

Bangladesh

July-September 2023

Quarterly

**A Tribute to Bangabandhu
The Great Man Who Conquered Death**

**Women's Development in Bangladesh
Issues, Actions and Challenges**

**Traditional Boats and its Role in the
Nautical System of Bangladesh**

Magnificent Natural Beauty in Sylhet



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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina stands in solemn silence for some time as a mark of profound respect to the memory of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on the occasion of National Mourning Day, 15th August 2023



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Editorial

The National Mourning Day has been observed on 15th August with due solemnity and fervour throughout the country and Bangladesh missions abroad. On this night of August 15, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and most of his family members were assassinated at house 677 of road 32 in Dhanmondi in 1975. The nation reproaches this heinous act of assassination. Bangabandhu is alive and remembered for his struggle and foresighted political career that led to the independence of Bangladesh. The government, different political and socio-cultural organisations and educational institutions chalked out various programmes on this occasion.

Women's development and women's empowerment is one of the most discussed topics of the present time. At the international level various programmes are being carried out, and in the country also the current government has taken many programmes in this regard. The women empowerment lies in the creation of the environment that is free from intimidation, and where free mobility, working conditions and also safety of a woman are ensured. Basically a society committed to respect and love for women can ensure the development and empowerment of a woman.

Bangladesh is a land of beauty. The vast crop field, and numerous numbers of rivers and their tributaries & distributaries have given the country a unique elegance. The greenery hills, the longest sandy sea beach, the hillocks, tea gardens, the largest mangrove forest, the deciduous forests and the vast water bodies at different parts of the country have given the elegance a different dimension. The country has hundreds of attractive places of historical and archaeological values as well as the natural beauty that always attract the native and foreign tourists.

The boat is a necessary and common mode of transportation in riverine Bangladesh. For hundreds of years, boats of various sizes and types have been flowing through the rivers of this country. Each type of boat has different utility and beauty.

Apart from the articles on the above mentioned topics, write-up on wildlife and a poem on Bangabandhu have also been accommodated in this issue.

Contents



There Comes The Magnanimous
Nasiruddin Chowdhury
Page - 4



Magnificent Natural Beauty in Sylhet
M. Q. Zaman
Page- 32



Women's Development in Bangladesh:
Issues, Actions and Challenges
Md. Quddus Khan
Page- 23

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| POEM | |
| Sheikh Mujib Everywhere <i>Zafar Wazed</i> | 13 |
| A Tribute to Bangabandhu: The Great Man Who Conquered Death <i>Azgar Ali</i> | 14 |
| Bangabandhu the Eternal Source of Inspiration <i>Md. Shiplu Zaman</i> | 18 |
| Traditional Boats and its Role in the Nautical System of Bangladesh <i>Md. Mosharraf Hossain</i> | 42 |
| Durgasagar Dighi <i>Md. Ziaul Haque Howlader</i> | 47 |
| Civets- Most Neglected Mammals of Bangladesh <i>Professor Dr. A N M Aminoor Rahman</i> | 50 |
| 'Bangladesh at a Glance' Unveiled | 57 |
| Department of Films and Publications organises programme on National Mourning Day | 58 |
| Development Chronology | 59 |



There Comes The Magnanimous

Nasiruddin Chowdhury

under threat for several times. When he established that independent country, even then the independence was not out of danger. The nation had to pay the highest price to protect the freedom brought by them. It was Bangabandhu, who had to pay the price of the independence with his life.

Bangabandhu along with his family and several ministers sacrificed life to protect the sovereignty of the first independent state of Bengal. He did not inherit a state, he himself founded a new independent country. Not a state, but a republic.

Bangabandhu is the asset earned by many pursuits. Why Bangabandhu has achieved the title of the greatest Bengali personality for all times in the poll of BBC? Many a great personalities, political figures, poets, literary persons, philosophers, scientists, knowledgeable and worthy persons ignited and moved our lives for thousand years; they built the history and civilization by their own merit, innovation, extra-ordinary pursuits and works.

To cite examples, we find the names of the great thinker Dipankar Srigyan-Atish, Sri Chaitanya, Rammohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Rabindranath Tagore, Sir Ashutosh Mukhopadhyay, Rashtraguru Surendranath Bandopadhyay, Arvind Ghosh, Jagadish Chandra Bose, Acharya Prafulla Chandra Roy, Satyendranath Bose, MeghnadSaha, Deshbandhu Chittaranjan, Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Haque, Manabendranath Roy. Is Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, Satyajit Ray. Each of them has made a valuable contribution in building the civilization of Bengali nation. But none of them organised the Bengali nation. Nor did they establish independent Bangladesh. There lies Bangabandhu's excellence, uniqueness.

15 August is the elegiac day to us. The day of bereavement, sorrow and agonising pain. On that day the nation turned blue in pain to loose the greatest Bengali for all times, the great hero of our struggle for freedom, the architect of independent Bangladesh, the luminary great man Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. 15 August has cast unfathomable shame, humiliation and ineffaceable stigma on Bengalis. That stain can never be erased, never be faded.

Such a day of deception, deceit, killing, treason, and knavery has never come in the life of the nation.

Bangabandhu sacrificed his life for the independence. Before the birth of Bangladesh, his life was



Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in his study room at residence

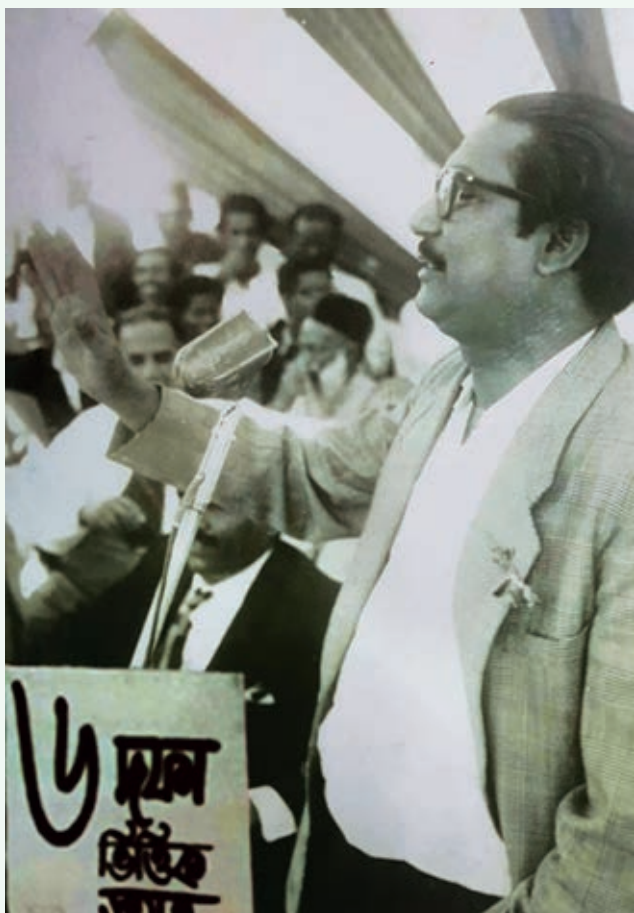
We learned from history that an independent Bengal was established in the first half of the sixth century during the fall of the Gupta Empire. Gopichandra, Dharmaditya and Samacharadeva were the kings of this kingdom. But they were not Bengalis. South and some parts of East and West Bengal were included in this independent state of Bengal. In the late 6th century, the Gaur kingdom was established with parts of North and West Bengal. King Shashanka was its first sovereign ruler. The independent Sultanate period of two hundred years (1204-1576), from the 13th century to the 16th century, was a bright chapter in Bengali history. But the Sultans were not Bengalis and that Bengal is not this Bengal.

These are about the monarchy. Bangabandhu founded the People's Republic or the Republic. There is another incident in the history of Bengal when after the death of King Shashanka, the democracy of Bengal was destroyed by disharmony, inner conflicts and repeated attacks by external enemies.

The political wisdom, foresight and self-sacrifice shown by the Bengali nation to get rid of that extreme miserable situation will forever be remembered in history. Once the senior leaders of the country decided to put aside their quarrels and elect a person to the throne and all would willingly accept his lordship. People of the country also happily accepted this opinion. As a result, a man named Gopal was elected as the ruler of Bengal.

After reviewing the history of Bengali of 1500 years, we have to come to the conclusion that it had not been possible to have an independent Bangladesh before 1971.

It was Bangabandhu who was first to establish the independent nation state of Bengalis, to give Bengalis a national identity. Bangabandhu rewrote history by establishing independent Bangladesh, a unique event in the history of



Sheikh Mujibur Rahman announces the six-point in Lahore, 5 February 1966

Bengalis which can be compared to the height of the Himalayas and the magnitude and depth of the epic. Bangabandhu is the creator of the new history of Bengalis, the great hero.

Among the previous and contemporary leaders of Bangabandhu, he was the only leader who dedicated his life-long struggle and pursuit for the establishment of an independent state for Bengalis. Although he was busy to fight for contemporary problems and issues, once he was convinced with the truth during his young time that East Bengal must be liberated, never did he forget it. That is why he is Bangabandhu.

Bangabandhu went to Agartala at least three times (twice in 1961 and 1962, another time probably after his acquittal in the Agartala case) to seek Indian help in liberating Bangladesh.

Moazzem Chowdhury and his associates of Sylhet, wanted to take Bangabandhu to London through India in the style of Netaji Subhash Bose to form a government in exile to carry out the struggle for freedom of Bangladesh. In 1962, Bangabandhu also sent a message to the then Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru through SS Banerjee, a diplomat working at the Indian High Commission in Dhaka at that time, seeking his help in establishing an independent Bangladesh.

In 1961 Bangabandhu formed an organisation called East Bengal Mukti Front for independence, such information is available in Shah Moazzem Hossain's book. He wrote, that Bangabandhu gave him some leaflets printed on behalf of that organisation to distribute to halls and other important places of Dhaka University. When he gave the leaflets to Sheikh Fazlul Haque Mani, he slipped them through under the doors of different rooms of university halls.

Before that, in 1960, a detective working at the Pakistan Desk in Delhi's South Block came to Chittagong. He went to Noakhali after visiting Patenga Beach,

Halishahar etc. This was also a part of Bangabandhu's freedom movement. The detective's name was Raj Nirmal Narayan Chowdhury. His home district was Noakhali.

He was the assistant of 'RAW' Chief Ramnath Kao. The purpose of his visit was to verify the feasibility of using the coastal areas of Chittagong for armed revolution for the purpose to liberate Bangladesh. The then General Secretary of Greater Chittagong District Awami League MA Aziz and later accused in Agartala case Manik Chowdhury were with that detective.

These incidents prove how desperate Bangabandhu was for freedom. The Nucleus, a secret group formed within the Chhatra League in 1962, was not the original secret revolutionary move for freedom. But Bangabandhu had secretly taken various initiatives for independence even before that. In thinking and armed secret revolutionary movement for freedom, Bangabandhu was ahead of all.

From the last half of 1961, several rounds of meetings were held between Awami League and the declared illegal Communist Party. Journalist Zahur Hossain Chowdhury mediates between the two parties in this regard. Sheikh Mujib and Tofazzal Hossain Manik Miah from Awami League and Moni Singh and Khoka Roy from Communist Party were present in those secret meetings.

In the meeting, Awami League leader Sheikh Mujib proposed to include the demand of independent East Pakistan in the programme. He argued: we cannot stay with them anymore. Therefore, the movement for independent East Pakistan should be built from now; that demand should be included in the programme of the movement. But in the meeting, the Communist Party leaders did not agree to Bangabandhu's proposal. They opined, 'In this situation, the demand for an independent East Pakistan is now a foolhardy demand.'

Bangabandhu's politics and struggle can be divided into two parts-one is spatial and temporal, and the other one is permanent. The independence of Bangladesh was the ever-lasting and eternal motto of his politics. When he came to Dhaka from Kolkata after partition in 1947 to start politics, the key persons in the politics of Dhaka among the opposition leaders were his predecessors. They were Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Haque, his direct leader Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy, Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani. Shamsul Haque, Maulana Abdur Rashid Tarkabagish, Aaur Rahman Khan, Abul Mansoor Ahmad, Comrade Moni Singh etc. Bangabandhu's contemporary leaders were Oli Ahad, Khondaker Mushtaq Ahmad, Prof. Mozaffar Ahmad, Mohammad Toaha etc.

In 1970, all leaders were alive except AK Fazlul Haque and Suhrawardy. But in terms of popularity, none of them were equal to Bangabandhu. The popularity of Bangabandhu's leadership reached such a height that he could only be compared with the Everest, the highest peak of the Himalayas. Compared to Bangabandhu, other leaders seemed like dwarfs. For this reason, Bangabandhu is the architect of Bangladesh, the great hero of independence

It was Bangabandhu who awakened the Bengali nationhood, he organised the Bengalis as a nation. Bengalis had the same language, tradition, and culture. After the creation of Pakistan, the Bengalis living in the same geographical boundaries of East Bengal got an opportunity to organise themselves as a nation. Bangabandhu's



Meeting of the Jukto Front (United Front) for selecting the candidates prior to election, December 1953

6 points demand in 1966 ushered in Bengali nationalism.

Bangabandhu was also the first man to name East Bengal or East Pakistan as 'Bangladesh'. In 1969, Bangabandhu used the word 'Bangladesh' in a discussion meeting organized on the occasion of Suhrawardy's death anniversary at the shrine of the three leaders.

In the past, there was never an independent country named Bangladesh. The land known as Bangla Mulk, including West Bengal, were divided into different independent separate townships named Bengal, Gauro, Rar, Pundra, Barindra, Samatat, Harikel etc. The creation of undivided Bengal occurred during the British rule when the separated townships or independent states got united. In 1905 the attempt of Bengal partition was foiled by the united resistance of Bengalis. In 1947, Bengal was bifurcated and East Bengal was incorporated into East Pakistan and West Bengal into India. Jinnah's pursuit of binationalism was at the root of the 1947 partition of Bengal. Jinnah Sahib established Pakistan as a separate homeland for Muslims as he described the two main segments of the Bengali nation, Hindus and Muslims as two nations. Although religion can never be the basis of nationality. Despite that, Jinnah Sahib created a strange state in the name of Pakistani nation by uniting the people only based on religious belief who lived thousands of miles apart and whose language, culture, traditions and even skin color were different. But after four and a half months of the birth of the country, Bangabandhu challenged Pakistani nationality by forming the East Pakistan Muslim Chhatra League. The formation of Chhatra League was a time bomb which exploded on March 26, 1971 and devastated Pakistan.



