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PRESIDENT
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
DHAKA

16 December 2024
01 Poush 1431

Message

16 December, our great Victory Day. On this day in 1971, we achieved our long-cherished victory after a long struggle and a nine-month bloodshed war. It gives us a sovereign country, a sacred constitution, our own map and a red-green flag. We also gained our existence and status in the world as an independent nation. On this joyous day, I extend my sincere felicitations and warm greetings to my fellow countrymen living in home and abroad.

I recall with profound respect the valiant freedom fighters who made supreme sacrifice in the War of Liberation for the cause of country's Independence. I remember with gratitude the national leaders, the heroic freedom fighters, two lacs oppressed women, the organizers and supporters of the Liberation War, foreign friends, warwounded individuals and members of the martyrs' families including people of all walks of life who directly and indirectly contributed to our victory. I also remember those who accepted their martyrdom in various democratic movements along with anti-discrimination movement. The nation recalls their contributions with utmost respect.

Independence is the greatest achievement of the Bengali nation. In its backdrop, there was a prolonged history of deprivation, sanguinary struggle and supreme sacrifice of our people. The dream journey of Independence that started with the great Language Movement in 1952, subsequently, came into reality on 26 March in 1971 through the Proclamation of Independence, overcoming various ups and downs and by staging long movement and agitation. The final victory was achieved on 16 December 1971 through a nine-month long armed War of Liberation.

The ultimate goal of our Liberation War was to attain political sovereignty as well as people's economic emancipation. Keeping the aims of Independence in mind, the journey for achieving economic emancipation and the agricultural revolution began by rebuilding economy and infrastructure of the war-torn country. But even after five decades of the victory, people's economic emancipation has not yet been achieved. Time and again our democratic advancement and path to the economic freedom have been obstructed.

However, the development and progress of Bangladesh never been stopped. The country is advancing in various indices of socio-economic development including health, education, women empowerment etc. I think, the dream to build a discrimination and corruption free Bangladesh that people envisioned through the student mass uprising in July-August this year, will be realized soon. Bangladesh, the land of heroes, will be glorified in the world-Inshallah.

Bangladesh believes in world peace and harmony. War is not desirable for any country. Bangladesh believes that any crisis can peacefully be solved through dialogue. Bangladesh is always ingenuous in humanitarian solutions of any international crisis. Bangladesh strongly condemn Israel's heinous aggression, atrocity and bombing on mass people of Palestine and Lebanon. Bangladesh will always stand by and extend unwavering support to the people and government of Palestine in establishing their inalienable rights. It is my expectation that international community would take effective actions to bring a permanent solution to this problem ensuring safe and dignified repatriation of the displaced Rohingyas stranded in Bangladesh.

The role of expatriates is evident in the economic development of Bangladesh. Expatriate Bangladeshis are making a significant contribution to the national economy by sending their hard-earned remittances to the country. We acknowledge their contribution with gratitude. I hope that during this global recession and economic crisis, our expatriates will continue to send foreign remittance and play a positive role in country's development.

To deliver the benefits of Independence at people's doorstep, we need to institutionalize our democracy which we attained through the sacrifice of millions of martyrs. The political parties will have to nurture the culture of mutual respect and of tolerance of others' opinion. Inspiring from the spirit and values of the anti-discrimination movement of 2024, let us contribute more from our respective positions to build a country free of corruption as well as to implement the goals of Liberation War and establish a society free from exploitation. Let us take the nation towards the path of development and prosperity and build a prosperous 'New Bangladesh'- this is my expectation on this great Victory Day.

May Bangladesh Live Forever.

Md. Sahabuddin
Mohammed Shahabuddin

16 December 2024: A New Day of Victory
Brigadier General (R.) Dr. M Sakhawat Hussain ndc, psc

Although we are observing the 53rd Victory Day of our liberation and independence war on 16 December 2024, that war had commenced many years earlier, since the partition of India and the establishment of Pakistan. The struggle of the students and masses of the then East Pakistan against the exploitation and deprivations of the Bangalis was transformed into a fight for survival. That struggle against discrimination and exploitation had continued for a long time, similar to the blood-drenched struggle of the students and masses during July-August 2024 fifty-three years later. Exploitations and discriminations over a long period were again the reason behind this blood-drenched movement. But the struggle this time was not against any foreigners speaking a different language. Rather, the people emerged victorious by spilling blood following a movement waged by students and masses against the exploitations, deprivations, and discriminations perpetrated by the ruling coterie for about 16 years. That is why our youths have termed this a 'second independence'.

However, although there were no battles during the independence struggle earlier on, it started in full swing on the night of 25 March 1971, when the Pakistani forces appeared on the scene to slaughter the unarmed Bangalis. The war then commenced with the participation of the students-masses and the Bangali soldiers. It may be recalled that the nine-month long liberation war was organized and directed by a handful of fearless young officers of those forces, with the students and masses joining them gradually.

But the soldiers of that war, that is the young military and militia men and the students-masses, were also courageous like the participants of July-August Revolution of 2024. All segments of the country's population were bewildered when the Pakistani forces launched a sudden attack on the Bangalis in the midnight of 25 March 1971. The political leaders did not issue any directive then. Although Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was acknowledged as the leader of the Awami League,



which was the largest political party in Pakistan, he also remained inactive on the question of starting an independence war. It can be gathered from the books written by a number of leaders of the period that although the students and masses were



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Today is 16th December, Victory Day. This day is a very glorious and memorable day in Bangladesh's history. On December 16, 1971, we gained the taste of freedom and self-identity as a nation through the victory in the War of Independence. We get our desired freedom in exchange for the blood and sacrifice of millions of martyrs.

Victory Day is not only our source of pride but also our oath day. The oath is to remain united, protect the sovereignty of the country, and hold the spirit of the Liberation War.

On this day, we remember the brave martyrs of our freedom struggle with respect and honour their sacrifices. We promise to work together to build a developed, prosperous, and well-governed Bangladesh by the interim government formed through the mass uprising of the students, workers, and people.

We are determined to further develop and strengthen our country and enjoy the full benefits of freedom.

I wish Victory Day 2024 a great success.

Muhammad Yunus
Professor Muhammad Yunus

Victory Day: Memorable Day of Declaring Victory in the Inevitable Struggle for Bangladesh's Freedom

Professor Niaz Ahmed Khan, PhD

Victory implies the joyous message of ultimate freedom that is desired by all humans. This statement is more applicable in the context of the independence war that took place in Bangladesh during 1971. The memorable victory that the freedom fighters achieved against the Pakistani forces on 16 December 1971 was especially important and significant for all the people living inside the geographic boundary of Bangladesh. This independence struggle cum liberation war that continued for long nine months against the pseudo-colonialist Pakistani military rulers reached a final conclusion on the eventful day of 16 December. A new country called Bangladesh was born on that day through the surrender of the Pakistani army to the allied forces. Therefore, the Victory Day on 16 December is quite significant in the building of our independent nationhood and for presenting our national identity before the world community.

The victory achieved on 16 December 1971 had a long and painful background. East Bengal was incorporated into Pakistan in 1947 because of its Muslim majority during the partition of India following the end of British rule. It assumed the name of East Pakistan in accordance with the Constitution of Pakistan in 1955. All Bangali Muslim inhabitants of East Bengal were then optimistic about the prospects of their complete freedom due to their inclusion in an independent Pakistan free from British imperialism. This total freedom implied economic, political, and cultural freedom.

However, the people of East Bengal became disillusioned within a short time. This was because, the rulers and people of West Pakistan started to exploit the Bangalis anew by playing the role of pseudo-imperialists. Although Pakistan was constituted with two distant territories – East and West Pakistan – there were huge differences between the two in terms of linguistic, anthropological, and socio-economic contexts. Consequently, the people of West Pakistan started nurturing the idea of providing leadership to the Bangalis through exploitation. As a part of this stance, they attempted to take away the cultural independence and linguistic rights of the Bangalis.

The architect and Governor General of Pakistan Quid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah visited Dhaka in 1948. He declared during a public meeting held at



Racecourse Ground near Dhaka University on 21 March that 'Urdu shall be the lone state language of Pakistan'. The students lodged a strong protest immediately after this announcement by Jinnah. Movement against the Pakistanis commenced in this way, and this agitation centring on linguistic right gradually spread to all corners of East Bengal. Its final form was witnessed on 21 February 1952, when the Pakistani policemen opened fire on the advancing students and masses in Dhaka who broke the unfairly imposed section-144. Numerous youths including Salam, Rafiq, Barkat, and Jabbar had to embrace martyrdom as a consequence.

The Pakistani government had to accept the heartfelt demand of the Bangalis as a result of this bloodletting, and Bangla was accorded recognition as the principal state language in the Constitution of Pakistan.