



# 16 December THE GLORIOUS VICTORY DAY



Special Supplement

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پیرو اللہ العزت الرحمن  
  
**PRESIDENT  
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF  
BANGLADESH**

### Message

On the occasion of our great victory day, I extend my sincere felicitations and congratulations to my fellow countrymen living at home and abroad. December 16 is a glorious and memorable day in the history of Bangladeshi nation. On this day in 1971, we achieved ultimate victory through a nine-month long War of Liberation.

The historic declaration of the Independence made by our great leader, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on March 26 in 1971 became true on this day through a nine-month long armed struggle by attaining the final victory. Today, I pay my deep homage to the valiant freedom fighters who made supreme sacrifice in the war of liberation for the cause of country's independence. On this very day, I also recall with profound respect the greatest Bangladeshi of all time, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, whose boundless sacrifices and uncompromising and charismatic leadership contributed to the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent and sovereign state in world atlas. Today, I also extend my deep gratitude to the valiant freedom fighters, organizers and supporters of the war of liberation and the people from all strata who directly and indirectly made meaningful contributions towards achieving victory.

Independence is an inherent right of every individual by birth. To attain this right our struggle for the right of self-determination and war of liberation is a unique example in the history of the world. The people of Bangladesh are indeed democratic and peace-loving. They want the advancement of democracy and development. But it is an irony that the democratic norms and practices were not functioning smoothly over the years particularly after the assassination of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1975. Democratic government has now been established in the country. With the formulation of appropriate planning and its implementation, Bangladesh has significantly achieved manifold successes both at home and abroad. Our country has continuously been attaining above 6% economic growth last few years despite worldwide downturn. The mega project of constructing the Padma Bridge is going on by the government's own fund. It is heartening to note that Bangladesh is now being considered as a role-model in the world community for flourishing democracy, empowering women, expansion of women education, strengthening local government, development of agriculture, health and education; ensuring food security, developing power and energy, thriving information technology and ICT etc.

Our foreign policy is being exercised in accordance with the principle of 'Friendship to all, malice towards none' as adopted by the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The win-win resolve of longstanding land boundary agreement with India and resolving maritime boundary with neighboring Myanmar and India are the landmark of our diplomatic success. I am confident that our bilateral relations with the international community along with neighboring countries would gradually be widened and deepened in the days to come. Bangladesh's efforts in mitigating negative impact of Global Climate Change and thriving Information Technology are being acclaimed by the world community transcending domestic boundary. It is a matter of pride that our Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has been awarded with 'ICTs in Sustainable Development Award 2015' and 'Champions of the Earth Award 2015' this year by the respective UN bodies for her outstanding contributions in this regard. I believe it is also a great achievement for the Bangladeshi Nation.

The Government has set 'Vision 2021' and 'Vision 2041' for transforming Bangladesh into a middle-income and developed country respectively. It is my firm conviction that we would be able to materialize the vision within the stipulated time by utilizing our huge human resources and information technology, InshAllah. On the eve of our great victory day, I call upon my fellow countrymen irrespective of party affiliation, to contribute more from their respective positions to realize the spirit and objectives of war of liberation.

On the occasion of great victory day, it is my expectation that with the concerted efforts of all Bangladesh will turn into a hunger and poverty free prosperous 'Sonar Bangla' (Golden Bengal) as dreamt by Bangabandhu, the Father of the Nation.

Khoda Hafez, May Bangladesh Live Forever.

Md. Abdul Hamid



پیرو اللہ العزت الرحمن  
  
**PRIME MINISTER  
GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S  
REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH**

### Message

Today is the 16 December, the Great Victory Day. This is the day of greatest pride for the Bangladeshi nation. Responding to the clarion call of the greatest Bangladeshi of all time, the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the Bangladeshi nation earned the ultimate victory on this day in 1971 after 23 years of intense political struggle and a 9-month blood-spattered war against the Pakistani occupation forces.

I extend my sincere greetings and warm felicitations to the countrymen at home and abroad on the occasion of the 44th Victory Day. On this glorious day, I pay my deep homage to the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. I recall with gratitude the four national leaders, and three million martyrs, who sacrificed their lives and two hundred thousand women, who lost their innocence for the cause of our independence.

