

## **Mujib Birth Centenary: Special Session of Jatiya Sangsad**

### **Md. Saifullah**

Year long elaborate programmes have been drawn to celebrate the birth centenary of Visionary Leader and Architect of the Independent Bangladesh, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at home and abroad. The scheduled programmes of 'Mujib Borsho', however, have to be squeezed in view of the coronavirus pandemic. A special session of the Jatiya Sangsad recalling the Father of the Nation was due in March. Finally that special session was held on 8--19 November 2020 maintaining strict health guidelines considering the pandemic. The splendid political life, works, ideology and philosophy of Bangabandhu thoroughly discussed in the session that formally began with President Md Abdul Hamid addressing on November 9. As the address of the President over, Leader of the House and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina placed a resolution in the session under the section 147 of the rules of procedure for holding a general discussion highlighting the life and works of Bangabandhu and thus paying a rich tribute to the Great Leader. The House unanimously adopted the resolution by voice vote after a five day hectic discussion participated by MPs of all the political parties.

The President at his address in the special session said, there is no scope to see Bangabandhu and Bangladesh separately and "if you want to know Bangladesh, you have to know about the country's Freedom Struggle and the Liberation War of the Bangalis and also Bangabandhu." He said, those who tried to separate these entities-Bangabandhu and Bangladesh- have failed ultimately. Today's reality is the most vivid proof of this. The President said, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is not merely a name, Bangabandhu is an institution, an entity, a history. He also said, invisible Bangabandhu is as much as powerful as a living Bangabandhu. As long as Bangladesh remains, the Bangalis remain, the people of this country remain, Bangabandhu shall remain as a source of inspiration for all, the President said adding Bangabandhu will continue to illuminate the world as a luminous torch of freedom for the oppressed people of the world. The president called upon all to take initiatives so that the future generation can grow being imbued with the principles and ideologies of Bangabandhu and the spirit of the War of Liberation.

The President calling for building unity against those who create confusion among the common masses said, the benefit of independence would have to be delivered to every doorstep. He also said, unity is needed most for building the 'Sonar Bangla' as pledged Bangabandhu. It needs unity of the people, specially unity of those who were on the side of the War of Liberation. The unity that brought us together in 1971, that unity has to be forged against communalism, undemocratic behaviors and violence, he added.

The President said, the political parties shall have to nurture the culture of being accommodative to others opinion and showing mutual respect. He said, by getting imbued with the spirit of 1971, resistance has to be built against those who want to hinder the trend of advancement in the country through mongering confusion and derailing the simple-minded people by denying the reality and concocting imaginary stories and situations. Only then the Golden Bangla as dreamt by Bangabandhu would be materialized and the celebration of his birth centenary would be meaningful, the President added.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina while moving the resolution to pay homage to the Father of the Nation said, Bangabandhu gave us an independent country, a red-green flag and a constitution. He contributed to build up an environment so that the Bangali, as a proud nation, can stay in the world community keeping head high with self-identity. The Leader of the House said, after the independence Bangabandhu got only three and a half years to build up a war-ravaged country. By that span of time, she took a comprehensive plan for the development of the country and its implementation.

Sheikh Hasina said, had the Father of the Nation not been heinously killed on the fateful night of 15 August, 1975, Bangladesh could have emerged as a developed country much before. The Premier termed the celebration of birth centenary of Bangabandhu with the Awami League led

government running the country as a matter of being fortunate. For this, she expressed her gratitude to the countrymen. Sheikh Hasina referring to the scenario after the assassination of Bangabandhu said, during that time, the name of Bangabandhu and his contribution to different movements including the Language Movement had been erased from history. Even the Historic 7 March Speech had been banned after the assassination of the Father of the Nation on August 15, 1975. This is our bad luck. The Speech has now become World Heritage, she continued adding “it is not easy to wipe out history, even history itself takes revenge. From now on, that name (Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh MujiburRanman) can not be erased from history, this is the reality”, she added.

The PM said people can know the real history by reading Bangabandhu’s “Oshomapto Attojiboni” (Unfinished Memoirs), “Karagarer Rojnamcha” (Prison Diary) and “Amar Dekha Naya Chin” (The New China as I Saw). “Pakistani intelligence report on Father of the Nation” can be another source of knowing true history, she added. Work on publishing one more book written by Father of the Nation “Smritikatha” is going on, she informed.

Mentioning that Father of the Nation had a belief that people of the country loved him very much and they could not kill him, the Prime Minister said, “It was unfortunate that the Bangali nation could not keep up his trust.”

“He (Bangabandhu) saw the traitors (before death), but could not see the people who were behind the scene,” she said, adding that only a few people, not in a huge number were behind the heinous act.

Referring to Bangabandhu’s maiden speech in an independent country on his arrival on January 10, 1972 from the Pakistani jail, Sheikh Hasina said, Father of the Nation asked all to stay united as conspiracy was going on. But they failed to remain united against the plot, the Premier added.

