

Special Supplement

Dream of Bangabandhu...

(Continued from previous page)

achieved a state. And this has been possible for Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. That is why, he is our Father of the Nation, greatest Bangali of all time. Not merely we just have achieved a national flag and a national anthem, after 46 years of independence we know, this is the time for us to keep head high. This is the time to march forward. There are initiatives all over for advancement in education, working hard and to build up the country. Today Bangladesh is a miracle, a model of development to the world. We are progressing in so many fields. All these have been possible for independence. And the architect of this independence is Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.



How did he make Bangladesh independent?

First of all, a dream. Moreover, he had a profound patriotism, firm determination, indomitable courage and self sacrificing mentality. He had the quality of leadership.

The English left the sub-continent in 1947. The two countries, India and Pakistan were created. We were in the part of Pakistan, named the East Pakistan. Sheikh Mujib, the son of Tungipara of Gopalgonj, went to Kolkata for study. There he got involved in politics. After the English left in 1947, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman came to Dhaka from Kolkata. Before even leaving Kolkata, he informed his friends and colleagues that new movement would be launched after returning to the East Bengal.

He did not recognize Pakistan even for a day. Even he was not pronouncing the word 'Pakistan'. He had always been referring the country as the 'Bangla' or the Purbo (East) Bangla. He used to say, they want to erase the word 'Bangla'. The word that has a history, a heritage.

Just after arriving in Dhaka, he launched movement demanding Bangla as the state language. In that very year in 1948, he was jailed for waging the movement.

He earned popularity from that time. The people gathered in public meetings only to listen to his address. That is why, the senior leaders would say, Mujib will address last of all. Even the chairperson of the meeting would finish his/her address earlier. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had been the last speaker. It was done as the audience would start leaving the meeting after his deliberation.

Why had he been so popular? As he used to speak of the emancipation of the Bangali, protested the injustice and misrule of the Pakistani rulers. He had never been afraid of anybody.

That is why, he was facing arrests repeatedly. He had not at all been worried to go to the jail. Even love for his wife or children had not let him away from rendering service to the country. His wife Begum Fazilatunnesa had always been a source of courage and inspiration. She had to go through severe hardship with the minor kids.

Lamp-Bearer on a Dark Night

(Continued from previous page)

countrymen. He used to say, "Let us construct the country, give our people a smiling face and eliminate the sorrows of the country". He knew that it was possible to remove the country's sorrow by protecting the interest of peasants and labourers and establishing their rights. He knew that only the strengths of agriculture and industry were at the root of development. That is why, in the plan of construction of the country his main aim was to increase these strengths. Bangabandhu wanted to ensure country's development and reconstruction through the improvement of peasants' and labourers' conditions in 1975. But his opponents got an opportunity to misinterpret his idea. The consequence was the ruthless killing on 15 August.

This greedless man was not led by any self-interest even at any weak moment in his life. A simple and plain life was his dress and his generous heart was his greatest wealth. People's love placed him on the highest peak of faith and confidence. The entire Bangladesh was, as it were, the chest of this great people-loving leader. Stored there was the sure safety and warm love for people of all walks of life. Some ambitious, power-hungry, and inhuman reactionaries hatched out a conspiracy and annihilated this great leader from the face of the earth. This man gave freedom and an address of their own to the people of the country sacrificing his own happiness and pleasure and depriving himself of the blessings of family life, yet he had to be killed brutally along with his family members. However, he has a permanent seat in the hearts of all Bangalis except a few self-seeking heinous conspirators. Such a man cannot actually die.

Through his physical and worldly death he has embraced a 'deathless life'. Some extraordinary great people of the world have their birthdays only. They don't have any death-day, because they are immortal. Bangabandhu is also such a blessed son of immortality. Our motherland got an extraordinary child on 17 March, who sacrificed his own life to save the dignity of his country and removed the darkness from the life of the nation by striking his own life into fire.

In his 'The Unfinished Memoirs' written during his imprisonment from 1966 to 1969, he wrote in English "As a man I always think about the entire humanity. As I am a Bangali, whatever is connected with the Bangalis makes me think deeply. The source of this endless association is love. Immortal love. It is the love which makes my politics and existence meaningful". Bangabandhu's extraordinary leadership and noble character become evident in his deep spirit of integrating his own being with the country and countrymen.