Sheikh Mujibur Rahman takes oath of office as Agriculture & Forest Minister in the Jukto Front Cabinet before the Chief Minister AK Fazlul Huq in 1954

However, Jinnah established Muslim nationalism in Pakistan. Bangabandhu introduced Bengali nationalism by presenting the idea of mono-nationalism as opposed to Jinnah's bi-nationalism. He argued that no nation can be built based on religion. A common language, culture, tradition is a necessary condition for the formation of a nation. When East Bengal was annexed to Pakistan in 1947, Bangabandhu discovered elements of Bengali nationalism within this geographical territory and found the potentials of Bangladesh which he imagined and envisioned. After that, at first he took initiative to build a nation to establish independent Bangladesh. Bengalis started to be inspired by Bengali nationalist consciousness when they found Pakistanis treated East Bengal (the then East Pakistan) as a colony and found themselves as second-class citizens of Pakistan facing exploitation and discrimination in all aspects of development, business and trade, jobs etc. In the 1960s, Bangabandhu's 6 points demand fanned the fire amid the smoldering discontent of the Bengalis. The demand for autonomy contained in the 6 points is considered charter of independence of Bengalis. Bengalis were reanimated by the spirit of independence as the Pakistani rulers refused to accept the 6 points.

After that, in the 1970's election Bengalis elected Bangabandhu and his party Awami League with an absolute majority as the party secured more than two-thirds of the seats. The Pakistani rulers again refused to accept the people's verdict and started genocide in Bangladesh. When Bangabandhu declared the independence of Bangladesh and called upon the nation to drive away the Pakistani invaders from the soil of Bangladesh, the nation plunged into the liberation war and established Bangladesh by defeating the Pakistani forces. The Pakistani government arrested



The staircase at Dhamondi residence where Bangabandhu was shot dead

Bangabandhu from his residence of Dhanmondi 32 on the night of March 25 and imprisoned him in West Pakistan and tried to kill him. The Pakistani government was forced to release Bangabandhu as their forces lost the war in Bangladesh. Bangabandhu returned to the country on January 10, 1972. From the aforesaid discussion, it can be concluded without any confusion that Bangabandhu is the father of Bengali nation and the founder of independent Bangladesh.

On August 15 the killers of '75 did not kill only Bangabandhu, the father of the Bengali nation, the greatest Bengali of thousand years; they killed Bangladesh, a rose. Because Bangabandhu was not just an individual; he was the symbol of an ideology, the name of a spirit. That ideology is Bangladesh and that spirit is Bengali.

But the killers failed. Because even though Bangabandhu passed away, his ideals of Bangladesh and Bengali nationalism are still alive. Even after 48 years of Bangabandhu's physical death, his ubiquitous influence in Bangladesh is noticeable and is still highly relevant in this country. As long as Bangladesh exists, Bangabandhu will live in Bangladesh.

Who were they? Mushtaq, Chashi, Thakur, Rashid, Farooq - whom we know as killers; behind their personal identity, who were they really? They were also symbols of an ideology.

Or was there a mastermind behind the scene? Who, clean-shaven and dressed in a complete military uniform, was pacing up and down in grave concern at the residence of Cantonment on the morning of August 15 to hear the news of accomplishing the killing mission? It was Ziaur Rahman.

After seizing power, Zia himself revealed that his ideology was 'Bangladeshi

nationalism', which was essentially a variation of Islamic or Pakistani nationalism. Before this, Mushtaq had dissolved the state policies of Bangladesh, transformed the slogan of liberation war 'Joy Bangla' to 'Bangladesh Zindabad,' and renamed 'Bangladesh Betar' to 'Radio Bangladesh.' Mushtaq hated everything about Bangabandhu, even his attires too. He tried to introduce a peculiar type of new national attire. Among the four main state principles Bengali nationalism, secularism, and socialism were altered. Those principles were the achievements of the Liberation War.

Bangladesh was founded based on Bengali nationalism; Pakistan's communalism was replaced by secularism; and instead of class inequality and exploitative social structure, an egalitarian society was introduced, which was one of the commitments of the Liberation War. All these were abandoned. After that, what remained was the sheath named Bangladesh, within it there was 'Pakistan.'

Mushtaq established Pakistan, and Zia legitimized him under the veil of Bangladeshi nationalism. Actually, Mushtaq and Chashi, were remnants of the defeated Pakistani forces of '71. They were engaged in a conspiracy to foil Bangladesh's Liberation War in 1971 and wanted to keep Pakistan united by forming a confederation. Mushtaq could not succeed due to the vigilance and firmness of the four national leaders Syed Nazrul, Tajuddin, Captain Mansoor Ali and Kamaruzzaman.

By killing Bangabandhu, Mushtaq fulfilled his desire to ascend to power. It was Ziaur Rahman who was the man behind the scenes encouraging him to kill Bangabandhu. Bangabandhu did not appoint him as the army chief, thus enraged, Zia participated in the assassination plot of Bangabandhu.

Zia was a mysterious figure from the Liberation War. Though unwilling, he joined the liberation war and initially served as the Sector Commander of Sector 1 in the Harina Camp in Tripura, India. However, due to suspicious activities, he was removed from Sector 1. There were doubts that during the Liberation War, he was involved in subversive activities. He opposed Mr. Osmani's appointment as the Chief of Staff and attempted to remove the latter from the position. He couldn't succeed due to Khalid Musharraf's opposition. Due to Zia's mistakes in the Battle of Kamalpur, many officers and soldiers of the Bangladesh forces were martyred. After that incident, General Osmani wanted to sack him.

Zia was the highest beneficiary from the assassination of Bangabandhu. He gradually established himself as the Chief Martial Law Administrator, Chief of Army Staff, and eventually became the President, reaching the pinnacle of power. He gradually rehabilitated the key persons who had opposed independence by appointing Shah Aziz as the Prime Minister and Alim and Matin as ministers. He abolished the Collaborators Act, and released collaborators, Razakars, and Al-Badr members. He dismantled all achievements of the Liberation War, abandoning the values of the war from all levels of the state and society.

Mushtaq and Zia tried to banish all the signs of Bangabandhu by banning Bangabandhu's name and Awami League. However, despite their efforts, Bangabandhu's legacy remains deeply engraved in the hearts of the people. Such an attempt to erase him was not easy, as he lives eternally in the consciousness of the people. It is proved that martyred Bangabandhu is thousand times powerful

than living Bangabandhu. Bangabandhu's name is intertwined with Bangladesh to such an extent that it's impossible to separate them. He is inseparable from the sky, air, rivers, lakes, fields, trees, foliage, flowers, birds, and all of nature in Bangladesh. His presence is deeply felt and cannot be erased.

Those who thought that they brought back the defeated and ousted Pakistani forces of '71 to Bangladesh by killing Bangabandhu in '75, they were living in a fool's paradise. The person who would bring them to justice had already grown up. The daughters of Bangabandhu, Sheikh Hasina and Sheikh Rehana, who escaped the killers' bullets on August 15, 1975 as they were abroad. Sheikh Hasina returned to the country in 1981 with firm determination to bring the killers of her father to justice and to bring back Bangladesh on the right track. First she took the initiative to reorganise Awami League, the political party formed by her father, the party which led the struggle for freedom.

First, she took the initiative to reorganize Awami League, the party created by his father, which led the struggle for freedom. She brought order back in the party by organising the frustrated, demoralized, fragmented leaders and workers. With the reconstituted party, she won the elections in 1996 and again from 2008 to the present time and has brought back the spirit of the liberation war at all echelons of the state and society.

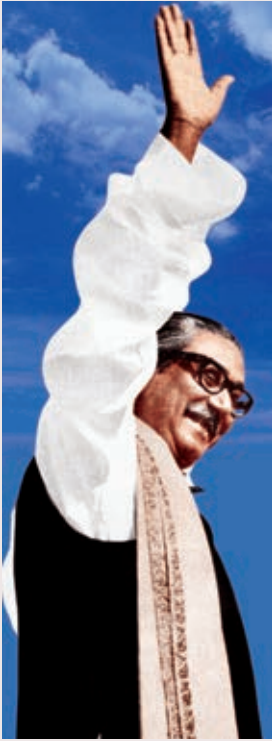
Based on the values of the liberation war, she has governed the country and established Bangabandhu at the position of the highest honor and dignity of the state. He was declared the 'Father of the Nation', constitutionally so too. She established Bangladesh firmly on the foundation of the spirit of independence by declaring Bangabandhu's Martyrdom Day as National Mourning Day, Bangabandhu's Birthday as National Children's Day, 'Joy Bangla' as National slogan; by including Bangabandhu's speech of 7th March in UNESCO World Heritage and completing the trial of Bangabandhu killing and jail killing, the trial of war criminals.

With the aim of realizing Bangabandhu's dream of turning country into a golden Bangladesh, she has transformed Bangladesh into a developing country. Now she is working relentlessly to transform the country into a developed state within 2041. After establishing Digital Bangladesh, she has now taken a vow to build Smart Bangladesh. Despite the global economic recession caused by the Corona pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war, Sheikh Hasina's ability to steer the country's economy on a dynamic and progressive track shows the proof of her leadership's foresight and strength. After the refusal of the World Bank to finance the construction of the Padma Bridge, Sheikh Hasina surprised the world by building the Padma Bridge with our own funds. The construction of Metro Rail in Dhaka and Bangabandhu Tunnel in Chittagong are immortal achievements of Sheikh Hasina's government.

Translation: Parikshit Chowdhury

The Writer is Famous Journalist

Courtesy : Press Information Department



Sheikh Mujib Everywhere

Zafar Wazed

Even today the blood-stains of Sheikh Mujib in all our homes
That grotesque night burns like inferno in the wounds of chest,
The tired history of a sad, wasted end breaks down in tears, anger
The face of a brave Mujib floats on in the struggles of our lives.

Does anyone know what pain people in crores carry in their chests?
Suppressing that with hand, running breathlessly in bloodied Bangladesh
We return to an empty home fatigued by the sweats of wakeful night
The dreary soil breaks up into pieces ceaselessly in this barren habitat.

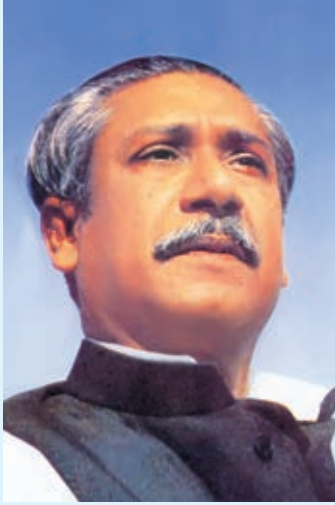
Even then in all our homes one Sheikh Mujib remains awake
None is there in this homeland stained with the wounds of heart
The flowers don't blossom in gay wind carrying the memory of birth
The wailings only swell by the lamentations of a brave dark night.

We get back the vanquished land, a torn flag amid pains and cries
In our homes the endless courage of Mujib rise up even then
His blood corpuscles wake up by the care of dusk that breaks darkness
There are only songs of his sign in our flag, love of homeland's soil
Articulations only on the tide of freedom, in sun, rain, toil and music.

On seas, fields, parks built with life's labour, tied by the debt of blood
The dove of Mujib's dream spreads the cloth of passionate love
In our homes on the flag of our soul his name flutters
A reverence emerges from the ceaseless waves that break all barriers;
Standing with the mark of blood on an Asian land stretching up to horizon
Even amid piteous cries and struggles the Bangalis sing the song of triumph;
Freedom therefore comes back home, revolutionary spirit gets colour
In our history, ups and downs of life, wakefulness, with golden hue
Extends across Bangali's eternal soul – Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Translation: Dr Helal Uddin Ahmed

Courtesy : Press Information Department



A Tribute to Bangabandhu: The Great Man Who Conquered Death

Md. Azgar Ali

immortalized as a source of inspiration to human beings for a lifetime. But as a condition of determining the fate of a nation, all that is applicable is to show the way out of the millennial filth and to lead by in the pages of history. But qualified people to be superheroes have not been created in all ages. To this day in the history of the world, there is no documentary evidence that anyone has taken the place of the great hero of the nation without all those charismatic qualities. But in building a nation-state through political and social activities in the contemporary world, Bangabandhu is a unique personality who was able to reach the highest position of a great hero by shaking hands in the great arena of history. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur is the undisputed leader of the Bengalis, the great architect of independent-sovereign Bangladesh, the father of the nation. And the greatest Bengali of all time is the source of all our inspiration. The main basis of his life philosophy was the political, economic, social and cultural liberation of the Bengali nation. And we see its reflection in the flow of events arranged in layers of history which is the right of an exploited and subjugated nation to breathe in the open air by dreaming of freedom. He played a leading role in every democratic

History gives meaning to the present. Through knowledge of the past, we gain understanding of what is happening today. History has more than a utilitarian purpose; it is the record of the progress of man's endeavors and works, his ideas, visions, failures, and achievements. History without dates is rootless and meaningless; Dates help to put events in a time sequence and to relate them to other events. Make careful mental notes of dates when you read this article understanding of Bangabandhu's achievements throughout His life span then you will get the kind of facts what the historian wants. However, I am not a history student yet I begin to write. This is to me a convincing and plausible thing with facts and figures. I write, the more I know Bangabandhu what I am looking for, the better I understand the significance and relevance of what I find. Come what may, history finds its 'hero' at its own pace and in the pursuit of necessity from age to age and not everyone can be the main catalyst of every event in the long journey of that 'history'. It is a mystery of divine creation. God Himself, for the benefit of mankind, sends people from country to country in the form of His qualities as the savior of the oppressed and disadvantaged people of the world who through his deeds has been



Sheikh Mujibur Rahman highlighting the economic disparity between the two parts of Pakistan

movement, including the State Language Movement, the United Front Election, the Anti-Military Movement, the Education Movement, the Six Point Movement, the People's Uprising of 1969, the Election of 1970 and the Liberation War of 1971. He has always spoken for truth, justice and exploitation. He never deviates from the path of truth and justice. He has always spoken out for the rights of the exploited people from the path of truth and justice in the face of hundreds of prison fears and oppression. And thus he became an abstract symbol of liberating people. His speech on March 7, 1971 is a historic document in favor of democratic rights, for freedom, for independence. That speech has awakened a nation, united at one point. Many great people have been born in the history of Bengal, who have sacrificed their lives for the liberation of Bengalis. But no one like Bangabandhu thought of Bengalis in every moment, every breath of life. He did not realize the sense of life of all Bengalis as his own sense of life. Therefore, there is no other person with such a unique and generous personality like Bangabandhu. Bangabandhu's life span was only 55 years, four months and twenty-eight days. Of these, 4,682 days have been spent in jail. And his reign was only 3 years 7 months 3 days. On January 10, 1972, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was released from Pakistani prison and returned home. After a long 9 months He addressed the huge crowd in Suhrawardy Udyan and spoke for 40 minutes in an emotional voice. He said there, "if we can't provide our people with food, clothing and jobs, then our hard-won freedom will be meaningless, and he also said that now if anyone wants to lose the independence of Bangladesh, then Mujib will be the first to give his life to protect the independence. Bengalis can no longer lose their independence." Returning to his homeland, Bangabandhu resigned from the post of President on 12 January 1972 and on the same day he took over as the Prime Minister and reconstituted the Cabinet. After taking charge of a war-torn, wounded, economically devastated country, he took on the daunting

challenge of managing it with great courage and deals. But the extent and magnitude of the damage to war-torn Bangladesh was indescribable. Bangladesh Bank did not have any foreign exchange reserves when Bangabandhu's government took over. Bangabandhu tried his best to make Bangladesh stand out from such a devastated situation. Bangabandhu made possible for Bangladesh what was not possible for India and Pakistan. The first constitution of Pakistan was drafted in 1956, nine years after the independence of Pakistan in 1947. India drafted its constitution in 1950, three years after independence. And Bangladesh wrote the constitution in 1972, just one year after independence..In 1973, Bangabandhu adopted the first five-year plan to rebuild the country's economy. Poverty alleviation, meeting basic needs such as employment for all, food, clothing, shelter, education and medical care. We still have to struggle to get rid of economic, political, social, hunger and poverty. Bangabandhu was able to show people the dream and taught the nation to work towards the realization of that dream. We know that a welfare state has a separate state philosophy. That is why Bangabandhu's thought was a state philosophy, which is the highest improvement of human life on the basis of human dignity, freedom and equality. To that end, he built Bangladesh into a modern welfare state as such; he continued to make every effort to do what he needed to do on the world map. . But alas! What is the misfortune of the freedom-and peace loving people of the world! On the morning of August 15, 1975, the worst massacre in human history came to an end. All the living beings of nature were sobbing that day.. The man who gave the gift of an independent country, he had to die with his family!The defeated forces and allies of 1971 wanted to remove all traces of the existence of Bangladesh from the world map by killing Bangabandhu. And with that they wanted to ,blot out the spirit of the liberation war. On August 15, 1975, the assassins killed the mortal body of the Father of the Nation, but they could not efface the immortality of his immortal



