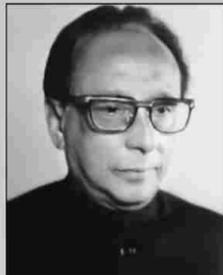


15 August National Mourning Day

Special Supplement

Art & Design : Department of Films & Publications ♦ Assistance : Press Information Department, Ministry of Information



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

PRESIDENT
 PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF
 BANGLADESH

Message

August 15, the National Mourning Day of Bangalee nation. Today is the 36th martyrdom anniversary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the greatest Bangalee of all times. On this day I pay, with grieved heart, my profound respect to the architect of sovereign Bangladesh Bangabandhu as well as to the memory of his family members who embraced martyrdom.

The 15, August 1975 is regarded as a shameful chapter in the history of Banglaee nation. On this day the undisputed leader and Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman along with his family members except his daughter Sheikh Hasina and Sheikh Rehana were brutally assassinated at his own residence by a group of assassins who were being directly and indirectly indulged with the conspirators as well as anti-liberation force. Wife of Bangabandhu Begum Fazilatunnessa Mujib, sons Sheikh Kamal, Sheikh Jamal and Sheikh Russel, daughters-in-law Sultana Kamal and Rosy Jamal, brother Sheikh Naser, farmers' leader Abdur Rab Serniabat, youth leader Sheikh Fazlul Haq Moni and his wife Arzu Moni, Baby Serniabat, Sukanta Babu, Arif and Abdul Nayeem Khan Rintu were also assassinated on this day. This brutal event is rare not only in the history of Bangalee nation but also in the history of world. I pray to Almighty Allah for the salvation of those departed souls of all martyrs on this Mourning Day.

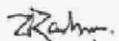
The contributions of Bangabandhu in our national history are of paramount and resplendent. The Bangalee nation, who had been struggled for a long period, achieved their long-awaited independence under his able and courageous leadership. Starting from the historic Language Movement in 1952, Bangabandhu led the nation at every struggle and movement including 58's movement against Martial Law, 66's Six-Point Movement, 69's Mass Uprising and 70's General Election towards attaining self-reliant and fulfilling the hopes and aspirations of our common mass. He, therefore, was sent to jail for several times and suffered inhuman sufferings for this active and leading role in struggles. Finally, the great leader Bangabandhu declared independence on 26th March in 1971 after inspiring our people with the spirit of Banglaee nationalism over two decades. Hence, he had been sent to jail again and had to be ready for gallows during his imprisonment. In spite of manifold pressures during his imprisonment in Pakistan, he was firm with his principle and yet he did not compromise with the opponent on idealism. He always upheld the people's interest throughout his life. Though the conspirators killed the father of the nation yet they could not wipe out the ideal and believes of Bangabandhu. I am confident that the name of Bangabandhu will remain ever-imprinted in the mind of cores of Bangalee so long the country and its people will remain alive.

It is a matter of hope that the trail of the killers of Bangabandhu has been made in the soil of Bangla after 35 years of assassination. Today the nation is somewhat stigma-free. Now we should take all out initiatives to bring the death-sentenced fugitives back to country in order to execute the verdict. The nation will be aware of that the killers have no room at any corner in the world.

The Father of the Nation Bangabandhu dreamt a 'Golden Bangla' throughout his life. It is our utmost responsibility to materialise his dream in order to build a happy and prosperous country. If we do so the soul of Bangabandhu would remain in ever-rest and we would be able to pay our deepest homage to him.

On this National Mourning Day, let us make our grief into strength and devote ourselves in building up a prosperous Bangladesh.

Khoda Hafez, May Bangladesh Live Forever.


Md. Zillur Rahman



Where can we keep this body?

Shamsur Rahaman

Where can we keep this body?

Is there any grave that suits it right?

The earth, the mountain

Even the water from the deep blue sea—

Is nothing but porous, if not trivial.

Hence we do not put the body to its rest

In earth, mountains or ocean,

As we let it rest in hearts after hearts.

Translation : Dr. Shamsad Mortuza

Everyday Dawns with the Grief and Brave Oath

Obaidul Haque

1 5 August, 1975. It's midnight but roads and streets of Dhaka city were not without traffic and pedestrians yet. The city was not in deep sleep yet, not in complete silence either. At that time, several military tanks stopped in front of house 32, Dhammondi. Gunshots were heard. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Honourable President of Bangladesh, beloved and revered leader of the people was still awake. He heard the gunshots. He knew the shooters were not there on a peace mission. But the great architect of independent, sovereign Bangladesh, the father of the nation couldn't even think of going into hideout being scared of this maneuver in the middle of the night.

