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**Bangabandhu:  
A Dreamer for the Suffering People**

**Rohingya Crisis: A Historical Review**

**International Literacy Day  
and its Importance**



# Bangladesh

## QUARTERLY

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*Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina placing wreaths at Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi - 32 on August 15*



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## Editorial

**1** 5 August, the National Mourning Day, has been observed in a befitting manner throughout the country and Bangladesh missions abroad. It reminds us of the heinous act of assassination of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and most of his family members at house 677 of Road 32 in Dhanmondi in 1975. The nation paid rich tributes to the Father of the Nation on the occasion of the National Mourning Day. The government, different political and socio-cultural organisations and educational institutions observed the day recalling the brutal assassination of Bangabandhu and his contribution in achieving the independence of Bangladesh through various programmes.

The Rohingyas are the Muslim inhabitants of the medieval land of Arakan (now Rakhine), who have now taken shelter in Bangladesh after being forced to flee Myanmar. At present more than one million Rohingya refugees continue to live in Bangladesh posing a gigantic challenge for the country's economy and society. The Bangladesh Government, however, has been facing the crisis quite courageously and the matter has now reached even the International Criminal Court. Although various countries and agencies from the Western world, the United Nations, European Union, and the Commonwealth have stood beside Bangladesh on the Rohingya issue. A swift resolution of the repeated persecutions, expulsions and statelessness of the Rohingya Muslims requires empathetic attention and urgent action of the global community.

8th September, the International Literacy Day is observed around the world. At present about 83 per cent people are literate and about one billion people are still illiterate all over the world. In Bangladesh, education is a fundamental right of men, women and children. The ranking position of Bangladesh in the world in respect of literacy is reputable and prestigious and now about 73 per cent of the people of Bangladesh are literate.

Articles on the above subjects are included in this issue other than write-ups on different issues and subjects.

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## Bangabandhu: A Dreamer for the Suffering People

Selina Hossain

**B**angabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the Father of the Nation, had just come back from the Pakistan prison on 10 January 1972. He went straight to Suhrawardy Uddayan from the Dhaka Airport. Hundreds of thousands of people were awaiting his return. He went up the podium. There he started his speech. At one stage he said, "You also know that I was ordered to be hanged. A grave was also dug for me beside my cell. I am a Muslim. I know a Muslim dies only once. That is why, I decided that I would not give in to them. Before going to the gallows, I would say: I am a Bangalee, my country is Bangladesh and Bangla is my language. *Joy Bangla* (May Bangla achieve victory). My colleagues requested me to leave the country before being arrested by the West Pakistani soldiers on the night of 25 March 1971. I then told them I would not leave my land throwing the seven and a half crore people into the mouth of danger. If I have to die, I will die here. Bangla is dearer to me than my life. Tajuddin and my other colleagues then burst into tears".

Such was his political, socio-economic and cultural feeling regarding his own national spirit and the mass people's identity. No modern state of the world can exist outside its own identity. Only a state that is subservient to the imperialistic powers chains up its self-identity. Bangabandhu was uncompromising about his national identity. In the very face of the Pakistan Government he said, "Don't call my land East Pakistan, call it East Bengal. If you want to call it East Pakistan, arrange a general election of the Bangalees". He clearly said in a meeting arranged on the occasion of Suhrawardy's death anniversary that the name of the country would be Bangladesh.

Even before the achievement of the independence he fixed the name of the country. In his speeches all over the country he always spoke about the common people's rights. He made people aware of the fundamental truth of living as human beings with dignity.

He was behind the bars during the Language Movement in 1952. He has written in his Unfinished Memoirs: " My cabin had a window facing the ward. I asked them to come after 1 o'clock at night..... Nobody minded it because only a few would turn up at that time of the night. The police lay silent because they knew I would not escape. The intelligence officer dozed off at one corner. We talked on the corridor and I asked them to constitute an all- party council for movement. ....



*Bangabandhu on the way to village*

A conspiracy is again going on to suppress the demand for the Bangla Language. If no protest is raised now, the Muslim League will get their proposal for Urdu passed in the central Legislative Assembly. Mr. Nazimuddin has not only spoken for making Urdu the only state language but he has also put forward many new arguments. .... In that discussion there it was decided that 21 February would be observed as the State Language Day and in a meeting a Council for movement would be constituted. One member of the Student League would be the convener of the State Language Movement Council. The public opinion should begin to be created from the very beginning of February. I further said that, "I would also start a hunger strike from 16 February demanding my own release".

He took the dignity of the mother language as a political right. The pride of the mother language is shattered if a nation is deprived of this right. Today the life-sacrificing day 21 February is the 'International Mother Language Day' in the world forum. The UNESCO has declared this day to be observed all over the world. A modern state wants to see its achievement in the world heritage. Bangladesh has won that achievement. Bangabandhu's contribution to this achievement is worth remembering.

Secularism was one of the tenets of his life-philosophy. He took his position against communal ideology from his student life. This is a fundamental condition in the definition of any modern state. During the Kolkata communal riot in 1946,

he engaged himself in distributing relief materials in the riot- torn areas. He stood by the distressed humanity. The eminent Indian economist Bhabatosh Datta was a teacher of Islamia College from 1943. In his book The 1960s he reminisced about the riot time and wrote: "We had a proof of how much the students of Islamia College had done for us during the bloody communal riot in 1946. The road from Baliganj to Islamia College was strewn with dangers. Our students helped us cross this road. They waited near Baliganj and took us to the college on the Wellesley Street. Again they helped us go back in the same way. Here I gratefully remember those muslim students of Islamia College who helped us cross the dangerous area. One of those students was Sheikh Mujibur Rahman."

He risked his life during the 1964 Bangali- Bihari riot. His life was endangered during the terrible violence in Narayanganj. He was giving away the leaflets with the words "Stand up to Defend East Pakistan" published by him as a member of the anti- riot committee. Bangabandhu was the convener of the Riot Protest Committee. For circulating the 'Stand up to Defend East Pakistan' leaflets he was arrested under the Pakistan Press and Publication Ordinance and Pakistan Penal Code. He was later granted bail.

In this way he bravely stood by people even at the risk of his life. He had imprinted in him the philosophy of humanity. This is why, in his contemplation about the distressed people the religion of humanity irrespective of religion, caste and creed got the priority. Bangabandhu believed in the empowerment of women. After the independence, he gave the title "Birangana" ( the female heroes) to the oppressed women. A Board for the Rehabilitation of Women was formed under his leadership. This board was constituted for the care and shelter of the oppressed women. In the post-war condition he faced this difficult problem with a cheerful heart. He tried his best to re-establish the social status of women.



*After the devastating tidal bore of 12 November 1970, Bangabandhu stood by the people to share their misery*

On the other hand, he made an arrangement for the reserved seats of women in the National Parliament in 1973 in order to ensure the political empowerment of women. He gave ministerial duties to women in the cabinet of the government of the independent Bangladesh. Muslim marriage and marriage registration law was made in 1974. The question of



*Bangabandhu among working people and masses at Tejgaon*

men-women equality is mentioned in Chapter 17 of the Constitution. The dream of today's Bangladesh is not violence; it is a dream to go forward through the equality of men and women.

He thought about the common people right from his very early youth. He dreamed of doing something for them. The kind of far-sightedness that he demonstrated as a politician from the forties to the seventies was a direction for the freedom of a country. There was no question of fallibility there. Secondly, the kind of love and sympathy he had for the common people as a politician was a deep truth of life. He can be compared only with himself. Two of his speeches may be mentioned here. The first one was made on 5 October 1972 on the occasion of approving the draft constitution in the General Assembly. He explained there the four pillars of the constitution, namely nationalism, democracy, socialism and secularism. He made the next speech in the National Parliament on 25 January 1975. In policy making and implementation he asked the administration to become servants of the common people. He said in his speech that government employees should change their mentality and consider themselves not as rulers but as servants. He said, "Some people came to me and wanted protection from me. I told them, my people want protection from you, gentlemen". He was this type. He never spared the bureaucrats in his speeches.

To cite a little more from Bangabandhu's speech, "I came to learn that a cold storage had been built at Thakurgaon a year ago. But there was no electricity there. I gathered that it would take one year to send electricity there, because there was no pole. Poles, they said, had to be brought from abroad. I said to the minister, I don't bother about poles. We have bamboos for sure. Stand here, cut bamboos into poles with machetes. Within a month and a half or two this work should be done. Do it. I don't want to hear how you'll do it. Then I saw it was done. If they hadn't come to me, they wouldn't have got poles in a year and the work wouldn't have



been done. Where did poles come from? Electricity was there and potatoes were stored. There is no place to store potatoes. Why do we have this mentality? Poles come from trees in Bangladesh. I want to supply every police station in Bangladesh with power".

If he had got help and cooperation for the implementation of the policies he made in state administration, he would certainly have been able to bring a smile to the suffering people's faces in the real sense of the term.

The huge amount of work that he wanted to undertake in three and a half years was Herculean. He also wanted to go forward facing all challenges. But he could not score the final goal. He was dauntless in the face of all local and foreign conspiracies. He was never afraid of his own life. He even did not have the mental meanness to distrust the Bangali nation.

Rabindranath Tagore in his essay 'Sabhyatar Sankat' (Crisis in Civilization) wrote '..Losing trust in people is a sin...' Bangabandhu accepted this immortal saying of the master poet as an unchangeable truth. That is why, just for the cause of safety he never thought of leaving his own residence and living in the government residence surrounded by security guards. If he had done it, there would have been a distance between him and the common people. He paid the price of loving the suffering people with his own life.

Regarding the fundamental idea of a modern state, Bangabandhu was far-sighted and had a modern mind. He never explained the idea of a nation and country with a backward mentality. He had a very extended vision. One of his extraordinary utterances was: "As a human being, I think about the entire mankind. As I am a Bangalee, everything related to the Bangalees makes me think deeply. The source of this endless attachment is love, immortal love---- the love which makes my politics and existence meaningful".

There was a song in Bangabandhu's diary. He wrote it down as one of his favourite songs:

Love isn't love till you give it away  
Love isn't love till it's free  
The love in your heart  
Wasn't put there to stay  
Oh love isn't love till you give it away  
You might think love is a treasure to keep  
Feeling to cherish and hold  
But love is a treasure for people to share  
You keep it by letting it go

This was one of the remarkable traits of his life- philosophy. He instilled this extraordinary message of the song into his own philosophy: love is a treasure for people to share.

**Translation: M. Jahurul Islam**

**Courtesy: Press Information Department**



## Rohingya Crisis: A Historical Review

Dr. Helal Uddin Ahmed

The Rohingyas are the Muslim inhabitants of the medieval land of Arakan, a majority of who have now taken shelter in Bangladesh after being forced to flee Myanmar or Burma. The Myanmar province of Arakan, renamed as ‘Rakhine’ in 1974, is located in the north-western region of that country beside the south-eastern border of Bangladesh. According to recent figures, the territory of Arakan has an area of around 36,762 square kilometres with its capital at Sittwe, and contains a population of over 4 million. The Rohingyas constitute around 35 percent of the province’s current population and the rest are mostly Buddhists.

Neither the Myanmar government nor the Rakhine province’s dominant Buddhist group ‘Rakhines’ recognize the label ‘Rohingya’ that surfaced mainly in the 1950s in order to provide the ethnic community with a collective political identity.



*Rohingya Influx : A journey towards uncertainty*



Although the etymological root of the word is disputed, the most widely accepted theory is that 'Rohang' derives from the word 'Arakan' in the Rohingya dialect, and 'ga' or 'gya' means 'from'. By identifying as Rohingya, the ethnic minority group asserts its ties to a land that was once a part of the medieval Arakan Kingdom. The exploits of the Bengal-origin Arakanese poet Alaol (1607-73, composer of 'Padmavati') in the royal court of Arakan is quite well-known.

The Rohingya community is believed to have originated during early 9th century, when some Arab and Persian traders of Islamic faith found shelter in Arakan after their ship sank near the island of Ramree. The British administrator R B Smart had written in the Burma Gazetteer (1917): The local histories relate, in the ninth century several ships were wrecked on Ramree Island and the Mussalman crews were sent to Arakan and placed in villages there. They differed but little from the Arakanese except in their religion and in the social customs which their religion directed; in the writing they used Burmese, but amongst themselves employed colloquially the language of their ancestors.

Therefore it is quite clear that Bangladesh and the present-day Rakhine state of Myanmar have had a long history of social and cultural interactions, and the main reasons for this have been geographical contiguity as well as historical entanglements. Chittagong or Chatgaon or Chattogram of Bangladesh was under Arakanese occupation from 1550 to 1666 and Tripura was also its protectorate during the 16th century. During this period, the Arakanese 'Maghs' as well as Portuguese 'Harmads' or 'Firingis' used to conduct joint piracy raids for carrying out lootings and abductions in different regions of Bangla, especially in the coastal districts, which severely disrupted the socio-economic lives of the Bangali population. Even the European traders were not spared from these attacks. The

Mughal Subedar of Bangla Shaista Khan, however, captured Chittagong from the Arakanese in 1666, and then incorporated it in the Mughal Empire.