The PM went on saying, “Today Father of the Nation is not with us. But his ideology, his every word and line is very significant for us as these are lessons for us.” Bangabandhu wanted to bring a smile on the face of the countrymen by changing their lots since his childhood, she said, adding, “We are committed to build a prosperous and developed Bangladesh free from hunger and poverty envisioned by Father of the Nation.”

Bangladesh Awami League General Secretary and Minister for Road Transportation and Bridges Obaidul Quader in his address in the special session said, in the thousand year old history of Bangladesh, Nawab Siraj-ud-Daulah, Fakir Majnu Shah, Titumir and many others called for liberation, but had not been successful. Only Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Ranman became successful and presented us an independent country.

Senior MP Tofail Ahmed taking part in the discussion on the second day ( 10 November) said, Bangabandhu after declaring the historic 6-point in 1966 held 32 public meetings within 35 days. During attending these programmes, he was arrested 8 times. Tofail Ahmed said, many leaders would come in the world, but a leader like Bangabandhu would never come. He was one of the most admired leaders of the world. He can not die. He is with us, he will always be with us.

Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon MP said, the historic 6-points turned Bangabandhu into a unique leader. “Bangabandhu does not belong only to Awami League. Bangabandhu is not a property of any party. He is the Father of the Nation.” Menon added.

Minister for Liberation War Affairs A K M Mozammel Haque told the House, it was very clear to the killers that if any descendent, whatever the form, of Bangabandhu can survive, Bangladesh may turn around centering him or her. And that is why, they even did not spare minor boy Russel. Sheikh Hasina and Sheikh Rehana escaped, thanks to fortune. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has relentlessly been working to complete the unfinished works of Bangabandhu.

Taking part in the discussion on the third day (11 November) Deputy Speaker Fazle Rabbi Miah demanded the inclusion of the Historic 7 March Speech of Bangabandhu in the school and college level academic curriculum.

Advocate Abdul Matin Khasru MP demanded the trial of the ‘masterminds’ of the Bangabandhu killing through forming a commission. Ranks like Brigadier or Colonel should not be allowed to use with the names of the killers of Bangabandhu, he added.

Taking part in the fourth day( 12 November) of discussion of Jatiya Sangsad’s special session marking the ‘Mujib Borsho’, Awami League Leader Amir Hossain Amu MP said, although Bangabandhu could not turn the country into ‘golden Bengal’ as he was assassinated on August 15, 1975, his dream is being fulfilled now by his competent daughter Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal President Hasanul Haq Inu MP said, Bangabandhu is a flag, a country, a movement, a revolution, a history, a poet of politics and a great hero of history. He said, Bangabandhu is the world’s sharpest politician and a strategist. He turned every Bangalee into a Mujib.

Opposition Whip Moshir Rahman Ranga said, the killing of Bangabandhu is a terrible incident in history. The whole nation was orphaned through this killing. Although the killers were tried, the conspirators behind the killing have not been brought to justice.

Harun-ur-Rashid MP from BNP while speaking at the special session read out a write up by Bangamata Fazilatunnesa Mujib detailing the arrest of Bangabandhu in the night of 25 March, 1971. Harun-ur-Rashid MP said, the decision of Bangabandhu on the 25 March was very much right. Had he gone absconding, or had he taken shelter in India, then he had been blamed as a separatist-leader. The BNP leader said, there is no way to ignore the long struggle of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman for establishing the rights of the people.

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Roushan Ershad taking part in the last day (15 November) of discussion said, those who wanted to erase the name of Bangabandhu from history, they themselves had been erased from history. Lauding the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the Leader of the Opposition said, “We get the reflection of Bangabandhu in his daughter Sheikh Hasina.”

Jatiya Sangsad Speaker Dr Shirin Sharmin Choudhury while presiding over the session said, a hunger and poverty free Bangladesh will be forged following the Constitution of 1972 formulated by Bangabandhu upholding the ideology of the Great Leader and the spirit of the War of Liberation.

Just before the passage of the resolution paying solemn tribute to the Father of the Nation in parliament by voice vote, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina taking the floor said, Bangabandhu formed Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League (BAKSAL) in a bid to make the whole nation united, but the whole idea was misinterpreted. The Leader of the House said, the Father of the Nation announced the programme of the Second Revolution for rapid socio-economic emancipation of the common masses. Sheikh Hasina said, he amended the constitution and took a five-year programme. Sheikh Hasina said, “I believe, had he been able to implement that programme, Bangladesh could have been established as a developed country in the present world.” But, unfortunately he was not made able to do so, she said.

The name of Bangabandhu will shine as long as Bangladesh exists. The nation will recall Bangabandhu for decades and centuries. The special session of Jatiya Sangsad commemorating the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is the first special session in the history of Jatiya Sangsad of Bangladesh. The parliament had never gone into special session before. The parliament, however, went into special sittings on two occasions-- January 31 and June 18 in 1974—which were addressed by former Yugoslav President Marshal Josip Broz Tito and the then Indian President V V Giri.

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22.11.2020

PID Feature

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