Bangabandhu's birthday, 17 March, is now the national children's day. A child is called 'the future citizen'. Those who will change Bangladesh in future as a developed country have to grow up as successful citizens themselves. For that, the children should have such an ideal before them through which will sparkle the light of honesty, justice, humanity,

He would always stay in jail. His daughter Hasina was a minor kid, son Kamal was younger. At that time, one day he went home on being released from prison. What happened at that time, as he wrote 'one morning I and Renu were gossiping in bed. Hasu and Kamal were playing below. Hasu occasionally came to me calling 'father, father'. Kamal stayed looking on. At one stage, Kamal was found saying to Hasina, 'Hasu Apa, May I a bit address your father 'father'? (The Unfinished Memoirs - Sheikh Mujibur Rahman).

In the prison, the officials of the intelligence of the Government would say to him to get released from the confinement on signing a bond or undertaking. Sheikh Mujib would say, I will lay down my life. Even then I do not want to release signing a bond of slavery. I will make the people of Bengal free. It is obvious. The Zionists must fall.

The officials of the government intelligence while submitting report at that time would write, the mental strength of the prisoner is very high. He cannot be convinced.

Those reports have been recovered from the government offices. If you read the book 'Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman : Life & Politics' published by the Bangla Academy, then you would be able to read the intelligence reports. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was ready to sacrifice his life for the sake of the country since then.

Of course, you will read another book 'The Unfinished Memoirs' (Published by UPL). The language of the book written by Bangabandhu himself is very soft, description very smooth. If he could stick only to writing, he could have been one of our best writers.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was born on 17 March, 1920. His father was Sheikh Lutfur Rahman.

In the book 'The Unfinished Memoirs' there is a vivid sketch on his football play. When he was 20, there was a football match between his school's team and Officers' Club Team of his father. The team of the son lost to the father's team by one goal in the final match.

However, just after returning to Dhaka from Kolkata, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman launched the Language Movement in that 1948.

The Awami Muslim League was formed. Bangabandhu has written in his 'The Unfinished Memoirs', 'The draft party manifesto published during the formation of Awami League by us demanded full autonomy (of the East Pakistan). Seeing it, Liaquat Ali Khan became more angry.' That means Awami League raised the issue of full autonomy in writing in that very 1949. Why the issue was raised, Bangabandhu also detailed that point in his autobiography. Because the Pakistanis have exploited the East Bengal in the name of governance, though the East Bengal was the majority of Pakistan, the Bangalis had been made deprived in all the fields. Karachi was made the capital. All industrial establishments, mills and factories were developed in the West Pakistan.

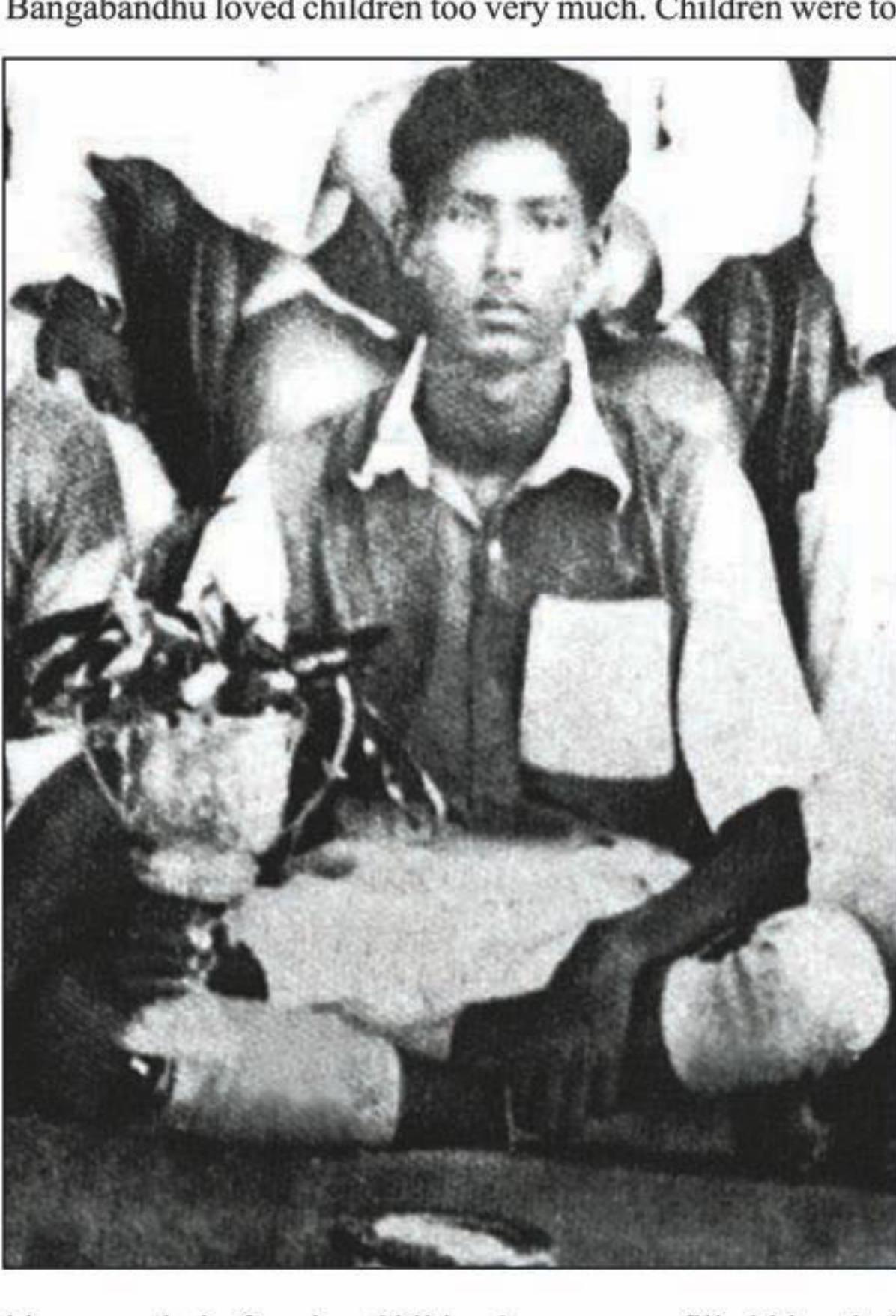
In fact, the dream of the independent Bangladesh was set in the thinking of Bangabandhu from the past. He even expressed these views in an interview with the Indian Litterateur Annada Shankar Roy after the Independence. Annada Shankar has written in his memoirs, 'We ask Sheikh Shahab, When did you conceive the idea of Bangladesh first?' 'Would you listen to?' Saying this he (Bangabandhu) just giggled and continued, 'it was 1947. I was in the party of Suhrawardy. He and Sarat Chandra Bose wanted the United Bengal (Jukta Bangla). I also want a single country for all the Bangalis. What not the Bangalis could do if they have been united. They could win the world.'

He was getting excited while saying this. Then he said out of despair, 'Suhrawardy and Sarat Chandra Bose came back from Delhi in empty hands. Neither Congress nor Muslim League agreed with their proposal. They have yielded. I also found that there was no alternative. I came to Dhaka and started anew. I conceded with the Pakistan Concept for the time being. But how my formula will be fulfilled was my worry. There was no possibility of it to be fulfilled. How communal the people are! Had we say we want Bangladesh, they would become skeptical. All on a sudden, one day a voice was raised, 'we want Bangla Language'. I also converged in the Language Movement.

We turned the movement based on language, step by step, to the movement for a state. Afterwards, at a stage when I asked

selflessness, courage and patriotism. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is that ideal for the construction of the future nation and that great image which will inspire children to develop themselves as good citizens.

In 1996 Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina decided to observe Bangabandhu's birthday officially as the National Children's Day. She understood that through the programs and activities centering around this day the children would be able to know about such a person who was great not only as the leader of his country but also as a man. A noble and generous man like him having affection for people, love for the oppressed and love for the country without any self-interest is scarcely born. Bangabandhu loved children too very much. Children were to



him a symbol of purity. Children's company filled his mind with peace. Even in the midst of his numerous busy schedules he attended the programs arranged for children, thought about their progress and took many effective measures for the development of their education, health and mind. He used to say that "today's children will lead the country in future. If we cannot ensure their good and healthy life, the nation itself will become weak". So Bangabandhu had a plan to turn children into creative human beings endowed with good education and knowledge.

He had as much true love for the poor and unprivileged

National Children's Day

Friday 17 March 2017

my party members, what would be the name of our country? Some proposed Pak-Bangla, some for Purbo Bangla. I said-no, it would be Bangladesh. Then I raised slogan, 'Joy Bangla'. In fact, they could not understand me. By joy Bangla, I wanted to mean the victory of the Bangla language, Bangladesh and the Bangali Nation. Which have been beyond communalism.