The great leader established this very country Bangladesh facing death throughout his whole life. He freed the nation from bondage of centuries. He couldn't just run and take shelter in a safe place. He came forward brave heart, asked the armed military personnel in his usual voice, "Why are you people here? What do you want?" The deviated and misled killers didn't have the guts to answer. They started firing desperately. The bullets pierced through the fearless heart of Bangabandhu. His lifeless body fell down on the ground. His blood sanctified the soil of his beloved Bangla. He was never scared of death, that very death embraced him with honour, dignity and decorum, held the mortal body of the immortal hero humbly.

All the lights went off. The whole nation got covered in darkness. People were thunderstruck and turned speechless. The nature was also overwhelmed with grief. All around was sounded with the drone of lamentation. Humanity was at stake and in grief, lamentation without any condolences. The killers didn't stop there. They continued their killing operation with a heinous addition to their evil design. They mercilessly killed the great woman Mrs. Mujib, Bangabandhu's

three sons including minor Russel, newly married daughters in law, his brother, brother-in-law, nephew and his pregnant wife. Terrified Russel wanted to know whether they would kill him as well. Right after the question, his soft tiny body was sprayed with bullets and the sound of his final anguished cries reached the court of Almighty Allah. How can humans kill innocent

The trial of the diabolical massacre of the 15 August is completed after a period of long 36 years. . Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is rightly called the Greatest Bengali of Thousand Years. He taught us how to free ourselves breaking the chains of bondage of many centuries. He introduced our individual nationality to the world outside, established our motherland as an independent sovereign state in the world. It's him who wrote the name of Bangladesh and drew its geographical boundary on the globe.

In the history of the Greatest Bangalis of Thousand Years, Bangabandhu's love and honour has been appropriately recognised. So long flow the Padma, the Meghna, the Jamuna, so long history holds his dignity. An act of murder can never change the course of history- this is a historical truth. Likewise, the killers of Bangabandhu have not been able to remove Bangabandhu from the position he earned in exchange of his great sacrifice. German intellectual Schiller once said, "World history is world's court of judgement." According to the judgement of world court, the position of Bangabandhu is eternal. He is immortal and saturated with love, honour and respect in the hearts of millions of Bangalis.

Bangabandhu made the ever distressed Bangalis victorious in their movement for freedom, established rule of people in their free land. This is the greatest achievement of his life. The main objective of this achievement is to become a true Bangali and a true human being on the whole. To relieve our nation from the accusation as in great poet Rabindranath Tagore's words "Have been made Bangalis, not humans". Today on this day of great mourning, we have to take an oath to prove our sincere love and respect for Bangabandhu which is the demand of time. Otherwise neither will we be Bangalis nor humans, the complaint of the great poet will remain unaddressed. At the same time, we cannot claim ourselves the followers of Bangabandhu- this is simply unthinkable.

Translation : Sharif Hasan



children and baby in the womb? Thus the killers, deranged in a killing spree staged a diabolic scene there that night.

The role of those who grabbed power illegally after Bangabandhu's murder was equally anti-humanity. Passing the Indemnity Act, they took part in this mindless crime. They stained the legal system, blocked the natural process of law by passing this black law. They destroyed the legal system on which the society was based and in the process destroyed the society itself. Fortunately, though after decades, the black law called Indemnity Act has been repealed. The law of the land has got back on track. Rule of law has been restored.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

PRIME MINISTER
 GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S
 REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH



Message

The 15th August is the National Mourning Day. On this day in 1975, the greatest Bangalee of all time, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, along with his family members, was assassinated in one of the most barbaric carnages in the human history.

Eighteen members of the family along with Bangabandhu's wife Sheikh Fazilatunnessa Mujib, sons Captain Sheikh Kamal, Lt. Sheikh Jamal and Sheikh Russel, daughter-in-laws Sultana Kamal and Rosy Jamal, brother Sheikh Naser, farmers' leader Abdur Rab Serniabat, youth leader Sheikh Fazlul Haq Moni and his wife Arzu Moni, Baby Serniabat, Sukanta Babu, Arif and Abdul Nayeem Khan Rintu were killed on the fateful night. Bangabandhu's Military Secretary Col Jamil was also killed. Some members of a family at Mohammadpur were also killed by artillery shell fired by the killers.

On the day of National Mourning, I pray to the Almighty Allah for the salvation of the souls of the martyrs of the 15th August.

The people of this territory snatched the glowing sun of the Independence, breaking the shackles of subjugation of thousands of years, under the dynamic, courageous and charismatic leadership of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The Bangalees have gotten their own nation-state.

