



98th Birth Anniversary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

&


National Children's Day




Special Supplement

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PRESIDENT
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF
BANGLADESH

Message

On the occasion of the 98th birth anniversary of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and National Children's Day 2018, I pay my profound tribute to the memory of the greatest leader. On this auspicious day, I also convey my heartfelt greetings and felicitations to the children around the world including Bangladesh as this day is being observed as 'National Children's Day' across the country.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Father of the Nation, was born in Tungipara of Gopalganj district on 17 March in 1920. He was the architect of independent Bangladesh. Since his boyhood this most distinguished person was very kind and generous to the people but uncompromising on attaining rights. The leadership quality of Sheikh Mujib was noticed from his school life. In the early forties of the last century as a young student leader, he actively participated in politics having close association with Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy and Sher-e-Bangla A. K. Fazlul Haque. He was the dreamer of Bangali nation and an ardent exponent 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 Upsurge 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 did never compromise with the Pakistani rulers on the question of establishing rights.


On 7 March in 1971 Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman delivered the historic address before a mammoth gathering at Race Course Maidan ignoring the blood-shot eyes of the then Pakistani rulers which was the true mandate of emancipation of the Bangali. Considering the political situation and holding the emotion, dream and desire of the Bangali, Bangabandhu uttered in his speech with thunderous voice, "The struggle this time is a struggle for emancipation, the struggle this time is a struggle for independence" which was, in fact, the true charter of independence. In line with the historic address, Father of the Nation, finally, declared the long-cherished independence on 26 March in 1971. We achieved ultimate victory on December 16, 1971 through a nine-month long armed struggle under the leadership of Bangabandhu. How an address can rouse the whole nation, inspire them to leap into war of liberation for independence, the historic 7 March Speech by Bangabandhu is its unique example. UNESCO has recognized the 7 March Speech of Bangabandhu as part of the 'World's Documentary Heritage' and included it in the 'International Memory of the World Register' on 30 October 2017. As the Bangali, we feel proud of this. For his extraordinary contributions to the people, Bangabandhu and Bangladesh, thus, emerged as a unique symbol to the people of Bangladesh.

Bangabandhu is now the symbol of independence and the forerunner of freedom not only for the Bangali but also for the down-trodden and oppressed people of the world. He made immense contributions for establishing world peace and harmony including equality, friendship and democracy throughout his life. In his speech on 9 September in 1973 at the 4th Summit of Non-Aligned Movement, held in Algiers, Bangabandhu said, "Today the world is divided into two- the oppressor and the oppressed: I am for the oppressed".

We have to build our young generation with the spirit of noble qualities so that they can materialize Bangabandhu's dream of transforming the country into 'Sonar-Bangla' (Golden Bengal). Let us put our sincere endeavour to flourish the intrinsic values of our children from their very childhood. Let us 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 the observance of Bangabandhu's birthday as the 'National Children's Day' because our new generation will be able to know the life and works of Bangabandhu through observing the day and will contribute to build the nation imbued with the spirit of patriotism.

Bangabandhu is the eternal source of our inspiration. His works and ideology will remain everlasting in our midst. I pray to the Almighty for the salvation of the departed soul of Father of The Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on his 98th birth anniversary.

Khoda Hafez, May Bangladesh Live Forever.



Md. Abdul Hamid

Sheikh Mujib My Father

Sheikh Hasina

There is a beautiful picturesque village on the bank of the river Baigar. The name of that village is Tungipara. The river Baigar reaches the Madhumati river by following a meandering course. The river Baigar is one of the numerous branches of this Madhumati. There lay a green foliage of palm-tomal-hijal trees on the both sides of the river. The songs of 'Bhatiali' float from the mouths of boatmen on this river with oars in hand; the chirping of birds and the ripples of river-water create a fascinating environment.




The river Madhumati had flown beside this village nearly two centuries ago. Habitats were then built up on its bank. Due to the inviolable law of nature, the river has now moved further away. Many other villages also sprang up after the surfacing of shoals. Our forefathers had arrived in this small riverine village of natural splendour and beauty and settled down here with the goal of preaching Islam. Their trading and commercial activities were centred around the port of Kolkata. They started cultivating crops in fallow lands here together with the local peasants. Gradually, they built up Tungipara as a self-reliant and affluent habitat. At the outset, boat was the only mode of transport. Later, a steamer landing port developed at the Gopalganj thana.

Our ancestors, purchased landed properties at Tungipara village for dwelling. They built houses there by hiring masons and technicians from Kolkata. Those were completed in 1854. The remnants of those buildings still remain as a witness of time. The Pakistani invading forces burnt down the two buildings which were used as residences till 1971. After starting to reside in those buildings, our family began to expand and the number of settlements around the place also rose. My great grandfather Sheikh Abdul Hamid built a tin-roofed house on the north-eastern corner of that building. My grandfather Sheikh Lutfor Rahman started his family life in this dwelling. And my father was born here on 17 March 1920. My father's maternal grandfather Sheikh Abdul Majid named him as Sheikh Mujibur Rahman during his *Akika* (naming ceremony). My father was the first son of my grandmother who issued two daughters earlier. My grandmother's father therefore donated all his properties to her and said during *Akika*, "Maa (daughter) Saira, I have given your son such a name that it will be famous all over the world."


