

15 August

National Mourning Day

Special Supplement

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



President PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

Message

August 15 is the National Mourning Day of Bangali nation. Today is the 38th martyrdom anniversary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the greatest Bangali of all times.

The 15th August 1975 is regarded as a shameful chapter in the history of Bangali nation. On this day the undisputed leader and Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman along with his family members except his daughter Sheikh Hasina and Sheikh Rehana were brutally assassinated at his own residence by a group of assassins who were being directly and indirectly indulged with the conspirators as well as anti-liberation force.

The contributions of Bangabandhu in our national history are of paramount. The Bangali nation, who had struggled for a long period, achieved their long-awaited independence under his able and courageous leadership. Starting from the historic Language Movement in 1952, Bangabandhu led the nation at every struggle and movement including 58's movement against Martial Law, 66's Six-Point Movement, 69's Mass Uprising and 70's General Election towards attaining self-reliance and fulfilling the hopes and aspirations of our common mass.

The trial of Bangabandhu assassination has been made in the soil of Bangla after 35 years. Today the nation is somewhat stigma-free. Now we should take all out initiatives to bring the death-sentenced fugitives back to country in order to execute the verdict.

Father of the Nation Bangabandhu dreamt a 'Golden Bangla' throughout his life. It is our utmost responsibility to materialise his dream by building a happy and prosperous country. If we do so the soul of Bangabandhu would remain in ever-rest in peace and we would be able to pay our deepest homage to him.

On this National Mourning Day, let us make our grief into strength and devote ourselves in building up a prosperous Bangladesh.

Md. Abdul Hamid

He is our Strength He is our Inspiration
Abd Khan

One curious facet of history is quite noticeable. Most of those who emerged as unforgettable heroes by taking up prime role in building a state or a nation had to pay the undesired and unexpected prices. In the sub-continent, Mahatma Gandhi could be cited as an example.

The supreme hero of the Independence of Sri Lanka, Bandaranayke lost his life at the hands of an assassin. The great leader of Algeria, Ahmed Ben Bella who, breaking the chains of the French rule, led the people of his motherland to kiss the taste of freedom, had spent the last days of his life in the dark confinement cell.

The most brutal example of such killing was set forth in Bangladesh. That curious fact showed its face to the history through the brutal killing of the first successful founder of Bangali nationhood - Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, along with his entire family.

15 August 1975, those who were killed along with Bangabandhu by the artillery shell fired by the heinous killers

- 1. Begum Fazilatun Nesa Mujib, 2. Sheikh Russel, 3. Abdur Rab Serniabat, 4. Sheikh Fazlul Haq Moni, 5. Begum Arzu Moni, 6. Baby Serniabat, 7. Sheikh Kamal, 8. Sultana Kamal, 9. Sheikh Jamal, 10. Parvin Jamal Rosy, 11. Arif Serniabat, 12. Sukanta Abdullah, 13. Sheikh Abu Naser, 14. Co. Jamiluddin Ahmed, 15. Shahid Serniabat, 16. Abdul Nayeem Khan Rintu

