sacrifice his own goodness for the sake of others have put him at the helm of our cruise for freedom.

He was never shy of speaking the truth. He was always vocal against the Pakistan regime and the failure of the Muslim League administrators and the suppression of rights of the Bengali. He was a very good orator, and was fast becoming popular as a public speaker.

The government was afraid of him. He was always under surveillance. All his movements were reported, some of which have now been recovered. The Muslim League government branded him as the most dangerous element. Hence he was arrested many times.

The secret service men would meet Mujib inside the jail. They would offer him bail-out, asking him to sign a



Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman with his parents and wife

responded by saying: "I am a Bengali. I am a human. I am Muslim. Bengalis do not die twice. I will not compromise. On my way to the scaffold, I will say: I am a Bengali, Bangla is my land, Bangla is my language. You can kill me, but give my body to the people of my land."



Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman with his family

Such was his courage. Such was his love for his people. The people of Bengal have also reciprocated his love. On March 7, 1971 he declared, "Build fortress in each house. You need to be ready with everything that you have." The Bengali listened to Bangabandhu's word. Each house was a spot of resistance. Each soul fought with everything they had. Bangabandhu said, "This struggle is the one for independence."

Many a times Pakistanis tried to kill him. They dared not kill him even though they had dug a grave for him. But he was assassinated by local agents in 1975. Not only this man but also his family including his wife, sons, daughter in laws—even the maid of the house were killed. Not even the youngest child Rasel was spared.

When the guns roared on that day, the pigeons of the house flew in the sky as if they too wanted to confront the bullets. As this great man fell down on the stairs of his residence, I am sure, his dying words were: "I am Bengali. Bangla is my country. Bangla is my language. Joy Bangla." The pigeons joined in to chime with him as did the trees, forest, rivers, as they echoed: Joy Bangla!

Translation: Dr. Shamsad Mortuza

Saturday 17 March