But Bangabandhu was killed when he had undertaken an arduous task of building a Golden Bangla reconstructing the war-ravaged country and unifying the whole nation. The defeated forces of the Liberation War made an abortive effort to ruin the tradition, culture and advancement of the Bangalee nation. Their target was to destroy the non-communal democratic fabric of Bangladesh.

The anti-liberation forces linked to the carnage initiated the politics of assassination, coup and conspiracy. Martial Law had been promulgated suspending the constitution and overthrowing the government elected by the people. Military dictator Ziaur Rahman established autocracy destroying democracy in the country. The trial of Bangabandhu's brutal assassination was blocked by promulgation of indemnity ordinance and the killers of the Father of the Nation were rewarded.

Assuming state power in 2001 through a rigged election, BNP-Jamaat alliance established politics of looting. Their main objective was to establish autocratic rule snatching peoples' right to franchise and annihilating the opposition political forces including Bangladesh Awami League.

Bangladesh Awami League won an overwhelming people's mandate in 2008 general elections. The present government has been working hard to materialise "Vision 2021" and other election pledges to build a digital Bangladesh. We are marching forward to build a modern Bangladesh free from hunger and poverty by 2021, the golden jubilee year of our independence.

We have freed the nation from the stigma to some extent through implementing the verdict of the Bangabandhu killing case. Measures have also been taken to accelerate the trial of the killers of four national leaders.

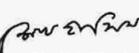
When the Awami League government has initiated the trial of the war criminals, corrupts and grenade-attackers, the rejected forces are out to subvert the march forward of development and democracy through hatching conspiracy and creating chaos. I urge the countrymen to remain alert about the troublemakers.

The killers could have killed Bangabandhu but they could not kill his dream and ideals. Millions of people of this soil have been nurturing in their hearts the ideals of sacrifice of Bangabandhu. Let us take forward with bold steps the struggle to build a Golden Bangla as dreamt by Bangabandhu turning the grief of the great loss of the Father of the Nation into strength.

We must win in the struggle to establish an economically solvent democratic and non-communal Bangladesh which will be totally free from hunger, illiteracy and poverty.

Insha Allah, victory is ours.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu
 May Bangladesh Live Forever.


Sheikh Hasina

First year of Bangladesh from the Pages of Newspapers

The final victory in our liberation war came on 16 December 1971. There were then devastations all around. The roads and houses were destroyed and the whole country was facing a calamitous situation with tears and sorrows of bereaved people. The dwelling houses, schools-colleges, universities, hospitals, bridges, culverts, rivers-canal, seaports, everything was in a devastated state. The state coffers were empty. There were widows everywhere. The householders were destitute after losing everything. There was no paddy in the farmers' yard and no crops were cultivated on their land. Everywhere, there was frustration. Whatever hopes were alive centred on the taste of freedom and the return of the Father of the Nation. The whole nation was eagerly awaiting the return of the Father of the Nation for reconstruction of war-ravaged Bangladesh after the victory. Finally, he returned as a saviour on 10 January 1972 after being freed from a Pakistani jail. Bangabandhu declared before a sea of people - Bangladesh has become independent, shall remain independent - as long as a single Bangali remains alive. During interviews with BBC Television and the daily Globe of Ottawa on 2 August 1972, he asserted that there could be no compromise on the issue of the trial of war-criminals.

Bangabandhu took oath as the prime minister of Bangladesh Government at Bangabhaban on 12 January 1972. He concentrated on building the country while standing on heaps of wreckages. The people of the country were then simultaneously enthused and confused. He also took the responsibility of showing these confused people the way forward. The size, design and colour of the national flag were approved. Decisions on the national anthem and war-song were taken, the constitution was formulated and industries were nationalised.

Continued to page-22

First year of Bangladesh from the Pages of Newspapers

Continued from page 21

Establishing ties with various countries and obtaining memberships of international bodies were positive developments in the field of foreign relations. A takavi credit was introduced in the agriculture sector; mass education was launched and an education commission was constituted; epoch-making decisions were taken in the area of communication system under his leadership.

