

17 March

National Children's Day

Homage on the auspicious birthday
of Father of the Nation

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman



Special Supplement



Message

On the occasion of the 98th birthday of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as well as National Children's Day, I pay my profound respect to the memory of the greatest leader. On this auspicious day, I also convey my heartfelt greetings and felicitations to the children of Bangladesh and the world as well.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, an undisputed leader of the Bangali, the dreamer of independent and sovereign Bangladesh, Father of the Nation, was born in Tungipara of Gopalganj district on 17 March 1920. Since his boyhood, the most distinguished great man was very kind-hearted and generous, but uncompromising on attaining rights. The leadership quality of Sheikh Mujib was noticed from his school life. As a young student leader in the early forties of the last century, he actively participated in politics, coming close association with the then legendary leaders Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy and Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Haque. He was a dreamer of Bangali nation and an ardent proponent of Bangali nationalism. The visionary leader led the nation in every movement towards attaining democracy and autonomy including the Language Movement in 1952, 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. For this, he was sent to jail several times and had to bear inhuman sufferings. Despite manifold challenges, he never compromised with the Pakistani rulers on the question of establishing rights of the Bangali. Crossing many acclivity and declivity, finally, he declared country's independence on March 26, 1971. Responding to his clarion call, the people from all strata participated in the War of Liberation in 1971 and achieved their ultimate victory on December 16, 1971 through a nine-month long armed struggle. For his extraordinary contributions towards achieving Independence, Bangabandhu and Bangladesh thus emerged as a unique symbol to the people of Bangladesh. He would remain as an ever surpassing personality in society, nation and in the contemporary world for his outstanding leadership quality and works. He is the symbol of independence and the harbinger of freedom not only for the Bangali but also for the down-trodden and oppressed people of the world.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the architect of independent Bangladesh, always dreamt of building a happy and prosperous Sonar Bangla (Golden Bengal). We have to build our young generation as worthy citizens to materialize Bangabandhu's dream of transforming our country into 'Sonar-Bangla'. We have to render our sincere endeavour to our children for flourishing the intrinsic values from very childhood. We have to make our generation as enlightened citizens through providing proper education and knowledge and igniting them with the deep sense of patriotism so that they can make themselves as worthy citizens and love the country and its people.

I welcome government's initiative to observe the 'National Children's Day' on the occasion of birthday of Bangabandhu. Our new generation will be able to know the life and works of Bangabandhu through observing the day and will contribute to building the nation imbued with the spirit of patriotism. I urge all, irrespective of party affiliation, to take united efforts for building a happy and prosperous Bangladesh and ensuring bright future of our children. Bangabandhu is the eternal source of our inspiration and he will remain among ourselves forever for his noble deeds and ideals. I pray to the Almighty for the salvation of the departed soul of Father of The Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on his 98th birthday.

Khoda Hafez, May Bangladesh Live Forever.

Md. Abdul Hamid

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

The Lamp-Bearer on a Dark Night

Jharna Rahman

Yes, come barefoot and very carefully; here is the Ramna Racecourse Field. Look, the chlorophyll of the grass in the field is lighting up. Your feet are getting greener! Listen, a chorus is coming out of the grass – millions of voices led by one are singing a life-winning chorus. Come step by step through the grass to the centre. Can you see the reckless wind blowing wildly towards this centre from all around you? Can you hear the loud voice roaring in the midst of stormy clouds? The 7 March, 1971 speech? Can you see the fiery tongue of that bold speech is spreading over the 56 thousand square kilometre area? And that raised hand giving directions? The hand that sparked like a torch in the darkness of exploitation and disappointment? Can you see how the bright light of that torch is clearing up everything and eliminating the darkness? Can you feel its heat? The words "the struggle now is the struggle for emancipation, the struggle now is the struggle for freedom" are spreading everywhere like the sparks of fire.

