

Special Supplement

The National Mourning Day Sunday 15 August 2021

15 August Tragedy: Roadmap to... (Continued from previous page)

Bengal to the suppression of his senior and vastly superior Bangalee Golam Morshed. The Chief Secretary Aziz Ahmed was then writing Annual Confidential Reports on the Bangalee Ministers for the rulers in Karachi. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's resolve for the achievement of an independent Bengal never weakened but he sometimes changed strategy. In 1963, Sheikh Mujib indirectly dialogued with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the Indian Prime Minister through Sree Sachindra Sinha, Chief Minister of Agartala. He thereafter abandoned the idea of an unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) and of forming up a government in exile in London. Then came the weapon of six point programme and the clamour for the rights of East Pakistan still within a united country.

The general election of 1970 presented an opportunity for Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to Checkmate Yahya-Bhutto unholy alliance. President Yahya's desire to become an "Elected President" prompted him to induce Bangabandhu to accept the election under LFO with "one man one vote" formula. He knew, a general election in Pakistan without the participation of Bangabandhu and his Awami League would be waste paper basket sure. Bangabandhu on the other hand, jumped on the opportunities as he was reasonably sure, Bangalees will support his now proverbial six points programme. Bangabandhu's bait to Yahya Khan was the chance for him to become the President of Pakistan in preference to Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. It worked until Bangabandhu captured absolute majority in the



The Father of the Nation is praying to Almighty Allah for the peace of the country and the people

Pakistan National Assembly (162 out of 300 seats) frightened Yahya Khan to surrender to Bhutto machinations.

The glorious struggle for liberation and the independence war was fought in the name of and led (in absentia) by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The Bangalee Freedom Fighters fought valiantly in the front and in guerilla warfare tactics as appropriate. The people (65m) who did not seek shelter in the friendly neighboring country were inspired by and charged with the spirit of independence declared by Bangabandhu on 7th March 1971. There is no parallel in history: an entire population took to heart Sheikh Mujib's categorical announcement of March 07, "..... the struggle this time is of (economic) emancipation; the fight at this round is for independence." On the dawn of 26 March 1971,

they jumped on the occupation army at unleashing the genocide. The entire people heeded Sheikh's clarion call, "..... build a fort in each house and with whatever weapon you have, jump on the enemy" and engaged in warfare with bamboo, boat oar and axes against the well-equipped occupation forces. Another such instance of showing loyalty to the charismatic leader is difficult to find.

UNESCO has rightfully enriched its treasure of human heritage by accepting the 7th March speech as an integral part of it.



United Nations Secretary General Kurt Waldheim meets Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

The Teachings, Ideas and the Environment

The Father of the Nation during his childhood saw in his father Sheikh Lutfur Rahman a person of honesty, integrity and defender of the just cause. "My son is doing the right things, he is fighting for our independence. I am very proud of him even if he has to go to jail for his patriotic activities" told the father Sheikh to the complainers. The mother, Saira Khatun was a model of faithfulness as she refused to leave the village house and the properties left to her custody. Head Master Babu Rasnirajan Sengupta and one of the house tutors Kazi Abdul Hamid transmitted good values to Sheikh Mujib. Begum Fazilatun Nesa Mujib was a tower of strength throughout. Confidence with which Bangabandhu ascended the zenith of success perhaps originated in 1938. The Bengal Premier AK Fazlul Huq and Minister HS Suhrawardy visited Gopalganj and explicitly recognized the leadership quality of young Mujib. In the Islamia College, the enlightened Professor Sayeedur Rahman and the progressive General Secretary of Bengal Muslim League Abul Hashim animated the patriotic thoughts to Sheikh Mujib. He was also impressed by the trio, Mayor Chittaranjan Das (Deshbandhu C.R. Das), Deputy Mayor HS. Suhrawardy and the Chief Executive Officer Subhash Chandra Bose (Netaji) in their pro-poor policy and an absolutely non-communal stance : 60% of all new recruits would be muslims until parity was achieved. Hands-on experience in providing relief to the 1943 famine stricken and the forceful stand against the communal riots in 1946 prepared Mujib for public service.

To the young Mujib, Netaji provided the magic for defeating the British Raj without the arms. Since 1937, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman would sing the motto of the Bratachari Movement of Guru Saday Dutta, an approximate translation reads: Never harbor hatred and jealousy in your mind. Let not others wealth makes you greedy. Shere Bangla's Krishak-Praja stances impressed Bangabandhu all the while. Suhrawardy was his political guru without any doubt. Rebel Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam was an idol.