My father's childhood was spent diving in the river-water at Tungipara and getting dusty on the rural-path passing through the field. He used to get soaked in the muddy

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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 98th 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 Lutfor 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 upsurge 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 Sheikh Mujib 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. We have already formulated a time befitting Children policy for the welfare of the children. The students are being provided with free textbooks on the first day of every year. Around 100 percent children are now enrolling at the schools. The government has published many books based on the glorifying life and activities of Bangabandhu and also included the true history of our liberation war in the textbooks. 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 build a non-communal, hunger-poverty-free and happy-prosperous Sonar Bangladesh 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


Creation of the Past
Creator of Our History

Anisuzzaman

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was at the same time a product of history as well as the creator of our history. And to put it correctly, he was more a creator of history than its creation. His school-life was spent in Gopalganj. The tide of Bengal's politics, sometimes of Indian politics, and occasionally of global events during and after the Second World War hit that place as well. He was at first attracted towards the *Swadeshi* (homeland) movement after hearing about the sacrifices of armed revolutionaries as well as the revolutionary exploits of Poornachandra Das at Madaripur near his home. He became a fan of Subhas Chandra Bose near the fag end of his life. In 1938, a reception, meeting and exhibition were arranged in honour of the then Prime Minister of Bengal A K Fazlul Haque and the labour minister Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy on their arrival in Gopalganj. Sheikh Mujib, then a school student, was made the leader of the volunteers' group on that occasion. However, as directed by Congress, the upper caste Hindus removed themselves from this program at the last moment. This touchable and untouchable phenomenon of Hindu society experienced during that reception hurt Sheikh Mujib immensely and welded exceptional influence in his mind. The next year, he met Suhrawardy by going to Kolkata and then formed the Muslim Chhatra League and Muslim League in Madaripur after returning home. He himself became the secretary of Chhatra League and also took the responsibility of directing the activities of the person who became the Muslim League secretary.

There were two factions within Bengal Provincial Muslim League. One was led by Mohammad Akram Khan-Khwaja Nazimuddin, and the other by Suhrawardy-Abul Hashim. The second group was considered to be a progressive one. They tried to give Muslim League the shape of a people's institution and declared a resolve to dismantle the Zamindari system. Sheikh Mujib got himself involved in this group and became a full-time activist of Muslim League as advised by Abul Hashim. A terrible famine befell Bengal in 1943. Then a student of Islamia

College, Sheikh Mujib worked day and night in the gruel-kitchens, occasionally returning to the Baker Hostel at night and sometimes passing the night by sleeping in the Muslim League office. The Muslim League issued a call for observing 'direct action day' on 16 August 1946. On the eve of that day, Suhrawardy asked his workers to take care so that the day was observed peacefully. Abul Hashim asked them to convince the Hindu neighbourhoods that the day was not against the Hindus, rather it was being observed as part of the movement against British rule. But the most terrible killings took place in Kolkata centring on that day, which later spread to Noakhali and Bihar. A group of workers led by Sheikh Mujib then exerted all their might in rescuing Muslim female students from Hindu areas and escorting Hindu teachers through Muslim areas.



It was not that Sheikh Mujib liked all the decisions of the Muslim League. But it was not possible for him to speak out openly against those as he was a worker. Examples include stands against replacement of the word 'states' by 'state' in the Lahore resolution of 1947, sabotage of the proposal by Suhrawardy-Abul Hashim to constitute an independent and sovereign Bengal, and unseating Suhrawardy by issuing directive for electing a new leader of the East Bengal legislative assembly. Sheikh Mujib viewed the last instance as a conspiracy by some leaders of central

Muslim League against Suhrawardy; he later felt that it was the beginning of the conspiratorial politics in the then Pakistan.

When Sheikh Mujib took leave of Kolkata after the partition of India, Suhrawardy asked him to take care so that no communal riots broke out in Pakistan. When an initiative was taken to constitute the Ganotantrik Jubo League in Dhaka in September 1947, Sheikh Mujib said that the only objective of that organization should be to work for communal harmony. Opposing the adoption of an economic program by Ganotantrik Jubo League, he opined that such demands should not be raised then as the country had achieved independence only two months earlier. Not only did he remove himself from that initiative, he forced the removal of the signboard of Ganotantrik Jubo League from the Moghaltuli office of Muslim League after it was hung there; he also asked the Jubo League workers to leave the place along with their belongings. But he could not maintain his confidence on the Muslim League regime for long. Therefore, he took the initiative to form East Pakistan Muslim Chhatra League in opposition to the All East Pakistan Muslim Chhatra League formed under government patronage. The question of state language came up in the month of February and Chhatra League took a stand in favour of Bangla. Sheikh Mujib was arrested while picketing before the secretariat after joining the strike called by state language action council on 11 March 1948. It was the first time that he was put behind bars in Pakistan. He was expelled from Dhaka University in 1949 while leading the movement of class four employees of the university, and was again put behind bars. The new political party Awami Muslim League was born while he was in jail, and he was elected as one of the two joint secretaries of the party.

The democratic movements in Pakistan and the life of Sheikh Mujib became almost inseparable after that. He demonstrated extraordinary organizational acumen as the general secretary of Awami Muslim League during the decade of 1950s. The cabinet was dissolved by the central government sixteen days after he became a minister for the first time. He left the job of a minister another time in order to concentrate on his party's organizational tasks. The latter incident showed the extent of greedless disposition in his character. He played a notable role in omitting the word Muslim from the Awami Muslim League and adoption of a resolution in the provincial assembly in favour of a joint electoral system for East Bengal. As a member of the constituent assembly, he proposed the omission of Islamic Republic from the country's name in the first constitution of Pakistan; naming of the province as East Bengal instead of East

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