After the home coming of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, hundreds of thousands of people are taking their beloved leader to the Racecourse Ground (Suhrawardy Udyan), 10 January 1972



Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman took oath as President on 12 January 1972

hyperconsciousness, philosophy and ideals. Throughout history, there have been and will continue to be misguided killers in this world. But next to their names will be inscribed the heinous crime of demonism. Be that as it may, it was historically proven that the assassins could not destroy the existence of Bangabandhu, the great hero of history, the lifeblood of the Bengali nation's inspiration and ideology. However, Bangabandhu talked about building a golden Bengal. We think Bangabandhu's Sonar Bangla declaration is still a dream. We can identify Bangabandhu's Sonar Bengal as his dream of building a smart egalitarian society. To establish a developed, prosperous, technology-based egalitarian society without exploitation and discrimination. In order to build the golden bangla of Bangabandhu's dream, we must constantly be energized by the oath, how to work for the country with justice. It must be remembered that Bangabandhu made this country independent, to transform it into a true golden Bengal, where the rights of every person in the country will be established, no one will be a victim of exploitation and oppression. Social inequality will decrease. The people of the country will be able to work and move well, spend the night with peace and security. We all have to work with impartiality in the development of the country, in the service of the people of the country. Only then by implementing the ideology of Bangabandhu will he live forever, not otherwise. Finally, I would like to say that the golden Bengal of Bangabandhu's dream in the development, prosperity, and progress of today's Bangladesh is promising to move forward with self-confidence and motivation. Come what may it should be remembered that it is not just a matter of words; this inspiration must be transmitted to the hearts of future generations, only then will Bangabandhu's dream and Bangabandhu's philosophy and ideals remain immortal and watchful.

Md. Azgar Ali, Researcher and Columnist



Bangabandhu the Eternal Source of Inspiration

Md. Shiplu Zaman

Jamal and Sheikh Rusel and many close relatives including two daughters-in-law (pregnant), Bangabandhu's brother Sheikh Abu Naser, were martyred at their residence in Dhanmondi before dawn on August 15. Farmer leader Abdur Rob Serniabat and youth leader Sheikh Fazlul Huq Moni were also killed brutally that day. On that day, the sky-air-birds of Bengal became stagnant, the nature became poisonous and polluted. People of the country were scared and became helpless again, they did not know what to do, where to go. Because their leader - the shelter, the inspiration was no more.

Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was to come to Dhaka University campus, so the whole campus was filled with excitement. First, Bangabandhu was supposed to come to the Department of Sociology. And there, Bangabandhu's youngest son Sheikh Russell and the students of the University Laboratory School were to greet him respectfully with flower petals on a silver plate. Little Russel would welcome the father i.e. the President of Bangladesh, every father and son will be proud to think about it, their hearts will be filled with joy. But the group of hyenas did not let that wonderful image be transformed. The killers did not spare the innocent and tender Russell; They were such scared cowards who even considered the future Russell as a threat.

On that day, the stage was ready, all arrangements were completed. He would come, all were waiting for him eagerly. On his arrival plan, the Dhaka University campus was decorated with pomp and ceremony. He was our first president, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the father of the nation of Bangladesh. The day was 15th August 1975, the convocation of Dhaka University was organized for the first time in the history of independent Bangladesh. Everybody expected the day to be glorious and joyful but it was not like that in reality. With the direct help of the anti-independence forces of Bangladesh, some misguided members of the country's army, turned the day into a scarred and stigmatized one - another day like the day of Karbala. The undisputed leader of the Bengali nation, the greatest Bengali of all time, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, his wife Bangamata Sheikh Fazilatun Nesa Mujib, sons Sheikh Kamal, Sheikh



Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (standing at the back wearing glasses) with Mahatma Gandhi and Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy at Sodepur Haydar Mansion in Kolkata, 1947

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman mockingly said, on the eve of joining the first convocation of independent Bangladesh as chancellor on the 14th of August 1975, to his private secretary Dr. Faras Uddin, “My journey in Dhaka University has never been pleasant”. Mohammad Faras Uddin (Private Secretary) commented, ‘How happy it will be that the university authorities are going to give him an ‘Honorary Doctor of Law’ degree from which Bangabandhu was once expelled; Perhaps it was because of that doubt that Bangabandhu made such a comment.’ (The Daily Campus, 15 August 2021)

When Bangabandhu was a second year student of law department in 1949, the fourth class employees of Dhaka University started agitating with various demands. When they went on strike, Bangabandhu supported it as a student. But many people including Bangabandhu were expelled from Dhaka University for giving support. All accepted studentship with fine but Bangabandhu did not accept studentship with fine for a fair movement (Sarabangla, 15 August 2018).

Besides, President Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was supposed to give the first speech as the chancellor in the first convocation in the history of Bangladesh. For this reason, the then Vice-Chancellor of DU, Professor Abdul Matin Chowdhury, was supposed to read the honorary certificate. But that certificate was no longer read (The Daily Campus, 15 August 2021). The fear that the great poet of politics mentioned in his visionary thought finally turned true.

Bangabandhu was a visionary leader of the Bengali Nation and the architect of our Independence. He led the nation at every democratic and freedom movements including the ‘All-party State language Action Committee’ formed to ensure the right to mother-tongue in 1948, the historic Language Movement in 1952,



Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman with Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy in Rajshahi, 1954

Juktafront Election in 1954, the movement against Martial Law in 1958, the movement against anti-people Education Commission in 1962, Six-Point Movement in 1966, Mass Upsurge in 1969 and the General Elections in 1970, all of which were directed towards realizing Bangalees emancipation and their rights. For this, he had to embrace jail several times and bear inhuman torture.

During the Great War of Liberation,



Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 'Mourning Procession' with Maulana Bhasani, 21 February 1953

he was arrested by the Pakistani forces and imprisoned in Pakistan alone, the Pakistanis wanted to hang Bangabandhu, a grave was dug for him next to the prison. Even being away from the country, people and family, he was not afraid at all. Even then, he was extremely brave and determined. After the victory, the Pakistani forces were forced to honorably send him back to the country, bowing to his personality and leadership. Returning to the country, he hugged the people of Bengal and touched the soil of Bengal and wept bitterly. He was fascinated by the courage and achievements of the people of Bengal, and was full of love. Bangabandhu was uncompromising on the question of fundamental rights and independence of people throughout his life. He also sang Bengali and Bengali songs on the gallows. Returning to the country on



President VV Giri, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and other leaders of India greet Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman of the way to Dhaka from London via New Delhi on 10 January 1972

January 10, 1972, .Bangabandhu said, “When going to the execution stage, I will say - I am a Bengali, Bangla is my country, Bangla is our language.”

The Pakistani ruling group arrested Bangabandhu and took him to their hideout however, did not dare to touch him. Bangabandhu believed the Bengalees with closed eyes, but some traitors with Bengali names who were constantly around Bangabandhu, who ate the food cooked by Bangamata supported the plot of killing Bangabandhu and his family brutally. How could they? It is not possible to get the answer if you think in a healthy brain. Such a precedent cannot be found in any civilized society, in any other country of the world. We have seen a lot of news of statesmen being killed in different countries of the world because of their strong desire to seize power. But in this way an entire families are killed together including women and children and even unborn fetuses cannot be accepted. There was no chapter of human rights violations left in this brutal murder case. Whenever something happens in the world today, the so-called human rights defenders protest with one voice, but none of them could be found that day. On that day, humanity and human rights were stunned by the clang and roar of weapons. Bengali and Bengalis were smeared with dirty ink and made it stigmatizing. After killing Bangabandhu, the gang of murderers confessed to killing. Bangabandhu’s self-confessed killer, Major Farooq, said in an article in The Sunday Times of London on May 30, 1976, “I ordered the killing of Sheikh Mujib. Bangladesh government can file a case against me if it wants”. They were so violent and bloodthirsty that after the assassination of Bangabandhu, on 2 September 1975, self-proclaimed President Khandkar Mushtaq Ahmed promulgated the Indemnity Ordinance to protect the murderers from prosecution, and later Ziaur Rahman passed it into law in 1979 (Ittefaq, 02 August 2023).

The hyena group thought that they could kill Bangabandhu and his family and

eradicate them from the soil of Bengal. But they could not realize that Bangabandhu and Bangladesh have become a single entity. Bangabandhu lives in the hearts of every people of Bengal. Bangabandhu today is much stronger, much more inspiring. The killers thought there would be no justice for this heinous murder in history, but truth and justice prevailed belatedly. The infamous Indemnity Act was repealed by Bangabandhu's daughter Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and justice prevailed. After a long trial, on January 28, 2010, the death sentence of the five accused in the Bangabandhu murder case was executed, and the nation was absolved to some extent. But the five convicted murderers are still on the run in different countries. Rashed Chowdhury in the United States and Noor Chowdhury in Canada, were approached by the government to bring them back, but the government of the United States and Canada did not respond. And the government has not yet got any clear information about the whereabouts of Rashid, Dalim and Muslim Uddin (BD News 24, 18 August 2021).

On August 15, 1975, Sheikh Russell and other students could not pay floral tributes at the feet of Bangabandhu at Dhaka University, but we now pay tribute to Bangabandhu by offering floral tributes. On that day the written charter for Bangabandhu was not read but the heart of every Bengali always weeps for this great leader, everyone is looking for him in the present world context.

Bangabandhu has made an outstanding contribution to the establishment of world peace along with equality, friendship, democracy throughout his life. He was a symbol of freedom, an ambassador of freedom for oppressed and exploited people in the world. At the Non-Aligned Conference in Algiers on September 9, 1973, he said, "The world today is divided into two - the exploiters and the exploited: I am for the exploited".

Bangabandhu has struggled throughout his life with the aim of achieving political freedom as well as economic liberation of the people. His dream was to establish a 'Golden Bangla' free from hunger and poverty. For this purpose, after one year of independence, he formulated a people-oriented constitution. Bangabandhu did not just gift us a country; he also formulated a contemporary outline of what the economic, social, political and cultural structure of a newly independent state would look like.

Even though Bangabandhu is no longer with us, his principles and ideals will always inspire the freedom-seeking people worldwide and the mass awakening against exploitation and oppression. Bangabandhu is immortal and will always remain in our hearts. Bangabandhu has been and will remain an eternal source of inspiration not only for millions of Bengalis in this country but also for freedom-seeking people worldwide.

It is our sole responsibility to make Bangladesh a happy and prosperous country by completing Bangabandhu's uncompleted work by being enriched with knowledge and dignity. On the day of National Mourning, we will devote ourselves to building the 'Sonar Bangla' - the Golden Bengal dreamt by the Father of the Nation turning the grief of losing him into strength - this should be the pledge of the National Mourning Day.

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Women's Development in Bangladesh: Issues, Actions and Challenges

Md. Quddus Khan

Emphasizing the role and importance of woman or Nari in the world, our national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam said, '*Jogote ja kichhu sundor, chiro kolyankor, ordhek tar koriachhe nari ordhek tar nor* (whatever is beautiful and beneficial in the earth, half of them has been created by the women and the rest half by the men).' Of course, poet's imagination and the reality differs, women's development to reach at par with the men is still an important and challenging issue.

There is no unanimity as to what is most meant by women's development among women themselves. Radical feminists think women development means surpassing men in all spheres of life. They also think the women should think about their independent growth. They also feel women are human beings like men. Hence, they should get equal treatment and opportunity in all spheres of life. On the other hand, women holding liberal views think that there is no need to compete with men in all spheres of life. Women should be free to develop themselves, and they should be



Women in office job



Women in Bangladesh Navy

given appropriate treatment and opportunity in such spheres of life where they are appropriate and fit best. The relation between men and women should not be unduly competitive, rather it should be complementary. In no way it should appear conflicting. It must be cooperative as a matter of policy and principle.

Major popular views on women and related issues of their development

- a). Male dominated society in Bangladesh discriminates against women.
- b) The female children in the family usually do not get equal treatment with male ones (children).
- c) There is discriminatory law of inheritance, in different religions of Bangladesh. In some religion (As for example Hinduism), women are deprived of share in their paternal property. In some religion (as for example Islam) female children get less share of their paternal property than the male ones. That is an issue with the feminist in Bangladesh who demand equal share of both men and women in their paternal property.
- d) Comparing suitability of women and men in different professions due to difference in their natural body formation. Stephan Liller UN Resident Representative in Bangladesh said, the GSNI (Gender Social Norms Index) highlights a troubling reality. Over 99% of people in Bangladesh hold at least one bias against women, with 69% believing that men make better political leaders and 88% thinking that men are more capable business executives and are deserving a greater job opportunities. Even more concerning, over 99%

women hold bias against their Own Gender. (The Daily Star, September 19, 2023 page 9).

- e) Gender based violence (GBV) status in Bangladesh can be seen referring to a study of GBY Educo Bangladesh reveals that 55% respondents blame that girls are harassed by peers and classmates, 41% blames their neighbors and 29% blames their family members. Over 54% blames early marriage as the worst form of gender based violence. Online abuse is also on the rise, claims chairman BHRC.38% respondents do not disclose or complain about violence against them for fear of reprisal. They need safe environment for disclosure These Violence Limiting Women's Liberty, Mobility, and Development (The Daily Star, September 19, 2023 page 3-4).
- f) Given the percentage of primary and high school enrollment of girls of of both urban and rural areas in Bangladesh, it cannot be said that religion is a substantive obstacle to girls education here in Bangladesh.
- g) The preference for male child in the family on grounds of continuity of heredity in the family is a reality. A recent study by Dhaka University and even UN FPA reveals that the preference for a son is still prevalent among parents in Bangladesh.

