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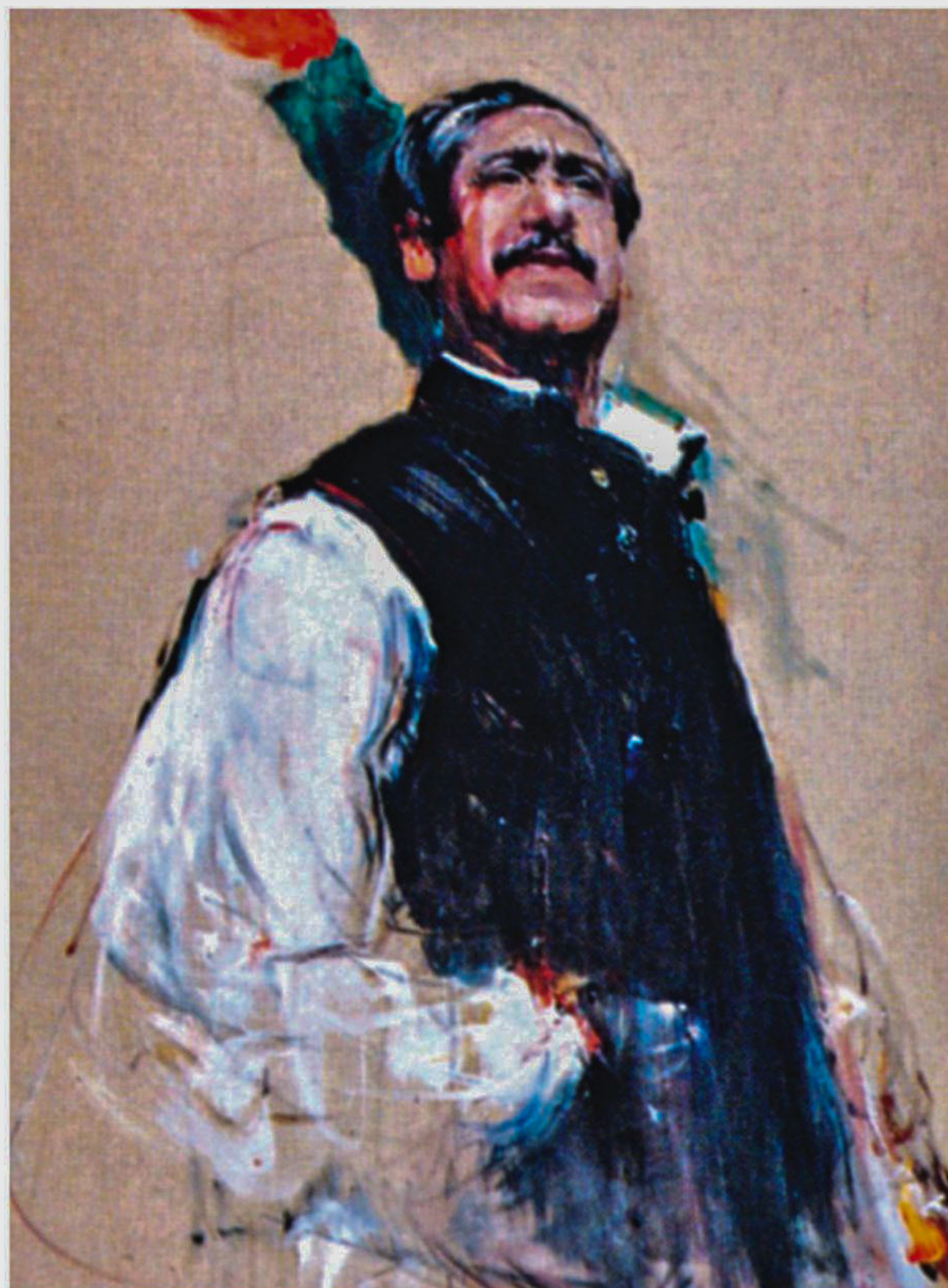
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# OUR INSPIRATION



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## EDITOR'S NOTE

This day comes in the life of every Bangladeshi with unfathomable joy. Regrettably the feeling of joy is tinged with pain and loss, although victory against such a rapacious and brute force is never achieved without sacrifices. *"If blood is the cost of victory then Bangladesh had overpaid."*

The joy of achieving victory was marred by the colossal loss of our valiant sons and daughters—our freedom fighters—in the battlefield but also of three million of our innocent countrymen and thousands of our mothers and sisters, killed and defiled. It is also a day for acknowledging the help and sacrifices of the friendly countries, India most particularly, without whose help victory would have been much longer in achieving. And while it is a day for specially remembering our freedom

fighters and savouring the victory that their sacrifices have given us, it is also a time for introspection on whether the aims, for which the blood of the martyrs was shed, have been achieved.

There are many things that we, as a nation, can be justifiably proud of. Some of our socio-economic achievements are second to none in the region. Infant mortality has come down and so has poverty in percentage terms. Our achievement in the food sector, becoming a net exporter from a net importer not many years ago, is noteworthy. The benefits of education have reached the corners of the land and rapid digitalisation has opened multifarious avenues for the development of the country. The RMG sector has been the success story whose prospect of reaching the \$50 billion target is no longer a dream.

But by the same token we must wonder why the benefits of economic growth have not been equitable, why the gap between the rich and the poor has grown wider. We are plagued too by the spectre of religious extremism that is trying to subvert the very reason that stimulated us to take up arms against the Pakistani forces. In fact our sorrow is even more aggravated by the killing of twenty Bangladeshis and foreigners during the month of Ramadan this year by extremists. So, while we rejoice and grieve, we must resolve to come together cutting across party lines to thwart the fissiparous forces that would want to destroy the very ethos on which our nation has evolved.

**Mahfuz Anam**  
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