Within one year, the Chittagong and Chalna ports were put back into operation after removing the sunken ships, boats and mines. It reopened the scope for importing food items and development tools from abroad. The primary network of internal communication was partially restarted after repairing the Hardinge Bridge, Bhairab Bridge and innumerable culverts. Coastal embankments were built for safeguarding millions of acres of land. Around 60% of the country's first budget was allocated for rural development. Other notable measures included: motivating the common people for participating in development efforts through launching of cooperative development board, rehabilitating the 10 million refugees who returned from India, rendering financial assistance to the families of martyred freedom fighters, rehabilitation of 3 lac women who lost their honour during the liberation war, sending crippled freedom fighters abroad for treatment, withdrawal of the Indian military from the soil of Bangladesh within 3 months, drafting the best constitution in the world within 10 months, introduction of the parliamentary system, preparation of voters' list and holding of parliamentary election in 1973, formation of national wage board, restructuring the armed forces, constitution of the Kudrat-e-Khuda Education Commission for establishing a scientific and secular education system, promulgation of a democratic ordinance (1973) for the public universities, nationalisation of 40,000 primary schools, introduction of free education for girls up to class eight, distribution of khas agricultural lands among landless and poor farmers all over the country, waiver of all arrears taxes including interests of farmers, etc. Bangladesh was accorded recognition by 140 countries of the world and a water-sharing agreement for the river Ganges was signed with India, which stipulated 44 thousand cusecs of water for Bangladesh. Bangabandhu made a significant trip to Lahore in 1974 to attend the OIC summit which resulted in OIC membership for Bangladesh. Performing so many basic tasks within such a short time was a huge achievement for the Father of the Nation.

The trend of success set by Bangabandhu in a war-ravaged newly-independent country still occupies the top position in the annals of Bangladesh's development endeavor. Bangabandhu alone had lifted the development indicator of Bangladesh by 345 metres on a scale of one kilometre index within a period of mere three and a half years. This calculation has been made on the basis of the United Nations Human Development Index (UNHDI). Against this, only 19 points could be achieved during the five and a half year rule of Ziaur Rahman. Begum Khaleda Zia could add only 33 points to this index during her first tenure. The illustrious successor of Bangabandhu, Sheikh Hasina and her government advanced this index by 54 metres during the first four years of her first tenure (1996-2000), from 452 to 506. After that, this index rose by only 14 metres during the rule of BNP-Jamaat alliance government and stood at 520 metres in 2005.

The anti-liberation conspirators indulged in multifarious conspiracies in order to throttle this onward march led by the Father of the Nation. A number of natural disasters struck the country following her independence. The drought of 1972, the catastrophic cyclone of 1973, the economic recession resulting from the Arab-Israeli war and the disastrous floods in the coastal region in 1974 created an adverse situation for the new government in Bangladesh. There were no social safety net programmes at that time. The enemies of independence took advantage of this scenario and created a food-deficit situation in the country with the help of international conspirators. They started to set fire to jute warehouses with the objective of destroying the country's economy. Although the freedom-fighters surrendered arms at the call of the Father of the Nation, many anti-liberation people hid their weapons. They mingled with the people of the country by changing their outside attire, but engaged themselves in thwarting the goals of the liberation war. They started to create unrest in the country by using those weapons.

Although food items were procured from abroad for the hungry people of Bangladesh through sincere initiatives of the Father of the Nation, conspiracies continued so that those food items did not reach the country. Because of the conspiracies hatched by the countries opposed to our liberation, even ships could not be hired for bringing food to the country. Under such circumstances, the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman formed Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League (BAKSAL) by inducting patriotic people from all professions and strata. When BAKSAL made forward strides for emancipation of the masses in a planned manner, the power-hungry anti-people civil forces assassinated the Father of the Nation along with his family members on 15 August 1975. The real progress of Bangladesh was silenced with that incident.

In order to sabotage the goals and objectives of the liberation war, these murderous beasts spread various canards against the greatest Bangali of all times Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman by concocting absurd tales. Fundamentalism and militancy gradually spread in the country due to their patronization. They started to silence the pro-liberation forces through discriminations, murders and intrigues in accordance with their blue-print. That intrigue has not yet stopped. They attacked a public meeting with high quality military grenades in order to kill the daughter of Father of the Nation. This attack left at least 23 dead including Mrs Ivy Rahman, women affairs secretary of Bangladesh Awami League, who was also wife of the present President Md. Zillur Rahman of Bangladesh, and injured many others, including Sheikh Hasina.

They killed political personalities like distinguished economist cum diplomat and former finance minister of the Awami League government SAMS Kibria and Ahsanullah Master MP as well as intellectuals like Professor Humayun Azad. The country saw a swift rise of fundamentalism because of their patronization. The supply of heavy weaponry in the country rose fast. And all these could happen with the assistance of an anti-Awami League government in power.

A chronological account of the first year of Bangladeshis is presented here on the basis of various newspaper reports for providing an objective idea about the development initiatives undertaken in Bangladesh during the rule of Father of the Nation.

