



17 March

National Children's Day


Homage on the auspicious birthday of Father of the Nation


Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman



Special Supplement

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PRESIDENT
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF
BANGLADESH

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.

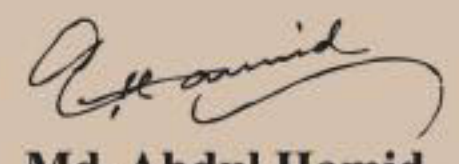
Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, an undisputed leader of the Bangali, the dreamer of independent and sovereign Bangladesh, Father of the Nation, was born in Tungipara of Gopalganj district on 17 March 1920. Since his boyhood, the most distinguished great man was very kind-hearted and generous, but 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




Independent Bangladesh

A Life Long Dream of Bangabandhu

Anisul Hoque

'Everyone has to have a big dream. You must think of how to make space in others mind. But why they should do that must be identified. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman has created Bangladesh. He is in the mind of everybody. Thus, along with having a dream, everybody has to work to materialize it.' This was stated by the Former Indian President and Famous Scientist A P J Abdul Kalam at one of his addresses in Dhaka.

Everything has been made by someone. Who has made this table? Who has made this chair? It can be answered. Similarly, if someone questions, who has made Bangladesh? The answer is, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. And that is why; he is called the Father of the Nation.



I have composed a rhyme on this concept:

Do you know whose brainchild Facebook is?
Answer promptly, if you know.
Everybody knows, answer comes from two to four lac,
Facebook has been innovated by Zuckerberg.


Tell me who the inventor of airplane is
Instant answer makes the thing clear,
Wright Brothers, Wright Brothers, the two brothers
Is there anybody who doesn't know the answer?


Who has founded Bangladesh, please tell me
The answer is the same and all agree

The answer is in the sun and stars shining
The answer is in everybody's blood always flowing
The name that's as good as Independence is
Bangabandhu sheikh Mujibur Rahman

Today we are living in an independent country as only Bangabandhu was born, we have had a green flag, an independent state and also a national anthem to sing whole heartedly. There was no state in thousand years old history of the Bangali. For the first time the Bangali

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PRIME MINISTER
GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S
REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

Message

I pay my deep homage to the greatest Bangali of all time, the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on his 97th birth anniversary and National Children's Day. I convey my best wishes to the countrymen, especially the children, on this auspicious day.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was born in the illustrious Sheikh family at Tungipara in Gopalganj district on 17 March 1920. His father's name is Sheikh Lutfar Rahman and mother's name is Begum Saira Khatun. He was the third among six children of his parents. From his boyhood, he was fearless, kind and generous. The leadership quality had flourished during his school days. Gradually, he became the last resort to realise the righteous demands of the people of Bangladesh.

Having keen memory and vision, the aim of Bangabandhu's long career was to free the Bangali nation from the shackle of subjugation. The Father of the Nation led the movement to establish the state language. In 1948, State Language Movement Council was constituted comprising Tamuddun Majlish, Student League and other student bodies as per a proposal of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Bangabandhu was arrested as a general strike was enforced on 11 March 1948 to realise the demand for recognising Bangla as the state language. He was arrested time and again from 1948 to 1952. Bangabandhu led the Language Movement from both inside and outside the jail. During the tragic incident of 21 February 1952, Bangabandhu gave directives from his internment. In continuation of the movement, the election of United Front in 1954, the anti-martial law movement against the military junta Ayub Khan in 1958, the movement against Education Commission in 1962, the historic 6-point movement of 1966, Agartala conspiracy case of 1968, mass uprising in 1969, general elections in 1970 and the independence war of 1971 were carried under the undisputed leadership of Bangabandhu.

The charismatic leadership and personality of the Father of the Nation brought the whole nation under one umbrella. As a result, we got the independence and sovereign Bangladesh. The Bangali nationalism got flourished. Bangabandhu was not only the leader of the Bangali but also a forerunner in realising the rights of the oppressed and deprived masses of the world. When he devoted himself to rebuild the country, the anti-liberation and reactionary forces brutally assassinated him along with most of his family members on 15 August 1975. The spirit of the war of liberation, Bangladesh's democratic march and development spree were halted by the heinous killings. The illegal military rulers then defaced the country's constitution, which was one of the finest constitutions of the world. They rehabilitated the anti-liberation war criminals and reactionary forces. The countrymen were deprived of their rights to life and vote. The history of independence and freedom struggle was distorted.