Bangabandhu's Other Name is Struggle and Freedom

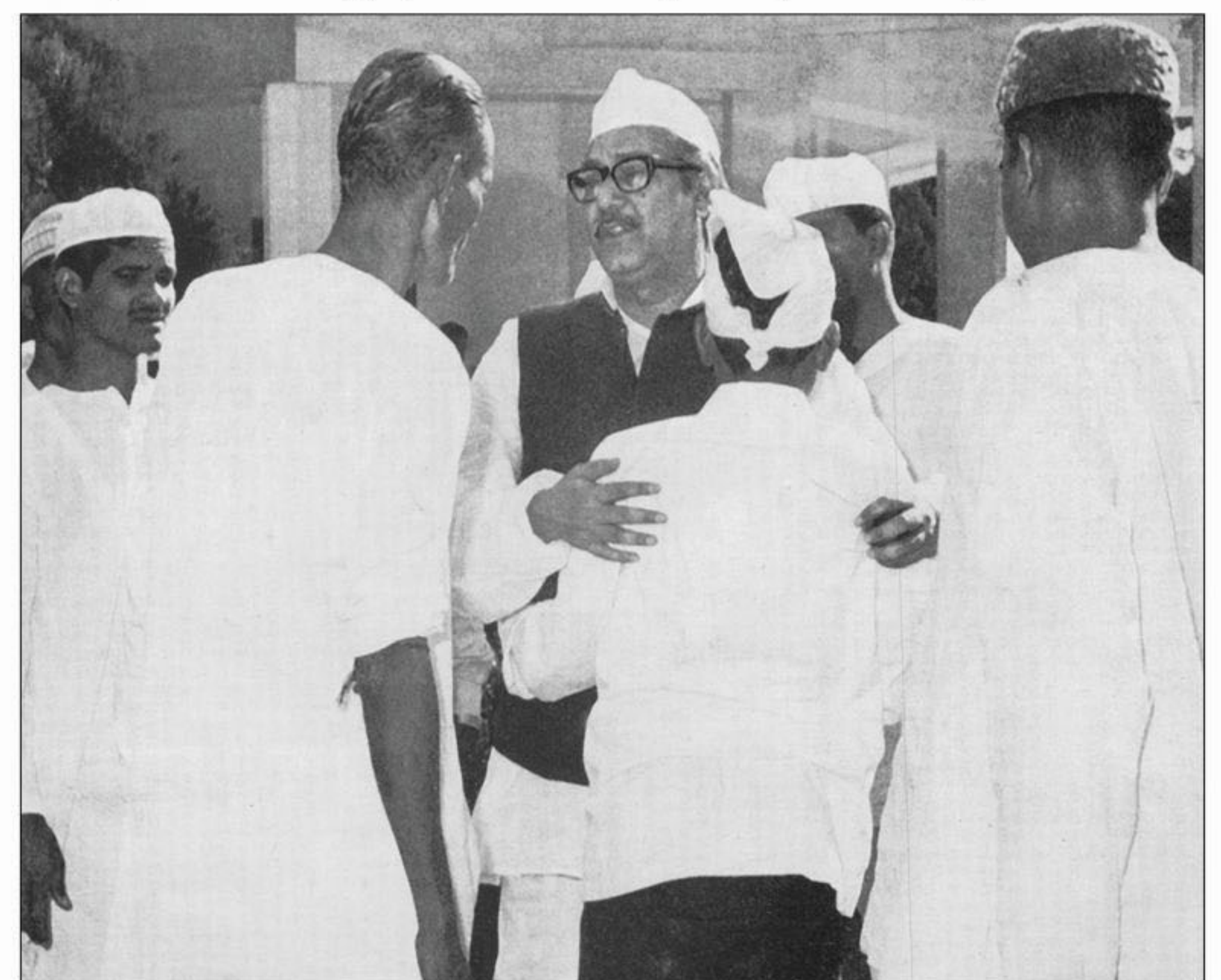
Professor Dr. A A M S Arefin Siddique

"When great men come, we cannot recognize them properly. Because, our minds are cowardly and opaque, nature is slack, and habit is weak. Our mind lacks that simple energy which can comprehend greatness fully. We have repeatedly kept those who are the largest of all at the farthest distance." - Rabindranath Tagore

Rabindranath had made this comment in the context of Mahatma Gandhi. Many contemporary individuals were critical of Gandhiji; they could not appreciate his contributions, sacrifices and efforts for human welfare. That same situation can be observed in the reality of present-day Bangladesh. Despite living in an independent and sovereign Bangladesh and obtaining the blessings of a free motherland, there are many who could not yet rise above their inferiority complex.

Great men of this world are mainly of two categories. Some are born great and others achieve greatness after birth. We can include Bangabandhu in both these categories. There would have been no scope for the birth of Bangladesh if Bangabandhu was not born.

He was born in an ordinary family like us. His childhood and adolescence were spent in the remote village of Tungipara under Patgati union of Gopalganj district. His father Sheikh Lutfar Rahman and mother Mosammam Saira Begum were both ordinary people.



Bangabandhu among common people

him 'Khoka'. His education started in a family atmosphere during his childhood under the care and guidance of a teacher named Shakhawat Ullah. He was admitted to the nearby primary school at the age of seven. But he did not get the chance to study here for long. He was soon admitted to Gopalganj Primary School. His school was again changed at the age of ten or eleven. This time, it was Madaripur Islamia High School. The reason was circumstantial; his father was working at Madaripur sessions court at the time. His father wanted to groom his child while in his company.

Gopalganj Mission School carried much importance in his political life. A students' meeting was called when he was a student of class nine. But the British administration was against it. So, section-144 was imposed to block the meeting. But the students did not succumb. They held the meeting at a mosque. Student Sheikh Mujib stood up for speaking, but before he could finish his words the police arrested him.

