

16 December

THE GLORIOUS VICTORY DAY



Special Supplement

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



بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

**PRESIDENT
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF
BANGLADESH**

Message

16 December is our Victory Day, a glorious and memorable day in the history of the Bangali nation. On the eve of the day, I extend my sincere felicitations and warm congratulations to my fellow countrymen living at home and abroad.

Independence is the greatest achievement of the Bangali nation but it was not attained in a day. Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the undisputed leader, declared the historic independence on March 26, 1971 after overcoming various ups and downs and staging long movement and agitation against Pakistani government. The ultimate victory was achieved through a nine-month long war of liberation under his leadership. Today, I recall with profound respect the greatest Bangali of all time, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman whose boundless sacrifices, uncompromising and charismatic leadership contributed to the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent and sovereign state in world. I pay my deep homage to the valiant freedom fighters who made supreme sacrifice in the war of liberation for the cause of country's independence. I also extend my deep gratitude to the organisers and supporters and the people from all strata who directly and indirectly made meaningful contributions to our war of liberation. I extend my sincere thanks to UNESCO for the recognition of the historic 7th March speech of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as a world's important documentary heritage and include it in the 'International Memory of the World Register'. This recognition is the source of inspiration and a great pride for Bangali Nation.

The importance and significance of great victory day is boundless in our national history. On one hand victory has given us our own identity and on the other hand it has elevated us to world arena as an independent nation. But it is an irony that the path of development and the practice of democratic norms were not functioning smoothly all the time. The emergence of military autocracy and undemocratic government came into being after the assassination of Father of the Nation on 15 August in 1975 that hindered the flourishing of democratic pluralism. After about 6 years of exile, Sheikh Hasina, daughter of Bangabandhu, returned home on 17 May in 1981 and started movement against autocratic government for reviving democracy. Through a long struggle, democratic government has now been established in the country. With the formulation of appropriate planning and making its best implementation, Bangladesh has achieved manifold successes both at home and abroad. The mega projects like Padma Bridge are being implemented with our own resources. Construction of the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant is started and it will generate 2400 MW electricity by the year 2024. Bangabandhu Satellite will be launched soon. This will be a new horizon for the development of telecommunication sector. Bangladesh is now being considered as a role-model in the world for socio-economic development. These have been possible due to intellectual-mind, tireless hard work and undaunted courage of our people. Foreign Remittance being sent by expatriate Bangladeshis is making immense contribution to our national economy. They are also the proud partners of our development. The government has successfully attained the targets of MDGs and now providing its continued efforts to achieve the targets of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

Our foreign policy is being exercised in accordance with the principle "Friendship to all, malice to none" as adopted by the Father of the Nation. This year, Bangladesh has set a unique example by providing shelter to millions of forcefully displaced and tortured Rohingyas fled from Rakhine State of Myanmar on humanitarian ground. But it is very difficult for Bangladesh to bear the burden of such a huge homeless people. Bangladesh believes in a peaceful solution to the problem. I urge the UN and the international community, including Myanmar, to take immediate effective measures for the permanent settlement of this problem.

Millions have sacrificed their lives for our independence. Combined efforts are imperative to make the sacrifice meaningful. On the eve of the victory day, I urge the countrymen to make more contributions from their respective positions in implementing the spirit of the liberation war and take the nation towards a prosperous future.

The Government has set 'Vision 2021' and 'Vision 2041' for transforming Bangladesh into a developed country. I am hopeful that we would be able to materialise the visions within the stipulated time by utilizing our huge human resources and information technology, Insha Allah. On the occasion of great victory day, I hope that our coordinated efforts will turn Bangladesh into a hunger and poverty free prosperous 'Sonar Bangla' (Golden Bengal) as dreamt by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Khoda Hafez, May Bangladesh Live Forever.

Md. Abdul Hamid

Bangladesh is a Colourful Manifestation of Culture and Struggles

Obaidul Quader

Bangladesh is the name of a crimson sun rising from the lap of greenery drenched by the sweats of movements and the flow of blood from the hearts of three million martyrs. Bangladesh is a name that emerged from the movement to uphold the dignity of mother-language, graduating into the struggle for self-determination and independence. Bangladesh is a name that resulted from the thunderous roar of a voice that was echoed by seventy-five million people, causing the fire of resistance to spread all around and bringing about a triumphant victory. Bangladesh has been blessed with the footprints of great personalities starting from Bhusuku-Kahnapa, Alaol-Chandidas, and then Michael-Rabindra-Nazrul. The name of this colourful manifestation of struggles and culture is known as Bangladesh.

