



PRIME MINISTER
GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF
BANGLADESH

03 Chaitra 1426
17 March 2020

Message

I extend my heartiest greetings to all the citizens of Bangladesh, expatriate Bangladeshis and people of the world on the occasion of celebration of the birth centenary of the architect of independent Bangladesh, the greatest Bangalee of all time, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Mujib Year has been declared from March 2020 to March 2021 to highlight the life and work of the Father of the Nation to the mass people. Bangabandhu's birth centenary celebration starts with a grand opening on 17 March 2020. Along with Bangladesh, Mujib Year is being celebrated globally with the initiative of the UNESCO.

I pay my deepest homage to the Father of the Nation. I also pay my respect to all the martyrs of the 15 August 1975.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib was born in Tungipara village of Gopalganj subdivision [now district] of the then Faridpur district on 17 March 1920. From his childhood he was fearless, indomitable brave and kind. He was conscious about politics and people's rights. The key aim of the long political life of this world leader who had keen memory and farsighted vision was to liberate the Bengali nation from the chains of subjugation, and ensure a developed life by freeing people from the curse of hunger, poverty and illiteracy.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was a legend. While studying at Islamia College in Kolkata, he got involved in active politics. After the famine of 1943 and the communal riots of 1946 in Kolkata, young Sheikh Mujib with his classmates and colleagues devoted himself in humanitarian activities in the affected areas daring his life. After the partition of India, he returned from Kolkata and got admitted into the University of Dhaka. Discriminatory attitudes towards the people of the East Bengal by the elite rulers of the just-liberated Pakistan hurt Bangabandhu.

In the meantime, attacks were made on our mother tongue. Bangabandhu came forward in the struggle to establish the status and dignity of Bangla language. In 1948, 'Rashtrabhasha Sangram Parishad (State Language Movement Council)' was formed on Bangabandhu's proposal by Chhatra League, Tamaddun Majlish and other student organizations. On 11 March 1948, Bangabandhu was arrested while observing a strike to materialize the demand for recognition Bangla as the state language. He was imprisoned thrice between 1948 and 1949. He was continuously in jail from 1949 to 1952. Both while in and out of jail, the Father of the Nation had led the Language Movement. During the incident of killings of language movement activists on 21 February 1952, Bangabandhu was observing hunger strike in jail.

In continuation of the language movement, all major movements of Bangalees including United Front elections in 1954, anti-Ayub Movement in 1958, the Education Movement in 1962, the Six-Point movement in 1966, the Agartala Conspiracy Case in 1968, the Mass Upsurge in 1969, the General Elections in 1970 and the War of Liberation in 1971 were led by the Father of the Nation. The charismatic personality and influential leadership of Bangabandhu united all the freedom-aspiring Bangalees during the Liberation War. As a result, we got an independent, sovereign Bangladesh. The entity of the Bangalee nation got flourished. Bangabandhu was not only a leader of the Bangalees, he was also the leader of all oppressed-exploited and deprived people of the world in establishing their rights and emancipation.

Bangabandhu was imprisoned at least 3,053 days during the British and Pakistani regimes just for the cause of establishing the rights of the people. It can be said that prison was his second home. In order to strengthen Awami League as political organization, he voluntarily resigned from the cabinet in 1957. The historic 7 March speech of Bangabandhu has been recognized by UNESCO as a world documentary heritage. Bangabandhu was awarded Joliot Curie Peace Award in 1973 for his outstanding contribution to the world peace.



PRIME MINISTER
GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF
BANGLADESH

The Indian Allied forces returned home just within three months of independence under the prudent leadership of the Father of the Nation. A total of 126 countries recognized independent Bangladesh. During his tenure Bangabandhu enacted many laws and promulgated ordinances, many of which were ahead of their time, including the law for land and maritime boundaries to run the state. Under his directions and supervision, a secular, rights-based and equality prioritizing Bangladesh Constitution was adopted in mere 10 months. He boldly faced major challenges of nation building by establishing a people-centric balanced public administration, resumption of the communication network and infrastructure destroyed during the Liberation War, rehabilitating the refugees and the violated women, controlling the law and order situation, repatriating the stranded Bangladeshis from Pakistan and rebuilding all the national institutions by freeing those from the grips and influence of collaborators of the Pakistani forces. Bangabandhu started trials of the war criminals. The Father of the Nation signed the historic Land Boundary Agreement with India. Five-Year Plan for economic development was formulated. The GDP growth rate reached 7 percent. Within three years, Bangabandhu turned Bangladesh into a Least Developed Country (LDC) from a war-ravaged country. In order to maintain good relations with all the countries in the world, he adopted the foreign policy based on the principle of 'Friendship to all, malice to none'. Bangabandhu made Bangladesh a dignified country in the world through ensuring the country's membership to the United Nations, the Commonwealth, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the World Trade Organization (WTO), among others.

When Bangabandhu was moving forward with an aim to building a Golden Bangladesh facing all obstacles, the defeated and anti-liberation war clique assassinated the Father of the Nation along with most of his family members on 15 August 1975. A black law titled 'Indemnity Ordinance' was enacted to prevent justice to one of the most shameful killings in the history and to give immunity to the killers. After coming to power in 1996 with the people's mandate, the Awami League government repealed the black law and started the trial of Bangabandhu murder case. With the execution of the verdict of the trial, the nation got rid of the stigma.

Since 2009, the successive governments of Bangladesh Awami League have relentlessly been working to improve living standards of people. In the meantime, Bangladesh has achieved outstanding socio-economic progress. It has fulfilled the requirements for graduating from least developed country to developing one. Child and maternal mortality rates have drastically come down and life expectancy has risen to 73 years. Literacy and economic growth rates have grown rapidly. We have established 'Digital Bangladesh'. Youths have been provided with modern information technology instead of arms. The scope of education for girls has been widened and women empowerment has been ensured at all levels. We have modernized the Madrasa education and made it job-centric. Trials of war criminals are going on and several verdicts have already been executed. The rule of law has been established. Stability has been ensured by rooting out terrorism and putting an end to the culture of strikes. The long-awaited Land Boundary Agreement with India has been implemented. We have resolved maritime disputes with India and Myanmar. Villages are being equipped with all civic amenities. Many mega projects such as 100 Special Economic Zones, more than 28 Hi-Tech Parks, Bangabandhu Satellite-2, deep seaport, Padma Bridge, LNG terminals, Expressways and Nuclear Power Plants, among others, are being implemented. The country is moving forward. Today we have become a self-respecting country in the world holding our heads high.

By formulating and implementing our 'Vision-2021', 'Vision-2041' and 'Delta Plan-2100', we have been working tirelessly to build a hunger-poverty free developed-prosperous Bangladesh as envisioned by the Father of the Nation. In the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, let us all resolve to take Bangladesh to even higher heights in the international arena; let us determine to transform Bangladesh into a safe and peaceful home for our next generation.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu
May Bangladesh Live Forever.



Sheikh Hasina