At that time, there was a custom in the Muslim families to marry off the children at a tender age. Sheikh Mujib was married to Fazilatun Nesa alias Renu at the age of only 18 years. Three sons - Sheikh Kamal, Sheikh Jamal

standing up for their respective motherlands, struggled on behalf of fettered humanity. This infuriated and outraged the vested interest groups. And so they resorted to satisfy their vengeance in their favourable time and opportunity.

This strife of the human race is not only that of recent but also of all times, of all ages. That began in the early period of history. Spartacus, being crucified, had set the example of a great rebellion in the history. That spirit of rebellion came throbbing to the Ganges delta echoing the footsteps of Mangal Pandey and Surjya Sen. It is here the man holding whose arms a great nation emerged is Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman - a child of a solvent middle class family from a remote village of the then Faridpur.

It is amazing to ponder as to how this amazing person built himself up little by little! Sheikh Mujib - that lean and thin young fellow of Tungipara never looked forward to gain anything big in return. The belief that had primarily



Message

The 15th August is the National Mourning Day. On this day in 1975, the greatest Bangali of all time, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, was assassinated in one of the most barbaric carnages in the human history.

Eighteen members of the family along with Bangabandhu's wife Sheikh Fazilatun Nesa Mujib, sons Captain Sheikh Kamal, Lieutenant Sheikh Jamal and Sheikh Russel, daughter-in-laws Sultana Kamal and Rosy Jamal, brother Sheikh Naser, peasant leader Abdur Rab Serniabat, youth leader Sheikh Fazlul Haq Moni and his wife Arzu Moni, Baby Serniabat, Sukanta Babu, Arif and Abdul Nayeem Khan Rintu were killed on the fateful night. Bangabandhu's Military Secretary Col. Jamil was also killed. Some members of a family at Mohammadpur were also killed by artillery shell fired by the killers.

On the day of National Mourning, I pray to the Almighty Allah for the salvation of the souls of the martyrs of the 15th August.

The people of this territory snatched the glowing sun of the independence, breaking the shackles of subjugation of thousands of years, under the dynamic, courageous and charismatic leadership of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The Bangalis have gotten their own nation-state, own national flag and own national anthem.

But Bangabandhu was killed by the alliance of war criminals and anti-liberation forces when he had undertaken an arduous task of building a Golden Bengal (Sonar Bangla) by reconstructing the war-ravaged country and unifying the whole nation. The defeated forces of the Liberation War made abortive attempts to ruin the heritage, culture and advancement of the Bangali nation. Their target was to destroy the non-communal democratic fabric of Bangladesh.

The anti-liberation forces linked to the carnage then initiated the politics of assassination, coup and conspiracy. The trial of Bangabandhu's brutal assassination was blocked by the promulgation of indemnity ordinance.

Ziaur Rahman usurped to the state power. Martial Law had been promulgated suspending the Constitution and overthrowing the government elected by the people. The killers of the Father of the Nation were rewarded and given jobs at the Bangladesh missions abroad. The anti-liberation elements were given nationality. They were made partners of the state power and rehabilitated politically and socially. The subsequent government of BNP-Jamaat alliance had followed the same path.

Bangladesh Awami League won an overwhelming people's mandate in 2008 general elections ending the era of BNP-Jamaat regime's killing, corruption and misrule, and ensuring country's socio-economic development. The present government has been working hard to materialise "Vision 2021" aimed at building a prosperous Bangladesh. Bangladesh has now turned into a role model of development in the global arena.

We have implemented the verdict of the Bangabandhu killing case. Measures have also been taken to accelerate the trial of the killers of four national leaders. The trial of the war criminals is going on as per our election-pledge. Verdicts against some of the war criminals have been pronounced. Insha Allah, we will be able to execute the verdicts. The trial of the 21st August grenade attack case is also progressing. We are committed to establishing democracy and rule of law. No conspiracy will be able to distract us from establishing the truth and justice.

The killers could have killed Bangabandhu but they could not kill his dream and ideals. Millions of people of this soil have been nurturing in their hearts the ideals of sacrifice of Bangabandhu.

Let us take forward with bold steps the struggle to build a Golden Bengal (Sonar Bangla) as dreamt by Bangabandhu turning the grief of the great loss of the Father of the Nation into strength.

We must win the struggle to establish an economically solvent, democratic and non-communal Bangladesh which will be totally free from hunger, illiteracy and poverty. Insha Allah, the victory is ours.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu May Bangladesh Live Forever.

Sheikh Hasina

Continued to page-19