(The Daily Star, September 19, 2023, page 9.)

- h) The radical feminist holds the view that relation between men and women is antagonistic. The men usually oppress and torture women. Hence government enacted specific laws to prevent torture and harassment of women by men. Of course there is no law to prevent torture or harassment of male by the female. Although such events are not rare. The feminist claim themselves as “manush” and are also opposed to the use of the term “Mey manush”(Female person). Dr. Rubana Huq, VC of Asian University for women (AUW) in a recent article termed mother as a child bearing machine (Daily Star, September 19 2023, page 9.) Does this remark not only dishonored women folk but also mankind as a whole?
- i) The liberal group of women hold a different view Liberal group of women hold a different view from the radical feminist view. They believe cooperation and not conflict with men will ensure women's development. The writer as Ex-DG of Women's Affairs Directorate back in 2007, while presiding over a meeting of women hard, a women leader saying, “why a wife should prepare a cup of tea for husband!.Is she subordinated to husband?“ Another women leader present in the meeting. stood up and said“ I do not agree with the leader Appa. I think what is the wrong if wife prepares a cup of tea for the husband out of love!?.The women leader also say that living side by side necessitates cooperation not conflict. I narrated this incidents to the to the present DG of Women's Affairs Directorate, Mrs. Florida Parveen, while interviewing her last month (August 2023).The DG Mrs. Parveen told me that she cooperates with her husband, forgetting her higher official status. She believes cooperation with



Women in Banking sector

men was more helpful for women's development. Stephen Liller, a Resident, Representative, UNDP Bangladesh, also expressed a similar view in a recent article.

Women cannot achieve all these alone. Men must also engage as active allies in the fight for gender equality.” (*The Daily Star, September 19, 2023*)

- j) The feminist also criticize polygamy in Bangladesh, although it is not a major issue for women's development. Islam allowed polygamy on valid grounds, but supports monogamy in principle. The Muslim Family Law Ordinance 1961 provides for two years imprisonment for taking second wife without permission from first wife.
- k) Recently punishment for rape has been increased to a maximum of death sentence. But in our view, this may be counterproductive in some cases. As it has been reported in the press many times that rape victim has been killed by the rapist when they (Rapist) could know that rape victim could identify them as previous acquaintance and could be a weakness in the rape case in future which may lead to their death sentence. Can normal rape (without deadly violence including death), justify life as a cost? Can we ignore this reality?
- l) Political empowerment of women by enfranchising them and reserving women seats in Parliament? We do not have this enfranchisement problem. Although Japanese women, French women and US Women got right to vote in 1945, 1944 and 1920 respectively, we have reserved seats in Parliament for our women. But India only recently passed law providing reserve seats for women in Federal and State legislatures. Our political parties are bound under law to nominate women members for parliament election gradually.

m) Security is a fundamental basic issue in women's development. In fact, this security issue limits the sphere of activities of women. Many of our families do not allow their family members to work in specific fields where they feel the women are not safe. The threats to security of women are many. A major threat is from the perverted section of male persons, though their number is handful but they exist in some families, almost in every society. Hence their omnipresence is assumed and women usually do not dare to travel alone by night and feels insecure when alone at home.

A Short review of Government Interventions in Women's Empowerment and development

Basically two types of interventions are there.

A. Interventions in terms of policies, laws, rules, regulations, etc.

B. interventions in terms of plans, programmes, projects, etc.

A. list of major policies, laws, rules, regulations, etc

1. The Bangladesh National Women Development Policy 2011
2. The Women Entrepreneurship Development Policy 2018
3. The Constitution of Bangladesh in 1972
4. The Representation of the People's Order, 1972
5. Women and Children Repression Prevention Act, 2000
6. The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1980. (amended in 2017)
7. The Acid Crime Control Act, 2002
8. The Prevention of Domestic Violence Act, 2012
9. The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2017
10. The Maternity Benefit Act, 1939
11. The Muslim Family Laws Ordinance 1961
12. The Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Rules 2013
13. The Citizenship Amendment Act 2009 (The Act empowered mother to confer citizenship to her children)
14. Mobile Court Act 2009 (to prevent teasing of girls and women and their sexual harassment. The schedule of the act included Section 509 of the Penal Code empowering Executive Magistrate to take action)

B. List of plans, programmes, projects, etc.

1. The National Plan of Action for women (2013 to 2020)
This plan outlines specific strategies and actions to promote gender equality and empower women in various sectors of society.
2. Vulnerable women benefit (VWB) programmes
Under this programme 104000 poor women have been provided with 30KG packet food (Rice) each in 2021 to 2022.
3. Mother and Child Assistance programme

Under this programme, poor pregnant mother gets Tk. 800 per month. There are 12,54,000 beneficiaries in 2022 to 2023.

4. Microcredit programme for self empowerment of women

Under this programme each women get a maximum credit of Tk. 2,00,000 WAD also distribute sewing machines to poor women for self-employment as a regular programme.

5. Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) project

Under this project one lac, women were being provided training on skill development, entrepreneurship and income generation. They are also provided with 30KG nutritious rice each and taka.20,000 were transferred to their bank accounts through EFT.

6. Financial grant was provided to selected voluntary women samity ranging from Tk. 25,000 to 50,000 each in 2021 to 2022 at a cost of Taka 11 crore 80 lakhs and taka 12 crore 75 lakhs allocated for financial year 2022-2023.

7. Women's Affairs Directorate established 64 Daycare centers throughout the country where 4050 children usually got benefit. WAD established 9 professional women's hostel where 2746 seats are available.

8. WAD also conducts training at Upazila level on skill development and different trades and each trainee gets Tk. 100 per day of training. Training is also given on computer application and motor driving at divisional level and each trainee get Tucker 200 per day of training.

9. Besides Women's Affairs Directorate and Ministry of Women's and Children Welfare organized award giving ceremony for successful women entrepreneur and established women in different fields called Joyeeta.

10. International Women Day, Rokeya Dibosh etc. set are also being observed

(Source : Department of Women Affairs)

A brief discussion on some major issues of Womens development

National Women's Development Policy 2011 is a historic document in our national life. Major objectives of National Women's Development Policy 2011 are: to establish equal rights of women and men in all space of state and of public life (Article 28 (2) of our Constitution) to ensure security of women in all spheres of life, to ensure economic, political, social, administrative and legal empowerment of women, to establish human rights of women, to ensure full and equal participation of women in the mainstream of socioeconomic development. to develop women as educated and skilled manpower, to ban anti women technology, to give protection to disadvantaged women(as for example widows etc) including physically disabled women, to remove all kinds of discrimination against women and a female child, to ensure good health nutrition of for women, to project positive image of women and female child in the media, to extend all kinds of help to women's development We hope these objectives, if achieved, will ensure A respectable position, economic footing and a positive image of women in our



Goat rearing has empowered rural women economically

society and national life. In fact, government has already enacted laws, etc., and undertaken plan projects and programmes to achieve these objectives.

The list of laws, rules and regulations mentioned at previous para 4, if implemented, are reasonably enough to prevent and punish repression against women. It has been found from some study that a sizable percentage of women and girl victim of harassment and abuse are not going to disclose or complain for fear of reprisal thus deprived of legal protection. Unless a fearless environment is created, the state has a responsibility to create that environment providing protection to the victims.

It has been debated whether punitive measures alone enforced through laws, can ensure safety and security of women. It is a fact that perpetrators are few, but vast majority of men are working for the safety and security of women. The more this majority is increased, the more secure will be the safety and security of women. Therefore, we think respect for women has to be developed among men from the very beginning of their life from education institution and religious institution. Keeping our mothers as example before us women belong to nation of mothers, hence they cannot be disrespected, and they can only be loved and respected. Islam says heaven of children lies at the feet of their mother. Moreover, dowry is forbidden in Islam. It may be mentioned here that the Indian Constitution enjoined that women to be respected by citizens. The social norm and public opinion must be developed to such extent that any member of the society committing violence against women will be an ostracized from the society. None will stand by the perpetrators. Everybody will hate and boycott them. We think this hate and boycott

of society can root out this vice from the society gradually until such time law has to be enforced on perpetrators mercilessly.

The law of inheritance is different in different religions. The Hindu law does not allow Hindu women to inherit paternal property. The Muslim law or Islamic law allows women to inherit paternal property. But a female child gets less than a male child, a female child gets 50% of what a male child gets. But Muslim women are also entitled to inherit property of husband. Islam gives responsibility to husband for maintenance of wife and children. Hence women, who are playing the role of a wife and in the Islamic context has no responsibility for maintenance of family requires less property than men who is playing the role of a husband.

In the recent past, a section of Hindu women leaders have demanded to the government that civil law to be made giving Hindu women right to inherit paternal property. However, majority Hindu religious leadership is still undecided. It is argued by some that Hindu women during the marriage are given enough *Pon* or *Joutuk* i.e. dowry (in the form of money, valuables or ornaments) during their marriage. Hence, no inheritance of property is essential. However, civil rights activists in our country have been demanding equal rights of inheritance in the paternal property. This issue relates to religion, hence is very sensitive.

Therefore, government is still undecided about it. A broad consensus of religious leaders is essential to bring reform in this respect. However, we think that the more women become self-reliant the need for inherited property would diminish concurrently.

What is essential for women's development

- a) A security of women at home, on way, workplace, social gatherings, place of business, etc
- b) Socio economic upliftment programmes for women. Equipping women with education and skill and make them a bread earner like men.
- c) Change of attitude, that is positive and friendly attitude towards women. Shunning of discriminatory attitude and putting women in a place of love and respect.
- d) Side by side of legal protection. Social protection of women is also essential. Whole society must stand by them, not because they are not strong enough, but because they are an integral part of society and mankind and mankind will perish without them. No human development is feasible or possible without them. A family without women is not a family. Family is the foundation of civilization and responsible for its existence and growth. An assembly of individuals, without women is like a barren land where no flower blossoms, no corn or trees grows, or no life forms or survives.

From time immemorial, ancient or modern, the rape culture prevailed during war it happens most. Rape with grievous hurt or murder falls under heinous crime, but without it (violence) rape without consent may be called normal rape. It may not

hurt physically but it causes fear and mental trauma and in the eyes of the society, the victim of rape is highly humiliated and dishonoured.

Although rape victim women has no role in the crime and she is innocent, the state and society should humiliate dishonor and punish perpetrators of rape and also boycott and ostracize them socially and not the rape victims. The state and society must change their attitude and honor and respect the rape victims as innocent survivors of accidents like an innocent widow is respected and honored.

Under article 28 (4) of our Constitution as persons from disadvantaged section of our society, girls of primary and high schools are provided with stipends to pursue their education, but if it continues for long it may create disparity between male and female.

Children's growth in the family and in the long run also create an imbalance in the society. That equality between men and women under Article 28 (2) of the Constitution may be jeopardized in the field of education. It must be recognized that education is a basic need, like food for both male and female. The preference for women's education depriving men must end for a smooth and equal development of the society. Like girl's stipend facilities may also be expanded to boys.

To achieve women's development goals

State has also laid the foundations provided policy support legal, socio, economic, political and administrative interventions. What is needed is the creation of the environment free from fear and intimidation, where free mobility and working conditions are ensured, a society which is committed to respect and love for women, A society where rule of law reigns.

Questions have been raised as to whether women's development is possible by women alone, that is, whether men's cooperation is essential for it. Human development includes all husband, wife and children in that is development of family means development of mankind. Therefore, women's development without family is a myth. Therefore, cooperation is rooted in the family. No birth of children means ultimate end of civilization. Growth and security of women is at stake without men.

Therefore the question of development of women must go concurrently with the development of men. The relation between the two is also complementary

Conclusion

The major issues of women's development centers round education, security, empowerment of women and creating enabling environment for their socioeconomic development. There is no major legal, social, economic or religious barriers to their development in Bangladesh. Ensuring secure environment for women in all spheres of our national life holds the key to their development.

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Magnificent Natural beauty of Sylhet

M. Q. Zaman

Bangladesh is a land of beauty. The vast crop field, and numerous numbers of rivers and their tributaries & distributaries have given the country a unique elegance. The greenery hills in Chattogram Hill Tracts, the long beaches of Cox's Bazar and also the high and low hillocks of Sylhet, the tea gardens and haors have given the elegance a different dimension.

Sylhet is known as the holy land of Hazrat Shahjalal (R), famous saint and preacher of Islam in the subcontinent. The tomb of Hazrat Shah Paran (R), another great saint, is also there which is 7 km away from Sylhet town. The greater Sylhet (Sylhet division) is divided into four districts namely Sylhet, Habiganj, Moulvibazar and Sunamganj. There are many places of natural beauty in Sylhet district that always attract the local and foreign visitors. The best time to visit Sylhet is during the rainy season and the following months i.e. from June to October. A brief description some of the spots of Sylhet district is given below.

Jaflong

Jaflong is known as the daughter of nature. It stands in Gawainghat upazila 62 km to the north-east from Sylhet town. The fountain created by the flowing of the River Piyain originated on the Dowki hill at the foot of the Khasia Jainta hill across the border, has made Jaflong a wonderful pleasure ground of natural beauty. The heap of stones scattered on the bank of the River Piyain has added charm to Jaflong. Moreover, crystal clear and cool water of the river Piyain, and



Sada Pathar river bank

also the high hills and the deep forest adjacent to the place just beyond the border irresistibly attracts the tourists. To enjoy such scenic beauty native and foreign tourists come to the spot round the year.



Jafflong always attracts the tourists for its natural beauty

The appearance of Jaflong in winter and the rainy seasons are different. In the rainy season the dusty surroundings become transparent. On the greenish top of Khasia hill, the movement of patches of clouds and incessant rainfall at any time adds a new dimension. From a long time past, the businessmen used to come by water in search of stone here. In 80s after the establishment of road communication of 55 km from Jaflong to Sylhet, the pleasant, delightful and captivating beauty of Jaflong became known throughout the country. Frequent visits of the foreign and domestic tourists have made Jaflong one of the attractive tourist spots in the country. On the other side of the Piyain river there is a Khasia Palli, where in the Khasia ethnic minority live and they cultivate betel leaves and nuts. At the end of the road there is a tea garden on the plain land.

Bholaganj Sada Pathor

Bholaganj Sada Pathor is about 35 km away from Sylhet town. It is located in Companiganj Upazila on the border of Sylhet district and near East Khasia Hills in Meghalaya state of India. Cherrapunji and Shillong of India are on the other side of the hill. This place is known as Bholaganj zero point. Bholaganj is famous for its white stones of various shapes, crystal clear water and adjacent green hills. Bholaganj is the largest stone quarry in the country. The Dhalai River flows down the place. Along with the water of the Dhalai River, a lot of rocks and stones come down from the Khasia Jaintia Hills. The Dhalai River enters the Bangladesh and is divided into two parts, turns around and joins again. A huge number of white stones have added an extra ordinary beauty to Bholaganj. The crystal clear cool water, the white stones, reflection of the shade of green hill on the surface of water, adjacent high and low hills- altogether the beauty of Bholaganj is matchless. The visitors can enjoy swimming, floating, bathing or simply soaking their feet in the transparent and cool water.



White stones scattered across the river bank at Bholaganj Sada Pathor



Tourists bathing in the crystal clear water of the river at Sada Pathor

Pantumai Fountain

The Pantumai Waterfall is located at a distance of 12 km from Jaflong. Actually Pantumai is the name of a hill and a village of east Khasia district in the Meghalaya state of India. The village Pantumai lies to the East from the Maturtola Bazar which is 9 km away from Gowainghat upazila Sadar and is close to the bank of the River Piyain. This hilly waterfall is located to the East of the Bangladesh-India pillar no 1269. Locally the waterfall is known as 'Fatachhara.' Though the hill lies inside India, yet its front part or beauty is viewed from Bangladesh. A tourist can enjoy the beauty of Pantumai Fountain from here.



Panthumai Fountain



Tourists going towards Ratargul swamp forest by boat

Ratargul

Ratargul is the sole swamp forest in the country. It is known as the Sundarbans of Sylhet. This swamp forest which has an area about 505 acres of land is surrounded by a river and a haor and is situated in the village Ratargul in Fatepur Union under Gawainghat Upazila. In this forest mostly three species of trees grow-



Passing through the bushes in Ratargul is thrilling



Tourists enjoying the beauty in Ratargul

Hijal, Koroch and Patibet. In addition, Boron, Bet, Ikra, Khagra, Murta and deep tall grass have made the swamp forest unique and matchless. With 73 species of plants, 25 species of mammals, 20 species of reptiles, 175 species of birds, and 9 species of amphibians live in the forest. Surrounded by thick bushes and trees in a vast body of water, this place has an extraordinary beauty. Traveling by small boats in such a calm and quiet environment is really thrilling. Any tourist would love to visit Ratargul wetlands. The best time to visit this place is monsoon. At that time, the spread of water is high and the trees are submerged up to their necks. One should not miss this place when visiting Sylhet.

Bichhanakandi

Bichhanakandi is located in a village of Rustampur Union under Gowainghat Upazila adjacent to the Indian border, which is about 40 km away from Sylhet town. This is comparatively a newly spotted tourist attraction but now has become one of the most visited spots in Bangladesh. Bichnakandi is basically a stone quarry like Jaflong and Bhologanj. The confluence of the Goain River and the fountain water comes down across the border is known as Bichhanakandi. It is the place where many layers of the Khasi mountains from both sides meet at one point. Fountains from the Khasi Hills make a lake that is connected to Piyain River. The rocks are also natural and come down with water streams from the mountains. The main attraction of this spot is the stream flowing over the rocks. Moreover, during the monsoon, thick clouds are stuck on the mountains. From the east, a



Blue hills beyond the Bichhanakandi

branch of Piyain River passes under the hill towards Bholaganj. The continuous flow of water and the beauty of extensive green hills can easily bring tranquility at heart of a tourist. The scope for pleasure trip by boat is available here. Hills, rivers, fountains and rocks- altogether, this Bichnakandi is a playground of natural beauty.



Big and small stones of various colours in the midst of flowing water give Bichhanakandi a unique beauty



Bluish-green water changes its colour with the change of daylight in Lalakhal

Lalakhal

Lalakhal is a canal in the Shari River near the Tamabil road which attracts the tourists for its greenish-blue water. It is 41 km away from Sylhet town and located at Jaintiapur upazila. Lalakhal is the place of highest rainfall in Bangladesh. It is a wide channel. The river is not very deep and is one of the sources of sand in Sylhet. The beauty of Lalkhal is the variety of colours of the clear water, which varies from blue to green at different points. River cruising is the main attraction of this place. Surrounded by hills, tea gardens, natural forests, and the rivers have made this place a tourist destination.

Tea Gardens

Sylhet is famous for its tea estates. There are 135 tea gardens in Sylhet division out of 164 throughout the country. Malnichhara the first tea garden of the subcontinent lies close to the Airport Road which is a little distance away from Sylhet township. It is the biggest and oldest tea garden which was created in 1854. There is an



Malnichhara tea garden near Parjatan motel



Lakkatura tea garden in the town



Tea garden covering an area of 2,750 acres in the plain land at the end of Khasia Punji in Jaflong

orange orchard on one side of the garden. After crossing a little distance ahead of it, Rakhatua Tea Garden is there. Beside these, there are Burjan Tea Garden, Khadimnagar Tea Garden, Alibahar Tea Garden, Star Tea Garden, Daliya Tea Garden, and along with these there are some other tea gardens that lie in Sylhet. Lakkatura Tea Garden is near Sylhet town. It is one of the largest tea gardens of the district. The beauty of these tea gardens wrapped in a green carpet on the steps of hillocks will fascinate anyone.

River cruise in the Surma and the Piyain River

Apart from the above spots a tourist may like to go for river cruise in the Surma



The Surma, one of the major rivers with strong currents in the country



Boat trip in the Piyain River is fascinating, blue hills are visible in distance

and Piyain rivers. The Surma is a tributary of the Borak River which rises in Lusai hill of India. In the rainy season the Surma becomes flood-prone but in the dry season boat journey in the river is very comfortable. The Piyain flows close to the foot hills adjacent to Jaflong of Sylhet. It is known as the Sari River too. As the Piyain is a hilly river, the hilly stream of water comes down and flash flood occurs there. With the flood water, it carries a huge amount of stones and sand from upstream. River cruise in these rivers is delightful.

Parjatan Motel, Sylhet

In the midst of the pleasant views, there is a motel on the top of a hillock covering an area of 40 acres of land which is 90 feet high above the ground level. It is located on the Sylhet Osmani International Airport road adjacent to the Sylhet Cadet College. The spacious motel has 26 rooms, an auditorium, a large dining and a ice cream parlour. Besides there is a children's amusement park- Sylhet Adventure World near the motel. It was constructed on the initiatives of the expatriates



Parjatan Motel, Sylhet is located on the top of a hillock surrounded by breathtaking natural beauty

and now run by Bangladesh Parjatan (Tourism) Corporation. Children can enjoy the rides in the park. A tourist may choose the motel for comfortable stay.

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Fishing boats in Teknaf sea shore

Traditional Boats and its Role in the Nautical System of Bangladesh

Md. Mosharraf Hossain

Being traversed by many rivers as well as water bodies, ancient Bangla had sparsely populous areas encircled by woods. Archaeological evidences further testify that there had only one town Pundranagalate (Pundranagara in Sanskrit) by name in the 3rd century B.C. There after gradually came into being some other *Joyskandavaras* (camp of victory); namely- Vaigram (Hakimpur of Dinajpur), Panchanagari (Panchbibi of Joypurhat), Jaykarmantavasak (present Cumilla), Devparvata (present Cumilla), Vikrampura (present Munshiganj), Vijoyanagara (present Rajshahi), Vardhamanpur (present Chattogram), Laksmanavati-Gaur (Chapai Nawabganj), Suvarnagram (present Narayangonj), Khalifatabad (present Bagerhat) and so on. Even there had no road till the fourteenth century. In the mid-fifteenth century a warrior saint named Khan Jahan first built a brick-paved road in his headquarters (present-day Bagerhat town). At Dhaka city proper such road was first constructed in the mid-seventeenth century by Subedar (provincial administrator) Prince Shah Muhammed Azam. So, in every possibility people had to depend on the navigable waterways alone.

That rivers played vital role as to the traffic system of ancient Bangladesh is also evidenced by the text of some copperplate grants. Of them mentions may at first be made of copperplate land grant of the early sixth century, salvaged from a village, presently known as Gunaighar, located in Debidar upazila of Cumilla. It



Examples of early type of boats common in ancient Bangla in 9th (left) and 18th (right) century manifested in terracotta plaques found at Paharpur Buddhist Vihara (Naogaon) and Kantajeu Temple (Dinajpur) respectively

has mentioned a word 'Nauyoga' perhaps to mean either a boat anchorage or a port (in Bengali vocabulary *nauka ghat*). The next reference occurs in a sculptural piece, stylistically datable to the 11th century, found at Aswinpur of Matlab upazila in Chandpur district. It says that the sculpture was donated by such a man who was a merchant by profession living in a locality in or nearby a nautical route. Besides, Sanskrita poet Kalidasa in his famous epic *Raghubansa* (4th century A.D.) praised highly about the skill that the people possessed during his period in nautical operation.

The traditional nautical vehicles of Bangladesh are primarily dividable into three broad group viz. makeshift raft (locally called *bhela* made of clustered plantain trunks with piercing twigs at regular distance), mortised boat (locally called *konda* caved out of a single block of palm trunk) and boat (locally called *nauka/nao*). For manufacturing traditional boat the chief raw material is indispensably wood, bamboo splinters being the supplementary, and needs special carpentry. In spite of all, they were denominated by different regional as well as fabricated appellations simultaneously. In all probability, one of its pro-type was called 'salti', a mortised row-boat caved out of a single block of rain-tree trunk alone and gradually the following common forms were contrived.

Patila or Patela: This kind of boat had its length about 12m -17m and breadth 6.5m in average meted either in planks or bamboo splinters provided with comfortable residential compartments fronted by a congregational space and backed by a narrow terraced platform, the latter being reserved for the oarsman. It was also called Pansi and Jalataranga in laurelled way of writing for its lavish decoration, while Sebastiam Manrik, a European traveler of 1630, mentioned the names Pork along with Patela. The district of Bhola is still rich in this type of boat. But earlier it was in use especially for official duties by the high officials as well as land-lords called 'jamindar'.

Goyna (Gayana) or Guntana: This kind of boat was bigger in length than that of the Patela, being 18m – 22m in length as well as 7m in width but with a big deck backed by minor residential shed attached to the oarsman platform, the former being used for laden of goods. The stragling river basin areas together with the northern upper stream bigger boggy basin i.e. *haoranchal* are still rich in this type of boat. Earlier it would drag by *gun*, a device consists of



Goyna boat



Bajra boat

rope carried by hauler-man walking along the river terraces, in days of scanty wind blow. Its sub-varieties were called Basari, Padi, Balam and so on. But Brudly Birt, an ICS officer, preferred the name Gayana in his famous book entitled 'The Romance of an Eastern Capital' published in 1906.

Bajra: This kind of boat was bigger in length than that of the Goyna, being 20m – 22m in length as well as 8.5m in width, accommodated a group compartments through-out save the two tips called *galui*. Despite of its general use for traffic of a mass gathering, it would be used for recreational tour purpose also.

In 1808-24, D'Oley, an Magistrate of the then Government posted at Dhaka, would live in such a floating boat in the Buriganga river and is still in use in the district of Bhola, being favored by the Muslim Peers (friar).

Mayurpankhi: Despite almost similar in size to that of the Bajara, it remained lavishly painted in various colors through-out allowing a peacock-head scalp at the front tip and was preferred by the rich for their pleasure trip. It accommodated many compartments inside suitable either for serving office-cum residence purpose such as allowing tiller of land (*rayots* in Bengali vocabulary) in order to settle official dealing pertaining to revenue collection or to accommodate the members of orchestral party.



Mayurpankhi boat

Mahajani/Saudagari:

Despite characteristically homologous to that of the Gayana, but likely would have been comparatively bigger as it was in use for over-seas transaction. During the late medieval period it was very much popular in southern flood prone lower basin area called 'bhati', while at present it is dwindling only in *haoranchal*.



Mahajani boat

Vindi: It is a kind of crescent shaped nautical carrier, 10m – 15m long, wider at the middle region and distinct for much higher cusped ending, special to sea-shore areas. Another big variety of its kind is called Sampan. The latter, however, had a truncated end at the rear side.

As all the aforesaid boats were giant in size and they had to carry huge load, their moving needed more *dbari* i.e. oarsman. Heber, an eminent Portuguese Bishop, made mention of a boat driven by sixteen oarsman in his travel account published in 1824 A.D. The best example of their depiction in plastic art is to be seen in the 18th century A.D. terracotta plaque of Kantaji temple of Dinajpur.

Sundari: Usually it had a size not longer than 6m – 8m with width of 1.80m in average capped by half barrel wicker shed only in the mid-most region. It was used by the fishermen like that of a European smack and often was to be seen in the river. A few of those would look like that of a new born crescent and was very familiar in the river Meghna even in the late years of the last century.

Kosha: Despite similar to that of Sundari but less slender in size and suitable for moving faster, this kind of boat is also known by the name Chip, Pork, Jalia, Thab, Parinda, Maniki, Bathila, Khudia, Nardul, Neyak and Katari. Earlier they were in use for nautical scuffle and piracy. In days of Mughal ascendancy in the sixteenth century A.D., it was extensively exploited by the valiant in-country defenders like Isa Khan, Chand Roy and Pratapaditya.



Kosha boat



Pansi boat



Dingji boat

Jhiori-Naiori Nao: It was a kind of smaller row-boat, being not more than 2m - 2.5 in length with breadth of 1m at the mid-part covered by such a half barrel shaped wicker shed so that it could accommodate the *jhiori-naiori* i.e. married women like guest going to or returning from paternal home. Earlier the boatman would use sail to ply it while on the river route. But it was suitable for plying in the *khal* i.e. local water-channel only. It was of two kinds, i.e. *ekmallai* (one boatman) and *domallai* (two boatmen) depending on the size of a boat as well as number of passengers. Howsoever, it is also called *Baidya Nao* in case of its use by the gypsy families for dwelling purpose. The Baidyas belong to such a petty landless ethnic group who earn their livelihood chiefly by snake charming and wanders one anchorage to another in sub-groups. Each family use a *nao/nauka* (boat) to survive on.

Dingi: It was the smallest of all kinds of row-boat comparable to European canoe as well as skiff and suitable to meet the everyday familial smaller transportation purpose. In Dhaka district it was called Mahalgiri. It is still playing the role of an indispensable means of trafficking in *beel* i.e. marshy valley, *chala* i.e. shoal and *char* i.e. islet. Its earliest depiction in the plastic art form has been found in one terracotta plaque of Paharpur Buddhist monastery of the 8th-12th centuries.



Kunda boat

Brushing aside the aforesaid names we get some other names in the older publications; viz. Palakki, Ghasi, Malar, Foti, Gasti, Palowari, Suranga etc. Be that as it may, in spite of the banishment of the most older names, the tradition of *nao/nauka*/boats are still lingering indispensably with the daily life of the natives and we found many markets remain alive at many rural areas like that of Varakair and Burirhat in Munshigonj, Sekherhat in Nesarabad of Pirojpur, Aricha Ghat in Manikgonj and Sandvip in Chattogram.

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Durgasagar Dighi

Md. Ziaul Haque Howlader

in Madhabpasha village. The relics of the palaces, temples and other buildings built by them as still found to exist. After the independence of Bangladesh, a small island was created at the middle of the large pond.

Local people also call it as Madhabpasha Dighi. It is the largest pond of the southern Bangladesh. Everyday hundreds of local and regional tourists visit the site to enjoy the unique greenery, serenity and have deep breaths over there. The water of the large pond is blue and it dances with the high wind. This beautiful spot attracts tourists round the years irrespective of seasons. There are also angling facilities. Anglers can catch fish twice in a year.



Ghat (Landing stairs) of the pond

Durgasagar Dighi – known as a beauty-spot of Barishal district – is located at Madhabpasha in Babuganj upazila. This beautiful large pond is just eleven kilometer away from the Barishal district town. This large pond was dug in 1780, which now appears as one of the spectacular tourist spots of Bangladesh. Durgasagar Dighi was named after Durgadevi, the mother of Raja Joynarayan. Durgadevi was very intelligent and kind to her tenant. She ordered to dig this pond to relieve her tenants from the dearth of sweet water. There is a myth that the pond would be dug as far as Durgadevi could walk at a stretch. Accordingly the pond was dug. Bakla-Chandradeep Royal family members have the houses



Entrance of Durgasagar Dighi

The total area of the pond is 62 acres. Around the pond, in all, there is 1.6 kilometer (1 mile) long walking track. In winter many migratory birds flock there. At that time this place starts resounding with the twittering and chirping of birds that soothe the weary tourists come from far-flung. Though this is the proper time for



Rest house at Durgasagar Dighi



Tourists at Durgashagor Dighi

the tourists to visit the place, the lonely ambience of the bank of the Dighi attracts the tourists in other seasons of the year too.

The pond was renovated to some extent during the year 1997 to 1999. Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation – the Government Tourism Organization has undertaken a project of BDT 16 crore 18 lacs in the FY 2018-2022 to create a one-storied accommodation building, construction of walk-way, recreational facilities, Duk Bungalow, staircases and landing, picnic sheds, boundary wall etc. This tourist spot will soon be commissioned by Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation.

Tourists can easily reach Durgasagar Dighi by air, water-ways and land transports. By air from Dhaka tourists can go upto Barishal town then twenty-five minutes journey by local transport. Tourists can also go by bus from Dhaka and lunch upto Barishal then local transport. There are bus services and scooters to Durgasagar Dighi from Barishal town. There are 5-star hotels and other standard accommodation facilities in Barishal town. Tourists can make overnight stay comfortably in Barishal town. There are also nice dining facilities with delicious food in Barishal, among which Hilsha fish, yogurt and sweetmeat are popular items. Tourists should not miss these delicacies. Tourists are advised to visit Barishal under a package so that they can enjoy other nearby spots along with Durgasagar Dighi.

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Civets- Most Neglected Mammals of Bangladesh

Professor Dr. A N M Aminoor Rahman

Although, the animal seemed dead from a distance, but when I got closer saw its chest was fluctuating, but the eyes were fixed. Blood oozing out from the ears and the nose. Though the animal was live, it was unconscious. The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine & Animal Science at BSMRAU started its journey that year (2010). Veterinary Hospital and Wildlife Rehabilitation Center were not started. So, with the help of the farm workers, I gave the best possible service and treatment to the animal. After the treatment it shook a little. I was sure it had a brain hemorrhage. Therefore, the mammal had less chance of survival. I asked the workers about the person who did this heinous act. They said, a rickshaw puller had seen the animal roaming around, he suddenly got down from the rickshaw and chased the animal with a stick and hit it several times on the head. Under the interrogation of the workers, he got on the rickshaw and left the campus. As it was the time to leave the bus for Dhaka, I was forced to leave the animal in the custody of the workers. Before reaching Dhaka, I got the news that the animal had died.

The story of the injured and dead animal that I just told is a very familiar but neglected mammals of Bangladesh, Large Indian Civet. Although it looks a bit scary, it never harms people, rather the animal is beneficial for agriculture, farmers and the ecosystem as it eats rats, mice and other harmful animals. Its only crime

This is a true story of a decade ago. Like other day, I was preparing to return my home from my office at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Agricultural University (BSMRAU), Gazipur. At that time, my lab assistant Mamraj Alam informed me that a strange wild animal was beaten to death near the university farm. I ran quickly after hearing the news. Coming closer to the animal, viewing its beautiful black-and-white ringed long tail, I recognised the animal immediately. I felt a lot of pain in my heart to see the dying animal. How many times, I went to Bagerhat, Cox's Bazar, Chittagong to take a picture of this creature, but never thought to meet it like this. Two months ago, my bird and wildlife watching mate Kamal Parvez saw one of this animal with a pup. I had not a chance to face the animal as I always leave the campus before the evening. That's my bad luck.

is to occasionally kill and eat poultry or lambs/kids if get the chance. And as a revenge people kill the animal indiscriminately. Once upon a time, the animal roamed freely in the village forests all over the country. But our ignorance, cruelty and unnecessary hostility towards the animals has forced them to be placed in the threatened species list of IUCN Red Data Book.

Civets are carnivorous mammals of the Viverridae family. The family includes small to medium-sized, lean, mostly nocturnal mammals, native to tropical Asia and Africa, especially the tropical forests. They produce a musk (named civet after the animal) which is highly valued as a fragrance and stabilizing agent for perfume. Both male and female animal produce the strong-smelling secretion that is produced by the civet's perineal glands. It is harvested by either killing the animal or removing the glands, or by scraping the secretions from the glands of a live animal. The latter is the preferred method today. Animal rights groups, e.g. World Animal Protection, express concern that harvesting musk is cruel to animals. Between these ethical concerns and the availability of synthetic substitutes, the practice of raising civets for musk is dying out.

Civets are also called 'Toddy Cats' in English. The term applies to over a dozen different species, which feed on insects, birds, rodents and other small animals. Most of the species diversity is found in south-east Asia. They are able to hunt with their stocky bodies and sharp teeth. But they also have a preference for fruits and nuts, and are often evolved to have an omnivorous diet like the humans. The civet has a broadly cat-like general appearance with small legs and often an arched back, though the muzzle is extended and often pointed, rather like that of an otter, mongoose or even possibly a ferret. According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Bangladesh Red Data Book (2015), it is safe to say that at least five viverrid species reside in Bangladesh, namely Binturong, Masked Palm Civet, Common Palm Civet, Small Indian Civet, and Large Indian Civet. The scientific classification or taxonomy of civet, for example, according to the Integrated Taxonomic Information System (ITIS), is therefore:

Domain: Eukaryota

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Mammalia

Order: Carnivora

Suborder: Feliformia

Family: Viverridae

Genus: Viverra (total 11 genera)

Species: Viverraindica (Small Indian Civet- total 35 species)

The 5 species of civets and their present status in Bangladesh are briefly described below:

1. Binturong (*Arctictis binturong*): Because of the combination of furry and



Binturongs at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Safari Park, Dula Hazra, Chakaria, Cox's Bazar

feline appearance, the species is often called bear-cats. It is also known as Asian Bearcat or Palawan Binturong. Bangla names includes BanshBhaluk, G a c h h F e u w a , GechhoBholluk and B h a m a k a r B h o l l u k . This rare and Vulnerable nocturnal mammal is the inhabitant of denser parts of mixed evergreen forests and bamboo clumps in the southeast (Chottogram

division) and northeast (Sylhet division) regions of Bangladesh covering the hill forests. Its global range covers Southeast Asia and Malayan peninsula, specifically Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam.

It is the largest of all 35 extant viverrid species. The large tree civet looks somewhat like a small bear. The body length is 75 to 90 centimeter (cm) and tail is nearly 70 cm. The animal weigh from 9 to 20 kilogram (kg). It's rough and coarse body hairs are black mixed with partial white and light yellow. Edges of the ears, eyebrows and whiskers are white. Prehensile tail is long, thick and muscular. Limbs are relatively short.

Binturongs are crepuscular, nocturnal and arboreal. They are mostly solitary animals that tend to evade each other, but are not strictly territorial. They spend the majority of their time in tree but also have some ground activity as they are too large to jump from tree to tree. But can climb trees with prehensile tail and limbs. During the day, they sleep in tree holes; occasionally basks in sunlight. The omnivorous mammal can eats small vertebrates, invertebrates, birds, fishes, insects, fruits (especially figs) etc. They are usually silent, but can make loud noise and hisses if attacked.

Binturong breeds year-round, but mostly from January to March. Female delivers 2 to 6 pups in tree holes or nests after 90 to 92 days of gestation. Pups become matures in 28 to 30 months. Lifespan is nearly 18 years in the wild and 25 years in the captivity.

2. MaskedPalm Civet (*Pagumalarvata*): The species is also known as Gem-faced Civet or Himalayan Palm Civet. Its Bangla names are Himaloyi Tal Khatash, MukhoshporaNongor, Pahari Bham or Boishne Ula. Like the Binturong this rare and Vulnerablecivet is also distributed in the evergreen forests of southeastern and northeastern regions and other well vegetated areas of the country. Its global range covers Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, India,



A Masked Palm Civet at Satchhari National Park, Habiganj

Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Thailand and Viet Nam.

Body length of this species is 50 to 76 cm and the tail is 50 to 64 cm; weight is 3.6 to 6.0 kg. Body is covered with short and smooth, dark brown or blackish-grey hair with tinges of orange, buff or yellowish-red. Chin, lips, ears, tail and upperpart of the feet are black. White band or patch are seen on eyes, nose and below the forehead.

The species is mainly arboreal and nocturnal; become active at dawn and dusk. Occurs solitary or in pairs and sleeps during the day in ‘day beds’ on the tree-top. Feeds on fruits, palm-date juices, small vertebrates and insects. It rarely comes down to the ground and move in the morning or in the late afternoon. When disturbed ejects a foul-smelling liquid. Usually keeps silent.

Although it can breeds year-round, but mostly breeds twice a year. Female delivers 1 to 4 pups in tree top holes after about 60 days of gestation. Lifespan is up to 10 years in the wild and 20 years in captivity.

3. Common Palm Civet (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*): It is also known as Asian Palm Civet or Toddy Cat. Bangla name includes Tal Khatash, Gondhogokul, Shairel, Nongor, Vondor, Hailla and Tali Biral. This common and Least Concern civet species is the jewel of the rural forest and is widely distributed all over the country including the Sundarbans having land connection. It is known to live in human settlements including the capital city of Dhaka. Outside Bangladesh also found in



A Common Palm Civet at Satchhari National Park, Habiganj



A juvenile Common Palm Civet in the bamboo thicket at Shatsoiya village, Fakirhat, Bagerhat

Bhutan, Borneo, Cambodia, China, India, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Nepal, Peninsular Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam.

The species is 48 to 59 cm long and its tail is 44 to 53 cm and weigh between 2 to 5 kg. The stocky body is covered with brownish-grey or greyish-black shaggy hair. There is a white mask across the forehead. A white patch is found under each eye and a narrow dark line between the eyes. Muzzle, ears, lower legs and distal half of the tail are

black. Juveniles have less streaks-patches.

It is found in all types of forests and plantations, including tea gardens, farming areas and human settlement. The animal is primarily arboreal and nocturnal, but also terrestrial. Occurs solitary or in pairs. During the day, it sleeps or rest on tree branches. Usually keeps silent. Adults can ejects a foul-smelling liquid when disturbed. The species is mostly frugivorous but can also feeds on rodents, birds, reptiles, insects, worms, eggs, snails etc. As it is fond of toddy palm or Palmyra Palm juice, hence the names as ‘Toddy Cat’.

The species can breed year-round. Female delivers 2 to 4 pups in tree top holes after about 60 days of gestation. Pups mature in 12 months. Lifespan is 15 to 20 years in the wild.

4. Small Indian Civet (*Viverraindica*): This is also known as Lesser Indian Civet or Lesser Oriental Civet. Bangla name includes ChhotoKhatash, Ghoilo, ChhotoBham, ChhotoBaghdash, Newl andKolkut. Although this uncommon and Near Threatened animal is widely distributed in well vegetated areas including homestead vegetation, bamboo thickets, old graveyard and sub-urban parts throughout Bangladesh but the population is declining day by day due to different anthropogenic factors like hunting, poaching and retribution killing. Outside Bangladesh, the species is found in number of countries of south and south-east Asia.

The Small Indian Civet measures 53 to 58 cm in length, tail is 38 to 43 cm and body weight is 2 to 4 kg. The body is covered with brownish-grey to pale yellowish-brown fur. There are longitudinal black or brown bands on back and longitudinal rows of spots on the sides. Head is brownish-grey and chin is brown. Legs are brown or black. Black tail with white rings.

It is primarily a terrestrial, nocturnal and solitary animal. During the day, usually it



A pair of Small Indian Civet at Chattogram Zoo

spends sleeping in burrows, tree holes and thickets, in abandoned brickfields, disused buildings and ruins, but sometimes may become active in the day. It is mainly omnivorous; eats snakes, rats, mice, birds, poultry, fruits, roots, insects, carrion etc. The civet marks its territory with the characteristic scent secreted from the civet gland. It is usually a silent animal.

Although there is no marked breeding season, young seen throughout the year; but mostly breeds from May to July. After 60 to 70 days of gestation female delivers 2 to 5 pups. Lifespan is 8 to 9 years in the wild.

5. Large Indian Civet (*Viverrazibetha*): The species is called Bagdash, Baghdasha, BoroKhatash, Bagkhondash, BoroBham or Huichain Bangla. It is an uncommon and Near Threatened species in Bangladesh. Although the species is widely distributed in diverse habitats including mixed evergreen and deciduous forests, homestead vegetation including bushes, but its number declining day by day due to retribution killing, hunting for meat, road-side killing and other anthropogenic factors. Its global range covers South and Southeast Asia including Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.

This is one of the large civet in Bangladesh. The body length is 80 to 86 cm, tail is 45 cm and height is 38 cm. Body weight ranged from 5 kg to 11 kg. The civet has longer head and body somewhat like a dog with short and stumpy black legs and long black and white tail. Body is covered with greyish-black hair with black spots and stripes. Three black and two white bands are seen on the sides of the neck. Long tail has a number of black and white rings around it. Male is slightly larger than female.



A pregnant Large Indian Civet at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Agricultural University campus, Gazipur

The nocturnal and terrestrial mammals occurs solitary. It spends most of its time on the ground, mainly in grasslands, scrubs,



Newly born pups of Large Indian Civet at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Agricultural University campus, Gazipur

abandoned brick fields, houses etc., but is an agile climber. During the day, it sleeps in burrows that is usually dug and abandoned by other animals. The animal marks its territory with the secretions of perineal glands. Its food habit is mostly carnivorous and diet includes snakes, frogs, small mammals, birds, eggs, crabs, fish as well as poultry and garbage but also fruits and roots. It prefers to

defecate in the same spots years after years. It is usually a silent animal.

