



Special Supplement

Thursday 10 January 2019

Art & Design : Department of Films & Publications (DFP) ♦ Assistance : Press Information Department (PID) , Ministry of Information



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



PRESIDENT
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF
BANGLADESH

Message

Today is the historic 10 January, the Homecoming Day of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. On this day in 1972, Father of the Nation returned independent and sovereign Bangladesh after 9 month and 14 days of imprisonment in Mianwali Jail in Pakistan. Though we achieved ultimate victory on 16 December in 1971 through armed struggle but the true essence of victory came into being upon returning home of Father of the Nation. On this memorable day, I pay my profound homage to Father of the Nation and pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

This year the Homecoming Day is more significant than any other time as the people of the country have cast their votes for Sheikh Hasina, the daughter of Bangabandhu to run the country for the three consecutive terms and materialize the dream of Bangabandhu through the 11th Parliamentary Election. I believe that this is the true reflection of deep trust and confidence in Bangabandhu and the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

The contribution of Father of the Nation to the struggle for our independence was incomparable. This visionary leader led the nation in every movement including the All Party State Language Movement Council in 1948, Language Movement in 1952, Jukta-Front Election in 1954, Movement against Martial Law being proclaimed by Gen. Ayub Khan in 1958, Movement against Education Commission in 1962, Six-Point Movement in 1966, Mass Uprising in 1969 and the General Election in 1970 where Awami League won landslide victory. Though the Awami League had won absolute majority in the General Election of 1970, the Pakistani rulers were reluctant to hand over power and therefore, the freedom loving people of the country started Non-cooperation movement under the leadership of Bangabandhu. On 7th March, 1971 Bangabandhu delivered a historic speech at Racecourse Maidan which was indirectly indicated the declaration of our independence. At the mammoth gathering he uttered in his thunderous voice, "The struggle this time is a struggle for emancipation. The struggle this time is a struggle for independence".

On 25 March 1971, the invading army of Pakistan as part of their blueprint committed genocide by launching "Operation Searchlight" with a view to destroying Bangladesh. Against this backdrop, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman declared country's independence at the early hours on 26 March and called upon the countrymen to take part in the war of liberation and fight until the last soldier of the occupation army is expelled from the soil of Bangladesh. Immediately after the declaration of independence, the Pakistani Junta arrested Bangabandhu from his residence of 32 Dhammondi and confined him in Mianwali Jail in Pakistan. In absence of Bangabandhu, the liberation war was being conducted under his leadership. On 16 December, 1971 the Bangali nation achieved ultimate victory.

Stepping into the soil of newborn independent Bangladesh on January 10 in 1972, Bangabandhu was overwhelmed by feelings of emotion. In front of hundreds of thousands people gathered at the Racecourse Maidan, he said, "The dream of my life has been fulfilled today. My Sonar Bangla is now free and a sovereign State has been emerged". He was sentenced to death during his imprisonment in Pakistan Jail but Bangabandhu told, "I will say, while going to the gallows, I am Bangali, Bangla is my country and Bangla is my language. Joi Bangla". Such an example of profound love for country and people is rare in the world.

The anti-liberation forces wanted to wipe out the ideal and principle of Bangabandhu and tried to tarnish the image of sovereign Bangladesh through the assassination of Bangabandhu and his family members on 15 August 1975. But the Bangali is a nation of intrepidity. As long as Bangladesh and the Bangalis exist, Bangabandhu will remain as the eternal source of our inspiration.

The present government under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the illustrious daughter of Bangabandhu, has been making untiring efforts for the progress and development of the country. Bangladesh, in the meantime, is now being considered worldwide as a 'role model' for its development in various sectors including education, health, agriculture, information technology, empowerment of women etc. I am confident that with this pace of development, Bangladesh will be a developed country by 2041, InshaAllah.

On the Homecoming day of Bangabandhu, let us take the pledge to continue the advancement of our country by implementing the unfinished tasks of this great leader imbued with the spirit of war of liberation.

Khoda Hafez, May Bangladesh Live Forever.

Md. Abdul Hamid

Md. Abdul Hamid

My request from today, my orders and directives as a brother, not a leader, not as the President or Prime Minister- I am your brother, you are my brother- this Independence will be futile unless my people of Bangla can have square meals. This Independence will remain incomplete if our mothers and sisters do not have clothes to wear. This Independence will bear no fruit if the youth do not have jobs, do not have work. Mukti Bahini and student community and workers- I congratulate you all. You all have been guerilla, you all have shed blood- this blood will not go in vain. Your blood has not gone in vain.

Just one word for you - make sure there is no theft, robbery, burglary or looting in this Bangla. The people who are inhabiting in Bangla, the people from other countries, the people of West Pakistan- those who do not speak in Bangla. I also say today you all become Bangalis. And I advise our brothers not to raise hands on them.

We are human, we love human beings. But those who had collaborated and assisted the occupation forces, those who killed my people in their homes shall be tried and punished. Leave the responsibility of the trial to the government of the independent Bangladesh. Nobody will be spared. But I want that they shall be tried as citizens of an independent country in the independent courts. I want to demonstrate to the world community that the peace loving Bangalis know how to give blood as well as how to maintain peace.

You have got me back. I am amidst you. I did not know that there had been an order for hanging me. A grave was dug beside my prison cell. I was ready- I said I am a Bangali. I am a human being and I am a Muslim- who can die once only. I told them if the death is dawned on me, I will embrace it with smiles. I will never do anything which will defame the Bangali nation. I will never bow down my head to you, and will say aloud- Joi Bangla (triumph is with Bangla), independent Bangla, Bangali is my national identity. Bangla is my language and my place is ever on the soil of Bangla.

My brethren, we have still to do many works. You know- I want to urge all the people where there are shattered and damaged roads, to please go and start rebuilding those. I want to see you grow rice in the field; want to warn all the employees that nobody shall take bribe. I will not forgive any vices. Brethren, I was dispatched under arrest. Tajuddin and Nazrul came to me. I told them- let me die with the seventy million Bangalis. I bless you. They were weeping. I told them Leave me and carry on struggle - my soul is with you. I want to die in this very house. I want to die in this city. We cannot bow down our heads to them.

My brethren, there has been an interrogation for long three months. Dr. Kamal was directed to give witness against me. Several Bangalis stood witnesses against me. They are familiar and known to us. They shall be punished. I cannot give speech today. You may realize. I adore my beautiful country. When I touched under Dhaka, my soul knew no bounds with joy. I could not hold my tears. I did not know whether I would ever be able to return to this Bangladesh - the land, the people and the identity of which I love very much.

Today I have returned to Bangladesh. I have returned to my people. My Bangla is independent. Today, the people of my Bangla are independent. I told the brethren in West Pakistan - stay in happiness. We do not possess any hatred against you. We would try to respect you. Your army perpetrated havoc in this country- they ravaged our women. My three million people have been decimated. Leave us. Let yourselves live in happiness. No more with you. All is ended. You stay independent. We also want stay independent. There may be a relationship with you as the citizens of an independent country. There cannot be friendship other way. But those who have committed injustice and crime shall be brought to the book appropriately.

I beg apology to you. I will address you some other day when my health will be slightly recovered. You see - I am not the Mujibur Rahman once you saw. If you look at my Bangla, you will find it has been razed to the ground - villages after villages have been burned. There is hardly any house where my people have not been killed. What a dastardly act! The military killed my innocent people indiscriminately. What a contradiction! They claim themselves as the Muslim military of Pakistan. Loathe such acts. It should have been known that this Bangladesh is the second largest country of Muslim population only after Indonesia. We have the second largest Muslim population. And India is the third, while West Pakistan is the fourth. We are Muslims. Can a Muslim rape Muslim women?

We are Muslims. There will be socialism in my state in this Bangladesh. There will be democracy in this Bangladesh. This Bangladesh will be a secular state. Those who want to know, I would like to inform whatever discussion I had with Mrs. Indira Gandhi in Delhi on the way back. I can tell you that I know her. I have regards for her. She is the daughter of Pundit Nehru; she is the daughter of the son of Motilal Nehru. They did politics, they sacrificed. They became the Prime Ministers of India. When I will want, Indian Army will leave Bangladesh. And she has been withdrawing her army gradually.

I express, on behalf of my seventy million distressed Bangalis, my gratitude from the core of my heart to Mrs. Gandhi, her government, the people of India for the help they had provided to my people. There is no head of state to whom she had not pleaded with for my release. I remain ever grateful to her. She personally approached all the states with a request- you please tell Yahya Khan to set Sheikh Mujib free. For forging a political solution.

Ten million people left homeland for another country. There are many countries where the total population is one million, 1.5 million, 2 million, 3 million, 4 million or 5 million. The population of about 60 per cent of the countries is below 10 million; while over from my Bangla 10 million people had left the homeland into India. Many die of illness there. Many suffered from want of food.

Many houses were set on fire by these brutes. Today I have grudge against none. Do not say anything to anybody. One who has committed offence shall be punished. Do not take law and disciplinary action into your hands. The young freedom fighters- you accept my salute; the student community - you accept my salute; the worker community - you accept my salute; the farmer community - you accept my salute, the wretched Hindus and Muslims of Bangla- you accept my salute. I salute all of you and express my respect to those of my employees, the police, the EPR on whom the machine guns were triggered- who had to flee away their near and dear ones and whose wives were arrested and dragged to Kurmitola.

This Bangladesh will grow anew. The people of Bangladesh will have smiles on their faces, they will have frolics in their life, they will breathe the fresh air and have square meals- this has been the worship and longing in my life. I want to live with this thought until my death. You will pray for this. I want to take leave of you with these words. I thank all my comrades- they all are here, they all have proven one by one that Mujib Bhai gave the call to carry on struggle, to liberate the land, to sacrifice the lives, to free the people of Bangla - and not to worry about me. I told them I am leaving, if I can return, though I knew I would not be able, but Allah is there. This is why I could have come back to you. My comrades- I congratulate all of you. I know what a pain you had to bear. I was in captivity in the prison. I was not given any paper for nine months.

Address of Bangabandhu at Racecourse on January 10, 1972

The Sovereignty of Bangladesh will last for Eternity

[On this day in 1972, the architect of the Independence of Bangladesh, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman returned home after nine and a half months of captivity in the prisons of Pakistan. Millions of people had accorded a heartiest welcome to Bangabandhu when he arrived at Tejgaon Airport from New Delhi by a special flight of British Airways at 1:41 pm. The road from Shahbag to Tejgaon Airport was jam-packed with crowd of people who were eagerly waiting to see their dearest leader. A mammoth crowd of hundreds of thousands had gathered at the Ramna Racecourse where he was driven in an open truck after his arrival. The mammoth crowd was comparable to the huge multitude that had assembled at the Racecourse ground on 7th March. This was a singular moment in the lives of 70 million people. The occasion was more joyful because Bangabandhu's life had been saved from the jaws of the devil in the midst of the trial of death and destruction of a war ravaged land. The Father of the Nation addressed a mammoth meeting of about one million people that day. The text of the address is presented below.]

I would like to say a few words to you after expressing my profound respect to and praying for the salvation of the departed souls of the students, labourers, farmers, intelligentsia, sepoys, soldiers, people, Hindus and Muslims of my Bangladesh who have been killed. My Bangladesh is independent today. The dream of my life is materialized today. The people of my Bangla are liberated now. My Bangla will remain independent. I cannot deliver speech today. The boys of Bangla, the mothers of Bangla, the farmers of Bangla, the labourers of Bangla, the intelligentsia of Bangla have waged struggle. I was in captivity in the prison of Pakistan. I was prepared for going into the gallows, but I knew none could suppress my Bangalis. People of my Bangla would surely be independent. I express my respect to my brothers who have sacrificed their lives and embraced martyrdom. I pray for salvation of their departed souls. Three millions of people have been killed. So many people did not die or embrace martyrdom even in World War II and even in World War I, which has happened to my seventy million people. I did not know that I could return to you. So I told them only one thing, I will not object if you kill me, but after my death send my body to my Bangalis. This is my request.

