Who Dare Calls Us but a Bangalee?

CHINTITO

When I Roquia Sakhawat Hussain, aka Begum Rokeya, was doing social work in undivided Bengal in the early 20th century working for gender equality, and when I established the first school for mainly Muslim girls, I was wearing a *ghomta.*

When I Sufia Kamal embraced our Muktijuddho, and when I worked against every despotic system, and when I campaigned for the trial and punishment of the 1971 war criminals, and when I led Mahila Parishad and BRAC, my head was always covered in a *ghomta.*

When I Jahanara Imam, because of my liberal upbringing in a progressive Muslim family and education, formed the Ghatak-Dalal Nirmul Committee against the 1971 killers and collaborators, and when I lost my son freedom-fighter Shafi Imam Rumi, I was draped in a *ghomta.*

When I Begum Fazilatunnesa Mujib remained the better half of a young man to his becoming Bangabandhu to this country's president, I was always blessed with a *ghomta.*

When I a Bangalee woman ran for my life to escape torture, humiliation, rape, and death by the brutal Pak Army, I covered my head in a *ghomta.*

When I trained myself, picked up arms, schemed to annihilate the occupying Pak army, and travelled the land in 1971 alongside the men, never ever was I without my *ghomta.*

When I Fauzilatunnesa Bulu was 52 years age and the war broke out, I organised and prepared soldiers for battle, but they would never accept me without my ghomta.

When I Rounak Mohol Diluba Begum recruited, organized, and helped train young men to fight in our war of liberation, I attired myself in my ghomta.

When I am introduced as a woman who was raped in *ekattur* by the Pakistani army and was later rejected by my family and also forgotten by the government, I remained resolute with others like me in our *ghomta.*

When I cast my vote in the national elections to elect our MPs and thereby our Prime Minister, and Leader of the Opposition, I am elegantly dressed in a *ghomta.*



Roquia Sakhawat Hussain



Sufia Kamal



Jahanara Imam



1971 Refugees