



Images of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the national flag being projected on the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban during the Independence Day celebrations yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

# Spectacle of lights, vibration of spirits

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hundreds of people lit candles on Manik Mia Avenue on Friday, remembering the tragic night of March 25, 1971 when the Pakistani occupation army swooped on unarmed people in Dhaka.

Participants, including government officials, cultural personalities and youths, pledged to build a country without hunger and poverty.

The event, "Alor Jatra (journey of light)", began at 11:45pm, organised by Grameenphone with private television Channel i as media partner.

Earlier in the evening, a spectacular 3D projection mapping arranged by the planning ministry featured rare pictures of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and other historic pictures of 1971 in the parliament building's South Plaza.

Addressing the crowd just before midnight on Manik Mia Avenue, Speaker of the House Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury said the nation went to war after the massacre on the night of March 25.

"It is the responsibility of the new generations now to drive hunger and poverty out of the country."

State Minister for Telecom Tarana Halim urged youths to make proud those who gave up their lives during the Liberation War so that their descendants could have a country.

Individuals who had witnessed the ruthlessness of the Pakistani military shared the stories of bravery in Bangladeshis surviving the carnage and overcoming fear in the struggle for freedom.

Eminent actor Aly Zaker recalled how he had survived the carnage by the Pakistani army.

Poet and writer Syed Shamsul Haq, theatre personality Nasiruddin Yousuff, writer and media personality Faridur Reza Sagar, media personality and agriculture development activist Shykh Seraj, among others, spoke at the event hosted by actor Shomi Kaiser.

Grameenphone's CEO Rajeev Sethi said, "Over the last four and a half decades, Bangladesh has defied all odds to be identified as potentially one of the biggest and most prosperous developments in the world. To achieve that potential, the Bangladeshis citizens must keep the spirit of independence alive in their hearts."

## Get ready to lead

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earned freedom through the Liberation War. So we cannot fail to maintain the desired pace of development on any front.

"We will go ahead. We will work for building the country to further consolidate our position in the world and ensure our dignity," Hasina added.

Recalling the long history of oppression and negligence of the rulers to Bangladesh, the premier said people had no access to food, education and healthcare. They could not dress well or live in a decent home due to poverty.

"People were living in miseries when the rulers were exploiting them and looting their wealth," she said,

adding that the Pakistani rulers even tried to snatch their right to speak in mother language.

The Father of the Nation staged protest against it. When he was studying at Dhaka University, he launched the movement for establishing the status of Bangla as a state language. In course of the movement, Bangabandhu floated the historic six-point demand, a charter for freedom of the nation, mentioned Hasina.

She said the Awami League had secured win in the 1970 general election, but the Pakistani rulers did not hand over state power to Bangabandhu.

Against this backdrop, Bangabandhu urged people for launching a non-cooperation move-

ment. In his historic speech on March 7, 1971 at the Suhrawardy Udyan, he called for a final movement for freedom and independence, the PM told her audience.

She said the speech of Bangabandhu inspired the people to forge unity against Pakistani rulers and get prepared for a guerrilla war. On March 25, the occupation forces swooped on Bangalis and launched the most barbaric genocide in world history.

In the early hours of March 26, 1971, Bangabandhu formally proclaimed the independence of Bangladesh, asking the people to continue their fight against the Pakistani forces, she noted.

Soon after the proclamation of the

independence, the Pakistani junta detained Bangabandhu. But he prepared the people beforehand for the war. People took up arms and freed the nation from enemy on December 16, 1971, said the PM.

Hasina paid tributes to Bangabandhu, martyrs of Liberation War, all freedom fighters and the mothers and sisters who lost their chastity and suffered torture at the hands of the occupation forces during the war.

Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Haq was present.

The PM witnessed the march past of smartly turned out units of school-children and took salute. She also enjoyed attractive displays by students on different themes on the Liberation War.

## Two cops suspended for extortion

Sher-e-Bangla Nagar OC to face music as well

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two police officials of Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station in Dhaka were suspended last night for allegedly detaining three employees of a travel agency and extorting money from them.

Debashis, a sub-inspector, and Shafiq, assistant sub-inspector, of the police station were suspended for their involvement in the detention and extortion, Biplob Kumar Sarker, deputy commissioner (Tejgaon) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police told The Daily Star.

The DMP would also take action against Abul Kalam Azad, officer-in-charge (operation) of the police station, for his alleged involvement in the matter, Biplob added.