January 1972

Acting President Syed Nazrul Islam says in Dhaka on 2 January: Bangladesh will be a secular state by echoing the ideal of Bangabandhu. Prime Minister Tajuddin Ahmed announces: there will be no minorities on the basis of religion in Bangladesh society. (3 January, Dainik Bangla)

The government sanctions Taka 30 million loans for distribution among farmers in areas where Boro paddy has been cultivated. (3 January, Dainik Bangla)

Bangladesh International Airlines (BIA) formed. (4 January, Dainik Bangla)

At a huge public meeting on the free soil of Bangla on 10 January, Bangabandhu says, 'Conspiracy is still going on' and firmly declares, 'Bangladesh shall remain free even when a single Bangali is alive'. (11 January, Dainik Bangla)

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman takes oath as the Prime Minister. Before that, he resigns from the post of the country's President. (12 January, Dainik Bangla)

The temporary constitution order of Bangladesh issued by the president; it stipulates formation of the first people's assembly of Bangladesh comprising of MLAs and MPs who were elected in December 1970 and January, March 1972 and who were not declared unfit for any reasons. (12 January, Dainik Bangla)

East Germany, Bulgaria, Mongolia, Poland and Burma recognise Bangladesh (12 January, Dainik Bangla)

The government waives all kinds of agricultural taxes including arrears and interests up to Chaitra 1378 Bangla or 14 April 1972 AD. (14 January, Dainik Bangla)

The famous song 'Amar Sonar Bangla' by Poet Rabindranath Tagore is selected as the national anthem and the song 'Chal Chal Chal' by the rebel poet Kazi Nazrul Islam is selected as the martial song. Decision is taken to exclude the map from the national flag. (14 January, Dainik Bangla)

In his first policy speech after assuming office as the prime minister, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman says, 'the basis of Bangladesh's foreign policy will be friendship with all'. (15 January, Dainik Bangla)

Bangladesh accorded recognition by Nepal. (17 January, Dainik Bangla)

The twin towns of Dhaka and Narayanganj brought under a single municipal corporation. (17 January, Dainik Bangla)

Taka 160 million allocated for the test relief programme. The main objective of the test relief programme is reinstatement of the communication system in rural areas and reconstruction of the country's devastated economy.

The list of commodities for import and export is finalised in order to strengthen the commercial ties between India and Bangladesh. Yugoslavia accords recognition to Bangladesh. (24 January, Dainik Bangla)

Taka 300 million is sanctioned for providing immediate relief and rehabilitation of the refugees and other homeless people. The National Economic Council – the apex body on economic policies of Bangladesh – is constituted with Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as its chairman. The cabinet approves the size, design and colour of the national flag. (26 January, Dainik Bangla)

Hungary and Cyprus accord recognition to Bangladesh. (29 January, Dainik Bangla)

February 1972

Australia, New Zealand, Cambodia and Fiji accord recognition to Bangladesh. (1 February, Dainik Bangla)

Regular air services between the Soviet Union and Bangladesh launched. (2 February, Dainik Bangla)

IF INDICT SCEPTER
Asim Saha

If indict scepter-I shall accept tamely.

If there is any unpardonable mistake,
And for that mistake if geographical boundary is changed,
If the hurled arrow of son floating in emptiness
penetrate your corpus
As mythological missile what punishment will you give then?

If indict scepter-I shall accept tamely.

Father, once you were inside my dream,
In your dream I found
My integral, blue sky;
But you know father,
Those dark clouds of *Sraavana* that cover that
beautiful transparent blue sky

And the thunderclap that hides behind it
With insolent grudge burns the earth to ashes,
I am that deluded boy raised from that howl of fire
I never understood that

By striking you
I am striking the very root of my existence.
For that audacity, any punishment that you will give me—
I shall accept tamely.

If indict scepter, if indict banishment
To the inaccessible deep forest of Africa
I shall accept, this is my desired reward of suicidal destruction.

Father, if I could realize that, for my mistake so much blood,

So much liquid filth would be deposited in the fatherland,
If I would know, in the sacrificial place of *Nikumbhila*
My map would be coloured by your breast's blood,
If I could know, in midnight your apparition would come
And kill you by it's merciless two hands;
If I would know, your motionless body will lie
Bloodstained on the starved stair;
If I would know, from your heart seven crores of bloodstream
Would flow through the steps
Then I would,
By each finger of this hand would stifle firmly
My nonplussed soul,
I would plunge towering thorns of *Shimul* into my eyes.
If you would rise from sleep, in my breast piercing affliction,
You would see with folded hands beside your feet lay your son, genuflected.
How could you deny him with your merciless two hands?

I know,
Your heart was a calm affectionate river;
Flowing like transparent fountain in the shade of mountains
Your heart was a monochord of *Baul*, tired boat-song.
Father, did you know, the water that emanated from your heart
Would one day forgetting everything regurgitate yourself
In the Bay of Bengal?
Without you, that soil will groan beside the shore of *Madhumati*?
If you would know, if you would know
This responsibility of fatherhood will one day be repaid
By your blood money;
Then also would you become the freedom-hymn of
subjugated people.