The species breeds twice a year, but mostly from May to July. Female delivers 3 to 4 pups after 70 to 80 days of gestation. Lifespan is usually 15 years in the wild and 20 years in captivity.

Conclusion: Once Bangladesh was very rich in wildlife, but due to different causes a number of species disappeared from the country in the last century. And the list of threatened and near-threatened animals is getting longer every year. Civets are harmless animals and ambassadors of the rural jungles of Bangladesh. Almost everyone in the rural area can relate to a distinct, pungent, pilau- or butter rice-like smell that comes from the civets. They are indigenous creatures of rural forests. Despite living side-by-side with humans since time immemorial, civets are now in an uncertain situation. Although some of the civets hunt poultry or raid fruit orchards occasionally, but they should not be considered as a pest, because by eating a wide range of insects and rodents, civets are sworn enemies of food crops. They also play a vital role in seed dispersal of many native trees, e.g. figs. Therefore, they are playing a very important role in ecological balance. However, rural forests and jungles are disappearing very fast. Much like their habitats, they are also vanishing in silence. These very secretive, nocturnal and harmless animals are so forgotten that our community members that share the space with these mammals wind up killing them. Compared to their positive role in the ecosystem, knowledge on these strange mammals is minimal, and studies about their status, decreasing trend, ecology and behaviour is also scanty. As a result, civets of Bangladesh become locally threatened animal in the country. If we can accept them as an essential component for our nature and create public awareness about their conservation, then only these animals could be able to survive in this country.

The writer and photographer of this article is a Wildlife Biologist, Veterinarian and Professor of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Agricultural University, Gazipur-1706

‘Bangladesh at a Glance’ Unveiled



Information and Broadcasting Minister Dr Hasan Mahmud unveiled a book titled ‘Bangladesh at a Glance’ published by the Department of Films and Publications at the Ministry on 3rd July. S.M. Golam Kibria, DG (right) and Md. Ali Sarker, Director (left) of Department of Films and Publications standing next to the minister

Information and Broadcasting Minister Dr Hasan Mahmud unveiled a book titled ‘Bangladesh at a Glance’ published by the Department of Films and Publications at the Ministry on July 3, 2023.

This pictorial book provides basic information and facts about Bangladesh for the readers, who can know the land and the people as well as the recent development of the country at a glance. This book highlights the country’s vital and up-to-date information, incorporating natural resources, people, language, religion, history and heritage, agriculture economy, communication, culture, education, forestry, tourism and mega development projects. The Minister said, this book will greatly be helpful to those, who especially take interest of Bangladesh related affairs.

S.M. Golam Kibria, Director General of DFP, other officials of the Ministry and media personalities were present at the unveiling ceremony.

- Md. Ali Sarker

Department of Films and Publications organises programme on National Mourning Day



Information and Broadcasting Minister Dr Hasan Mahmud, MP delivering speech at the function on the occasion of National Mourning Day on 15 August 2023

Department of Films and Publications (DFP) organised a programme marking the National Mourning day on 15 August at Tathya Bhaban Auditorium. Information and Broadcasting Minister Dr Hasan Mahmud, MP was the chief guest while S.M. Golem Kibria, Director General of DFP was in the chair. The day's programme included Photo Exhibition, Film Show and a discussion.

Speakers discussed about the life and struggle of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his role in achieving independence of Bangladesh. In the discussion, the speakers also strongly condemned the assassination of Bangabandhu and most of his family members on August 15, 1975 and demanded execution of the verdict on Bangabandhu's killers.

Md. Shahinoor Miah, Principal Information Officer of PID, Dr. Md. Jahangir Alam, Director General, BTV also spoke on this occasion. Officials and heads of the departments of the ministry were present in the programme.



Film show 'Bangalir Kalrat'

- Md. Nazim Uddin

DEVELOPMENT CHRONOLOGY

Major National Events

July-September



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated on July 4 the Copyright Bhaban virtually joining from her official residence Ganobhaban a function organised by the Cultural Affairs Ministry at the Bangladesh National Museum at Shahbagh in the city

4 July 2023

PM inaugurated newly built Copyright Bhaban

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on July 4 said her government will take measures to promote the culture of Bangladesh in the global arena alongside pursuing a move for its boost apace with thoughts of the new generations so that they never forget the uniqueness of the country's culture.

'As we are heading towards socio-economic advancement, we also have to move forward culturally. We will take required measures that our culture can put a strong footing on the world stage,' she said while laying the foundation stones of six development projects and inaugurating another.

She virtually joined the function from her official residence Ganobhaban through a video-conference organised by the Cultural Affairs Ministry at the Bangladesh National Museum at Shahbagh in the city. *Source: The Financial Express*



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina handed over gifts to the family members of PGR as she attended the 48th founding anniversary programme of the President Guard Regiment (PGR) at its headquarters in Dhaka Cantonment on July 5

5 July 2023

PM lauds armed forces' role

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on July 5 asked the armed forces to maintain the dignity they have earned by standing beside the people.

‘Our every force always stands beside the people alongside safeguarding the country’s independence and sovereignty.... So, they get respect from everyone. We’ll have to go forward keeping up this dignity,’ she said.

The premier said this while addressing a programme marking the 48th founding anniversary of President Guard Regiment (PGR) at its headquarters in Dhaka Cantonment.

She said the armed forces serve the local people simultaneously with discharging the responsibility bestowed on them even in the peacekeeping mission in other countries. *Source: The Financial Express*

6 July 2023

Democracy must continue to sustain country’s dev momentum: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on July 6 said her Awami League government wants the continuation of the democratic process to maintain the country’s development spree. ‘We want the democratic process to continue in the country. As the democratic process is going on we have been able to develop the country and we have attained the status of a developing nation,’ she said.

The Prime Minister said this while inaugurating a new office for officers of the Jatiya Sangsad Secretariat at the Parliament Bhaban.

Besides, an archive on life, works and struggles of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina goes round the new office after inaugurating it for officers of the Jatiya Sangsad Secretariat at Parliament Bhaban in the city on July 6

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the War of Liberation will also be built there by next October, the speaker added.

Earlier in the afternoon, the PM inaugurated the newly constructed office of the Jatiya Sangsad Secretariat by cutting a ribbon. *Source: The Financial Express*

9 July 2023

Bangladesh must prepare now for fourth industrial revolution, says Hasina



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina hands over the 'Prime Minister's Fellowship Award 2023-24' to a recipient at the Shapla Hall of her office in the city on July 9

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina believes Bangladesh should emphasise the development of a skilled workforce in preparation for the fourth industrial revolution.

Hasina highlighted the importance of high-quality education and research to people the country forward while handing out awards to the recipients of the Prime Minister’s Fellowship 2023-24 at her office on July 9.

‘We have established many specialised universities for science and technology. We have even built an aeronautical university. One day we will land on the moon and make aeroplanes. We built the [aeronautical] university with that ambition. We’ve even set up an aeronautical centre,’ she said. *Source: The Financial Express*

11 July 2023

PM calls for working together globally to achieve UN SDGs

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has called for working together globally to achieve the public health goals outlined in the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

‘This involves helping countries with fewer resources to improve their ability to handle health risks,’ she said.

The PM said this while addressing the two-day International Conference on Public Health and Diplomacy at Hotel Pan Pacific Sonargaon in the city on July 11.

‘I believe Bangladesh will play a leading role in this effort, considering its past success in protecting public health and dealing with the impact of the Covid pandemic,’ she said.

In this connection, the PM put forward five specific recommendations for regional cooperation. *Source: The Financial Express*



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing a two-day international conference on Public Health and Diplomacy at Hotel Pan Pacific Sonargaon in the city on July 11

14 July 2023

Future economy to be smart one: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on July, 14 urged the country's businesspeople to develop new products and find new markets for exports utilising their innovative ideas.

'Government is always beside you,' she said.

The Prime Minister said this while addressing the opening of the 'Business Conference on Building Smart Bangladesh' at the Bangabandhu International Conference Center (BICC).

The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), the apex trade organization of the country, organised the three-day conference focusing on the private sector's role in building Smart Bangladesh.

Foreign investors, top corporates, sector-based associations, and top business leaders, general body (GB) members from chambers and associations of FBCCI joined the conference. *Source: The Financial Express*



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina speaks at the Bangladesh Business Conference organised by the FBCCI at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the capital on July 14

16 July 2023

PM for improving quality of education for Smart Bangladesh

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on July 16 underlined the need for diversifying the education system for transforming the country into Smart Bangladesh by 2041.

'We need smart skilled manpower, smart economy, smart government and smart society. We want to build Bangladesh this way. The utmost need is to diversify the education system,' she said.

The Prime Minister was addressing the national council of principals of the colleges affiliated under the National University and the scholarship distributing ceremony-2023 at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre (BICC).

Source: The Financial Express



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina handing over scholarship to 10 insolvent but meritorious students of the national council of principals of the colleges affiliated under the National University at a function at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the city on July 16

17 July 2023

Saree made from banana plant fibre gifted to PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina July 17 received Kolaboti sarees and handicrafts, all made from banana plant fibre.



Holding a Kolaboti saree made from banana plant fibre, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina poses for a photograph at the cabinet room of the Prime Minister's Office on July 17

Bandarban Deputy Commissioner Yasmin Parveen Tibriji handed over three such sarees and two jewellery boxes to the PM at the cabinet room of the Prime Minister's Office.

The Kolaboti sarees were first created by Radhavati Devi, a member of the Manipuri community in Moulvibazar, using the fibre of banana plant.

Anjali Devi and Dutta Singh, weavers from Bandarban, made the three sarees that were gifted to the Prime Minister. Besides, a special Machang model of a residential shelter in hilly areas, district brand calendar and brand book were also presented to the Prime Minister by the deputy commissioner. *Source: The Daily Star*

28 July 2023

Judiciary running independently: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on July 28 said the government has been working to continue to run the country's judiciary, legislature and administration independently since the Awami League assumed state power.

The premier also thanked the judiciary for the verdict declaring the 15th amendment to the Constitution as illegal that stopped grabbing state power illegally and smoothed the path of democracy.

The premier was addressing the inaugural ceremony of the 'Smriti Chironjib' monument at Bangladesh Supreme Court.

She opened the monument constructed marking the golden jubilee of Bangladesh Supreme Court and laid the foundation stone of the 14-storey Record Bhaban of the Supreme Court.

Source: The Financial Express

31 July 2023

PM distributes 'Bangabandhu Public Administration Award-2023'

28 government officials and two departments received the 'Bangabandhu Public Administration Award-2023' from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on July 31.

The premier conferred the awards at an event in the city's Osmani Memorial Auditorium on the occasion of the National Public Service Day.



Chief Justice Hasan Foez Siddique presents a crest to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at a programme marking the golden jubilee of Bangladesh Supreme Court on the court premises in the city on July 28



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina posing with the recipients of 'Bangabandhu Public Administration Award-2023' given to 28 government officials and two departments on July 31. The event was held at Osmani Memorial Auditorium on the occasion of National Public Service Day

The award, under different categories, has been conferred since 2016 in a bid to encourage efficiency, mindfulness and innovative efforts of public administration officials in various fields.

The food ministry received the award in the 'Policy and Administrative System Reform' category and National Heart Institute and Hospital in 'Research and Its Use for Human Welfare' category.

The recipients of the awards can use the title 'BPAA' at the end of their names. Each recipient was provided with a gold medal (weighing 15 grammes) and a certificate with a state monogram as prizes. Tk 2 lakh was given for individual contribution, while Tk 5 lakh for team contribution.

The National Public Service Day is celebrated every year on July 23. This year, the theme of the day was 'Good Governance First, Innovation in Public Service'.

Source: The Daily Star

3 August 2023

Build skilled manpower to spread tech use for smart country: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on August 3 directed the Smart Bangladesh Task Force to work for building skilled and tech-savvy manpower to turn the country into a Smart Bangladesh by 2041.

'What is most important to us today is --building skilled manpower and finalising what to do to spread the use of technology widely,' she said at the first meeting of the Smart Bangladesh Task Force, held at the Prime Minister's Office.

The premier said digital devices are opening new doors before the people. 'That's why we have to develop suitable skilled manpower,' she said.

'The new generation has to be developed with education and technology. They will have to be prepared for Smart Bangladesh,' she added. *Source: The Financial Express*



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina presided over the meeting 'Smart Bangladesh Task Force' at her office on August 3

5 August 2023

PM urges private sector to patronise sports

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on August 5 urged the private sector to patronise the sports saying the sector demand their support for its development.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina speaks at the Sheikh Kamal National Sports Council (NSC) Award-2023 ceremony at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the city on August 5

'I believe that alongside the government's patronage, private sponsorship is needed for the evolvement of the country's sports and culture,' she said while addressing the Sheikh Kamal National Sports Council (NSC) Award- 2023 distribution ceremony at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the city.

The event coincided with the birth anniversary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's eldest son Shaheed Sheikh Kamal, a 1971 veteran who is also known for his extra ordinary role in the development of newborn country's sports and cultural fields. *Source: The Financial Express*

8 August 2023

Bangamata had great contribution to independence: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on August 8 said Bangamata Begum Fazilatunnesa



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina hands over the 'Bangamata Begum Fazilatunnesa Mujib Padak-2023' at a ceremony at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the city on August 8

Mujib had a significant contribution to the independence of the country and all achievements during the struggle for liberation.

'My mother made the 7th June hartal (a countrywide strike in 1966 in support of the historic Six-Point programme) a success. She knew how to wage movement and keep the organization united (in absence of Bangabandhu),' she said.

The premier was addressing an event in the city's Osmani Memorial Auditorium on the occasion of the 93rd birth anniversary of Bangamata Begum Fazilatunnesa Mujib.

The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs arranged the event to celebrate the birth anniversary of Bangamata and give Bangamata Begum Fazilatunnesa Mujib Padak- 2023.

Hasina said when Bangabandhu was in jail, Bangamata used to inform him about the situation of politics and his organization (the Awami League). She also used to convey Bangabandhu's instructions to the party's leaders and workers. *Source: The Financial Express*

9 August 2023

No homeless, landless family in 21 dists, 334 upazilas now

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on August 9 said BNP-Jamaat terrorists are still trying to harass the people in different ways by holding them hostage.

The premier said this while declaring another 12 districts and 123 upazilas free of homeless and landless people and opening the distribution of 22,101 houses among the poor under Ashrayan-2 project through a videoconference from her official residence Ganobhaban.

Hasina said her government has relentlessly been working for the people.

The premier was connected virtually with the beneficiaries and local people of three places while distributing the houses to the landless and homeless families on the sixth occasion since Mujib Year.

The three places are Barasat Sonar Bangla Palli Ashrayan Project site in Terokhada Upazila under Khulna, Chakla Ashrayan-2 project site in Bera Upazila under Pabna, and Amanullahpur Ashrayan project site in Begumganj Upazila under



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina declares 12 more districts and 123 upazilas homeless & landless-free through video conferencing from her official residence Ganobhaban in Dhaka on August 9

Noakhali district. *Source: The Financial Express*

10 August 2023

BD’s dev model can inspire others: WB ED

Executive Director (ED) of the World Bank Parameswaran Iyer on August 10 said other developing countries can follow the development model of Bangladesh.