Bangladeshi nation got prepared for independence waging the Language Movement of 1952, the Education Movement of 1962, the 6-point Demand of 1966, 11-point Movement and the Mass Uprising of 1969 under the undaunted leadership of the Father of the Nation. Awami League earned an overwhelming majority in the general elections of 1970 through which Bangladeshi nation's aspiration for independence got legal basis. Bangabandhu had realized that the oppression, persecution and deprivation meted out to the Bangladeshi nation would not be ended without achieving the independence. Ultimately, on the historic 7 March 1971, Bangabandhu in front of a million of people at the then Racecourse Maidan declared, "This time the struggle is for our freedom, this time the struggle is for the independence." Virtually, from that day, the final chapter began for achieving an independent Bangladesh. The countrywide non-cooperation movement had started at the directives of Bangabandhu as part of the final preparations for the Liberation War.

On the fateful night of 25 March 1971, the Pakistani occupation forces launched a brutal onslaught and committed genocide on the innocent and unarmed Bangladeshis. The Father of the Nation declared independence of Bangladesh in the early hours of 26 March of 1971 and the formal War of Independence started.

On 10 April, the proclamation of independence was announced by the elected people's representatives and the first Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh was formed with the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as the President, Syed Nazrul Islam as Vice-President and Tajuddin Ahmed as Prime Minister. This government was sworn-in on 17 April 1971 at the historic Mujibnagar in Meherpur and led the war of independence. The heroic freedom fighters with the help of the allied forces earned the victory on 16 December 1971 by defeating Pakistani occupation forces. The heroism and patriotism of Bangladeshi nation created a new history in the world.

As Bangabandhu had engaged himself in the struggle to build a 'Golden Bengal' reconstructing the war-ravaged country, the anti-liberation forces in collusion with the war criminals assassinated Bangabandhu along with his family members. Through the heinous killings of 15 August 1975, the assassins made an abortive attempt to ruin the heritage, culture and progress of Bangladeshi nation. They initiated the politics of killings, coup and conspiracy and obstructed the process to try the killers of Bangabandhu through promulgating Indemnity Ordinance. They ruined the democracy by declaring Martial Law and formed an illegal government. They defaced the Constitution and gagged the press freedom.

Democracy was established after a long struggle and sacrifices in 1996. Bangladesh has set up an example in the world in socio-economic development of its people. I take a solemn vow to build a Golden Bengal free from hunger and poverty keeping the development spree going.

Let us come and uphold the development and democratic process being imbued with the spirit of the Liberation War. Let us engage ourselves to the services for the country and its people. Let this be our pledge on the Victory Day of 2015.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu  
May Bangladesh Live Forever.  
  
Sheikh Hasina

## Looking Back at 1971 Anisuzzaman

The year had started with optimism and enthusiasm. Although innumerable people had lost their lives due to a devastating cyclone in the preceding month of November, the Awami League got absolute majority in the legislative assembly in the first general election of the country held in December. Everybody hoped that a new constitution would be framed based on the 6-points programme. Not only in the eastern region, the Awami League was about to assume office at the centre. The country was being freed from the clutches of the coterie who had been paramount rulers all these years.

When March arrived, it became quite clear that such optimism had no basis. Again that trickery, again that mesh of deprivations! The Bangladeshis started the non-cooperation movement at the call of Bangabandhu. Such non-violent and total non-cooperation movement amazed the citizens of the globe. Bangabandhu declared on 7 March at a public meeting in Dhaka: "This time the struggle is for our freedom, this time the struggle is for the independence." The people roared back: Heroic Bangladeshis, take up arms, liberate Bangladesh. The new national flag was hoisted all over the land on 23 March – the Pakistan Day: a red sun on a green background, with a golden map of Bangladesh in its middle. At that time, Bangabandhu and his colleagues were holding formal dialogues with the ruling coterie. Fitting this new flag on his car, Bangabandhu went for talks with the President of Pakistan.