That pierced the soil of this homeland?

Father, today you are not here-only your shadows remain.
In very dawn piercing sky the marooned sun that rises
In the eastern sky
Its deep colour mixing with the green nature
Emanates what a miraculous shade from horizon to horizon.
I see you there.
In my respiration of each moment
You enter as perpetual air.
Your perpetual presence in my whole existence
Transforms me into you;
It means I do not have any separate existence without you.

Yet fearing your absent existence
A group of hunters wants to smudge
Layers of darkness over your shadow.
Once whom you bonded by your warm hug of heart,
They over the pride of your existence
Want to smudge black darkness of twenty five
Your apparition comes to *Bangabhumti* without yourself.

Father, to err is human
This body of mine is servant to that error.
If possible, forgive this despicable son.

And those who want to change the soil of this homeland
Bought by your blood money,
Who want to embellish sectarian mark on red green flag?
If your forgiving hand one day runs to the wilderness
Give me also banishment that day
Drop me to any deep forest crossing this earth.

If indict me scepter-if my body becomes motionless in the gallows
Everything I shall accept tamely;
But I'll never accept
Combined killer darkness of August stifling my chest.

Translation : Samiran Saha

The largest Muslim country Indonesia accords recognition to Bangladesh. (3 February, Dainik Bangla)

Joint declaration by the two Prime Ministers – Srimati Indira Gandhi and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman: Indian armed forces will be withdrawn from Bangladesh within 25 March. (9 February, Dainik Bangla)

Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg accord recognition to Bangladesh. (12 February, Dainik Bangla)

France and Italy accord recognition to Bangladesh. (13 February, Dainik Bangla)

Sheikh Mujib-Kennedy meeting held; Kennedy says, US recognition will not be delayed. (13 February, Dainik Bangla)

Decision taken on free distribution of text-books up to class five; Government expenditure for the purpose will be Taka 10 million and students of 28 thousand primary schools of the country will be benefitted. (20 February, Dainik Bangla)

Bangabandhu declares: 'land per family shall not exceed 100 bighas'. Urging the peasants to come forward for building the country, he calls for an agricultural revolution. (21 February, Dainik Bangla)

Work on protecting 9 lac acres of land fully and another 9 lac acres partially completed under the coastal embankment project. (23 February, Dainik Bangla)

A high-powered autonomous body formed for providing assistance and rehabilitation of women tortured during the liberation war. The prime minister approves in principle a detailed programme worth around Taka 100 million. (24 February, Dainik Bangla)

43 lac tons of food-grain allocated up to 25 February for free distribution among the refugees who returned home and those people who incurred losses due to tortures by Pakistani soldiers. Indonesia and Malaysia recognises Bangladesh. (26 February, Dainik Bangla)

Two commodity agreements worth Taka 91.66 million interest-free loans signed by Bangladesh and Britain. (28 February, Dainik Bangla)

Bangabandhu leaves for Moscow on 29 February for a visit to Russia. The Bangladesh government seeks economic assistance from the Soviet Union for some important and long-term projects. (29 February, Dainik Bangla)

March 1972

A joint declaration signed claiming the success of 'Bangabandhu's Moscow visit'. Dainik Bangla publishes the lead item titled 'Bright prospect for peace in the sub-continent'.

Ceylon (Sri Lanka) accords recognition to Bangladesh. (6 March, Dainik Bangla)

The government sanctions Takavi credit worth Taka 100 million for purchase of cattle, seed and fertilizer by farmers. (16 March, Dainik Bangla)

The popular prime ministers of India and Bangladesh – Srimati Indira Gandhi and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman – address the largest ever public meeting at historic Suhrawardy Udyan in Dhaka and resolutely declare that the friendship between the two countries shall last forever. They pledge to work for world peace. (18 March, Dainik Bangla)

The 25-year Bangladesh-India Friendship Treaty signed. Containing 12 sections, the parties to this treaty declares – joint action will be taken if any party is attacked. None of the parties will sign any military pact or participate in such pact directed against the other party. The signatories shall refrain from assisting any third party that enters into conflict against Bangladesh or India. The treaty made declaration regarding honouring the independence, sovereignty and solidarity of each country and non-interference in the internal affairs of each other. It mentioned about undertaking joint surveys and action-plans in the areas of flood-control, development of river basins, power and irrigation. (20 March, Dainik Bangla)

A programme worth Taka 110 million announced for development of the handloom industry, including supply of yarn to weavers at wholesale price. (22 March, Dainik Bangla)

A fleet of salvage ships from the Soviet Union head towards Chittagong with the goal of making the Chittagong and Khulna Ports navigable once again. (22 March, Dainik Bangla)