That means, everything was clear to Sheikh Mujib from that of 1947. It was known to him that his target was liberty. That is why, one step after another had to overcome. He was crossing through developments. The people of the Bengal shed their blood for language in 1952. They made the Jukta Front (United Front) victorious in 1954. Ayub Khan proclaimed the Martial Law in 1958. Sheikh Mujib visited all through the Bengal for organizing Awami League. He announced the Six Point. The Pakistani Junta became nervous. Sheikh Mujib was arrested in the Agartala Conspiracy Case. His trial began. There was a plot to kill him even during that imprisonment. The people of Bengal freed Bangabandhu from the prison through the Mass Uprising of 1969. They adorned him the title 'Bangabandhu' out of love. Bangabandhu contested in the election. Because he was confirmed, if Awami League took part in the election, it would emerge as the majority winning party of Pakistan. Even before the election he asserted, on winning the election once, my target would be to establish Bangladesh.

The events progressed accordingly. In the election of 1970, on being spell bound with the dream of liberation, the people of Bengal under the leadership of Bangabandhu voted for the 'Boat'. The Awami League of Bangabandhu appeared as the majority party in the whole Pakistan. But the Pakistanis disagreed to hand over power to the Bangalis.

And Bangabandhu also announced, I do not want the Premiership. I want emancipation of the people of Bengal. In his historic address of 7 March, 1971, Bangabandhu categorically declared, struggle this time is the struggle for liberation, struggle this time is the struggle of our independence.

On the fateful night of 25 March of 1971, the Pakistan Army as per their pre-planned design launched attack with cannons and tanks on the unarmed Bangalis. Then Sheikh Mujib Rahman declared the Independence of Bangladesh. He was taken away arrested and sent to the jail in Pakistan.

The people of Bangladesh, following his direction, converted every house into a fort and started confronting the enemy with whatever they had. They started defeating the Pakistani Army in every sector.

On the other hand, arrangements were made to hang Bangabandhu in the jail in Pakistan. A grave was excavated for him beside his cell. He said, I would not bow my head down. He said, even when walking gallows, I would say I am a Bangali, Bangla is my Language, Bangla is my country, Joy Bangla, Independent Bangla.

In the War of Liberation of 1971, 3 million people faced martyrdom. Two hundred thousand mothers and sisters were violated. Conceding their defeat, the Pakistani soldiers surrendered on 16 December, 1971.

Bangabandhu returned to the Independent Bangladesh on 10 January, 1972. He said, my dream has been fulfilled today, my Bangladesh is independent. Saying this he started crying. He said, the World Poet, you have said, 'you mesmerized mother, you have groomed up your 7 crore children as Bangali, not human'. The World Poet Rabindranath Tagore, you just come and see, we have redressed your regret. Turning down your perception, seven crore Bangalis today

children as he had enthusiasm for the growth of talent and intelligence of the talented and promising children. This love was not the result of any momentary emotional outburst; Bangabandhu tried earnestly for the growth of children in the society enjoying their rights and privileges. On 22 June 1974 he promulgated the National Child's Act. In this act, children's right to names and nationality was recognized. This act ensured children's right to a security from any negligence, cruelty, exploitation, oppression to them and the use of them in any unsocial activities.

Simultaneously with facing the various undesired and chaotic situations during the reconstruction of a devastated country after the independence, Bangabandhu started the work of building a future for the children. Had he not been killed by some reactionary forces by the end of three and a half years, he would have been able to take many other steps for the overall development of the unprivileged children. In that case perhaps the sick mentality of oppressing and killing children brutally would not have been seen in a class of people in the society. Bangabandhu's life-long dream was to build a healthy society free from all kinds of inequality.

Bangabandhu made an all-time effort to create a child-friendly environment which was necessary for making children into competent human beings. In 1972, the children of 'Konchikanchar Mela' (an association of young children) went to Gonobhabon with their self-drawn pictures. Bangabandhu decided to take those pictures to Russia when he was going there to present the children of that country with them. Looking at the artworks of the children with an impressed surprise, he exclaimed with joy that the children of our country could draw such perfect pictures. He had love for and attention to the children not only of his own country but also of all countries of the world. From 2001 to 2006 the national children's day did not exist in the country. However, at the private and party levels, this day was observed with due importance and grandeur. The national children's day has been being observed again since 2009.