Three officials of a travel agency were detained with 45 passports in Farmgate around 9:00pm on Friday, he said.

Hearing about it, Biplob instructed the Sher-e-Bangla Nagar OC to release the detainees immediately as they worked for an authorised recruiting agency. But the law enforcers kept them detained at

the police station until yesterday morning.

Officials from the agency met Biplob last night and told him that the relatives of the three employees, all of whom hail from Kurigram, paid Tk 75,000 to ASI Shafiq, who had demanded Tk 3 lakh for their release.

ASI Shafiq, who is in Kurigram on leave, received the money from the relatives of the detained travel agency men, Biplob said.

Around 10:00am yesterday, the trio was released and were told to take the passports back after paying the rest of the Tk 3 lakh.

Learning about the extortion, Biplob called SI Debashis at his office and suspended him. He then called the ASI over the phone and told him that he was suspended and that his leave had been cancelled. He was asked to report to the DC Tejgaon office this morning.

"I have written to the police commissioner for taking actions against the OC as he violated my direct order and for his alleged involvement in the racket," he said.

## Celebration evokes

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and the national flag colours.

President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina paid tributes to the Liberation War martyrs and placed wreaths at the National Memorial early in the morning.

The prime minister placed a wreath at the altar just after the president. They stood in solemn silence for some time as a mark of respect to the memories of the martyred freedom fighters.

A contingent of the Bangladesh Armed Forces gave a state salute as the bugle played the last post.

Later, Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad, cabinet members and top government officials paid tribute.

After returning from the National Memorial, the prime minister paid homage to the Father of the Nation by placing a wreath at his portrait in front of the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum on Dhanmondi-32.

Flanked by her party senior leaders, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia paid tribute to the Liberation War martyrs at the National Memorial around 8:30am.

Yesterday, the children showed great enthusiasm in paying respect to the martyrs.

Carrying a national flag in her hand, Tasnia, a seven-year-old girl, went to the National Memorial with her father from Ashulia.

"I have heard the stories of freedom fighters who became martyrs ...

I've come here today to pay tribute to them," she said.

Like her, many children went to the National Memorial with their parents to pay tribute to the national heroes. Some were seen wearing green and red dresses, some were carrying flowers and some had the national flag painted on their cheeks.

Many social and political organisations, educational institutions, and dignitaries also went to the memorial and placed wreaths.

After paying respect, Bangla Academy Director General Shamsuzzaman Khan told reporters, "We must not compromise on the issues of secularism, democracy, humanity, and nationalism, which were the spirits of the Liberation War."

Dhaka University Vice-Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique said, "We must remain united the way we were during the Liberation War so that we can overcome any national crisis in future."

Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu said, "If we want to realise the dreams of freedom fighters, we must take the country one step forward where there will be no militancy, no conspiracy of anti-liberation forces and no corruption."

Different voluntary organisations, including Medicine Club and Rhythm, arranged voluntary blood donation programmes in front of the National Memorial gate.

## Mesmerising Mustafiz

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far is that it has all been expected. Ever since he burst onto the scene with a two-wicket haul against Pakistan in a T20I last year, Mustafizur has aced every challenge put in front of him. The Indians arrived, and he nearly single-handedly -- by dint of his high unreadable mix of cutters and slower balls -- delivered Bangladesh's first series win against their mighty foes. The South Africans came and went, and the story was much the same, except against the Proteas he extended his mystery to the Test format, picking up four for 37 on debut.

In sharp contrast to his teammates, Mustafizur has arguably been the find of the tournament so far. His five for 22 yesterday formed part of the nine wickets he took in three matches and among them are some of the best batsmen in the world. He outfoxed Australia captain and one of the most feared willow-wielders of modern times, Steven Smith, with a slower

cutter that slipped through the legs of an over-balancing, clueless Smith. India's feared opener Rohit Sharma wanted to hit Mustafizur out of the ground but could only spoon a catch off a slower delivery.

Yesterday he made arguably the best batsman across all formats, New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson, look like a novice as he beat him twice in succession before ending his misery with another cutter that bowled a shuffling Williamson round his legs.

"He is one of the most intelligent cricketers, although he hasn't played much cricket," Bangladesh coach Chandika Hathurusingha said after the loss to New Zealand yesterday. "If you notice he has got some variations which other people don't have but he is using them very cleverly."