The Bangalis of Bangladesh have demonstrated their independent profile by coping with the frenzied fury of nature as well as external aggressions. The annals of



Bangalis are therefore a history of thousand year long struggles. Starting from the legendary Bangali conqueror Vijay Singh, passing through the path shown by the democratic icon Gopala and many blood-spilling processes of destructions and creations, the great hero of our history Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman emerged as the architect of a sovereign Bangladesh. Lakhs of Mujibs have evolved from the blood of one Mujib. The three water currents of the Ganges-Padma-Jamuna have flowed through the alluvial expanse of the Ganges valley since time immemorial by overcoming eternity. During this transformation, the Bangalis have taken lessons from the mother and the mother-language with an endless thirst for freedom. The Bangali is firstly a language warrior, and then a freedom fighter. The mother is mine, the country is mine - this is what Bangladesh represents. The mother language Bangla is its linguistic expression. That is why the cultural traditions of Bangalis mainly flow through its language stream. This realization at one point of time inspired the subjugated Bangalis with language-based nationalism. Then it blossomed into the appellation of a state based on Bangali nationalism.

Today, at this moment of blooming of the Bangali spirit on the global podium, I pay my deep respect to the Father of the Nation - the greatest Bangali of all times Bangabandhu

(Continued to the next page)



How the Bangalis' Thousand Years' Dream of Independence Came True

Shamsuzzaman Khan

The Bangalis' thousand years' dreams and aspirations materialized in the historic and unforgettable year of 1971. In history are written some hints like the Bangalis' desire for freedom, their indistinct hopes and aspirations like dream buds and small germinating seeds. There is written the story of their being burned to death for the audacity of jumping into that fire of dreamy freedom. Also written there is the story of Bangalis' innumerable sacrifices and self-sacrifices. Freedom is a gem which is always earned through a big ordeal. It takes many years and many plans to achieve this great gem and many people have to be urged and influenced to implement those plans gradually. In this process they go both forward and backward and finally they get their long-hoped-for and long-contemplated priceless freedom.

The achievement of Bangladesh's independence also came through that known path of history. It did not come all of a sudden in a day at the call of any Major General. It did not come in that impossible way; rather it came in the traditional systematic way. That history is the history of our liberation; if anyone wants to tell any other history, that will be fake, distorted and self-imagined. The fake, submissive and selfish historians of Bangladesh, so-called favour-aspirant intellectuals and bureaucrats, and the power-greedy politicians have appeared in the role of a burglar in making this imaginary and fabricated history with various ill motives in the name of correcting the history written before.

It is very difficult to say exactly when the history of our freedom started. Afflicted by sufferings and deprivation, when Bhushuk, the Chariyapada poet, said, "Bhushuk turned into a Bangali today", it is not that this utterance of that Buddhist Bangali scholar did not have any contributions to the renaissance of Bangla, to the building of the Bangalis' national spirit and distantly to the roadmap of independence. When the Bangalis give priority to Chariyapada to build their cultural inheritance, that utterance of poet Bhushuk has the unique reverberation of their birth-cry. Then that Bangali poet, a

(Continued to the next page)



بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

**PRIME MINISTER
GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S
REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH**



Message

Today is the 16 December, the Great Victory Day. This is the day of greatest pride for the Bangali nation. Responding to the clarion call of the greatest Bangali of all time, the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the Bangali nation earned the ultimate victory on this day in 1971 after 23 years of intense political struggle and a 9-month bloody war against, the Pakistani occupation forces.

I extend my sincere greetings and warm felicitations to the countrymen at home and abroad on the occasion of the 47th Victory Day. On this glorious day, I pay my deep homage to the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. I recall with gratitude the four national leaders, and three million martyrs, who sacrificed their lives and two hundred thousand women, who lost their innocence for the cause of our independence.

Bangali nation got prepared for independence waging the Language Movement of 1952, the Education Movement of 1962, the 6-point Demand of 1966, 11-point Movement and the Mass Uprising of 1969 under the undaunted and firm leadership of the Father of the Nation. Awami League earned an overwhelming majority in the general elections of 1970 through which Bangali nation's aspiration for independence got legal basis. Bangabandhu realized that the oppression, persecution and deprivation meted out to the Bangali nation would not be ended without achieving the independence. Ultimately, on the historic 7th March of 1971, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib in front of a million of people at the then Race Course Maidan declared that, "This time the struggle is for our freedom, this time the struggle is for the independence". Virtually, from that day, the final chapter had been started for achieving an independent Bangladesh. The country-wide non-cooperation movement had begun at the directives of Bangabandhu as part of the final preparations of the liberation War.