A treaty was signed between Soviet Union and Bangladesh for sweeping mines, clearing the ports and salvaging submerged ships in order to bring back normalcy in navigation of ships at Chittagong and Chalna Ports. The Soviet team will prepare an action-plan as assistance to Bangladesh and provide experts, appropriate ships and engineering facilities as required. The Soviet government will extend this assistance free of charge as a token of goodwill and friendship. (23 March, Bangladesh Observer)

A telecommunication agreement signed by Bangladesh and India. (28 March, Dainik Bangla)

Indo-Bangladesh commercial and cultural agreement signed in New Delhi. (29 March, Dainik Bangla)

April 1972

A massive project is to be undertaken to make 80% of the people literate within five years. The project will start this year and conclude in 1977. Under the project, 20 education centres will be opened in each of the 4 thousands unions of Bangladesh. This programme will be implemented by a 13-member committee headed by the education minister. (19 April, Dainik Bangla)

Bangladesh becomes the 32nd member of the Commonwealth. (19 April, Dainik Bangla)

A consortium to be formed comprising of different banks. Investment Corporation of Bangladesh and other financial institutions of the country in order to reinvigorate the country's industrial sector. (20 April, Dainik Bangla)

The first trade policy of the country announced. Declared for the period January-June of 1972, the import policy provides a list of commodities which can be imported. All kinds of luxury goods have been banned for import. (25 April, Dainik Bangla)

A committee appointed for framing an extensive plan and make recommendations for administrative reorganisation. The committee will determine the future administrative structure based on existing structures of technical and non-technical jobs as well as demands and needs of the government. Besides, the committee will consider merger of all civilian jobs and attached services. (26 April, Dainik Bangla)

May 1972

In his May Day speech, Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman declares waiver of all taxes of farmers including interests in order to ameliorate the sufferings of the people. Taxes for up to 25 bighas of land waived. (3 May, Dainik Bangla)

A 21-member Education Commission is formed headed by Dr. Quadrat-e-Khuda for introducing a pro-people education system. (19 May, Dainik Bangla)

Bangladesh Specific Crimes (Special Tribunal) 1972 Order issued for tackling serious crimes including stockpiling of food-grains, other foods, children's food, edible oil etc. (26 May, Dainik Bangla)

Bangladesh government decides to nationalise the export trade of jute. Decision taken to fix the fair price of jute for the benefit of farmers. (31 May, Dainik Bangla)

July 1972

The country's first budget of Taka 501 crore, with a surplus of Taka 66.95 crore is announced. No new taxes are imposed. Taka 318.30 crore is allocated in the budget for development projects. Emphasis is placed on the education and agriculture sectors. (1 July, Dainik Bangla)

Target fixed for producing 1.67 million tons of food-grains during 1972-73 financial year.

Export target of Taka 2.6 billion fixed for 1972-73 fiscal year. (8 July, Dainik Bangla)

60 per-cent of the development budget will be spent in the rural

areas – Finance and Planning Minister Tajuddin Ahmed says at a press conference on the budget. (8 July, Dainik Ittefaq)

Iraq accords recognition to Bangladesh. (9 July, Dainik Bangla)

A 10-member national pay commission formed. It will submit its report within six months. (14 July, Dainik Bangla)

August 1972

South Yemen accords recognition to Bangladesh. (1 August, Dainik Bangla)

New trade policy announced. List of importable goods made longer. Import of luxury goods banned, similar to the first import policy. (2 August, Dainik Bangla)

Commodity exchange agreement signed by Bangladesh and Romania for three years. (5 August, Dainik Bangla)

Bangladesh gets membership of the World Bank, IMF and International Development Association. (19 August, Dainik Bangla)

Tea policy announced. (25 August, Dainik Bangla)

September 1972

Education Minister Yusuf Ali says, female education will be made free up to class eight from next year. (11 September, Dainik Ittefaq)

Around Taka 730 million spent for assisting those adversely affected by the liberation war. Four bighas of khas land per head sanctioned for the landless farmers. (14 September, Dainik Ittefaq)

Taka 727.5 million spent in nine months in the relief and rehabilitation sector. (14 September, Dainik Bangla)

Programme for enlistment of voters announced for the purpose of holding general election. (17 September, Dainik Ittefaq)

Announcement on keeping workers' representative in the board of directors of nationalised industries and formation of national wage board very soon. (27 September, Dainik Ittefaq)

October 1972

Decision taken for construction of the Teesta Barrage at a meeting of Indo-Bangladesh joint rivers commission. (1 October, Dainik Ittefaq)