Contrary to the hate campaign by the defeated detractors, the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman led the independent Bangladesh for three years seven months with remarkable efficiency, courage, innovation, foresight and love for the poor. The constitution passed by the National Assembly within nine months, an exceptionally modern-scientific-mother tongue oriented education policy, a masterly crafted Five Year Plan (1973-78) strongly advocating growth with equity, a spectacular revival of the economic growth (7.8% GDP growth in 1974-75), espousing the cause of "my sincere friends in peasants and workers" and "friendship to all, adversity to none", cooperatives for eliminating economic rent are only some examples of Sheikh Mujib management success. We hail him and rededicate ourselves to repay the blood debt to him by completing the ongoing work of a welfare state in Sonar Bangla. No doubt, BAKSAL would have long ago transformed Bangladesh to glorious heights of prosperity. □

The author is former Governor, Bangladesh Bank and PS to Bangabandhu.

Father, it is you who still flow

Minar Monsur

'I know Bangla's soil, Bangla's pulse'. - Bangabandhu

The shapeless assassin holds the caddish gun in his two accursed hands; The headless assassin drifts in time holding his ungalant gun - Like the cunning threadlike snake immersed up to neck in water-hyacinth. He only keeps on searching the eternally insolent head of Chand Bonik. The little river's water fumes; the parched water of tiny river seethes. History is a witness - as is also the sleepless Behula.

'As we have learnt to die

Nobody can suppress us' - Bangabandhu

Wherefrom does so much water come up? From where does so much water gush out? The barrel of the gun roars The gun's barrel rumbles Say Khudiram, tell us wherefrom so much water arise? The gun's barrel roars Its target is the fountainhead of eternal Bangla.

The Bay of Bengal spreads out its bosom before the roaring gun The thirteen hundred rivers also lay down their chest The forest of brave she-tigers and Sundari tree stretches its bosom The invincible hill of Jalalabad puts up its trunk That Buddhist Monastery of Paharpur spreads its chest The Sixty-domed Mosque offers its heart The Temple of Adinathputs up its bosom.

'I bought arms with my money for protecting the country from external enemies; today those arms are being used against the poor-miserable unarmed people of my country; shots are being fired on their chest'. -Bangabandhu

The shapeless assassin only knows guns - only guns! His Accursed two hands hang over his head forever like ropes of gallows And his monstrous existenceremains attached to the gun Spreading terrible smell like that of rotting whale Spreading its hideous odour all around Drifts on the drains and gutters of extinct history.

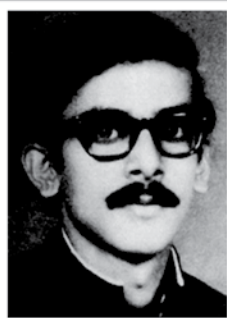
O' poet you flow along forever, it is you who still flow - father Inside the seared veins of a wretched Bangla.

Translation: Dr HelalUddin Ahmed

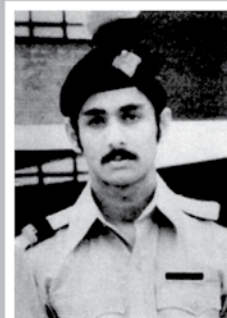
The Martyrs of 15 August



Begum Fazilatunnesa



Sheikh Kamal



Sheikh Jamal



Sheikh Russel



Sultana Kamal



Parvin Jamal Rosy



Sheikh Abu Naser



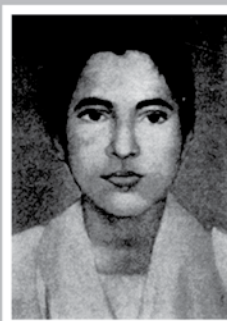
Sheikh Fazlul Haque Moni



Begum Arzoo Moni



Abdur Rab Serniabat



Baby Serniabat



Col. Jamiluddin Ahmed



Shahid Serniabat



Arif Serniabat



Sukanto Abdullah



Abdul Naim Khan Rintu

Bangabandhu- The Eternal... (Continued from previous page)



Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman with his parents

strategies of socio-economic development. He took notes on how the menaces of begging and prostitution were eradicated. He was also keen to learn about the policy initiatives on pro-people agricultural and industrial development. He explored the reforms on universal educational opportunities for all. He also visited the workers' colonies to see how they were accommodated. It was as though he was preparing a policy brief about how he would establish his dream project 'Sonar Bangla' ('Golden Bengal') if he got an opportunity.