‘Bangladesh has witnessed a phenomenal transformation,’ he said while paying a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the latter’s official residence Ganobhaban in the city.



Executive Director of the World Bank Parameswaran Iyer paid a courtesy visit to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Ganobhaban on August 10

He conveyed the greetings of the WB president to the premier.

He said the WB will assist Bangladesh to improve infrastructures in the next phase of its development journey.

The WB official said Bangladesh’s private sector is thriving.

The country’s sanitary system is also remarkable, he said.

He said the WB will also assist Bangladesh to implement the Delta Plan-2100.

Source: The Financial Express

13 August 2023

PM urges Islamic scholars to protect the dignity of Islam

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on August 13 urged the country’s alem-uleama to cooperate with her government to eradicate religious superstitions, terrorism and militancy so no one can misguide the children by wrong interpretation of Islam.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina hands over an award to a winner of National Hifzul Quran Competition 2023 at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in Dhaka on August 13

‘I want your cooperation in eradicating religious, superstition, terrorism and militancy. We especially request you to keep watch so our children don’t follow the wrong path,’ she said.

The Prime Minister was addressing the award giving ceremony of National hifzul quran competition 2023 held at Bangabandhu International Conference Center (BICC). *Source: The Financial Express*

15 August 2023

National Mourning Day observed

The National Mourning Day and the 48th martyrdom anniversary of Father of the



President Mohammed Shahabuddin and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina pays tribute to Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman by placing a wreath at his mausoleum at Tungipara in Gopalganj on August 15 on the occasion of the National Mourning Day

Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was observed on August 15 across the country and Bangladesh missions abroad with due respects and solemnity.

Bangabandhu and most of his family members were brutally killed by some disgruntled army men on the fateful day of August 15, 1975 and this carnage is termed the ugliest chapter of the nation's history.

The government drew up elaborate programmes in observance of the day at the national level.

The national flag was hoisted half-mast at the buildings of all government, semi-government, autonomous and educational institutions and private buildings including Bangladesh missions abroad.

As part of the state programme, President Mohammed Shahabuddin paid rich tributes to Bangabandhu by placing a wreath at his portrait in front of Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi-32 in the city in the morning.

Later, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina paid homage to Bangabandhu, the architect of independent Bangladesh, by placing wreaths at his portrait in front of Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi. *Source: The Financial Express*

17 August 2023

Meant for better life of all: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina hopes the Universal Pension Scheme her government just introduced will ensure a better life of all in society by covering above-18s for secure latter-day financial benefit.

‘We have introduced the pension scheme so that every person of the country can



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurates the Universal Pension Scheme on August 17 at a virtual ceremony from her official residence Ganobhaban

lead a better life,' she said while launching the Universal Pension Scheme virtually from her official Ganobhaban residence in Dhaka on August 17.

The universal pension has been introduced aiming to bring

all citizens aged above 18 under the pension coverage, save those who enjoy state pension. *Source: The Financial Express*

22 August 2023

PM dreams country to be trillion-dollar economy

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on August 22 invited South African entrepreneurs to make investment in Bangladesh that seeks to become a trillion-dollar economy and a fully developed smart nation by 2041.

'Bangladesh progresses toward prosperity. We want you to join our journey of development. Do invest in Bangladesh; we are confident that your investment will be primed for success, and we are fully prepared for a sustainable partnership,' she said.

The Prime Minister was speaking at the Bangladesh Trade & Business Summit in South Africa jointly organised by Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) and Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) at the Radisson Blu Hotel and Convention Center. *Source: The Financial Express*



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina speaks at the 'Conference of Bangladesh Envoys in Africa' organised by Bangladesh ambassadors stationed in African countries at Radisson Blu Hotel Sandton in Johannesburg on August 22

PM Opens First Elevated Expressway



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurates the 11.5 km Airport-Farmgate segment of 19.73 km Dhaka Elevated Expressway, the first of its kind in the country, on September 2

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on September 2 inaugurated the 11.5 km Airport-Farmgate segment of 19.73 km Dhaka Elevated Expressway, the first of its kind in the country, raising high hope to reduce traffic congestion and commuters' travel time in the capital.

The long-awaited expressway, one of the mega infrastructure projects under the current government, will be opened to traffic on September, 2 morning and it will take 10 minutes for a vehicle to reach Farmgate from Kawla with a speed up to 60 km per hour.

This is the first project in the transport sector being implemented under the public-private partnership (PPP) with foreign investment.

The car carrying the Prime Minister entered the expressway from the north end in Kawla area near the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport after paying toll at the toll plaza.

The expressway is expected to increase traffic capacity within and around the city by improving connectivity between the northern part of Dhaka City with the Central, South and South-Eastern part.

Private cars, minibuses (<16 seats) and mini-trucks (<3 tonnes) will have to pay Tk 80, medium-sized trucks (up to 6 wheels) and large trucks with more than 6 wheels will pay Tk 320 and Tk 400 respectively.

It is being built in partnership with Thailand-based Italian Thai Development Public Company Limited (51 percent), China Shandong International Economic & Technical Cooperation Group (34 percent) and Sinohydro Corporation Limited (15 percent). *Source: The Financial Express*

6 September 2023

Bangladesh, Indonesia keen to work together in energy, health sectors

Bangladesh and Indonesia are keen to work jointly in energy, agriculture and health sectors in line with the signed bilateral agreements between the friendly countries.

The bilateral meeting between the Bangladesh President and his Indonesian counterpart was held on September 6 the sidelines of the 43rd summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and 18th ‘East Asia summit’ at Kakatua Room of Jakarta Convention Centre (JCC).

Noting that both the countries earlier signed three MoUs (memorandum of understanding) on energy and health sectors, it was acknowledged there is an ample opportunity to ensure joint work for the benefit of the two peoples.

The Bangladesh President expressed his heartiest thanks to his Indonesian counterpart for inviting him as well as the excellent hospitality extended to the Bangladesh delegation during the visit. *Source: The Financial Express*



President Mohammed Shahabuddin and his Indonesian counterpart Joko Widodo hold a bilateral discussion on the sideline of the 43rd summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) at Jakarta Convention Centre in Indonesia on September 6

7 September 2023

Let’s build Smart Bangladesh together irrespective of caste, religion, says PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on September 7, asked all irrespective of caste, creed and religion to work together to build a developed, prosperous and Smart Bangladesh by 2041.

‘We, Hindu, Muslim, Bouddha and Christian will work shoulder to shoulder to take our motherland forward. We will build Sonar Bangla as envisioned by the Father of the Nation and Smart Bangladesh by 2041,’ she said.

The Prime Minister was exchanging views with the Hindu community marking the Janmashtami, the holy occasion of birth of Lord Sri Krishna, also known as Janmashtami at her official Ganobhaban residence.

Food Minister Sadhan Chandra Majumder, State Minister for Religious Affairs



The Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina exchanges greetings with the Hindu community on the occasion of birth of Lord Sri Krishna (Janmashtami) at her official residence Ganobhaban on September 7

Md Faridul Haque Khan and State Minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Swapan Bhattacharjee, among others, spoke on the occasion. *Source: The Financial Express*

8 September 2023

Hasina-Modi summit meet

Connectivity, commercial linkage and bilateral ties dominated discussions between Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Delhi on September 8, at a time when both face polls ahead.



Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina meets with her Indian counterpart Narendra Modi at latter's official residence in New Delhi on September 8

The Indian Prime Minister expressed gratitude for steps taken by Bangladesh government to help India in curbing terrorism in the northeastern states of India.

The Bangladesh Prime Minister requested her Indian counterpart to take measures to ensure uninterrupted export of necessary commodities to Bangladesh, the FM added.

The meeting that took place on the sidelines of the G20 summit was held at Narendra Modi's residence in the Indian capital city, where world leaders converged for the forum meet.

The bilateral summit talks were capped with the signing of three MoUs on interaction, Foreign Minister Mr Momen told the media.

The three instruments signed are on agriculture research, culture, and rupee-taka payments system for trading amid dollar dilemmas.

Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC) signed the MoU on agricultural research and training.

The memorandum of understanding on the two countries' cultural-exchange was extended up to 2025. *Source: The Financial Express*

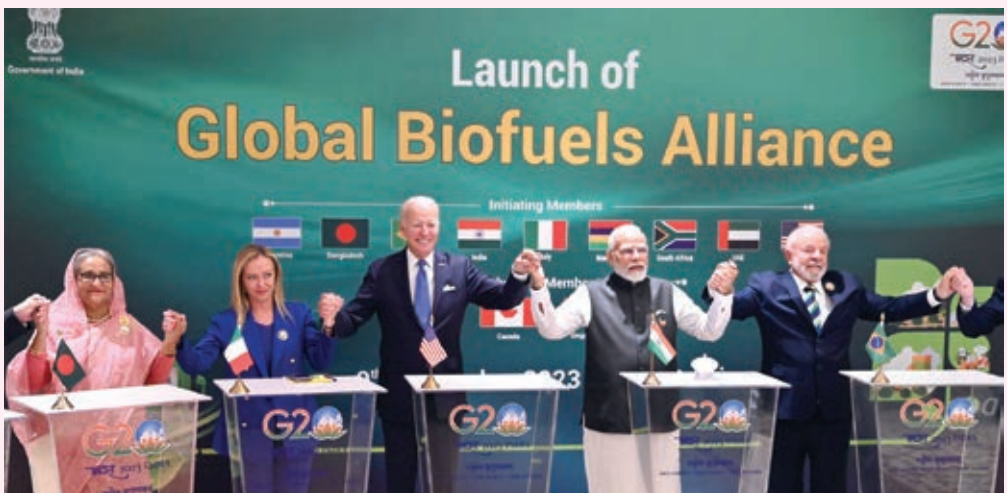
9 September 2023

India makes clean energy push at G20 with global biofuel alliance

India announced on September 9 the launch of a global biofuel alliance at a G20 summit in New Delhi to boost the use of cleaner fuels.

The alliance, with the United States and Brazil as its founding members, would help accelerate global efforts to meet net zero emissions targets by facilitating trade in biofuels derived from sources including plant and animal waste.

'We are launching the Global Biofuel Alliance. India invites all of you to join this



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, US President Joe Biden, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other world leaders at the launching ceremony of the Global Biofuels Alliance at the G20 Summit in New Delhi on September 9

initiative' Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in his remarks to leaders from the Group of 20 major economies at the summit.

The push for a biofuels alliance mirrors the International Solar Alliance launched by New Delhi and Paris in 2015 to bring clean and affordable solar energy within the reach of all. *Source: The Financial Express*

11 September 2023

Dhaka may order 10 Airbus planes, Paris pledges dev aid

Bangladesh committed to ordering 10 aircraft from Airbus in the country's first deal with the French company in what is seen as a shift from its Boeing-dominated fleet.

The planned airbus deal is among cooperation accords inclusive of defence and Indo-Pacific affairs mentioned in a joint communiqué capping summit talks held September, 11 between visiting French President Emmanuel Macron and Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina-both back from the Delhi G20 summit.

French officials said the deal for the A350 wide-body airplanes, which is still being finalised, is with the national flagship carrier Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd.

'I thank you for your trust in the European aerospace industry. And this commitment for 10 Airbus A350 is important,' Macron said in a statement to the media after the meeting with Sheikh Hasina. *Source: The Financial Express*



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and French President Emmanuel Macron witness the exchange of documents of two agreements signed between Bangladesh and France at the Prime Minister's Office in Dhaka on September 11



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addresses the 'Commonwealth Trade and Investment Forum' in Dhaka on September 13

13 September 2023

BD needs dev partners to reach its goals: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on September 13, invited investors from Commonwealth countries to come to Bangladesh in a bigger way.

‘Geographically, Bangladesh is at the centre of a market of 3.0-billion people. We’ve 170-million people of our own. By 2030, the affluent population of Bangladesh will stand at 35 million.’

‘Therefore, Bangladesh will become the third-largest market globally, leaving behind Germany and the United Kingdom,’ said the premier.

Sheikh Hasina said this while addressing a two-day ‘Commonwealth Trade and Investment Forum Bangladesh-2023’ at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre.

Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council (CWEIC), Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA), Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Zi Foundation, a family-run entity that offers support to vulnerable people, co-hosted the event.

The aim is to promote innovation, trade, investment and economic growth, enhance partnerships and explore ways towards sustainable and inclusive economic development for Bangladesh. *Source: The Financial Express*

19 September 2023

Financial system needs fundamental shift to overcome global crisis: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on September 19, said the world financial system needs fundamental shift to address the ongoing financial crisis across the globe.

She put forward five points in reshaping the financial system while speaking at the high-level roundtable titled ‘Towards a Fair International Financial Architecture’ held at UN Headquarters.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina speaking at the high-level roundtable meeting titled 'Towards a Fair International Financial Architecture' held at UN Headquarters in New York on September 19

First, MDBs, IFIs, and private lending agencies must re-align their priorities and mobilize additional funds for SDG implementation and climate action.

Second, funds need to be made available for developing countries at low-cost, concessional rates, and preferably in higher quantities of grants;

Third, all lending instruments should have disaster clauses to allow vulnerable countries to absorb shocks during crises;

Fourth, fair and effective debt relief measures need to be given priority based on coordination and transparency among creditors; and,

Fifth, instead of quotas, SDR borrowing limits should be based on needs and vulnerability, supported by easy lending processes. *Source: The Financial Express*

22 September 2023

Work for peace, prosperity shunning path of war, PM tells UNGA

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has called upon the global leaders to work in unison for peace, welfare of mankind and prosperity by shunning the path of war and confrontation.

“My appeal today is to all of you - to the leaders of the world, to shun the path of war and confrontation, and to work collectively for enduring peace, welfare for humankind and economic prosperity for our people and future generations,” she said.

The prime minister was addressing the General Debate of the 78th session of the UNGA at the General Assembly Hall on September 22.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) at the General Assembly Hall in New York on September 22

She said the overall progress towards a peaceful and prosperous common future is faced with threats due to the impacts of the pandemic, the effects of an existential climate crisis, and the wide ramifications of the war in Ukraine affecting global food, financial, and energy securities have greatly impeded the achievement of SDGs in developing countries.

The premier said Bangladesh always supports the Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, for his strong commitment to strengthening multilateralism and for his efforts, bold statements, and his far-sighted and pragmatic steps toward making the UN deliver its mandates and stand up to the challenges of the current world.

In her address delivered to the UNGA session, she highlighted the Rohingya crisis, climate change, food crisis, human rights, women empowerment, healthcare, sustainable development goals (SDGs), terrorism and the government's inclusive economic development and other global and regional issues.

Report Compilation: Mazharul Hoque, Mamun Hossain, Jewel Chandra Barman



Kashful (*Saccharum spontaneum*) on the bank of Piyain River in Autumn



Department of Films and Publications

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