In 1760, the British East India Company received the right to extract revenue in the territories of Chittagong, Medinipur, Bardhaman etc. from the Nawab Mir Qasim, and the company then strove to exert its influence in the region. As sporadic attacks by the 'Maghs' hindered their effort, the company tried to improve its relations with the Kingdom of Arakan. The company officials also adopted a policy of sanctioning Arakanese settlements on the southern coast of Chittagong with the objective of obstructing the 'Maghs' as well as cultivating the southern territories. But the relations between the two parties could not develop



*Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her sister Sheikh Rehana at Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar on 12 September 2017*

much due to the anarchy and disorder prevailing in Arakan. In this backdrop, the Burmese King Bodawpaya captured Arakan by removing the then King Thamada in 1785, and incorporated it as a province of Burma.

Between 1785 and 1794, over two-thirds of the Arakanese population including Rohingya Muslims and the Buddhist 'Maghs' fled Arakan for saving their lives due to tortures and repression perpetrated by the Burmese king. They mostly took shelter in the present-day Cox's Bazar and Bandarban districts. This long history and tradition of the Arakanese people taking shelter in Chattogram after being driven out by the brutal Burmese troops in Arakan has continued till today. Between 1797 and 1798, as many as 40 thousand Arakanese refugees arrived in Chattogram. Captain Hiram Cox was appointed as a commissioner cum superintendent by the British rulers to rehabilitate these refugees. He allowed the



*United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Filippo Grandi talking to a young Rohingya man at Kutupalong, Cox's Bazar on 23 September 2017*

refugees to settle in various parts of Chattogram as well as the hill tracts. The district of Cox's Bazar still bears the name of this outstanding British diplomat.

The British East India Company tried to increase their revenue and output by settling the Arakanese refugees, mainly Buddhist Rakhines, in uncultivated lands of Chattogram, Bandarban, Barishal, Patuakhali etc. They

gradually became part of the Bangladeshi ethos despite their distinct cultural origin. The fate of Arakanese Refugees improved after the regions of Arakan and Tenasserim came under British rule as per the Treaty of Yandaboo in 1826 following the First Anglo-Burmese War (1824-26). The lower territories of Burma came under the control of British East India Company after the Second Anglo-Burmese War (1852-53). And the whole of Burma came under British rule at the end of the Third Anglo-Burmese War (1885-87). These political developments had a massive impact on the flow of population and migration in the region.

The British framed supportive laws under which they rehabilitated many people from Chattogram in Arakan by distributing fallow lands. The refugees were also allowed to return voluntarily to Arakan, but the British extended some benefits to them for encouraging their return. Due to the opportunities created for engaging in unhindered trade and commerce all over the British-controlled territories, a large segment of the Arakanese population living in Chattogram then started doing business in Arakan. Besides, in the backdrop of severe unemployment problem and economic difficulties faced by the Chattogram region, better facilities and higher wages in Arakan also motivated the refugees to go back to their own land.



*Director General of International Organisation for Migration (IOM) William Lacy Swing, while visiting Rohingya shelters in Cox's Bazar on 16 October 2017*



*Rohingya people queue for aid at camp area in Cox's Bazar*

The situation, however, started to deteriorate during the Second World War (1939-45), when the British troops withdrew following the occupation of Burma by Japanese military. During this interregnum, the communal 'Maghs' started killing Rohingyas and expelling them to Bengal. There were then horrendous communal riots between the Buddhist Maghs and the Muslim Rohingyas in the northern parts of Arakan, when Arakan virtually got divided into two communities based on religion. Under the circumstances, the Rohingyas supported the British and carried out activities in their favour. The British also promised the Rohingyas a separate homeland by adopting a 'Divide and Rule Policy'.

Many Rohingyas fought on the sides of the British forces and served as spies against the Japanese occupiers. When this linkage was discovered, the Japanese military along with the Burmese nationalist forces entered Arakan in 1942 and carried out widespread killings, which is also known as the '1942 Massacre' or 'Genocide'. At this juncture, about 100 thousand Rohingyas were killed and 500 thousand took refuge in the British-controlled India including Chattogram, as well as in Malay, Saudi Arabia and Iran. Since 1942, more than 1.70 million Rohingyas have taken shelter in Bangladesh, Pakistan, Southeast Asia, Saudi Arabia and the countries in the Persian Gulf region in order to save their lives from incessant tortures and repression in Arakan.

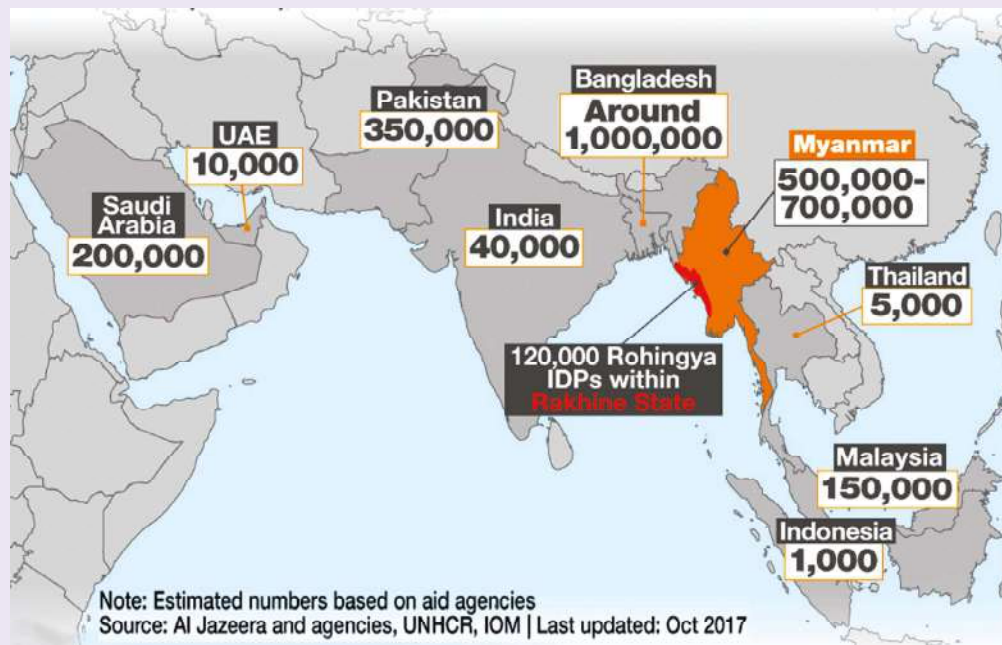
British rule in Burma was restored at the end of Second World War. But the British did not keep their pledge of creating a separate homeland for the Rohingyas. Even the founder of Pakistan Muhammad Ali Jinnah betrayed their cause when he declined to incorporate northern Arakan in the new state after being approached by the Rohingya Muslim League leaders in 1947.

Following the independence of Burma from British Raj in January 1948, the government under Prime Minister U Nu constituted the Burma Territorial Force (BTF) with the inclusion of 99 percent Magh troops. They unleashed a reign of

terror in the north of Arakan. Muslim men, women and children were mowed down in hundreds by machinegun fire. Hundreds of intellectuals, village elders and religious leaders were killed like dogs and rats. Almost all Muslim villages were razed to the ground. The BTF massacre triggered a refugee exodus into the then East Pakistan, and they numbered over 50 thousand.

After the military takeover in Burma by General Ne Win in 1962, all constitutional rights of the Rohingyas including their citizenship were rescinded. During the eviction drive that followed, around 20 thousand Rohingyas escaped to Cox's Bazar by crossing the border. The Burmese regime, however, took back the refugees after talks with the Pakistani government. In 1964, numerous Rohingya socio-cultural organizations were banned by the military junta. The programmes broadcast in Rohingya language by the Burma Broadcasting Service (BBS) were stopped from October 1965. All private newspapers were also banned from 1966. There was another Rohingya exodus from Arakan to Cox's Bazar after the Burmese military officers raped Rohingya women and encouraged the Maghs to attack the Rohingyas in 1966.

Following the independence of Bangladesh, a large number of Rohingyas again fled to the country in 1973 and 1974 in the face of renewed persecution by the Maghs. When the Bangladesh Government warned of dire consequences, the Burmese regime was compelled to take back the refugees and rehabilitate them in their Arakan homes. But within a few years, the military junta of Yangon launched the operation 'Naga Min' or 'King Dragon' in 1978. Over 10 thousand Rohingyas were killed during this operation and about 250 thousand refugees fled to Bangladesh. Around 40 thousand Rohingya women, children and elderly people perished during the journey. The refugees were sheltered in 13 refugee camps of Cox's Bazar and Bandarban as well as in some outer areas. However, the Burmese regime again took back these refugees under a programme titled 'Operation





*Kutupalong Camp area : The Rohingya people to cross the border and take shelters in Bangladesh*

Golden Eagle' following an agreement signed with the Bangladesh Government in 1979.

Myanmar's military junta once again targeted the Rohingyas in 1990 after the junta's rejection of the country's parliamentary polls results in 1989. As a result, 270 thousand Rohingya refugees were again forced to flee Myanmar during 1991-92. Although a bilateral agreement was signed by the governments of Bangladesh and Myanmar on 28 April 1992 for the return of the refugees, the repatriation progressed only at a snail's pace. There were additional Rohingya influxes during 1996-97, and the repatriation process was almost halted from 2005 onwards.

Meanwhile, riots again broke out in the Rakhine state between the Rohingya Muslims and the Buddhist Rakhines in June 2012. As a result, 200 Rohingyas were killed and over 110 thousand refugees fled to Bangladesh. There were similar inhuman tortures on the Rohingya community in 2016 as well. Then following the killing of 12 Myanmar security personnel by the Rohingya rebels on 25 August 2017, the military launched the 'clearance operations' against the Rohingyas. About 10 thousand Rohingyas were allegedly killed by the Myanmar troops during this operation, and many among them were wounded or became victims of tortures and rape. Over 300 villages were burnt to ashes, and around 700 thousand refugees were forced to flee and take shelter in Bangladesh. Although a bilateral agreement was signed by the Myanmar and Bangladesh governments for repatriation of the refugees on 23 November 2017, there has been virtually no progress on the issue till today. This has created a problem of huge proportion unprecedented in the history of Bangladesh.

The Myanmar government refuses to grant citizenship to the Rohingyas, as a result of which most of them now have no legal documentation, effectively making them stateless. Myanmar's 1948 citizenship law was already exclusionary, but the military junta seizing power in 1962 introduced another law that blocked the Rohingya's access to full citizenship. Until recently, the Rohingyas were able



to register as temporary residents with identification cards, known as ‘white cards’, which the junta began issuing to Muslims during the 1990s. The white cards granted limited rights but were not recognized as proof of citizenship, and only allowed temporary stay of the Rohingyas in Myanmar.

The Myanmar government organized an UN-backed national census in 2014, where the ethnic minority group was initially permitted to identify themselves as Rohingya. But later the authorities ordered the Rohingyas to register by identifying themselves as ‘Bengali’ after the Buddhist nationalists threatened to boycott the census. Again coming under pressure from the Buddhist nationalists who protested the Rohingyas’ right to vote in a 2015 constitutional referendum, the then President Thein Sein cancelled the temporary identity cards (white cards) in February 2015, thereby revoking their right to vote.

The Bangladesh foreign minister visited the Rakhine state in August 2018, where he inspected the progress in building shelters and houses for the Rohingyas. But the issue of granting Myanmar citizenship to the Rohingyas, which is essential for ensuring their secure and dignified existence there, has remained elusive. Under the circumstances, the Rohingyas would naturally be disinterested to return voluntarily. In fact, it appears that the initiatives taken and the assurances given by Myanmar have been mere eyewashes. Apparently, Myanmar has been applying this technique in order to protect itself from outside pressures including international embargos.

Many countries, agencies and human rights organizations have termed as ‘genocide’ and ‘ethnic cleansing’ the crimes committed by the Myanmar military against the Rohingya population in Rakhine. But ironically, the international community is yet to take any effective steps against these crimes against humanity. The global community and donor agencies have certainly come forward with humanitarian assistances. But it is not possible for a populous and resource-poor



*Makeshift warehouses*

country like Bangladesh to bear the brunt of 1 million refugees for an indefinite period. The country has no other option now but to generate global public opinion in favour of the return of refugees with recognition of their citizenship and assurance of a safe future, as well as trial of the inhuman acts committed against them. The global community also cannot forsake its responsibility in this regard.

In the above backdrop, about 1 million Rohingya refugees continue to live in Bangladesh, mostly in Cox's Bazar, posing a gigantic challenge for the country's economy and society. The Bangladesh Government, however, has been facing the crisis quite courageously and the matter has now reached even the International Criminal Court. Although various countries and agencies from the Western world, the United Nations, European Union, and the Commonwealth have stood beside Bangladesh on the Rohingya issue, Bangladesh faces an embarrassing situation as the regional powers like India, China and Japan maintain their tacit support for Myanmar due to geo-political and strategic reasons.

A swift resolution of the repeated persecutions, expulsions and statelessness of the Rohingya Muslims requires empathetic attention and urgent action of the global community. **If ethnic communities including the Maghs (Marmas or Rakhines) can live in peace and harmony in Bangladesh with all constitutional and citizenship rights, then why not it be so in case of the Rohingyas in Myanmar?** It is high time that the Myanmar Government and its people should come to terms with the historical reality of the existence of Rohingya Muslims in the Arakan or Rakhine state for centuries. Only then one can expect an honourable solution to this centuries-old problem.

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## International Literacy Day and its Importance

**Dr. Md. Matiur Rahman Khan**

8<sup>th</sup> September is the International Literacy Day. This Day is observed by all the countries around the world. Like other countries Bangladesh observed the Day of this year with the global theme “Literacy and Multilingualism.” As the theme suggested in this year, the International Literacy Day provided us with the opportunity to observe and express solidarity, unity, and consensus with the celebration of 2019’s International Literacy Day as other states on the globe did.

International Literacy Day is celebrated to create awareness among the people about the need and importance of literacy and education for every human being.



*School Girls in a classroom*



*UNESCO Head Quarters*

On this day, events and programs are planned and organized to motivate and inspire people to achieve literacy and to eradicate illiteracy and ignorance from the world. Bangladesh observed the Day with due fervor and solemnity. The radio and television put up special programs to highlight the importance of the Day. Newspapers reveal information and publish articles on the occasion of the International Literacy Day. Meetings, discussions and rallies are organized by government and private organizations to demonstrate and promote its importance and significance.

Practically we see that a blind man cannot see anything of the world. He cannot enjoy the beauty of nature and the strangely beautiful world. He has no eyesight. He cannot enjoy light and remains in darkness. He leads a very helpless and dependent life. Similarly, an illiterate person cannot read or write. He is to some extent like a blind man. He cannot enter the world of knowledge without the help of others. Though he can see books, magazines, newspapers, posters, he cannot understand the writings therein. For want of literacy, he also depends on others as a blind man does. Illiteracy is an evil and terrible curse on him.

To remove the evil curse of global illiteracy and to promote mass literacy rate all over the world, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) proclaimed the 8th September as the International Literacy Day. The proclamation was made at the 14th session of UNESCO's General Conference on 26 October, 1966. Thereafter, the day has been celebrated around the world since 1967.

Currently, about 83 % people around the world are literate and about 17 % people are still illiterate, and fumble in darkness. At present about 100 crore people are

still illiterate all over the world. This large and vast number of people is deprived of literacy or minimum education. But education is the fundamental rights of every man, woman, and child. We express our thoughts, ideas, sense of right and wrong, justice and injustice by means of education. Education gives us knowledge and knowledge is our power and this power comes from education. Education is very essential for our life and livelihood. Without education we are like blind people. So, everyone must have the right of having education.

Education in Bangladesh is a fundamental right of men, women and children. This right is enshrined in our Constitution. The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh about free and compulsory education states "The State shall adopt effective measures for the purpose of -- (a) establish a uniform, mass-oriented and universal system of education and extending free and compulsory education to all children to such stage as may be determined by law; (b) relating education to the needs of society and producing properly trained and motivated citizens to serve those needs; (c) removing illiteracy within such time as may be determined by law." Art. 17.

Again, the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh about the provision of the basic necessities states, "It shall be a fundamental responsibility of the State to attain through planned economic growth, a constant increase of productive forces and steady improvement in the material and cultural standard of living of the people with a view to securing to its citizens - (a) the provision of the basic necessities of life including food, clothing, shelter, education and medical care \* \* \*"



*ICT classroom in a High School in Sylhet*



*Chemistry Lab. in a Govt. Girls School and College, Sylhet*

Despite Constitutional obligations, Bangladesh has not yet achieved hundred per cent literacy rate. But literacy rate in Bangladesh is promoting and progressing appreciably fast. According to a statistical source, about 74% Bangladeshi people are literate. And about 26 % of people are still illiterate. Bangladesh lags behind in eradicating the curse of illiteracy. The officials at the Primary and Mass Education Ministry said although the total budgetary allocation for education was large, the allocation specifically for literacy programs was insufficient. They further added that projects focused on primary education, while the non-formal education system was largely ignored.

Deputy Director of Campaign for Popular Education said, “Usually literacy is attained in two ways formal education and adult literacy programs. We are largely depended on formal education, and literacy has gone up because of the rise in school enrollment and reduction and dropout rates. However, adult literacy programs remain missing, when they could have helped us develop literacy in a faster way.” The Direct General of the Bureau of Non-Formal Education (BNFE) said, Primary Education Ministry is implementing a project of Tk. 38000 crore under the Primary Education Development Programs to improve literacy among children who are unable to go to school. However, more effective drive may be needed to eliminate and eradicate illiteracy curse from Bangladesh.

Literacy means the ability of a person to read and write. And the standard for determining of literacy rate changed with the passage of time. Around

1901, the standard of literacy was set in the Census Document. According to the document literacy at that time meant the ability of a person to write and know only the letters needed to write his or her own name. Towards 1940, the definition of literacy was changed. Here literacy meant ability of a person to learn the skill needed for mere reading and writing. In 1960, the definition of literacy was a bit modified and expanded. This time literacy meant a person's ability and skill in calculation in addition to the ability for mere reading and writing. In 1980, again the definition of literacy was further expanded. This time awareness and ability of a person to read the visible writings were added to the definition of literacy. Currently literacy embraces communication, empowerment, and means of livelihood, protection and organizing power including all other previous criteria of the definition of literacy.

The ranking position of Bangladesh in the world in respect of literacy is reputable and prestigious. To improve and promote its image position, Bangladesh should draw up a comprehensive but realistic plan and program to reduce the rate of illiteracy. If we can bring down the illiteracy rate to the zero point, we shall be able to raise our heads with pride in the world. We can feel proud as the nationals of Bangladesh.

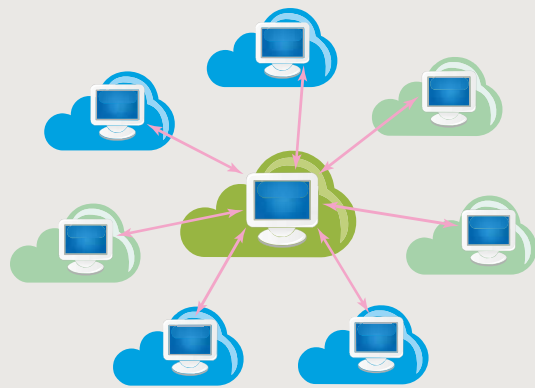
Primary schools and madrasas at the grassroots level can play very important role in saving the nation from the curse of illiteracy. In Bangladesh about 5 crore people are still illiterate. The children of remote areas, char areas, coastal areas, haors and far off places are to be imbued with literacy. Thus, we can make Bangladesh a literate country.

Government is very aware about the illiteracy issue. Government in the current Financial Year allocated a large sum of money in budget for education sector. If this money can be spent timely and properly, we hope that our country will surely and certainly go ahead towards literacy.

If we look at other countries, outside Bangladesh, we find that the more the country is literate, the more the country is developed. Russia, the UK, the USA, Germany etc. are the best examples.

In fine, I must draw a conclusion with the urge to all concerned to realize it that illiteracy is a serious impediment to our development. And we have to overcome this impediment to reap the success of development. And with the progress of literacy rate, we have to develop and improve our moral character, moral values, and build peaceful society; otherwise, the enhancement of literacy rate will be valueless. And in doing so, concerted efforts, cooperation, dedication, honesty and sincerity will be needed.

*The writer is former Joint Secretary to the People's Republic of Bangladesh*



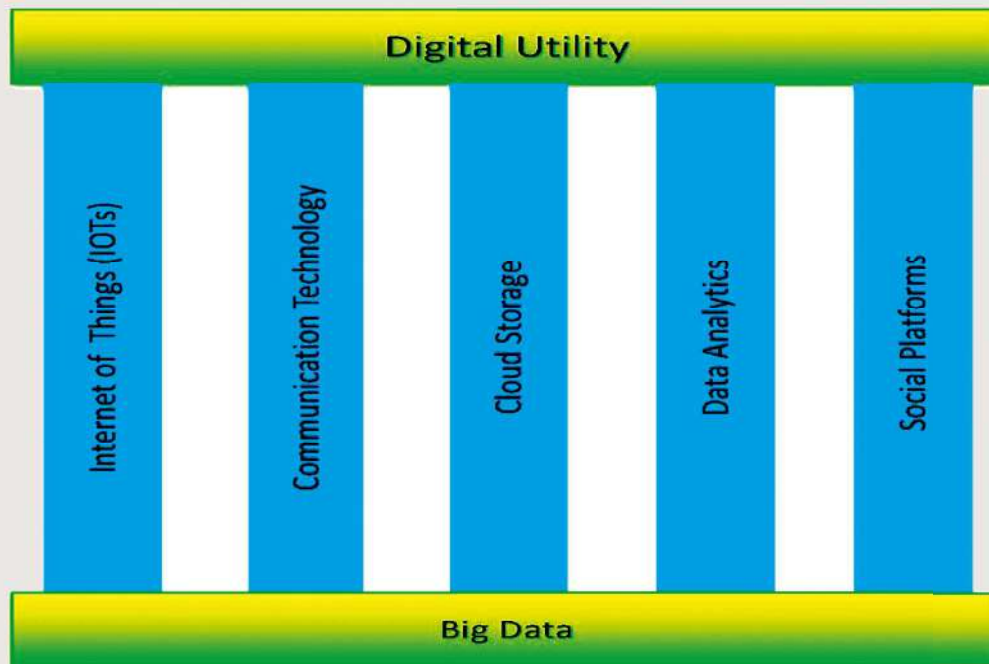
## Mapping and Weighting Big Data: A Development Challenge for Bangladesh

Md. Azgar Ali

The article is written in relation to the future development of country. In this present world we will have to fight for dignity and honour. The floods of information revolution have created a bridge between the people of the whole world. Our Bangladesh is not a separate island from the world. We are no less in any part. We have the responsibility to work, have the courage, have the right to live with dignity, and we will have to get through the high street of the information store to get what we need to sort out life. The world has changed a lot and the reasons for the changes are many and broad. In







2008, the present government had 23-point election manifesto. It was mentioned that by 2021 Bangladesh will be a Digital country. In early 2009, I wrote an article titled 'Vision 2021 Digital Bangladesh: A Concept of Stratified Development' in a national English daily, which highlighted the world thoughts about digital data and also the election agenda mentioned above that had impressed me very well. It is astonishing to think that the government of Bangladesh has been able to fulfill promises given to commonalities before the appointed time. Meanwhile, the United Nations Organization (UN) declared sustainable development goals (SDGs) which will be achieved by 2030 and vested with large-scale information-data revolution to the world population.

The scientific information-data revolution has given the name 'Big Data' which is not a fiction. It has been identified as the stepping stone for the development of every country in the current civilized society. What is this Big Data? Why is it necessary to have mapping and weighting again? How is big data transforming the agriculture, health, education, environment, industry, national income, international trade labour-market, business and service sectors? How are we ready to deal with this issue? Because it's a new version in the world of information. Big data is a popular phenomenon, which are products of communication technology in the 21st century, have embraced new dynamism and significant roles as tools for achieving sustainable economic development and aimed at providing alternatives to conventional solutions based on databases and data analysis. In other words, big data insinuates the planning of present and future life and development. The fact that tens of thousands of people of Bangladesh can instantly and easily share content including economy, health,

politics and environment, which is extremely crucial in terms of the comprehensiveness of information.

Big data may play a vital role in generating a clearer and more up-to-date picture of the world, such as planning required policies and programmes, monitoring and assessing these programmes, and evaluating the processes of sharing resources that could affect people's lives and influence political decision-making. Big data methods will be used for network analyses, such as anomaly detection, discrimination discovery, opinion leaders detection, event detection, rumor propagation detection, conflict detection and topic etc. detection. Undoubtedly, Bangladesh's economy has been growing since 2009. The 2018 election manifesto of the present government titled 'Bangladesh on march towards prosperity' has been focused on 33 sectors to be dealt with two strategic plans i.e. The SDGs and Delta Plan 2100 and to bring down poverty rate to zero by 2041. In this context, big data mapping and weighting are essential tools for the implementation of those mega plans. To tell the truth, big data range is broad and comprehensive in the world of information and it is randomly spread. So, mapping and weighting are the first requirements for the prevention of big data inequality, inconsistency, isolation, duality of information etc.

Accurate information can accelerate any development. That is why present government has adopted a very liberal policy. The government has continued steadfast efforts to maintain the continuity of the past. In view of that goal, on 11th and 12th February 2019, the government of Bangladesh's Access to information (a2i) programme, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, and the Bloomberg Data for Health (D4H) jointly organized an 'International Conference on Big Data for Health' in Dhaka, which was chalked out a road map for how Bangladesh's health community can leverage big data sources and techniques to create policies





### Mobile Apps

and programmes that improve the health situation of the people of Bangladesh. Albeit the term digital was coined with early 1990's, and big data term was in 2016. But both factors created unprecedented and tremendous information flow or trend and developments in the ability to access information. We are in a period of increasing natural disasters and humanitarian crises, both in scale and number. Obtaining maps of these potential crisis areas greatly improves the response of emergency preparedness actors. Their lack of scalability, flexibility, and performance has been resolved through new technologies in the context of big data. In this regard, big data mapping and weighting are an urgent piece of business of a government which adapted to the specific domain and purpose of the organization contributes to systematize the process of generating value.

The Big Data mapping also offers many advantages and benefits for the governments, private sectors and the society. Data weighting is a technique that is commonly used in market research. Weighting is most effective when you have reliable and precise information. We should try to address this issue by making sure that our sampling isn't so skewed. For example, if you have conducted a public opinion survey for a community on issues of a sensitive nature e.g. Rohingya's problem in Bangladesh, which is allowing certain large-scale construction, etc. Moreover, government can learn what people say about the government, understand which policies, services are subject to negative views and complaints. Recently conducted a 2- day international conference on big data highlighted its potential contribution to national development. As it enforces to change and upgrade research methods and makes it easy to conduct interdisciplinary research, helps to now-cast the present and to forecast the future more precisely. We therefore need to look at how we can increase this skill in Bangladesh from schools to post-graduate degree level in which data analytic



*National web portal*

skills are embedded across specific disciplines. We should bear in mind that computing and mathematical skills are core components of building these skills for the 21st century. In this regard, we must aim to enhance the collaborations between government, academia and development partners to ensure a strong pipeline of skilled people who are ready and able to enter the workforce and be productive from the first day at work. The big data sector has the potentials to create thousands of new jobs in the upcoming years, bolstered by the direct value of public sector data alone. However, big data presents unprecedented challenges to harnessing such large increasing volumes of data.

One challenge is how to collect, integrate and store. Another challenge of big data is management. The challenge is also how to clean such huge data sets and how to decide about which data is reliable and which data is useful. Be that as it may, big data brings big opportunities and transformative potential for various sectors. It is hoped that our policymakers, academicians, ICT related experts, economists, development partners, and overall ruling government along with opposition will be able to formulate the programmes and policies to have address the issue and thus provide the citizens economically emancipated, socially balanced, politically stabilized and productive country of the world.

Finally, it is hoped that the readers of this little work will understand that our purpose is not cooked up a new recipe 'Mapping and Weighting Big Data: A Development Challenge' to solve any of the problems but to shift the attention and efforts of those working to develop the country especially in the human development field where the problems lies.

***Md. Azgar Ali, Deputy Director, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics & Publicity Secretary, Bangladesh Statistical Association, E-mail: md.azgarali@ymail.com***



## Cowpea - a stress tolerant most nutritious pulse crop

**Dr. M. G. Neogi**

**C**owpea or Felon is a pulse crop. Most of the Bangladeshis may not be familiar with this pulse; even many of us never heard of this name. It is believed that after natural disasters in Bangladesh, the packets of this pulse were thrown in the affected area from the aero plane and since then it was named as 'felon pulse' - as it was thrown from the plane. In some areas, it is also called 'plane pulse' - as it was thrown from the plane.

It is assumed that about five hundred to two thousand years ago, this felon pulse was brought from Africa to Indian sub-continent and gradually spread. The cultivation of this pulse are being done in the coastal areas of Bangladesh,



*Fallow land in dry season at coastal belt due to increased salinity*



*Cowpea - a salt tolerant pulse crop with high protein in coastal area*

especially Patuakhali, Borguna, Bhola, Noakhali and some other parts of the country. The felon pulse is very familiar and popular in these areas. This pulse is being consumed by many families of the costal areas.

Many people of our country especially who live in the coastal areas are suffering from malnutrition. Cowpea or felon pulse contains 23-30% protein and 54-58% carbohydrate. Therefore, this species of pulse is very potential to meet up the malnutrition of the poor of coastal and other areas of the country.

Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI) has started to improve the quality of this pulse as it is very nutritious and accepted by the farm families. BARI has already succeeded to invent a developed species of felon pulse named BARI Felon-1.

Farmers are now not being able to get satisfactory yield in the dry season from existing crop due to climate change affect, i.e. the increased salinity and water logging in the coastal areas. For that reason, after the harvest of aman rice during December and January, thousands of hectares are kept fallow without any farming.

The farmers can easily cultivate this felon pulse during this dull period and can get a good yield of this pulse from this fallow land. During last two years, the scientists of Bangladesh and Australia have jointly initiated a research in the agricultural land of coastal areas and found that felon pulse has medium level of salt tolerance capacity while the other species of pulses are not being able to give satisfactory yield in lower level of salinity, whereas the felon pulse is able to give satisfactory yield from a mid-level of salinity.

This crop is drought tolerant as well. The roots of felon pulse can go much deeper in the soil as compared to other pulses crops and therefore it can survive during drought and give better yield.

Felon pulse plants are kind of bushy. The sunlight cannot pass to the soil through these plants and thus does not dry-up the land. For that reason, the soil moisture of cowpea field remains longer in the field which is good for felon plants for providing a better yield. The bushy character of this plant also protects from growing too many weeds and therefore the attack of insects is much lower than for other types of pulses. Hence, the production of legume from this species is very satisfactory.

Felon is not only consumed as pulse but also we can have it as vegetable. The farm families in coastal areas consume green legume as asparagus bean (Borboti) which is very nutritious.



*Cowpea is in sun drying*

The felon plants remain green after collecting the matured legume; thus plants are used as hay and fodder for the livestock. Felon plants produce huge amount of noodles which could nourish the soil. Therefore, felon pulse not only ensures the food security of poor families but also a great source of fodder for cattle and the plants enrich the soil health.

Considering the potentiality of cultivating of this pulses in saline prone and fallow coastal areas and the popularity among the farm families, the scientists of Bangladesh and Australia have initiated a research project about two years ago to improve the quality of this variety. ACIAR (Australian Center for International Agriculture Research) of Australia and KGF (Krishi Gobeshona Foundation) of Bangladesh have jointly financed the research project. Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI), Bangladesh Agriculture University (BAU), University of Western Australia (UWA) and CSIRO (national research institute of Australia) are directly involved with this research project.



*De-husked cowpea processed by local system*

With the help of IITA and other international institutes, a total of 345 cowpea germplasm have been tested over the last two years in the fields of Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI) in Rahmatpur of Barisal district. It seems some of the varieties are heat and drought resistant, assuming that some varieties are salt tolerant as well, some varieties have a short life span and some varieties are high yielding. Through this research, the scientists are very hopeful that it would be not that difficult to find out 2-3 varieties of stress tolerant high yielding felon crop for the farm households of Bangladesh.

There is not only consideration to develop an improved variety under this project, but efforts are also going on to mechanize the cultivation of felon pulse. BARI has been implementing a research on felon and mungbean cultivation with seeder machine over the 500 bighas of land of 500 farmers. In traditional system, it requires 3-4 days to prepare one bigha of land for felon or mungbean cultivation; it requires an investment BDT 2,000 per bigha. But with seeder machine it takes only one hour for the preparation of land, planting the seeds and covering the seeds in one bigha land. The costing is also very minimal which only BDT 400-500 per bigha is.

When the felon crop seeds are planted in lines by the seeder machine, it is very easy to uproot the weed from the straight lines. As the seeds are



planted properly under the soil the number of sprouting plants is more than in the traditional system. The plants sprout at the same time and get enough sunlight and air and can grow like healthy plants. The farmers informed that cultivating through seeder machine, they are able to get almost double production of pulses for this device. This year only in Patuakhali, the farmers have cultivated mungbean in 90 thousand hectares and felon pulse in 10 thousand hectares of land; most of these lands were fallow before cultivating these crops.

It is revealed from the data and findings from the research of Bangladesh Agriculture University (BAU) and Agrarian Research Foundation (ARF) that males and females both are involved in cultivating the mungbean and felon pulse cultivation. The males were involved in preparing the land and weeding while women are involved with collecting the legume of mungbean and felon pulse, to dry legumes in the sun, de-husking, cleaning, storing them in the houses and all other necessary work.

Till now there is no machine in rural areas to de-husking the legumes or seeds of pulses. For that reason, the pulse farmers are bound to sell their produced legumes of felon or mungbeans to the middlemen at cheap price. As there is no machine to de-husking the pulse seeds the habit of consuming pulses is also very poor. The female members crushing these seeds by traditional smashing stones (pata-puta or jata), clean them by kula (traditional flat object made of bamboo) to prepare them for cooking. The whole process is difficult and time consuming. Therefore, though the farmers produce different types of pulses, the habit of consuming pulses is very poor.

Considering this situation, this research project may initiate to establish 2-3 pulse de-husking machines in rural area. It is mentionable that the pulse de-husking machine 'mini-mill' was invented in the previous project of ACIAR (Australian Centre for International Agriculture Research). With this mini-mill, a farmer can de-husk 1 to 3 tons of pulses per day. We hope that if these machines are possible to establish in the rural areas, the farmers will get better price for their produced pulses and at the same time the habit of consuming pulses will increase.

We hope that the government of Bangladesh will include the invented technologies from this project for the sake of farmers of the coastal areas and would spread them to the farmers of the coastal areas by government agriculture extension department. This would help contribute to the socio-economic development as well as food security of the poor families. The ACIAR and KGF may continue to extend their hands for developing and extending the technologies for agriculture.

***Dr. M. G. Neogi, Deputy Project Leader, University of Western Australia***

## Now that It's August Cry out in Sorrow

Nirmalendu Goon

**N**ow that it's August, cry out in sorrow Bengalis!  
I know you weren't allowed to mourn for a long, long time  
I know, hapless Bengalis, you weren't able to cry at all  
For twenty-one long years, but you can do so now!  
Cry your hearts out now for the time to mourn has come  
Clear the debt of sorrow you've piled up for over two decades  
In tears that can flow completely freely now!  
With the tears of pent-up passion released from your hearts  
Let Bengal's delta be flooded and swept away.  
Most people have no idea how striking shared tears  
Can look on them. Let everyone know that truth now.  
Like crickets chirping soulfully across earth  
Let your clamorous cries pervade and overwhelm it.  
Cry out soulfully, making earth quiver with your cries!  
Citizens of an ill-fated country shorn of happiness  
Cry out now like a hungry baby deprived of milk  
Cry out now like a lonely sister grieving for a lost brother  
Cry out now like a dear daughter wailing for her dead father  
Cry out now like poor people who've lost all in ruinous floods  
Cry out now like a mother who has just birthed a still-born child  
Cry out now like a wailing old man who has just buried his own son,  
Returned home, and is flailing helplessly about on his courtyard floor.  
You couldn't mourn when you wanted to but cry out now  
And let go of your pent up and till now impotent anger and pain!  
After twenty-one years the sun called Mujib has burst through  
Clouds and now blazes in Bengal's skies again. Not in celebration  
But with funeral cries greet him now. Cry, Bengalis, cry!  
Like the immaculate juice oozing out of an uprooted baat tree  
Let tears ooze out of your eyes and flow down your face  
Like the warm juice of a date palm tree that has been tapped  
Let the tears pent up in your bosom trickle down to its earthly urn.  
Twenty-one years have gone by and August has come again  
August is the cruelest month  
August is the month of mourning, soaked in sin, harsh, cruel  
Free it from its sins with overflowing tears!

Translated by Sheikh Masud Kamal is working as Joint Director in BIWTA

## Life and Death

M. Mizanur Rahman

**E**ntire living beings are subjected to death.  
None is free from it.  
Here none knows very nature of its faith.  
How funny this life is fit  
where unseen force of nature meets  
as its wish!

We people are care free with our thought.  
We do not know our fate  
where time is fixed at any rate no matter what we feel overwrought!

We feel anything we like-  
But that is not all.  
Our mental horizon's universal call  
that's what we everyway seek.

Nature appears to be the master  
what we hardly apprehend  
but how far can we reach the peak  
where time does not transcend?  
One cannot reach the end of the vast creation  
that nature never permits limit's bygone!

Hence, my friends stay virtuous  
wherever you live.  
Our time is short lived  
where life seems positive  
as well as negative.

*The poet is coulmnist and translator*



## Non-human Primates of Bangladesh

**Professor Dr. A N M Aminoor Rahman**

The English word 'primates' is derived from Old French or French word 'primat', from a noun use of Latin 'primat', from primus ('prime means first rank'). The 'primate' name was given by Carl Linnaeus in 1758 because he thought it was the 'highest' order of animals. Therefore, a primate is any member of the biological order Primates that contains all the species commonly related to the lemurs, monkeys, and apes, with the latter category including humans. The primates are the most developed and intelligent group of mammals. The order Primates is the third most diverse order of mammals, after rodent (Order Rodentia) and bats (Order Chiroptera).

Primates are our closest relatives in the animal world. Although there are some notable variations between some primate groups, they share several anatomic and functional characteristics reflective of their common ancestry. Their common features include the presence of nails or claws as opposed to hooves or paws and the

capability for prehension that is grasping using fingers. When compared with body weight, the primate brain is larger than that of other terrestrial mammals.

Primates are found all over the world. Non-human primates include all the members of the order Primates except human. Non-human primates occur mostly in Central and South America, Africa, and Southern Asia. The majority of primates are adapted for life in trees, but many are ground dweller. Some principally feed on leaves, fruits and different vegetable matter, while others are insectivorous; many eat fruits and leaves but also hunt live prey. Primates range in size from about 30 cm in marmosets, weighing less than a kilogram or mouse lemurs weighing 50 grams (g), to gorillas, which stand almost 200 centimeters (cm) high, and may weigh as much as 350 kilograms (kg).

The first primates appeared in North America and Europe 65-53 million years ago (in the Palaeocene epoch). Early forms such as Purgatorius were small and bore a striking resemblance to the living tree shrews. The lemurs and lorises are known as the lower primates or prosimians, while the monkeys, apes and man are variously called the higher primate, simians or anthropoids. The higher primates are divided into two major groups- i) the Catarrhini or the Old World monkeys,

apes and man and ii) the Platyrrhini or the New World monkeys. Among the tailless primates Gibbons are known as lesser apes, while the Orang-utan, Gorilla and Chimpanzee are known as greater apes. Man is the only one to walk fully upright.

A total of 182 species of non-human primates under 14 families are found in the whole world. Out of the 83 species of Old World primates, 25 are found in South Asia. Bangladesh supports 128 species of mammals of which 10 are non-human primates. These are briefly described below:

**Bengal Slow Loris (*Nycticebus bengalensis*, Family Loridae):** It is also known as Slow, Northern Slow or Bengal Loris. Bangla name is Lozzawati or Lajuk Banor. It is the smallest primate species of Bangladesh, which looks somewhat like a miniature panda. It has stumpy tail and small ears and somewhat round face with large circular eyes. Head to body length is 26-40 cm with a 2-3 cm long tail. Body



*A Bengal Slow Loris mother with its offspring at Banyaprani Sebashrom (Wild Life Asylum) at Shreemangal, Moulvibazar*

weight is 1.2-1.6 kg. The new-born weighs only 30-60 g. Upper coat varies from shades of grey-brown to buffy-brown and under coat is paler. A deep brown mid dorsal line and brown rings are seen around the eyes. It is nocturnal, territorial and arboreal, but rarely descends on the forest floor. It occurs single or in pairs and is very sluggish in movement but is able to hang upside down. It uses urine to mark its territory. Diet consists of fruits, leaves, insects, bird eggs-nestlings etc. It prefers tall trees in dense forests and sleeps in tree holes or inside dense vegetation during day time. It is usually silent, but screeches when threatened. Breeds year round. Female gives birth to a single offspring after 185-197 days of gestation. Male matures in 17 months and female in 18-24 months. Lifespan is 15-25 years. In Bangladesh, it is found in mixed evergreen forests of Chittagong and Sylhet

divisions. This rare species is vulnerable globally and endangered nationally. Outside Bangladesh, it occurs in India, Myanmar, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, Viet Nam and China.

**Stump-tailed Macaque** (*Macaca arctoides*, Family Cercopithecidae): It is also known as Bear Macaque. Bangla name is Khatoleji or Chotoleji Banor. Head to body length is



*A male stump-tailed Macaque at Taipeng Zoo, Taipeng, Malaysia*

48.5-65.0 cm and tail is only 3.2-6.9 cm long. Weight is 7.5-102 kg. Face is bright pink or red that darkens to brown or nearly black with the advancement of age and also when exposed to sunlight. Long, thick and dark brown fur covering the body, but face and short tail are hairless. Infant is born white and darkens as it matures. Mature male is bearded. It is diurnal, arboreal and terrestrial. Shy and seems to be fearless. Lives in groups of 5-50 individuals comprised of males, females and infants. It is primarily frugivorous, but also eats seeds, flowers, leaves, roots, freshwater crabs, frogs, birds, bird eggs, insects etc. It inhabits in different types of forests, but prefer dense forests. Breeds during October to November. Gives birth to a single offspring after a gestation period of about 177 days. Female reaches sexual maturity at around four years of age. Lifespan is 10-12 years, but some can live up to 30 years. No recent sightings, but the species was recorded earlier from forests of Cox's Bazar. As it is found in bordering areas of Myanmar and India, therefore, it may also be found in the forests of Chittagong Hill Tracts, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions. The species is considered as data deficient or already extinct in Bangladesh and vulnerable globally. Outside the country, it is also found in India, Myanmar, Lao PDR, Thailand, Viet Nam, Malaysia and China.

**Assamese Macaque** (*Macaca assamensis*, Family Cercopithecidae): It is also known as Assam or Himalayan Macaque. Bangla name is Assami, Assam or Bora Banor. Similar to Rhesus Macaque, it is larger with short tail. Head to body length is 51-73 cm and tail is 15-30 cm long. Weight is 5-14 kg. The species has dark brown to pink thick face. Upper coat is brownish-grey while the under coat is whitish-grey. Mature male is bearded. It is diurnal, arboreal and terrestrial. Lives in groups of 5-15 individuals comprised of males, females and infants. Diet consists of fruits, leaves, flowers, grains, insects, small vertebrates etc. It is usually silent and rarely sounds like a musical low 'pio'. Occurs in dense deciduous and semi-evergreen forests. Mainly breeds during April to June. Age of female at first birth is five years and it gives birth to a single offspring after 158-170 days of gestation. In Bangladesh, it is found in mixed evergreen forests of Rajkandi

reserve forest of Sylhet and Shuvolong of Chittagong divisions. It is rare and endangered in Bangladesh, and vulnerable globally. Outside the country, the species also found in India, Myanmar, Lao PDR, Thailand, Viet Nam and China.

**Crab-eating Macaque (*Macaca fascicularis*, Family Cercopithecidae):** It is also known as Long-tailed Macaque or Cynomolgus Monkey. Bangla name is Parailla, Kankrabhuk or Lombaleji Banor. It is a medium-sized monkey with very long tail and short legs. Head to body length is 35-65 cm and tail 40-66 cm long. Weight is 2.5-8.3 kg. Upper coat is olive-brown and grey and, under coat is paler. Face is pinkish-brown and tail is blackish. A small crest is seen on the head. Infant is black that turns lighter with the advancement of age. It is diurnal, arboreal and terrestrial. Lives in groups of 5-15 individuals. It is a good swimmer. Mainly eat crabs and other crustaceans; but also like fruits, roots, young leaves, buds, grains, insects, fish, nestlings etc. Occasionally utters 'krra' sound to communicate with each other. Inhabits in lowland rainforest, evergreen forest, riverine and costal forest, mangrove forests etc. Breeds year round, but mostly from March to May and gives birth to a single offspring after 160-170 days of gestation. Lifespan is 10-12 years and highest recorded lifespan is 31 years. In Bangladesh, it is found in mangrove patches and surrounding forests of Naf river estuary in Teknaf and mixed evergreen forests of Fashiakhali. According to IUCN (2015) it is very rare, critically endangered and presently less than 20 individuals are surviving in the country. Outside Bangladesh, it is also found in India (Andaman and Nicobar Island), Myanmar, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, Viet Nam, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Indonesia and Philippines.



A Crab-eating Macaque with its baby at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia



*A Northern Pig-tailed Macaque at Satchori National Park, Habiganj, Bangladesh*

**Northern Pig-tailed Macaque (*Macaca leonina*, Family Cercopithecidae):** It is also known as Pig-tailed, Burmese Pig-tailed or Long-haired Pig-tailed Macaque. Bangla name is Ultoleji, Singha, Chhotoleji or Shukorleji Banor as well as Kulu Bandor. Head to body length is 40-60 cm and tail is 18-25 cm long. Weight is 4.5-12.0 kg. It has a pig-tail like short tail that projects upward. Upper coat is olive-grey, lower coat is greyish-white and face is pinkish. Head is depressed at the middle with black hair. Dominant male sometimes has mane like a lion. It is diurnal, arboreal and terrestrial. Lives in groups of 5-25 males, females and offspring under the leadership of a dominant male. Eats fruits, roots, young leaves, buds, grains, insects, crabs, nestlings etc as well as raids crop fields for food. Utters a harsh coughing sound 'khok' when alarmed. It inhabits in the deepest areas of evergreen forests. Breeds year round, but mostly from March to June. Gives birth to a single offspring after 162-186 days of gestation. Offspring matures in 3-4 years. Lifespan is about 12 years. In Bangladesh, it is found in the mixed evergreen forests of Sylhet and Chittagong divisions. The species is uncommon and endangered nationally, but vulnerable globally. Presently, less than a thousand individuals are surviving in the country. Except Bangladesh, it occurs in India, Myanmar, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, Viet Nam and China.

**Rhesus Macaque (*Macaca mulata*, Family Cercopithecidae):** It is also known as Rhesus Monkey or Indian Rhesus Macaque. Bangla name is Banor, Bador or Bandor as well as Lal or Kota Bandor. It is one of the best known species of primate order. Head to body length is 45-65 cm and tail is 19-31 cm long. Weight is 3-11 kg. Face is hairless and light pink or reddish. Upper coat is grey-brown to reddish-brown and under coat is whitish-grey to light brown. Rump is reddish.





*A Reshus Macaque with its baby at Satchori National Park, Habiganj, Bangladesh*

Tail is medium in size and partially erected. Male is larger than the female. The species is diurnal, terrestrial and arboreal. Lives in groups of 10-90 individuals under leadership of many dominant males. Diet consists of fruits, leaves, buds, flowers, roots, grains, invertebrates, small vertebrates etc, but can also raid crop fields and gardens for food. Utters a harsh coughing sound 'khok' when alarmed and often

screeches while fighting. It inhabits in forests, villages and towns, but prefers open country and trees near streams in dense forests. Breeds year round; but mostly during October to December. Gives birth to a single offspring after a gestation period of 130-180 days. Male matures in four and female in three years. Lifespan is 15-25 years. In Bangladesh, it is widely distributed in different forested areas as well as Dhaka and other towns. Although the species is common, but presently considered as vulnerable in the country. It is also known from Bhutan, Nepal, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, Viet Nam and China.

**Phayre's Langur (*Trachypithecus phayrei*, Family Colobidae):** It is also known as Phayre's Leaf Monkey or Spectacle Langur. Bangla name is Choshmapora or Kalo Honuman. Head to body length is 55-65 cm and tail is 65-80 cm long. Body weight is 5-9 kg. Except the white spectacles on eyes, rest of the body skin is black. White patches are seen on the lips. Face, ears and, sole of hands and feet are dark black. Back, sides of the body and tail are blackish-grey. Under coat is whitish-grey. New-born is entirely golden and the colour



*A male Phayre's Langur at Lawachora National Park, Moulvibazar, Bangladesh*

changes to greyish within a month. It is diurnal and arboreal. Lives in groups of 5-15 individuals under the leadership of a male. It is a peace-loving animal. Diet consists of leaves, stalks, buds, flowers, fruits etc. Inhabits in dense forest and bamboos nearby hilly areas and falls. Breeds from January to April. After 150-200 days of gestation female gives birth to an offspring. Male matures in 5-6 and female in 3-4 years. Lifespan is 10-12 years. The species is rare and critically endangered nationally. In Bangladesh, it is distributed in mixed evergreen forests of Sylhet and Chittagong divisions. Outside the country, it occurs in India, Myanmar, China, Lao PDR, Thailand, Viet Nam and China.

**Northern Plains Langur (*Semnopithecus entellus*, Family Colobidae):** It is also known as Northern Plains Sacred, Common or Grey Langur as well as Entellus Monkey. Bangla name is Honuman, Jossorer Honuman or Hanu Bandor. Head to body length is 50-110 cm and tail is longer than the body that measures 70-110 cm. Weight is 8-20 kg. Upper coat is grey and under coat is whitish-grey to light brown. Face, ears and sole of hands-feet are deep black. Instead of crest it has mane or moustachial stripe. Eyebrows are black. Juvenile is lighter in colour than parents. It is diurnal, arboreal, terrestrial and, spent most of the day on the ground. Lives in groups of 15-25 individuals under the leadership of more than one male. It is a very peaceful animal. Diet consists of young leaves, buds, flowers, fruits, roots, grains etc. Utters a

‘hoop’ sound. It inhabits in dry forest to open jungle and scrub, mixed grassland including villages and towns. Breeds from January to May. After 180-200 days of gestation usually gives birth to an offspring. Produce offspring once in every two years. Male matures in 5-6 and female in 3-4 years. Lifespan is 18-30 years, female has a longer life than the male. The species is rare, endangered and around 200 individuals are surviving mainly in Jessore, but also in Kushtia and Satkhira. Outside Bangladesh, it is also occurs in India and Nepal.



A very big Northern Plains Langur at a village near Kushtia town, Bangladesh

**Capped Langur (*Trachypithecus pileatus*, Family Colobidae):** It is also known as Capped or Capped Leaf Monkey as well as Bonneted Langur. Bangla name is Mokhpora or Lalche Hanuman. Head to body length is 59-70 cm and the longer tail is 78-104 cm. Weight is 9-14 kg. Upper coat is grey-brown and under coat is reddish-brown or golden. Face, ears and sole of hands-feet are dark black. Crest and tail tip are also black. New-born is golden-yellow which starts to change to



*A young Capped Langur at Satchori National Park, Habiganj, Bangladesh*

adult colour after a month. It is diurnal and arboreal. Prefers large and dense trees for roosting; sleeps on a big branch. Lives in groups of 2-15 individuals under the leadership of a strong male. It is a peaceful animal. Diet consists of young leaves, stalks, buds, flowers, fruits etc. It produces a harsh barking sound when alarmed. Inhabits in dense areas and bamboo forest of moist deciduous and evergreen forests. Breeds from January to April. After 180-220 days of gestation female usually gives birth to an offspring. Produce offspring once in every two years. Male can be infanticidal. Female matures in 3 years and male in 4-5 years. Lifespan is 10-12 years. Of the three species of langur found in Bangladesh, this species has widest distribution and found in the deciduous forest of Dhaka and evergreen

forests of Sylhet and Chittagong divisions. This uncommon langur is currently endangered in Bangladesh. Outside the country, it is also found in Bhutan, India and Myanmar.

**Hoolock Gibbon (*Hoolock hoolock*, Family Hyalobatidae):** It is also known as Western Hoolock or White-browed Gibbon. Bangla name is Ulluk or Bon Manush as well as Kala or Hutu Bandor. Its body length is 40-63 cm and weight is 6-8 kg. It has no tail. Except eyebrows, whole body hairs of male is black. Female is yellowish-grey with white rings around eyes and eyebrows are white. Hands, legs and fingers are black. Grey-white infant become black with the advancement of age. Female become yellow-grey at maturity. The species is completely arboreal, diurnal and monogamous. Lives in family groups of 4-6 with 1-3 offspring. It is frugivorous, but also eats leaves, twigs, insects, bird's eggs etc. Prefers middle to upper canopy of dense tropical forests and rarely descent to the ground. Breeds

from May to August. Gives birth to a single offspring after a gestation period of about six months of gestation. Produce offspring once in every three years. Young matures in 5-6 years. Lifespan is 17-25 years. The species is distributed in mixed evergreen forests of Sylhet and Chittagong divisions. It is rare, critically endangered and presently less than 250 individuals are surviving in the country. Except Bangladesh, it also occurs in India and Myanmar.



*A female Hoolock Gibbon with its baby at Adampur beat, Komolganj, Moulvibazar, Bangladesh*

Despite our overpopulation and consequential deforestation, these non-human primates have managed to survive in our wilderness. Continued vigilance in saving our forests is necessary for their continued presence in Bangladesh.

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

A photograph of a puffer fish swimming in clear blue water. The fish is white with black spots and is inflated, showing its characteristic defense mechanism. The background is a deep blue, suggesting an underwater environment.

## **Radiant Fish World: The First Sea Aquarium In Bangladesh**

**S A K Nazmul Huq**

*Puffer Fish*

**R**adiant Fish World is the first live fish aquarium in Bangladesh established in November 2017 and it is recognized as one of the top tourist attractions at Cox's Bazar. It has been built with a view to raising environmental awareness through its high quality exhibits, conservation of biodiversity and several marine education programmes. This fish aquarium was established with the initiative of Md. Shafiqur Rahman Chowdhury, who is the Managing Director of this organisation. Radiant Fish world was built on one acre of land, which has four floors and it contains 105 small and large aquariums. A vast collection of fresh, brackish and marine water organisms has been displayed here. We have displayed here about 170 under sea species out of about 450 species in our Bay of Bengal.

Some species are Pitabbari, Houspata, Star Fish, Sea Baing, Stone Fish, Squirrel Fish, Bishtara, Datina, Rupchada, T e k c h a d a , Poichador, Sucker Fish, different type of Sea snake, Turtle, Crabs, Snail, EeL Fish, Red Crab, Octopus and Sea Horse, Sting Ray, Mentis Srimp, Horse shoe Crab, Spider Crab, Sajaro Potka,



*Radiant Fish World*

White Spot Bamboo sark, Jelly fish and Electric fish.

Beside these, we have also gathered sweet water fish which available in different part of our country. Such as: Giant Black Piranha, Makong Giant Cat fish, Mohashol, Thai Pangash, Thai Sorputi, Chosok Fish, Ruhi, Katla, Mrigal, Pabda, Chital, Sucker fish and rainbow Sark.



*A curious boy is watching fish*



*Octopus*

All these above fishes have different characteristic, different life style, and different life cycle. In our small space we are giving a little idea of under mentioned species:

**OCTOPUS:** It has eight arms, three hearts and nine brains. It can change its color. Blood of Octopus is blue.



*Sea Horse*

**SEA HORSE:** We never know only the male Sea Horse is only the creature where the male has a true reversed pregnancy. The female Sea Horse transfer her egg to the male which he self-fertilizes in his pouch and produce about 1500 baby sea horse at a time.

Radiant Fish World is not a business organisation or a place of entertainment only,



*Diamond Fish*



*Mekong Giant Catfish*





*Stingray*

social and civic responsibility is also one of its driving forces. It is message to all concern that by using the wealth of our undersea species we can enrich our economy. From this obligation Radiant Fish World launched a strong research and



*Stonefish*

education wing named Radiant Ocean Research and Education Center (ROREC). ROREC has been working for creating environmental awareness among the people of all walks as well as the students of school, college and university. Radiant Ocean Research & Education Center (ROREC) looks forward to welcoming all section of people to our sea aquarium. We invite all the students to learn about the ocean and



*Visitors feeding fishes*

the richness of life that it supports through our collection of regional fish and invertebrates on display and we expect to your participation in one of our educational programs to help to enrich your experience.

The aquarium was flourished along with the new research facility. The goal of education and research center is to build awareness among the people on the marine environment and its resources. In order to accomplish these goals school children, educators and visitors to the aquarium are provided with current information pertaining to marine resources of Bay of Bengal.

The Fish World has also arranged for enjoying 3D movies in its theatre, Game Zone for the kids, Souvenir shop for purchasing of gifts for the visitors, a sophisticated live fish restaurant to meet people's appetite and also 1000-person capacity convention hall for big gathering, meeting, or any other Gala ceremony.



*Eel*

The organisation has smart, educated and qualified manpower to serve the visitors for all the time all the way. This museum is open from 9 am to 10 pm every day. Its entrance fee is Tk. 300 and has 40% discount for the children and the students.

***The writer of this article is the CEO of the Radiant Fish World***

**BOOK- REVIEW**



**The Slave Girl**

By Harriet An Jacob

Reviewed by M. Mizanur Rahman

**T**he Slave Girl by Harriet An Jacob Translated into Bengali by Professor Amirul Alam Khan. First Edition: February 2019. Published by Songho Prokason, 2019. Cover Design by Concord Emporium Shopping Complex, Katabon, Dhaka-1205. Price: Taka 500.00 in Bangladesh. Rupee 400.00 in India. US. And other countries -20\$.

Human trafficking is the ugliest slave trade around the world. It has been a curse for human civilization for ages to come. Harriet Jacob has given a detailed description of the Slave Girl in her book, “Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Seven Years Concealment in Slavery.” It appears to be her auto-biography. This book was published from Boston, USA in 1861. Professor Amirul Alam Khan has translated this book into colloquial Bengali very distinctly with a view to let us know, “What man has made of Man?” This ugliest slave trade appears to have been still in vogue throughout the world in cognito. We used to call that in modern language: “HUMAN TRAFFICKING”! In the sense of human civilization this sort of opprobrium from human beings must go. Now the question is here, “Who will bell the cat?”

The writer of the book Harriet Ann Jacob was herself a slave and as such she could make out the vivid descriptions of the slaves (mostly black niggers, both male and female) and their physical as well as mental tortures perpetrated upon them time and again by the white American Slave Traders. This slavery was absolutely atrocious and inhuman but merciless. Here white men are slave traders while their merchandises are black Negroes of Northern and Southern America. The harrowing tales of inhuman tortures of those American Niggers have been mirrored in the description of the authoress that appears to us horrid till now.

To be mentioned here a heinous character of a physician Dr. Flint, an infamous debauch out and out having fifty slaves at his disposal who tried his level best every way to catch the authoress of this book to have his vicious carnal desire fulfilled but failed ultimately and later died of heinous death.

Though there was a great awakening since world war-II but inequality among mankind in all respect saps its vitality morally till today!

But the great poet Kazi Nazrul Islam has mentioned in his poem - “The Woman”

I sing of equality.

In my eyes there’s no distinction

between man and woman.

Whatever good and beneficial works

have been done for human beings in this world

the half of them have been done by the woman

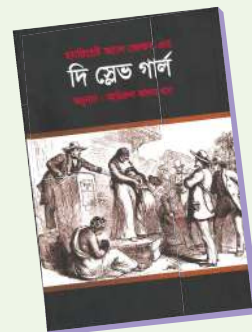
and the other half done by man.

**Translated by M. Mizanur Rahman**

This book “The Slave Girl” is well bound and hardly there’s any printing mistake. The cover design appears to be appropriate in accordance with the contents of the book itself. The price is moderate.

Thanks Prof. Amirul Alam Khan for presenting the translation of such an invaluable book to us while we talk high of US democracy!

***The reviewer is a poet essayist, translator and columnist***





## Prime Minister's Birthday Observed

Bangladesh Prime Minister and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina's birthday was observed on 28 September. The eldest of five children of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Begum Fazilatunnesa was born on this day in 1947 at Tungipara of Gopalganj district.

Awami League and its affiliated organisations celebrated the day by

organising various events. On the occasion, special prayers were offered at different places of worship seeking good health and long life of the premier.

After the assassination of Bangabandhu and most of her family members on August 15, 1975, Sheikh Hasina along with her sister, Sheikh Rehana, was offered political asylum in India, where she stayed till 1981 and she returned home on May 17, 1981.

In 1996, Awami League came to power and Sheikh Hasina became the Prime Minister. In 2008, she led the alliance to another victory. In 2014, Sheikh Hasina once again became Prime Minister. She assumed office of the prime minister for the third consecutive term after winning the December 2018 election.

Under her leadership, Bangladesh has become a role model for development, attaining steady economic growth and becoming self-sufficient in food. The country also achieved noticeable progress in various fields like women's empowerment, education, health, communication, energy & power, and ICT, etc.

Sheikh Hasina has been honoured with various honorary degrees, accolades and awards in recognition of her leadership excellence. Her most recent role in providing humanitarian support to Rohingyas drew attention and appreciation from global leaders, institutions and personalities.

*Source : BSS*

## DEVELOPMENT CHRONOLOGY

# Major National Events

July-September



President Md. Abdul Hamid inaugurates Hajj Programme 2019 at Ashkona Hajj Camp in Dhaka on July 2

2 July, 2019

### **Don't cheat Hajj pilgrims: President**

President Md. Abdul Hamid on July 2 warned against negligence, irregularities and corruption in Hajj management saying that individuals, agencies and institutions involved in such practices will be punished.

He said this while delivering his speech during the inaugural ceremony of the Hajj Programme-2019 at the Hajj Camp in Dhaka's Ashkona in the afternoon.

He also met the pilgrims.

'You make profit from Hajj pilgrims. Don't cheat them. It's very sensitive,' the president said.

He warned that anyone found guilty of mismanagement will be punished.

President Hamid also urged concerned ministries to ensure punishment for government employees for negligence, irregularities and corruption in Hajj management.

He praised the role of private Hajj agencies in Hajj management. *Source: The New Age*

4 July, 2019

### **China to woo Myanmar to take back Rohingya: PM**

China on July 4 assured Bangladesh that it would try to persuade Myanmar for taking back its nationals from Bangladesh as Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Chinese Premier Li Keqiang witnessing a deal signing ceremony at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on July 4

her Chinese counterpart Li Keqiang held bilateral talks.

During the talks, the Chinese premier agreed with the Bangladesh Prime Minister on resolving the protracted crisis fast. "There is no doubt that it's a big problem for Bangladesh," he said.

Li Keqiang, however, stressed the need for solving the crisis bilaterally and assured that China will help end the crisis.

"Both Bangladesh and Myanmar are friends of China ... we previously helped the two countries to solve the Rohingya problem and we'll continue our efforts," Foreign Secretary Md Shahidul Haque quoted the Chinese Prime Minister as saying while briefing reporters after the talks.

The Chinese premier said the two countries will have to find out a solution to this end through discussion. *Source: The Financial Express*

**8 July, 2019**

**Steps taken to make capital market vibrant: PM**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on July 8 said her government has taken various steps to ensure a vibrant capital market that will supplement its efforts to make Bangladesh a developed country by the year 2041.

"Various measures are being taken to protect the interests of investors which will ensure a conducive environment for a vibrant capital market," she said.

The Prime Minister said this while inaugurating a regional seminar on 'Financial Literacy and Investment Protection'.

The Bangladesh Securities and



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina speaks at the regional seminar on 'Financial Literacy and Investment Protection' at a local hotel in Dhaka on July 8

Exchange Commission (BSEC) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) jointly organised the seminar at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel in Dhaka.

The PM said industrialisation is the key to employment generation in the country and it requires investors from home and abroad along with the investment capital.

The Prime Minister said the government believes that the capital market can play an important role in generating new entrepreneurs and investors through creating partnership with the common people. *Source: The Daily Star*

**8 July, 2019**

### **PM defends gas price hike, urges people to accept it**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina urged people to accept the gas price hike without resorting to protests, for the sake of economic development.

The PM made the remarks at a media briefing on July 8 explaining the rationale for the escalation of gas prices.

"Energy is linked to economic development. Our economic growth is now 8.1 per cent because we paid attention to energy," She said citing provisional GDP data for fiscal 2018-19.

The Prime Minister faced the question from a reporter after she arrived at the Ganobhaban to brief on her five-day long official visit to China.

"The people of the country have to decide first whether they want gas or not," she said responding to the question.

"Despite our success in energy sector, we have to import gas and it costs more as we take liquefied natural gas (LNG)." *Source: The Financial Express*

**9 July, 2019**

### **Hamid for active role in climate change adaptation**

President Md. Abdul Hamid has called on developed nations and donors to play more active roles and spend more money to promote climate change adaptation.



*Marshall Islands President Dr Hilda Heine called on President Md. Abdul Hamid at Bangabhaban in Dhaka on July 9*

He made the call when Marshall Islands President Hilda C Heine paid a courtesy call on him at Bangabhaban on July 9 afternoon. The president's Press Secretary Joynal Abedin briefed reporters after the meeting.

Hamid said Bangladesh is producing low carbon and emphasising on renewable energy, energy efficiency and

conservation.

“Over the last decade, we’ve spent on an average around US \$1 billion annually for climate change projects... To achieve climate resilience, we’ve established a dedicated ‘Climate Change Trust Fund’ with our own domestic resilience,” he said. *Source: The Daily Star*

**10 July, 2019**

### **Climate Adaptation: Bangladesh the best teacher**

Terming Bangladesh the “best teacher” to learn from about adaptation, former UN secretary-general Ban Ki-moon on July 10 said the achievement of the people and the government of Bangladesh in the practice of adaptation was nothing short of miraculous.

“Let’s all be inspired by the examples the Bangladesh government and its people have shown in addressing climate change,” he said thanking the Bangladesh leadership for adapting to climate change wisely and effectively.

The former UN chief was addressing the inaugural session of the Dhaka Meeting of the Global Commission on Adaptation (GCA) at Hotel InterContinental Dhaka.

*Source: The Daily Star*

**11 July, 2019**

### **Showcasing Dhaka’s rich heritage**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on July 11 stressed the need for taking prompt measures to make Islamic tourism a global business brand considering its huge potential since it witnesses 8.3 percent annual growth.

“The value of Islamic tourism market will increase to US \$243 billion by 2021 with an annual 8.3 percent growth. So, all-out efforts and a roadmap aimed at promoting Islamic tourism as a global business brand is urgently required,” she said.

The Prime Minister said this while inaugurating the two-day official celebration of “Dhaka OIC City of Tourism 2019” at a city hotel. She called upon all the OIC member states to work together for flourishing Islamic tourism.

Referring to a report of Thomson-Reuters that forecasted tremendous potential of Islamic tourism, the PM said, “Muslim populations globally spent a total of US



*Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina along with dignitaries at the programme on ‘Dhaka OIC City of Tourism 2019’ at a local hotel in Dhaka on July 11*



\$151 billion on travel in 2015 [excluding Hajj and Umrah]. Of the amount, OIC member states contributed to US \$109 billion.”

She urged the OIC member states to encourage their private sector entities in tourism infrastructure and development projects. Islamic economy has already flourished as a new phenomenon, the PM said.

Islamic financing, halal food, pharmaceuticals and cosmetics as well as tourism are among the growing sectors of Islamic economy, she said, adding that enhanced cooperation and partnerships of both public and private sectors of the OIC member states are needed to flourish these sectors.

The Prime Minister hoped that the celebration of “Dhaka OIC City of Tourism 2019” will open a new door for cooperation. *Source: The Daily Star*

**July 13, 2019**

### **Corruption won't be tolerated, PM tells govt officials**

Reaffirming that corruption will not be tolerated, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina asked the top government officials to keep more vigil against corruption so that this menace does not affect the country's development in any way.

"We'll never tolerate this (corruption), all will be held responsible for their own duties, and all will have to perform their duties properly. All must keep it in mind that development must not be affected in any way because of graft," she said.

The Prime Minister said this at a function at her office on July 13 marking the signing of the Annual Performance Agreement (APA) of ministries and their subordinate bodies.

She asked the senior secretaries and secretaries to various ministries and divisions to give directives to their colleagues up to the grassroots level about graft and make them aware in this regard.

The PM said Bangladesh is currently formulating its annual budget with its own resources. "Self-dignity is evolving within us gradually, we must retain it. To resist corruption, there should be the practice of virtuousness ... you've to take steps so that people can reap the good results through the state," she said. *Source: The Financial Express*

**14 July, 2019**

### **South Korea to consider duty-free access of BD products**

South Korean Prime Minister Lee Nak-yeon on July 14 assured Bangladesh of considering duty-free quota-free market access for all Bangladeshi products to their market as the bilateral trade is heavily tilted towards Korea.

The assurance came during the official summit talks between Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her South Korean counterpart Lee Nak-yeon at the Prime Minister's Office.

During the talks, Sheikh Hasina requested South Korea to consider allowing duty-free quota-free market access for all of Bangladeshi products without any exception to narrow down the trade imbalance as the trade between the two countries is heavily tilted towards Korea.

PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim briefed reporters after the official talks.

Both the Prime Ministers led their respective sides at the 40-minute summit talks.



*Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and South Korean Prime Minister Lee Nak-yeon hold a bilateral meeting at the Prime Minister's Office in Dhaka in July 14*

"The Korean side informed that they have earmarked US\$ 1 billion ODA (Overseas Development Assistances) for Bangladesh for 2020," Ihsanul Karim said.

He said different bilateral issues, including trade, commerce, investment, technical cooperation and Rohingya, were discussed at the summit. *Source: The New Age*

**16 July, 2019**

### **ECNEC okays eight projects at Tk 51.42b**

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) rejected a Tk 4.52-billion cost project to procure Diesel Electric Multiple Unit (DEMU) trains, as the trains are not functioning well.

The ECNEC also turned down a Tk 1.20-billion project for construction of stadiums in six selected upazilas.

Presided over by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the ECNEC meeting in Dhaka on July 16, however, approved eight other projects at a combined cost of Tk 51.42 billion.

After the ECNEC meeting, Planning Secretary Muhammad Nurul Amin said the meeting endorsed eight projects and rejected two others.

He also said the eight projects - six new and two revised - were approved at a total cost of Tk 51.42 billion.

"Of the total cost, Tk 41.29 billion will come from internal resources, while the rest Tk 10.12 billion as project assistance from the development partners." *Source: The Financial Express*

**17 July, 2019**

### **Govt plans to introduce electric, high-speed trains**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said the government has a plan to introduce electric and high-speed trains in the country to make the railway services better and faster.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina launching the new train service Benapole Express on the Dhaka-Benapole route and the extension service of Dhaka-Rajshahi nonstop intercity train 'Bonolata Express' to Chapainawabganj through video conferencing on July 17

"We've a plan to generate more electricity as we're now producing 22,000MW...we'll be able to introduce electric trains in near future...we'll set up rail lines for remote areas as well to introduce speedy trains for easier communications," she said on July 17.

The Prime Minister said this while inaugurating 'Benapole Express' for plying between capital Dhaka and Benapole, and the extension service of Dhaka - Rajshahi

nonstop intercity 'Bonolata Express' train to Chapainawabganj.

The Benapole Express, having 896 seats in 12 compartments, will have stopovers in Ishwardi, Jashore and Dhaka Airport stations.

The train will leave Benapole at 11.30am and reach Dhaka at 7pm. On the other hand, it will depart Dhaka for Benapole at 12.30am and reach the destination at 8 am.

The ticket price for the train has been fixed at Tk 534 for Shovan chair, Tk 1,013 for Snigdha, Tk 1,213 for airconditioned seats each and Tk 1,869 for airconditioned berth. Its coaches have been procured from Indonesia. *Source: The Financial Express*

**17 July, 2019**

### **Highest priority attached to edn sector, says PM**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on July 17 appreciated the results of this year's Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) and equivalent examinations but noted that they will be better if the students pay proper attention.

"The results are sufficiently acceptable and good," she said after receiving the HSC and equivalent results from Education Minister Dipu Moni at her official residence Ganobhaban.

"I think if the students pay proper attention, their results will be better," she said.

The PM said she believes that education is the key to building a prosperous and developed nation free from hunger and poverty.

"An educated nation can build a developed, prosperous and poverty and hunger-free country," she said.

This year, 73.93 per cent students passed the HSC and equivalent examinations.

She congratulated the successful candidates and consoled the unsuccessful ones.

Deputy Minister for Education Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury Nowfel was also present while the Principal Secretary M Nojibur Rahman conducted the programme.

The PM said her government gave highest priority to the education sector and formulated a time befitting modern education policy. *Source: The Financial Express*

**18 July, 2019**

### **Maintain global standard in fish output for export: PM**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina stressed on July 18 the importance of maintaining the international standard of fish and fish products for export as riverine Bangladesh can grab the first position in the world in producing fish from inland water bodies.

"It's very essential to maintain the quality of fish (and fish products) which we're exporting to foreign markets," she said while inaugurating the National Fish Week 2019 in the city.

The Prime Minister said once there was no good laboratory to ensure the quality of fish and fish products in the country, but her government set up three I S O - a c c r e d i t e d laboratories in Dhaka, Chittagong and Khulna to maintain the international standard of fish and fish products.

The Department of Fisheries under the Fisheries and Livestock Ministry arranged the event at the auditorium of Krishibid Institution Bangladesh (KIB).

"The fish which we'll export should be of good quality so that those can enter the international markets," Sheikh Hasina said. *Source: The Financial Express*

**20 July, 2019**

### **Pursue political, economic diplomacy together, PM asks envoys in Europe**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina asked on July 20 Bangladesh envoys in



*Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina releasing fish fry in the lake at her Ganobhaban residence in the capital on July 18 on the occasion of National Fish Week 2019*



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina speaking at a meeting of Bangladesh envoys to Europe at a hotel in London on July 20

Europe to pursue political and economic diplomacy together in the interest of the country's economic development.

"We need to focus more on economic issues besides political diplomacy so the ongoing development in Bangladesh will continue," the Prime Minister said while speaking as the chief guest at the 'Envoys' Conference', the first of its kind, in London.

A total of 15 Bangladesh ambassadors, high commissioners and permanent representatives posted in different European countries attended the conference, PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim said after the meeting.

Referring to the fast-changing world, Sheikh Hasina advised the diplomats to take effective and time-befitting action plan for establishing deeper and broader relations with foreign countries.

"To this effect, we need to explore opportunities for enhancing investment, trade and skilled manpower export in countries, particularly in the European states," the Prime Minister said. *Source: The Financial Express*

**23 July, 2019**

**President urges govt officials to earn people's confidence**

President Md. Abdul Hamid on July 23 urged the government officials to earn the confidence of people so that they can avail themselves of government services without any lobbying.

"There's a lack of confidence among people that they can avail of various services from many government organisations with transparency and sincerity.

You (public servants) need to raise the awareness of people in this regard," he said.

The President said this while addressing the award-giving ceremony of Public Administration Padak-2019 at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the city.

President Md. Hamid said there is a need for building a relation of trust between the government officials and the people of the country.



*Recipients of Public Administration Medal-2019 receiving crest from President Md. Abdul Hamid at a function at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the city on July 23*

"There must be a trusted relationship between the public servants and the people of the Republic.

The National Public Service Day-2019 is being observed with an objective to encourage and motivate the government officials to perform their duties with an aim to ensure the welfare of people.

President Hamid also greeted and distributed awards among the recipients.