"He has bowled to [India captain Mahendra Singh] Dhoni some four-five times in the last six months, but still he managed to keep him down. He mixes up his yorkers, quicker balls and cutters. That's all credit to his

cricket intelligence and skill."

It is the inevitability of his strikes that makes him such an attractive prospect -- one particularly suited to T20 cricket where batsmen are compelled to attack. He cashed in to the hilt yesterday, when four of his victims were bowled, and three came in his last two overs when the batsmen were on the attack. New Zealand batsman Ross Taylor doffed his hat to the youngster after the match.

"You've got to give it to him, he bowled very well. He gave us a tough time inside the first six, got the key wicket of Kane Williamson, and then the way he bowled at the end, he's very disciplined," Taylor said.

## Reckless driving kills two Ctg kids

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four people, including two children, were killed and five injured in road accidents in two districts in the last two days.

In Chittagong, a microbus skidded off a road, hit an electric pole and crashed into a dustbin at Bahaddar Pukur in the city's Chandgaon yesterday, leaving two ragpickers critically injured, said Md Shajahan Kabir, officer-in-charge of Chandgaon Police Station.

The two were picking papers and bottles from the skip. They were rushed to Chittagong Medical College Hospital where doctors declared them dead.

One of the deceased is Abdul Mannan, 14, of Langalcoat in Comilla. The identity of the other, aged about 13, could not be confirmed.

In Charmatha of Bogra town, an unidentified elderly man was crushed by a truck after falling from a battery-run auto-rickshaw on Friday.

## Torn apart

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that heart-stopping one-run defeat against India in two contrasting games inside four days.

The batting was absolutely in shambles. Mohammad Mithun was bowled for 11 after missing an attempted down-the-wicket shot, Shakib chanced his arm too early and was caught at long-on for two. Sabbir Rahman also perished in the same fashion and Mushfiqur Rahim continued his forgettable performance with the bat. He was bowled by a leg-cutter which turned enough to disturb his off-stump. Wickets kept on tumbling with Mahmudullah Riyad playing down the wrong line against a googly from Sodhi. Captain Mashrafe was adjudged leg before for three. Mustafizur hit the only six of the Bangladesh innings before being out next ball. Shuvagat Hom, the only batsman who batted with some purpose, hit a superb four through the covers. But with last batsman Al Amin Hossain facing Sodhi after three balls, it was too tough to avoid the inevitable.

Earlier, Bangladesh bowled beautifully to restrict New Zealand to 145 for eight. Left-arm pace bowler Mustafizur revelled in all his guile and trickery to finish with five for 22, his best bowling figures in the shortest version of the game.

The 20-year-old cutter specialist actually took wickets in each of his four overs he bowled in different spells. Introduced in the fourth over with the Kiwis at 23 for no loss, Mustafizur had left-handed opener Henry Nicholls clean bowled with an off-cutter. He then returned in the ninth over to castle a menacing Kiwi

skipper Kane Williamson with a leg-stump yorker. Williamson shuffled too much across and was completely deceived by the kind of delivery with which Mustafizur had Pakistan opener Mohammad Hafeez on his international debut a year ago. Williamson scored a 32-ball 42. The bowler with a golden left arm then returned in the final overs to claim three wickets, including two off successive deliveries in the last over. Facing him for the first time the Kiwis were clueless against his cutters. His figures could have been more impressive if he was not whacked for a six in the final ball. It was the second five-for by a Bangladesh bowler in T20s after left-arm spinner Elias Sunny's five for 13 against Ireland in Belfast in 2012.

While Mustafizur mesmerised, other bowlers chipped in around him bowling a disciplined line. Right arm pace bowler Al-Amin Hossain also bowled well to finish with two for 27. Mashrafe gave away 21 runs in his three overs but was unlucky not to get a wicket when Al-Amin dropped a sitter off the bat of Ross Taylor at square-leg. Al-Amin was then the victim of sloppy catching when Tamin dropped Luke Ronchi at cover.

Off-spinner Shuvagata conceded only 16 runs in his three overs apart from taking a very good catch running backwards at mid-on. Ace all-rounder Shakib was a bit expensive but he was unlucky not to have a confident appeal for leg-before against Munro for his way; the batsman went on to score 35 after surviving that close call at nine. But the bowling effort counted for little after that wobbling display with the bat.