It became clear later that the talks were mere deceptions. Using that as a cover, the Pakistanis were boosting their military might in this region. And with that monstrous power, they attacked unarmed Bangladeshis on the midnight of 25 March. University hostels, residences of teachers and employees, Bangladeshi officers and soldiers at the cantonment, headquarters of EPR and police, newspaper offices, factories, slums, offices of political parties, houses of non-political people, martyrs' monument – nothing was spared. Panicked people rushed hither and thither for their safety – inside the land, neighbouring country, and even farther away. Around 10 million people took refuge in India alone.

Not that there were no unorganized resistance at that time. The soldiers and border guards, police and ansars, students and youths, teachers and civil servants, all built up resistances against the Pakistani army with whatever arms they had. This kind of unequal combat could not be sustained for long. The political leaders were scattered at the outset; but they got themselves organized on the Indian soil very swiftly. It was therefore possible to declare the formation of Bangladesh Government on 10 April. That government took oath on 17 April at Boidyanathtala of Meherpur – later named 'Mujibnagar' – in presence of local and foreign journalists. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was named the President, Syed Nazrul Islam the acting President, Tajuddin Ahmed the Prime Minister. The Bangladesh Prime Minister informed the entire world: "Pakistan is now dead and buried under a mountain of corpses."

The Bangladesh government segmented the army first into several sectors, then into brigades, and also appointed their Commanders. Major Ziaur Rahman, Major K M Shafiqullah and Major

Khaled Mosharraf were such Commanders. Colonel (retired) M A G Osmany was given the responsibility of Commander-in-Chief. Hordes of youths flocked to join the war. Their trainings as well as arms-equipment for the army were arranged with the help of India. Guerrilla warfare was organized, naval commandoes were trained for attacking Pakistani ships and later an air-force was launched consisting of small aircrafts. The Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra (radio station of independent Bangla) kept the morale of the people high within and outside the country through publicity campaign. Beyond government control, some forces were raised in occupied Bangladesh; they also disrupted the Pakistani army. A big chunk of the Bangladeshi diplomats in different countries defected from Pakistan and declared their allegiance to Bangladesh; they helped raise popular support for Bangladesh's liberation war through collective efforts of expatriate Bangladeshis in those countries. Foreign journalists publicised the brutalities of the Pakistani military and the distress of the Bangladeshis refugees; as a result, the conscientious citizens of many countries extended moral support to our struggle. Although the US government sided with the Pakistanis, many public representatives, journalists and intellectuals were in favour of our liberation war. Just as they protested military aid to Pakistan, similarly they called for humanitarian assistances for the Bangladeshis eminent musicians like George Harrison, Ravi Shankar, John Lennon, Joan Baez etc. created global sensation by  
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## Philosophy of victory R A M Obaidul Muktadir Chowdhury

The independence and victory of Bangladesh is a unique chapter in the history of Bangladesh. The day in 1971 when the struggle for freedom commenced following the declaration of independence and the day when the victory of the freedom struggle was achieved through the surrender of the occupation army was the fulfillment of the long cherished desire of Bangladesh and traditional Bengal. Though divided in the political lines the people of the deltaic Bengal in course of time during the second half of the twentieth century had been united to fight and succeeded to create the only Bengali speaking nation of the globe not forgetting the inherent desire of the nation in the alluvial soil of the East Bengal frequently swept by the tidal flows. The victory on the 16th December had ushered a golden era of progress and prospect in the Bangladesh life.

While Sher-e-Bangla Fazlul Huq, treating Bangladeshis like frogs, felt that it is impossible to bring them together in the same stage, the amazing superhuman, the symbol of courage and sacrifice of the middle class Bangladeshis named Sheikh Mujib made it possible. He had united the whole nation conveying the message of freedom and independence in every home of the Bangladeshis by dint of his courage, heartfelt love and unquestionable patriotism. Mujib had awakened the very desire of independence and freedom of the Bangladeshis. He had united the Bengali creed through the immoral message of Chandidas 'Mankind is at the zenith, nobody is above thereof.' He motivated and prepared the weak Bangladeshis for freedom struggle making them strong and pragmatic through united force. Mujib taught them that those who could shed blood don't accept defeat.  
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