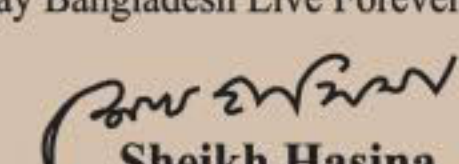
The Bangali nation was freed from the stigma through the execution of the capital punishment pronounced by the highest court of the country in the Bangabandhu killing case. The trials of war criminals are now going on and verdicts against the war criminals are being executed. We are committed to materialising the unfinished tasks of Bangabandhu defeating the conspiracies of anti-liberation and undemocratic forces.

Bangabandhu had a limitless love for the children. That is why, the day of his birth has been declared as the National Children's Day. On this day, I pray to the Almighty Allah for the peace of the departed soul of Bangabandhu and for the prosperous future of our children and juveniles.

The Awami League government is pledge-bound to make our beloved motherland as a safe habitat for the children. All, irrespective of party affiliation or opinion, have to work together to build the children developing their self-confidence, flourishing their patriotism and creativity, and building their personality. They would have to be inspired to learn the history of Bangladesh and the struggling life of the Father of the Nation.

Let us sacrifice our present for the welfare of our children's future. Let us join our hands to build a non-communal, hunger-poverty free and happy-prosperous 'Sonar Bangla' as dreamt by the Father of the Nation. On the day, this is our commitment.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu
May Bangladesh Live Forever.



Sheikh Hasina

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 how 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 Lutfar Rahman and mother Begum Saira Khatun 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 undisputable 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 a fight in an attempt to rescue his classmate Abdul Malek who was unjustly arrested by the Great Hindu Council. From that time

onward he spent about 12 years in prison including the days he spent in a Pakistani prison during the liberation war. It also happened that the moment he was released from jail in one case, he was charged with another allegation and sent to jail again.

He grew into a protesting character through his involvement in different protest movements and rebellions on different occasions like the division of the country in 1947 and the student movement in 1948 when Jinnah declared Urdu as the only state language of Pakistan. He supported the struggling ideal of the then public leader Maulana Bhashani for the establishment of peasants' and day labourers' rights. However, he wanted to see his party from a non-communal perspective. Giving priority to this doctrine later, Moulana Bhashani also dropped the word 'Muslim' from the name of the party. Later, Bangabandhu formed a non-communal party named 'Bangladesh Awami League'. He attacked the root of Pakistani rule and exploitation by presenting the famous 'Six-point' demands. He demanded the right to self-administration in his own country. He wanted people's absolute economic and political rights, and their freedom from all kinds of oppression and deprivation. He wanted this for all people irrespective of their religion, colour and community. This was not only the aim of his struggles but also a fulfillment of his existence.

No power was able to deviate the undaunted fighting leader Sheikh Mujib from his aim. The rulers sent Mujib to prison in the Agartala Conspiracy case. Yet, his movement could not be suppressed. Moreover, it proved his acceptability to people and his skyscraping popularity. Consequently, the government was compelled to release him unconditionally on 22 February 1969. In this way, Mujib became the symbol of people's freedom. That is why, this loving friend of the suffering people of Bangla was endowed with the title of 'Bangabandhu' in a mammoth meeting of the 'All Party Student Forum' at the Ramna Racecourse Field on 23 February 1969. Bangabandhu's struggle for people's rights then created an upsurge in the entire country. He was able to raise the people of all walks of life, particularly the young student community and the working class people with his hypnotizing leadership. He understood that the involvement of the youthful force was necessary for success in the movement, because this force is greedless and fearless and they have a violent emotion of patriotism in their bosom.

After the absolute victory in the 1970 election it is sheikh Mujib who became the people's hero in this country. Then the person who shook the crown of the Pakistani rulers was sheikh Mujib. As a result, the then President Yahia Khan cancelled the National Assembly session on 3 March 1971. Bangabandhu realized that he should now go into action with an all-out effort. Through the mass killing on 25 March Pakistani rulers also tolled their death knell. The name of their fear was then Mujib. They had no other alternative than to arrest Mujib. On early 26 March at the moment of being arrested by the Pakistanis, Bangabandhu, therefore, rang the bell of freedom in the life of this country's people by declaring freedom on the EPR transmitter. Next day, that announcement was read out several times from Kalurghat Radio Station in Chittagong. The Bangalis then plunged into a liberation war with a do-or-die determination.

In spite of his absence from the soil of the country Bangabandhu with his hypnotizing leadership from Pakistani prison led the 9-month war to the doorstep of success. The Pakistan government did not have the courage to keep Bangabandhu in the prison after Bangladesh's victory in the liberation war on 16 December. He came back to his own country on 10 January 1972. Kissing the soil and bedecking his head with the dust of his motherland, he devoted himself to the construction of the war-torn country. Only within his three years' rule he was leading his country to the arena of international power side by side with the reconstruction work. In the very year 1972 Bangladesh got the membership of IMF and ILO.

The only aim of his life was the development of his country and the peace of his

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