On the fateful night of 25 March of 1971, the Pakistani occupation forces launched a brutal onslaught and committed genocide on the innocent and unarmed Bangalis. The Father of the Nation declared independence of Bangladesh in the early hours of 26 March, 1971 resulting in the formal War of Independence.

On 10 April, 1971, the proclamation of independence was announced by the elected people's representatives and the first Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh was formed with Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, as the President, Syed Nazrul Islam as Vice-President and Tajuddin Ahmed as Prime Minister. This government was sworn-in on 17 April, 1971 at the historic Mujibnagar in Meherpur and led the war of independence. Under the leadership of this government, the liberation war had gained momentum. The heroic freedom fighters with the help of the allied forces earned the victory on the 16 December of 1971 by defeating Pakistani occupation forces and their local collaborators, Rajakars, Al-Badrs and Al-Shams. The nation ultimately earned an independent country, own national flag and national anthem. The heroism and patriotism of the Bangali nation created a new history in the world.

As Bangabandhu had engaged himself in the struggle to build a "Golden Bengal" reconstructing the war-ravaged country, the anti-liberation forces in collusion with the war criminals assassinated Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib along with most of his family members. Through the heinous killings of the 15 August, 1975, they initiated the politics of killings, coup and conspiracy and obstructed the process to try the killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib through promulgating Indemnity Ordinance. They ruined the democracy by declaring Martial Law and formed an illegal government. They distorted the glorious history of our independence. They defaced the Constitution and gagged the press freedom. The BNP-Jamaat alliance government had followed the paths of their predecessors.

The Bangali nation reestablished the democracy in 1996 through a long struggle and sacrifice. Our government's 1996-2001 tenure will always be manifested as a glorious period in our national history. The Bangali nation reestablished democracy and rights of the people in 2008 through a long struggle. The nation overwhelmingly voted in favour of Awami League, the party that led the War of Liberation, in the much-awaited parliamentary elections. The Awami League-led Grand Alliance Government ensured the franchise of the people by bringing the 15 amendment to the Constitution which prohibited usurpation of the state power.

The people of Bangladesh again made Awami League victorious in the 5 January election in 2014 and thereby preserved the continuation of the constitutional process. Our government has relentlessly been working for the development of the country and its people as per its election pledges.

Our government has been taking forward the country with immense developments in all sectors, including economy, agriculture, education, transport and communication, ICT, infrastructure, power generation, rural economy and diplomatic relations and cooperation during the last nine years. Bangladesh has already been elevated to a lower middle income country. In the index of economic progress, Bangladesh is one of the top five countries of the world.

Bangladesh has become the role model in development of the world. In the last fiscal, the GDP growth rate was 7.28%. The rate of poverty was reduced to 22 percent. People's income and purchasing capacity have substantially been raised. The per capita income has been raised to USD 1610. The foreign exchange reserve has now increased to USD 33 billion. Five crore people have been upgraded to the middle class group. The country has attained self-sufficiency in food production. The students are getting free textbooks. The literacy rate is now over 72%. Eighty three percent people of the country have come under the electricity coverage. The healthcare facilities are being provided to the doorsteps of the people. Thirty types of medicines are being provided to the poor free of cost. The life expectancy has risen to 71 years and 8 months. Digital Bangladesh has been established. Lots of projects have been implementing for the development in road, rail, highways, bridges, flyover, elevated express-ways, under-pass, waterways and overall communication infrastructures etc. across the country. The construction work of metro-rail project has been started. We are constructing the Padma bridge with own fund. We have executed the verdict of the trial of the killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib establishing the rule of law. The verdicts of the trials of the war criminals are also being executed. The trials of war criminals will be continued as per our pledges to the nation.

The historic 7th March Speech of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman has been included in the international memory of the world register as World Documentary Heritage by UNESCO. This recognition of the 7th March Speech has made the whole nation proud once again.

We have peacefully resolved the land boundary problem with India. Disputes with India and Myanmar on maritime boundary have also been resolved. Bangladesh's contribution to the various international forums for establishing global peace has been lauded. The world is now acclaiming Bangladesh for attaining remarkable progress in socio-economic fronts. All these were possible through continuation of the constitutional and democratic process.

We have been working relentlessly to build a hunger and poverty-free, and a peaceful middle-income Bangladesh by 2021, and a developed and prosperous one by 2041. We are hopeful of building a Golden Bangladesh as dreamt by the Father of the Nation through implementing the Visions 2021 and 2041.

Let us come and uphold the development and democratic spree being imbued with the spirit of the freedom struggle. Let us engage ourselves for the welfare of the country. Let this be our vow on the Victory Day of 2017.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu
May Bangladesh Live Forever.

Sheikh Hasina