Yes, now! Let us raise our shoulders and look at the sky to see how bright the March sky becomes with the light of Mujib in the sky-line. It is that Mujib who spread light all over Bangladesh covered by the darkness of dependence on others and exploitation. He drew a dream of freedom on our eyes and brought an excitement of victory to our hearts. Hearing his incantations of freedom 75 million people woke up on 26 March 1971 and Bangladesh established itself in the world community with a flag of victory in hand and with a mark of pride on its face on 16 December of that year. Whenever we remember the man behind it, our memory walks through these pictures.

His name is Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. He is the dreamer of the Bangali nation's freedom, the architect of the independent Bangladesh, the greatest hero of the century and the symbol of Bangalis' hopes and dreams. This is not only a name but also a history, an immortal story of a nation's birth, a fire-proof confidence and an infinite lyric of sadness written in the sorrowful letters of tears.

Did anybody realise that the boy named Mujibur Rahman who was born into an ordinary family at the Tungipara village in the Gopalganj Sub-division (now a district) of Faridpur District about a century ago on 17 March 1920, would end up as a great hero of the Bangali nation? Perhaps his father Sheikh Lutfur Rahman and mother Begum Saira Khutun understood it. Perhaps it was also understood by the dust, cornfields, the Madhumoti river and the common people of Tungipara. They found that this boy was a bit different. He was a sort of thoughtful type. His heart cried out in sorrow for the depressed and oppressed humanity. They again saw how strongly did this tender-hearted boy stand up against all odds like a sturdy 'Shal' tree resisting a violent storm. They also saw how this slender youth became steadfast like the Himalaya with a strong determination for the sake of the country and to seize their rights.

This rarely-born child gradually turned into a fiery name and painted the months from March to December in our calendar in different colours. The history of this country's new birth began to be written with the dates – 7 March, 26 March and 16 December. It was the history of the struggle for seizing the rights of the deprived and oppressed people of Bangla. He emerged as the undisputed leader of this struggle. The main concern of this leader was to turn the hopes, aspirations and dreams of the

mass people into reality.

At the age of only 51 (from 1920 to 1971), he brought Bangla which was under the feet of the foreign rulers and the people who were exploited and deprived of rights under the banner of freedom. The birth of Mujib and that of independent Bangla were tied together. The birth of a country and the birth of its architect were, as it were, the two covers of a great book. Between these covers are the sad story of a nation and the history of its self-establishment.

Sheikh Mujib got involved in politics during his very college life. As general secretary of the student association of Islamia College in 1946, he played a leading role in the establishment of Muslim Student League. Next year he admitted himself in the department of Law at Dhaka University. Here he was involved in a movement for fulfilling the demands of the fourth class employees and was accused by the authority of violating discipline. It resulted in his expulsion from the university. This happened in 1949. Mujib also broke down the chain of compulsion in education. He took to the streets with a determination to break down the chain of exploitation. This



was a rugged path strewn with difficult problems. Sheikh Mujib lovingly embraced this ruggedness.

After this, he was entangled completely in Political movements. The main aim of his struggles was to put a smile on the faces of the suffering people. The main objective of his movements was to establish the just rights of the working class people and to find out a way for people's emancipation from the oppression of bureaucracy. Not only for the people's freedom but he also continued his fight for the freedom of indigenous language and culture. He was the first man to be imprisoned for the Language Movement. For his demand for establishing Bangla as the state language in its own dignity he was sent to prison on 11 March 1948. He was sent to prison many other times for his involvement in political movements. Even as a school student he first went to jail for his involvement in fight in an attempt to rescue his classmate Abdul Malek who was unjustly arrested by the Great Hindu Council. From that time

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Art & Design : Department of Films & Publications • Assistance : Press Information Department, Ministry of Information



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Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the architect of independent Bangladesh, always dreamt of building a happy and prosperous Sonar Bangla (Golden Bengal). We have to build our young generation as worthy citizens to materialize Bangabandhu's dream of transforming our country into 'Sonar-Bangla'. We have to render our sincere endeavour to our children for flourishing the intrinsic values from very childhood. We have to make our generation as enlightened citizens through providing proper education and knowledge and igniting them with the deep sense of patriotism so that they can make themselves as worthy citizens and love the country and its people.

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