I express my gratitude to the Prime Minister of India Mrs. Indira Gandhi. I express gratitude to the people of India. I express my gratitude to the armed forces of India. I express gratitude to the people of the USSR. My gratitude is to the people and governments of the UK, Germany, France and elsewhere who supported me. I express my gratitude to the people of the USA. I express gratitude to the toiling masses of the world who helped our war of liberation. I have to mention that 10 million people who had left the country were sheltered in India. The people of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi gave them food. I could not express my gratitude to them. Those whose ever extended help to us deserve our gratitude. But it shall be remembered that Bangladesh is an independent and sovereign country. This sovereignty will stay for eternity. Nobody can suppress Bangladesh. No conspiracy will succeed in Bangla. I also said before my departure, this time it was the struggle for freedom. It was the movement for emancipation. You have materialized that. I urged you all to build forts in every house. You built forts to fight out the enemies. I congratulate my comrades. Many of our brothers, workers, mothers and sisters are no more on earth. It is not possible to see them again. I have seen the people of Bangla; I have seen the soil of Bangla; I have seen the sky of Bangla; felt the atmospherics of Bangla. I salute my Bangla. Oh my Golden Bangla. I love you so much. Allah has therefore rescued me.



I do not have roads; I do not have ports; my people do not have foods, they are homeless and empty handed. My people have been put on the street. I appeal to all the states of the world to come forward with help. I want your help for the sake of humanity. I want help from all the states of the world. Please recognise my Bangladesh and give her a place in the United Nations. You have to give, there is no way out, you have to provide. We will not accept defeat; we do not know any defeat.

Kaviguru Rabindranath once sighed, Oh Mother Bangla! you have not allowed your seventy million children to grow into manhood but only kept them as Bangalis. Hey Kaviguru, your words have been proved to be untrue. My Bangalis now possess all the virtues of human. My Bangalis have set an example that they are unmatched in their sacrifice. In the history of the world, there have not been so many sacrifices and losses of life. So I claim that nobody can suppress us.



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



PRIME MINISTER
GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S
REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

Message

The greatest Bangali, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman returned to independent Bangladesh on the 10 January of 1972 after over nine and a half months' captivity in a Pakistan jail. The 10 January is one of the memorable days in the history of the liberation struggle of the Bangali.

Bangladesh Awami League achieved absolute majority in the 1970 election under the leadership of the Father of the Nation. But the Pakistani military junta continued to cling to power ignoring the people's mandate staging various farces. Aiming at an ultimate target to free the Bangali nation, Bangabandhu in his address at the then historic Racecourse Maidan on the 7th March in 1971 declared, "This time the struggle is for our freedom, this time the struggle is for the independence". The Pakistani occupation forces launched brutal attack on the innocent Bangali and carried out massacre on the night of the 25 March in 1971. Bangabandhu declared Independence of Bangladesh at the first hour of the 26 March.

Just after his declaration of the independence, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was arrested and subsequently sent to a solitary confinement in Pakistani jail. He was subjected to inhuman torture in the jail where he had been counting moments for being executed after his death sentence was pronounced in a farcical trial. Even in the face of imminent death, he rejoiced the spirit of the Bangali nation. He was the inspiration of the freedom fighters. Under his undisputed leadership, the Bangali nation earned the ultimate victory waging the 9-month war. The defeated Pakistani rulers were compelled to free Bangabandhu. The Father of the Nation returned to the independent Bangladesh on the 10 January 1972. While speaking before a mammoth gathering at the then Racecourse Maidan on the day, he narrated the inhuman torture of the Pakistani military junta meted out on the people of Bangladesh. The Bangali Nation got back the Father of the Nation and their victory attained the fulfilment.

After his return, the Father of the Nation devoted all his efforts to rebuild the war-ravaged Bangladesh. Responding to his call, many international organizations, including the United Nations and friendly countries quickly recognized Bangladesh. Bangladesh became a member of OIC in 1974. Within a short time under the charismatic leadership of Bangabandhu, Bangladesh made a strong position in the world.

As Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib had engaged himself in the struggle to build a "Golden Bangladesh" reconstructing the war-torn country, the anti-liberation forces in collusion with the war criminals assassinated Bangabandhu 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, distorted the glorious history of our independence, defaced the constitution and gagged the press freedom. The BNP-Jamaat alliance government had followed the paths of their predecessors.

We reestablished the democracy in 1996 through a long struggle and sacrifice. Our government's 1996-2001 tenure will always be marked 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 Bangladesh Awami League, the party that led the War of Liberation, in the much-awaited parliamentary elections. Awami League-led Grand Alliance government ensured the franchise of the people by bringing the 15th amendment to the constitution which prohibited usurpation of the state power.

The people of Bangladesh again made the Awami League victorious in the 5 January 2014 election 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.

Bangladesh has become the 'Role Model' of development in the world. Our government has accomplished immense developments in all sectors, including economy, agriculture, education, health, transport and communication, ICT, infrastructure, power generation, rural economy and diplomatic relation and cooperation during the last ten years. We have also joined the elite club of the satellite technology as the 57th nation through the launching of Bangabandhu Satellite-1. Our GDP growth rate is now 7.86 percent, the highest in our history. The poverty rate in the country has now declined to 21.8 percent, and the hardcore poverty rate stands at 11.3 percent. Our per capita income is USD 1751. Our students are getting textbooks at free of cost. The literacy rate is now 73 percent. 93% people are under electricity coverage. We hope, 100 percent household will be brought under electricity coverage very soon. Healthcare facilities have reached the doorsteps of the common people. The average life expectancy of the people has jumped to 72.8 years. Digital Bangladesh is now a reality. For the first time in the world, we have formulated a hundred year plan named 'Delta Plan 2100'. Bangladesh is one of the five top countries in the world in economic development. Ninety percent of development work is done by our own resources. We have executed the verdict of the trial of the killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman 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. Due to the continuation of Awami League government for 10 years, grassroot people are now getting the dividend of the development. Bangladesh is moving forward and it will continue. The next generation will get a prosperous Bangladesh.

The people made Bangladesh Awami League victorious in the recent 11th parliamentary election. We will fully honour the huge mandate that the people of our country have given us. We will turn Bangladesh into a middle income country by 2021 and a developed one by 2041, InshaAllah.

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 and nation. Let us build a hunger-poverty-free and happy-prosperous Sonar Bangladesh as dreamt by Father of the Nation.

I pray for his departed soul on the occasion of the homecoming day of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu
May Bangladesh Live Forever.

Sheikh Hasina

Sheikh Hasina

True, while I was returning, Mr. Bhutto requested me to see if some sort of tie between the two countries could be made. I said, I cannot say anything; I do not know where I am. I will reply when I will be back to my Bangla - my land.

I reply now, Mr. Bhutto, may you live in peace. The bondage has been torn. If you want to snatch the freedom of my Bangla in collusion with any special power - keep this time in mind, Mujib would be the first man to lay down his life for the preservation of Independence.

My brethren- I have 400 thousand Bangalis in West Pakistan. I would say one thing. My colleagues, on your approval, an enquiry has to be made at the international forum under the UN supervision, on behalf of the World Jurisdiction. The world has to be informed what a brutality was perpetrated on my people. I would demand of the United Nations to give a place to Bangladesh immediately and conduct an inquiry into it.

My brethren- I know the conspiracy is not yet ended. Be aware of the conspiracy! It is not yet over. One day, I urged you to build forts in every house. You were urged to jump into the wars with whatever you have in your hands. On this place on March 7, I voiced - this struggle is for the Independence, this struggle is for the freedom. Today I urge you all to stay right and united. Do not listen to anybody. By the willing of Allah, we have become independent, we will keep on independent. No one will be able to snatch our Independence until a person is alive on this Bangladesh.

I cannot give speech any more. I will return to you for addressing when my health will be slightly improved. Pardon me and keep me in your prayers.

Translation : *M Liaquat Ali Khan*