It is not at all desirable that the plans and policies which are necessary for the progress and prosperity of the country and the people should change with the change of the government. Moreover, nobody or nothing else can be compared with Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. He is the architect of the independent Bangla, the father of the nation. His life and character can be considered as a model not only for the children of our country but also for those of the whole world. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is also an embodiment of the ideal persons like Socrates, Plato, Abraham Lincoln, Nelson Mandela, Fidel Castro, Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa and other famous leaders of the world. We can establish the golden moment of that man's birth day, 17 March, as an ideal for life-building before our children - the man from the bank of Modhumati who ended up as Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman through a life-long struggle with his heart-felt love for mother, mother tongue, soil and man - so that they can become good human beings in future. □

Translation: Professor M Jahurul Islam

have made the country independent through waging war and laying down their lives.

The independence of Bangladesh, in true sense, has been a lifelong dream of Bangabandhu. He has attained that. The Bangalis have achieved that sacrificing their lives.

Hatching conspiracy, however, did not stop. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman along with his family members were assassinated on 15 August, 1975. His two sons - Sheikh Kamal, Sheikh Jamal and two daughter-in-laws, his beloved wife Sheikh Fazilatunnesa, even his minor son Russel were also brutally killed by bullets. His two daughters Sheikh Hasina and Sheikh Rehana fortunately escaped, as they were abroad at that time.

Bangabandhu has given us an independent country. In his address on 10 January, 1972, Bangabandhu said, I firmly make it clear; Bangladesh would be an ideal state. And its foundation would not be on the basis of any specific religion. The founding pillars of the state will be democracy, socialism and secularism. The farmers, the labourers, the Hindus, the Muslims of this country will live happily, in peace.

Bangabandhu laid his life to establish that ideal.

It will be our duty to build up Sonar Bangla as dreamt by him. We can do it by discharging our respective duties in a perfect way. Such a view is expressed in the dialogues between Plato and Socrates - what is the most devoted patriotism? Performing own job most sincerely.

We have to learn from Bangabandhu, how we would love the country.



And if we can do our respective jobs properly with the spirit of patriotism, then the country will develop.

As the poet says, 'Mom if we do not wake up, how the dawn will come, the night will be over after your son is awake.'

If we wake up, the country will wake up, the dawn will come. If we enlighten ourselves, the country will be enlightened. Bangabandhu said, 'To build up Golden Bangla, we need the golden people.' You are those golden people of the dream of Bangabandhu. You are building up the Golden Bangla.

We will be able to build the country by building up ourselves competent in all the fields including education, science, culture and sports. If we can make ourselves as solid gold, then the golden country - the Golden Bangla dreamt by Bangabandhu will be built up. □

Translation: Md Saifullah

Seventeenth of March

Abu Hasan Shahriar

Not merely a date; seventeenth of March was the sacred tale of life To this luckless land on this fateful day Notes of the Spring, king of seasons came On the shore of eternal exploitation fields were dressed in Glory Bowers Rivers full of waves

And the full moon did grace the forehead of the night

Even the calendar was vocal because you were born

O, Great Soul! Your birthmark is visible on the Hihiri hills The couplets of the Chariapada eloquently spoke of your root You were a Santal in the beginning

You who are a primordial Peasants have your horoscope on waves of all these rivers, Rivulets, lakes and marshes

Hijal tree by the river-ghat knows where you buried your umbilical chord Only the soundlessness of sound knows you keep awake at the core of sound

You are praised by poets of oral verses that have the aroma of the soil The plough-blades of Tebhaga movement extol your virtues You were kin to the taste of rice in the sheer fantasy of the unfed

You were kin to the late Autumn's unswerving love You were kin to the fisherman's nets that nurture dreams And the blacksmith's hands that sparked

You taught dried up rivers the lessons of the seas And you whispered, come be yourselves waves River, you keep on raging and surge

In all thirsty souls, there reigns an endless story of the Spring: Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

Translation: Razia Sultana

Sleep-awakening Bird

Alam Talukder

On this auspicious day on this day of birth of Bangabandhu let's ask everyone let's all take an oath to lead the life of truth. The nation's father expected us to study sincerely through competition earn success and make life meaningful.