Decision taken to open 4 thousand fair-price shops throughout the country. The government measure aims at protecting the common people from the exploitations of profiteers and businessmen by bringing the commodity distribution system under state control. Minimum price of jute fixed at Taka 50 per maund in order to uphold the interests of farmers. (1 October, Dainik Bangla)

A Taka 50 million programme announced for enhancing sea-fishing. Enlistment of voters commence. (2 October, Dainik Ittefaq)

Taka 33 million IDA credit for Bangladesh. (6 October, Dainik Ittefaq)

Army deployed to curb smuggling along the borders, directive to take stringent measures. (6 October, Dainik Bangla)

Order issued to constitute a special cell for supplying yarns to genuine weavers. (8 October, Dainik Ittefaq)

An amount of Taka 32.28 million distributed among the families of martyrs, missing, crippled and injured people from the Prime Minister's Relief and Welfare Fund up to 30 September. Bangabandhu awarded Julio Curie Prize (11 October, Dainik Bangla)

Hardinge Bridge reopened. It was a shining symbol of joint initiatives taken by India and Bangladesh. Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman termed it a bright example of determination and dedication for national reconstruction. (12 October, Dainik Bangla)

The draft constitution placed at the peoples' assembly. The country is to have a unitary system of governance where the cabinet will run the country and remain jointly accountable to the president and a unicameral parliament comprising of 315 members. The draft constitution also provides for an independent judiciary by separating the judiciary from the executive. (13 October, Dainik Bangla)

Bangabandhu sends telegraphic message to the UN Secretary General calling for assistance to bring back the detained Bangalis from Pakistan. (15 October, Dainik Ittefaq)

Foreign exchange reserve in the country rises to almost 90 million pound sterling on 18 October. (19 October, Dainik Ittefaq)

Bangladesh gets membership of UNESCO. (20 October, Dainik Bangla)

First official survey on the losses incurred during the liberation war. The losses amounted to Taka 9.3 billion. (24 October, Dainik Ittefaq)

The 'Muktijoddha Kalyan Trust' (Freedom Fighters' Welfare Trust) formed with a capital of Taka 40 million. (27 October, Dainik Bangla)

November 1972

Written with the blood of millions of martyrs, the first constitution of the Bangali nation passed in the peoples' assembly after 225 years of servitude. (5 November, Dainik Bangla)

Bangladesh becomes a member of the Colombo Plan. (8 November, Dainik Bangla)

An eight-point policy directive issued for ensuring distribution of khas agricultural lands among the landless and poor farmers all over the country. (14 November, Dainik Ittefaq)

A resolution put forward by 23 countries calling for awarding membership to Bangladesh in the United Nations. (19 November, Dainik Bangla)

Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman receives the Julie Curie Peace Prize. He calls for halting the arms race for a sustainable world. (20 November, Bangladesh Observer)

An agreement signed by Dhaka and Moscow on exchanging radio and television programmes. Based on this, economic and cultural exchanges will take place through news, pictures and radio-television programmes. (23 November, Dainik Bangla)

Decision taken to construct a National Memorial in order to make immortal the memory of 3 million martyrs killed during the liberation war. The memorial will be built on an area of over 60 acres of land at Savar – 16 miles north-west of Dhaka. (23 November, Dainik Bangla)

The statute for the Indo-Bangladesh joint rivers' commission signed. (25 November, Dainik Bangla)

North Vietnam and Bangladesh accords mutual recognition to each other. (26 November, Dainik Bangla)

Verdict in favour of Bangladesh's admission to the United Nations. (1 December, Dainik Bangla)

December 1972

Taka 910 million foreign exchange earned by exporting jute-based commodities. (1 December, Dainik Bangla)

Out of 300 railway bridges, repair of 298 completed. (11 December, Dainik Ittefaq)

Decision taken at a meeting of Indo-Bangladesh joint rivers' commission held in Delhi to adopt long-term plans for river basin development. (14 December, Dainik Ittefaq)

The constitution formally accepted through signatures by the peoples' representatives including Bangabandhu. (15 December, Dainik Bangla)

The constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh made effective on 16 December, the Victory Day. Bangabandhu declares at a huge public rally in Dhaka – the people of Bangladesh achieved independence at the cost of blood, they shall protect freedom with this blood. He said, Bangladesh exists, shall exist, nobody will be able to suppress it. (16 December, Dainik Bangla)

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman lays the foundation stone of the monument to be built in sacred memory of the immortal martyrs of the the liberation war. (17 December, Dainik Bangla)

The president, prime minister and council of ministers take oath under the constitution. (18 December, Dainik Bangla).

(The events of the subsequent period are not included due to space limitations)

Prepared by PID Feature Section

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Bangabandhu affixing his signature on the draft of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh