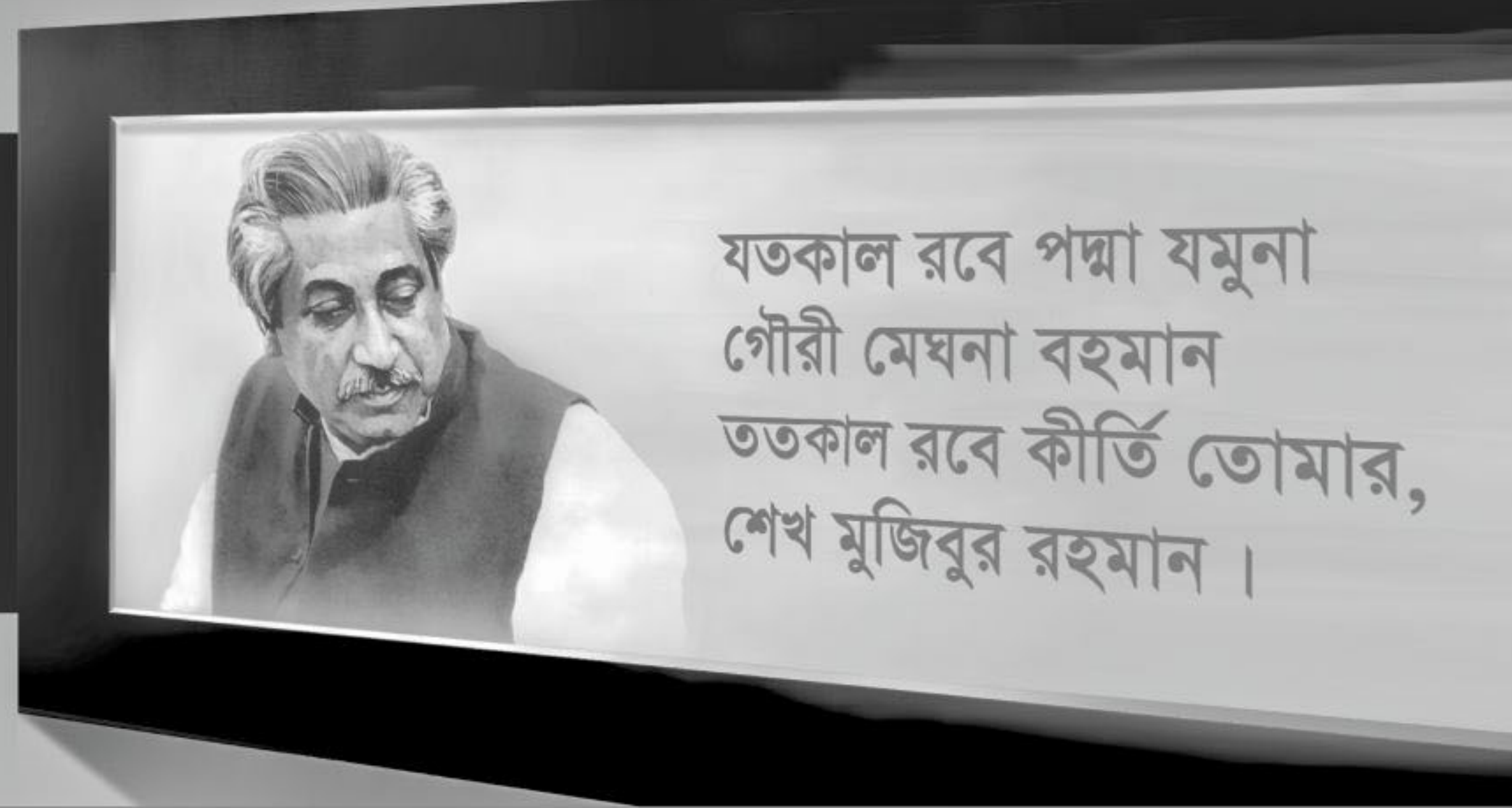


15 August

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 our National Mourning Day. Today is the 40th martyrdom anniversary of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. On this day in 1975, the greatest Bangali of all time and Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman along with his wife, sons, daughters-in-law and near and dear ones embraced martyrdom. Today, I pay my profound homage with heavy heart to them. I pray to the Almighty Allah for the salvation of the departed souls on this Mourning Day.

The 15 August 1975 is regarded as a heart-rending and disgraceful chapter in the history of the Bangali nation as well as the path of our democratic advancement. On this day the undisputed leader and Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was brutally assassinated at his Dhanmandi residence by a group of killers with the connivance of anti-liberation forces. His wife Sheikh Fazilatunnessa Mujib, sons Sheikh Kamal, Sheikh Jamal and Sheikh Russel, daughters-in-law Sultana Kamal and Rosy Jamal, brother Sheikh Naser, farmers' 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 also assassinated along with Bangabandhu. This brutality was a rare occurrence not only in the history of the Bangali nation but also in the history of the world. The aims of the killers were not merely to kill a statesman but to annihilate the ideals of the war of liberation and reinstate the defeated forces.

The contribution of Bangabandhu is infinite in attaining our independence and struggle for independence. Under his able and courageous leadership, the Bangali nation achieved a long-awaited independence. This great leader always nourished in his thinking for Bangla, Bangali and Bangladesh. He was the dreamer of the Bangali nation and an ardent proponent of Bangali nationalism. Starting from the historic Language Movement in 1952, Bangabandhu led the nation at every struggle and movements including the Jukta-Front Election in 1954, movement against Martial Law in 1958, Six-Point Movement in 1966, Mass Uprising in 1969 and the General Elections in 1970 which all were directed for attaining the right to self-determination and emancipation of the Bangalis. He, therefore, had to go to jail for several times and had to face inhuman sufferings. Despite various challenges, he did never compromise on the question of the rights of our people. Overcoming various ups and downs, this great leader finally declared country's independence on March 26 in 1971. Responding to his clarion call, the countrymen from all strata participated in the War of Liberation in 1971 and achieved ultimate victory on December 16, 1971 through a nine-month long armed struggle. For his extraordinary contributions towards achieving independence, Bangabandhu and Bangladesh has emerged as a unique symbol to the people of Bangladesh. The assassins though kill the Father of the Nation yet they could not wipe out the principle and belief of Bangabandhu. I am confident that the name and fame of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman will remain ever shining in the mind of millions of Bangalis so long as the country and its people will stay alive.

Bangabandhu cherished a dream of transforming Bangladesh into a 'Sonar Bangla' (Golden Bengal) throughout his life. Therefore, it is our utmost responsibility to build our country a happy and prosperous one by completing the unfinished task of Bangabandhu. In this way we can pay our deep homage to this immortal son of the soil. The Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the daughter of Bangabandhu has set 'Vision 2021' and successively 'Vision 2041' in order to transform Bangladesh into a prosperous country in line with the dream of her father. Bangladesh is now on the verge of middle-income group country and I am confident that Bangladesh would be a developed one by the Diamond Jubilee celebration of our independence.

On the National Mourning Day, let us translate our grief into strength and devote ourselves to build a prosperous Bangladesh.

Khoda Hafez, May Bangladesh Live Forever.

Md. Abdul Hamid
Md. Abdul Hamid

Bangabandhu: March 1971

Anisuzzaman

When, on 1 March 1971, President General Yahya Khan, military ruler of Pakistan, postponed the session of the National Assembly which was scheduled to meet on 3 March, the whole East Bengal burst into agitation. Crowds of people came on the streets, and instead of Six-Point demands, they claimed only one thing that was the declaration of independence of Bangladesh. In that situation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman called for Non-Cooperation Movement. Excluding only a few incidences of cruelties, this movement was peaceful. The whole world was astonished to see the intensity and fulfillment of this movement. All institutions, government and non-government, were run at his directions. People entrusted the responsibility of ruling them without any hesitation to their elected representative, although officially he did not hold any state position still then. In fact, beside Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela, Sheikh Mujib was the only politician who turned the Non-Cooperation Movement into a successful political tool. As a result of this, the speech which Bangabandhu delivered on 7 March became one of the greatest speeches in the world. The young people demanded unilateral declaration of independence which he did not fulfill. However in that short speech what he uttered was actually the declaration of independence: 'Be prepared with whatsoever you have. You must remember, as we have sacrificed blood we will give more blood - we will of course make the people of this land free, Inshallah. The struggle this time is the struggle for our freedom, the struggle this time is the struggle for independence.'

Despite this clear announcement, his critics lay blame on him for not announcing the independence unilaterally. Perhaps he thought, if Pakistan showed atrocious reaction against Bangladesh's declaration of independence we would be deprived of getting sympathy of the people of the world. He had known that the USA and China would not welcome the declaration of the independence of Bangladesh. For this he made a bit of concealment and even after this continued discussion with Pakistan for resolving the crisis. Meanwhile on 23 March, the flag of independent Bangladesh was raised in Bangabandhu's residence and on his car. From the very 7 March friends and enemies both parties perceived the desire of Bangabandhu. That desire had its room in the hearts of millions of people.

When the atrocious killing by Pakistani army started on 25 March, Bangabandhu was arrested, but in that very night his declaration of independence was broadcast everywhere. Many a man expresses doubt on this declaration. Many say that Bangabandhu did not agree



to declare independence. Many others say, there was no scope to send the declaration of independence from the transmitter of EPR. However this fact is beyond doubt that two versions of the declaration of independence in the name of Bangabandhu were broadcast from different sources on 26 March. The two versions were as follow:

1. 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.

Joy Bangla.

2. The Pakistan Army has suddenly attacked the EPR base at Peelkhana and Rajarbag Police Line and killed citizens. Street battles are going on in every street of Dacca-Chittagong. I appeal to the nations of the world for help. Our freedom fighters are gallantly fighting the enemy to free the motherland. I appeal and order you all in the name of the Almighty Allah to fight to the last drop of blood to liberate the country. Ask Police, the EPR, the Bengal

(Continued to the next page)



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

Message



The 15 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, along with his family members, was assassinated in one of the most barbaric carnages in human history.

Eighteen members of the family along with Bangabandhu's wife Sheikh Fazilatunnessa Mujib, three sons Captain Sheikh Kamal, Lt. Sheikh Jamal and Sheikh Russel, two daughters-in-law 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 killed. Some members of a family at Mohammadpur in the capital were also killed by artillery shells fired by the killers on the same day.

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

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

But Bangabandhu was killed at a time when he had undertaken an arduous task of building a Golden Bengal reconstructing the war-ravaged country and unifying the whole nation. The defeated forces of the Liberation War made abortive attempts to ruin the tradition, culture and advancement of the Bangali nation. Their target was to destroy the secular democratic fabric of Bangladesh.

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

Ziaur Rahman usurped the state power and promulgated Martial Law suspending the constitution and overthrowing the people's elected government. 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 governments of BNP-Jamaat alliance had followed the same path.

The people of the country made Bangladesh Awami League victorious on 29 December general elections in 2008 to end the era of BNP-Jamaat regime's killing, corruption and misrule of the caretaker government.

Overcoming the stagnancy left by the previous BNP-Jamaat government and global economic recession, we have put the country on firm economic footing. People again gave their mandate in favour of Awami League in the January 5 elections in 2014 to uphold the constitution and continue the development spree. We have implemented huge development programmes during the last six and a half years in line with our election manifesto. We have already been graduated to a lower middle-income country. Our aim is to turn Bangladesh into a higher middle income country by 2021 and developed one by 2041.

We have executed the verdict of the Bangabandhu killing case. The trial of the killers of four national leaders has been completed. The trials of the war criminals and the 21 August grenade attack cases are also progressing. We are committed to upholding democracy, constitution and rule of law. No conspiracy will be able to distract us from establishing the truth and justice.

The killers were able to assassinate Bangabandhu but they could not erase his dreams and ideals. The ideals of Bangabandhu's long struggle of sacrifice are implanted in the heart of Bangali nation.

Let us engage ourselves to the task of materialising Bangabandhu's dream of building a Golden Bengal turning into strength the grief of the great loss of the Father of the Nation. 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.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu
May Bangladesh Live Forever.

Sheikh Hasina
Sheikh Hasina

Bangabandhu – The Great Hero of History

Golam Sarwar

*I have come to speak about
The greatest Bangali of all ages
Whose heart had tremendous love for humans;*

*I have come to speak about a courageous sailor
who was a roaring wave in the surging sea
Overcoming the burning heat of summer
Intense rain of Shraban*

*And piercing the fog of winter
He had moored the boat on the bank.*

-Mahbub-ul-Alam Chowdhury

We utter the name of the greatest Bangali of all times, the most outstanding Bangali in a thousand years - Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman - in one breath with utmost reverence and deepest emotion. It is not possible to adorn him with any lesser adjective. Bangabandhu's ascension to the lion's chariot of infinite love of the Bangali nation was not done easily without any effort. He could dock his golden boat of dream on our shore as a triumphant hero by ignoring the turbulent sea ravaged by storms and surges and by relegating 'life and death' to the position of a servant in his stride.