Then onward, he got involved in mainstream politics. Gradually he transformed his favored Awami League into a secular political party with a sharp focus on realizing people's fundamental rights. He was repeatedly hauled to jail for his uncompromising pro-people stance. As reflected in his autobiographical books and secret documents prepared by the Pakistani intelligence, he never wavered from his principled stand. He became a Member of both Provincial and Central legislative houses, as well as a provincial minister twice during the Pakistan days. In these roles, he always tried his best to fulfill the aspirations of the people.

But the ruling elites of Pakistan never allowed him to maintain a long-term position to implement his ideas. They put him in jail frequently. Within this context, he launched his famous Six-Points program which galvanized the Bengalis to fight against the inequality of Pakistani society. He was arrested again, and later faced the false charges of the Agartala conspiracy case. The fabricated sedition case was initiated to finish him off once and for all by hanging. However, this move of the Pakistan government turned out to be a boomerang against themselves. Sheikh Mujib had to be released unconditionally under heavy pressure of a people's uprising in 1969. He exited jail like a hero only to be adorned with the people's title of Bangabandhu. Then came the fall of the Ayub government, and the succeeding President General Yahya Khan's promise to hold a general democratic election. Bangabandhu immediately jumped on this opportunity.

As expected, Bangabandhu won the single majority, but still could not form the government and write a constitution based on Six-Points. Instead, the Pakistan army began a genocide and Bangabandhu declared the independence of Bangladesh on 26 March 1971. Thus started the war of liberation, which ended on 16 December 1971 with a comprehensive victory for Bengalis. Bangabandhu had to be freed from Pakistani jail under global pressure and he returned to independent Bangladesh on 10 January 1972 to begin his new round of struggle for the economic freedom of his people. On the very day of his return, he said independence would be meaningless if he could not feed everybody and provide employment to the youths.

Then he began the process to rebuild the war-torn infrastructures and institutions and rehabilitate the refugees and war victims. He also reformed agriculture and industries under a planned approach with objectives of food self-sufficiency and increasing industrial productivity. He established an education commission to build human resources to achieve his long-cherished 'Sonar Bangla,' as pledged by the Constitution and the First Five Year Plan. Under his dynamic leadership, the country's economy rebounded despite repeated natural shocks and man-made disasters. There was an acute food deficit riding the coattails of high inflation and nasty food-aid diplomacy by a global power at the instigation of Pakistan. Also, there were domestic conspiracies to destabilize his government. Even then, he could raise the per capita income of his people from USD 73 to USD 273, reduce inflation by half, and set to bring drastic reforms through his second revolution. He was dead against corruption and tried to involve people in fighting the corrupt. But unfortunately, this heroic development journey of Bangabandhu was cut short by the bullets of the traitors who claimed to be sons of this country. The country degraded in all aspects including the economy. It took thirteen years to restore the per capita income to 1975's level.

Fortunately, daughter of Bangabandhu won the election in 1996 and formed the government to return the country to the rails set by Bangabandhu. She started reforming agriculture, industries, social protection, and education to realize Bangabandhu's dream of inclusive development. She resumed these reforms in 2009, and her current mission to build 'Digital Bangladesh' has been moving at full speed. The results have been stunning. Per capita income has increased more than three times, foreign exchange reserves more than six times, remittances have tripled, and we have achieved self-sufficiencies in food and initiated several mega projects including the Padma bridge. Although the pace of development has been dented to some extent by the global pandemic, the Bangladesh story remains very impressive. The country continues to benefit from the fighting spirit instilled by Bangabandhu and is destined to emerge victorious from this global disaster. We are still doing better than many of our peers as we derive strength from Bangabandhu's ideals. So, no one can deny his omnipresence among us.



Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman being Awarded 'Juliot-Curie' Beuce Brize by General Secretary of World Peace Council

To quote poet Shamsur Rahman,

"Hail that man, on whose name The sun shines down eternally, Like a song comes down the rains of Sravan, Whose name never collects dust, Hail that man, over whose name the moonlight crane Spreads its wings, Hail that man, on whose name liberation flutters Like a flag, Hail that man, whose name echoes in 'The victory cries of freedom fighters.'" (Shamsur Rahman, 'Hail that man'). (Translation mine). □

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Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman with brothers and sisters