Bangabandhu did not show us the mere dream for a piece of separate habitat. He did not engage himself in a life-or-death struggle for only creating the boundary-line of an autonomous landmass. Side by side with geographic independence, Bangabandhu also set the goal of achieving economic freedom. He dreamt of building such a state, which would one day assume a position of honour in the comity of nations in terms of wealth and prestige. The brutal hyenas had taken away his life while his dream remained unfulfilled. Most of his family members were also killed with savage cruelty. How did the picture of that deadly night look? In the language of the poet: 'There were clouds of Shraban on that night,

moon - there was none.' The darkness of that lethal black night spread not only in that house number 32, it spread throughout Dhaka and Bangladesh. That blood-drenched August 15 falls today; it is the fortieth anniversary of the martyrdom of our Father of the Nation.

In front of a sea of people at the historic Suhrawardy Udyan on 7 March 1971, the most inspiring line in the briefest epic of the world was uttered by an epic poet: 'This time the struggle is for our freedom, the struggle this time is for independence.' The heroic Bangalis launched themselves against the enemy with infinite courage following this singular call by Bangabandhu. The subsequent nine months was a history of war and triumph. Bangabandhu was the greatest hero in it.

The dreamlike journey of independent Bangladesh led by Bangabandhu had commenced in January 1972. He not only demonstrated farsighted pragmatism in all areas including the state and foreign policies, the governance structure, infrastructure development, education, health, agriculture etc. within three and a half year of running the country, he also established the philosophical foundation of the new land. The huge task of building a modern Bangladesh under the leadership of Bangabandhu's daughter Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is now being carried forward in the light of that philosophy.

What lay in that political philosophy of Bangabandhu? In his personal notebook, Bangabandhu had written on 30 May 1973, 'As a human being, I contemplate about



the entire mankind. As a Bangali, whatever is related to Bangalis touches me deeply. The source of this eternal bondage is love, unremitting love; a love that makes my politics and existence meaningful.'

Bangabandhu's political philosophy included- socio-economic emancipation of the general masses and the establishment of their political rights; an end to all kinds of discrimination and impunity; democracy and secularism; putting the Bangali nation on a seat of honour in the comity of nations; improving Bangla language and the culture of Bangalis; friendship with all and malice towards none in the international arena; far-reaching and sustainable development; above all, a poverty-free Bangladesh.

Bangladesh was made a breeding ground for anti-liberation war spirit, undemocratic communalism, and militant forces for some time by the hyenas coming out of the darkness of 15 August 1975, who tore apart our progressive ideologies. Dishonesty, corruption, nepotism, and wanton acts spread throughout the country then. The struggle to re-establish Bangabandhu's ideals was started since the establishment of a government led by Sheikh Hasina after long 21 years. The deep conspiracy to distort the history of liberation war and uproot Bangabandhu from our history through two decades of military rule and reactionary autocracy was ultimately foiled. The Father of the Nation now has a luminous presence in the minds of the young generation.

Socio-economic Freedom

Not only in freeing the country from enemies, the manner in which Bangabandhu rebuilt the war-ravaged country was also amazing. After returning from the scaffolds in Pakistan, he found his 'Bangla of Gold' turned into a devastated and shattered 'Bangla of Sorrow'. Half her assets were destroyed, trade and commerce were in shambles, and all links to foreign trade were cut-off. Bangabandhu took up the arduous task of growing flowers in a wrecked garden. A farsighted man, he took many emergency decisions at the very outset.

Bangabandhu formulated around 150 laws in the first year. Notable among these was the 'Bangladesh Collaborators' Ordinance'. Within three days of forming the government, Bangabandhu banned drinking, gambling and horse-racing in the country. Small-scale institutions, banking and insurance were nationalised. The agriculture sector as well as trade and commerce, where the largest segments of the population were engaged, were kept in the private sector by Bangabandhu. The highest priorities in his economic policies were agriculture and rural development. He presented to the nation a massive program for agriculture and

(Continued to the next page)