State Minister for Public Administration Farhad Hossain presided over the function while Public Administration Secretary Faiz Ahmed delivered the welcome speech. *Source: The Financial Express*

**24 July, 2019**

### **Govt to buy 0.1 million electronic fiscal devices**

The Cabinet Committee on Public Procurement (CCPP) on July 24 approved procurement of 0.1 million electronic fiscal devices (EFDs) to collect value added tax (VAT). According to the National Board of Revenue (NBR) proposal, a Chinese company - SZZT-KMMT-SYNESIS-EATL - will supply 10,000 devices at a cost of Tk 32,000 each in the first phase.

Briefing newsmen after a meeting of the CCPP at Bangladesh Secretariat, Finance Minister A H M Mustafa Kamal said these devices will be needed to collect VAT under the new VAT and Supplementary Act, introduced in July.

The NBR, after buying the devices, will supply those to shop owners. The receivers of EFDs will pay back the price in long-term instalments.

Replying to a query, the minister said the NBR previously estimated that the price of each EFD will be Tk 49,000. But the winning bidder quoted Tk 32,000 price for each device. *Source: The Financial Express*

**4 August, 2019**

### **‘Sonar Bangla’ for all**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has reaffirmed her determination to build a hunger-and-poverty-free Sonar Bangla as dreamt by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

“I have nothing to gain... My only aim is to materialise the ideals of Bangabandhu, based on which he liberated the country,” she said.

The PM was addressing a community gathering, organised at Central Hall in London’s Westminster on August 4 afternoon (local time).

She said she will work till her last breath to realise the dream of Bangabandhu. “I don’t fear death for working to make Bangladesh a prosperous country as Bangabandhu once dreamt of,” she said.

Marking the 44th martyrdom anniversary of the Father of the Nation and National Mourning Day, the UK unit of Awami League organised the event, attended by



*Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing a community gathering organised at Central Hall in London on August 3*

Bangladeshi expatriates from different European countries.

In her speech, the premier recalled the contributions of expatriate Bangladeshis to the country’s economic development as well as their role in different democratic movements.

She urged the expatriates to invest more to help establish a developed and prosperous nation.

“We are establishing 100 economic zones in the country for more industrialisation and employment... you can set up mills and factories there by taking advantage of our investment-friendly environment,” she said.

Highlighting her government’s various steps, she also said they have already brought down poverty rate to 21 percent from 41. “We want to cut the rate further. We don’t want anyone to remain homeless, hungry and without healthcare,” she said. *Source: The Daily Star*

**15 August, 2019**

### **Nation pays homage to Bangabandhu with vow to bring back killers**

The National Mourning Day was observed on August 15 across the country,



*Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina paying her tributes to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman by placing a wreath at his grave at Tungipara on August 15 on the occasion of National Mourning Day*

marking the 44th martyrdom anniversary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family members.

The day was observed with a fresh vow to bring back the fugitive killers home aiming to implement the verdict of the Bangabandhu killing case.

The government, Awami League and different political and socio-cultural organisations, educational institutions and professional groups observed the day by taking elaborate programmes to pay the utmost respect to the greatest son of the soil on the day of his martyrdom.

In the morning, President Md. Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina placed wreaths at the portrait of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum on Dhanmondi Road No. 32 in the capital.

A smartly turned out contingent of the Armed Forces gave a guard of honour to the portrait of the Bangabandhu. A special munajat and fateha were also offered there.

Later in the morning, Sheikh Hasina placed a wreath and offered fateha at the Banani graveyard for the family members of the Father of the Nation and others, who embraced martyrdom with Bangabandhu on August 15, 1975.

Following the President and the Prime Minister and other dignitaries, people from all walks of life wearing black badges thronged the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum to pay their profound respect to Father of the Nation by placing wreaths at his portrait there.

In the morning, the Prime Minister also placed a wreath at the mazar of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Tungipara in Gopalganj.

Bangladesh Betar, Bangladesh Television, private TV channels and radio stations aired special programmes in observance of the National Mourning Day.



National dailies and local newspapers brought out special supplements on the occasion.

Bangladesh Awami League took elaborate programmes to observe the day. As part of the programmes, the national and party flags were hoisted half-mast atop all the offices of Awami League and Bangabandhu Bhaban. *Source: The Financial Express*

**20 August, 2019**

### **India's commitment on Teesta still 'unchanged'**

Visiting Indian External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar on August 20 said India is eager to resolve the water sharing issues involving all common rivers of Bangladesh and India through a mutually beneficial formula.

While talking to journalists after his meeting with Bangladesh Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen, he also mentioned that India's position and commitment with regard to water sharing of the Teesta remained unchanged.

Terming the present era of Indo-Bangla ties as the golden one, Jaishankar said India is committed to providing all possible help to Bangladesh's development endeavours.

"India-Bangladesh ties transcend to strategic partnership. This is a golden age for India-Bangladesh ties thanks to the vision and statesmanship of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina," he said.

Mentioning India's 'neighbourhood first' policy, he also made it clear that the present Indian government led by Narendra Modi is determined to project Bangladesh-India ties as a role model of relations between the two neighbours.

He said India and Bangladesh will continue to step up the present pace of improving connectivity in land, rail and waterways between the two countries.

Both the countries will also continue efforts to enhance energy cooperation through a lot of projects, he added. *Source: The Financial Express*

**20 August, 2019**

### **ECNEC approves 12 projects worth Tk 34.70b**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) meeting on August 20 in Dhaka asked the ministries to punish public servants involved with misdeeds and corruption in development work.

The ECNEC meeting presided over by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina approved 12 development projects worth Tk 34.70 billion.

Planning Minister Mr Mannan said out of the total amount, the government would provide Tk 31.63 billion from the public exchequer while Tk 3.07 billion would come as project assistance from the external resources.

The planning minister said the ministries and agencies spent Tk 39.51 billion which is 1.84 per cent of the total Tk 2.02 trillion Annual Development Programme (ADP) in the first month of July.

In the same period of last financial year (FY) 2019, they spent Tk 1.027 billion, 0.57 per cent of the total Tk 1.73 trillion ADP.

Ministers, secretaries and officials concerned were present at the ECNEC meeting. *Source: The Financial Express*

**August 21, 2019**

### **Perpetrators to be punished: PM**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on August 21 asserted that punishment would be inflicted to those responsible for the heinous attack.

She accused the past BNP-Jamaat government and Begum Khaleda Zia and her elder son Tarique Rahman of perpetrating the August 21, 2004 gruesome grenade attack on an Awami League rally in the capital.

"It was not possible to carry out such attack without patronisation of the BNP-Jamaat government," she said while addressing a memorial discussion



*Awami League President and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and others observing one-minute silence to pay tributes to the August 21, 2004 grenade attack victims at the city's Krishibid Institution on August 21*

marking the 15th anniversary of the August 21 grenade attack at Krishibid Institute of Bangladesh (KIB).

The premier went on saying that "It (the patronization of BNP-Jamaat in the grenade attack) has become a truth that was proved by evidences and we have got a verdict upon filing a case."

Meanwhile, the 15th anniversary of the grenade attack on Awami League rally on August 21, 2004 was observed across the country in a befitting manner.

Awami League and its associate bodies have taken various programmes at different parts across the country to observe the day. *Source: The Financial Express*

**August 22, 2019**

### **PM asks Biman staff to improve services**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina directed on August, 22 the authorities concerned to improve the standard of passenger services of Biman Bangladesh Airlines so that it can brighten the country's image abroad.



*Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inspecting the inside of 'Gangchil', a Boeing 787 Dreamliner of Biman Bangladesh Airlines, after inaugurating it at the Dhaka airport on August 22*

"We hope you'll uphold and enhance Biman's reputation by improving the standard of its services for passengers," she said.

The Prime Minister was addressing a ceremony marking the induction of 'Gaangchil' to Biman fleet. This is the third Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner the national flag carrier has got.

The Prime Minister commissioned 'Gaangchil' by cutting a ribbon around 11:30am at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport. She also boarded and inspected the state-of-the-art aircraft.

Describing Biman as a symbol of the country's independence, Sheikh Hasina said people across the globe can know about Bangladesh and respect the country through Biman as its aircraft fly various countries of the world.

The Prime Minister asked all involved with Biman to operate its flights sincerely being imbued with the spirit of patriotism.

Talking about the newly-inducted aircraft, including three Dreamliners -- Akash Beena, Hangsabalaka and Gaangchil-- she said it is the responsibility of all to take good care of the new aircraft her government procured for Biman Bangladesh Airlines. *Source: The Financial Express*

**August 25, 2019**

**Protect migrant workers from middlemen: PM**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina asked on August 25 the authorities concerned to make the monitoring system stronger further along with conducting massive awareness campaign as the migration aspirants are not deceived anymore.

"We've to give a special attention so that no one is cheated by middlemen. We've



*Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina speaking at the first meeting of the National Steering Committee on Migration on August 25*

the responsibility to look after their security and welfare because they're our citizens," she said.

The Prime Minister was delivering her introductory speech at the first meeting of the National Steering Committee on Migration held at her office.

She also emphasised creating skilled manpower before sending them abroad.

"In Bangladesh, we still have the youth, which is a big power for us. We've to make them skilled by providing them training. We'll not send labourers only, we'll send skilled workforce," she said. *Source: The Financial Express*

**August 27, 2019**

**ECNEC approves 12 development projects involving Tk 54.94b**

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) on August 27 approved 12 projects, including a sewerage treatment plant in the city's Uttara area, involving a total estimated cost of Tk 54.94 billion.

The approval came at the weekly ECNEC meeting held at the NEC conference



*Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina presides over the ECNEC meeting on August 27*

room with ECNEC Chairperson and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

"ECNEC meeting approved 12 projects involving the total cost of Tk 54.94 billion. Of the cost, Tk 54.16 billion will come from government funds, while the remaining 780

million as project assistance," said Planning Minister MA Mannan while briefing reporters after the meeting.

Of the approved projects, seven are new and the remaining five are revised ones.

Of the total project cost, Tk 13.98 billion will be spent on land acquisition to set up a sewerage treatment plant in the city's Uttara area.

About the sewerage treatment plant, the minister said Dhaka Wasa under the Local Government Division will implement the project by June 2021 aiming to ensure hygienic, environment-friendly and sustainable sanitation system in Uttara area.

*Source: The Financial Express*

**August 28, 2019**

### **Develop villages protecting bio-diversity, says PM**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on August 28 said her government has been working to make all the villages beautiful in a planned way by ensuring all the civic amenities alongside protecting bio-diversity as dreamt by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

"It is needed to arrange all the villages across the country in a beautiful manner by protecting bio-diversity and ensuring civic amenities to build "Sonar Bangla (Golden Bangla)" as dreamt by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman," she said.

The Prime Minister was speaking while witnessing a presentation on Land Acquisition and Biodiversity Preservation Plan in adjacent areas of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Memorial Complex at Tungipara in Gopalganj.

The presentation was held at the Prime Minister's Office with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair. LGED Chief Engineer M Khalilur Rahman made the presentation.

Sheikh Hasina said Bangladesh has very little land with high population.



*Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina speaking at the presentation on Tungipara Upazila Development Project in Gopalganj at the PMO on August 28*

She said, "The civic amenities should be ensured not only in upazila and ward level, but also in each of the villages and my government has been relentlessly working to this end."

"We've to ensure food security, medical facilities, education and jobs. We've strengthened our economy considering all these factors."

The Prime Minister said the natural balance must be maintained while carrying out any sort of development works alongside protecting rivers, canals and wetlands, ensuring water drainage system and preserving waterways. *Source: The Financial Express*

**1 September, 2019**

### **Give special focus on waste management in setting up industries: PM**

Prime minister Sheikh Hasina on September 1 reassured the business community of extending all sorts of support to their any necessity, urging them to set up industries by giving special attention to waste management and environment.

'Our government is business-friendly government. We always remain beside the businesspeople ... they'll do business and we'll extend cooperation to their work,' she said.

The premier was addressing as the chief guest the National Export Trophy for 2016-17 fiscal year distribution function at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre.

The Commerce Ministry and the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) jointly organised the function chaired by commerce minister Tipu Munshi.



*Prime minister Sheikh Hasina hands over National Export Trophy for 2016-17 at a function at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in Dhaka on September 1*

The Prime Minister said the businesspeople will have to give a special focus on waste management and environment while establishing mills and factories.

‘I would like to request you that you’ll have to make arrangements for waste management from the beginning... it’ll help protect environment and ensure welfare for the country and people,’ she said. *Source: The New Age*

**4 September, 2019**

### **PM urges BGMEA leaders to be watchful against propaganda**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on September 4 called upon the country’s businesspersons to stay alert to the propaganda now being carried out against the government as this is ultimately affecting the businesses.



*A delegation of BGMEA calls on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Prime Minister’s Office in Dhaka on September 4*

‘There are some people who are out to conduct propaganda as part of their efforts to harm me politically. You should address it as you are being affected by it,’ she said when a delegation of BGMEA called on her at the Prime Minister’s Office in Dhaka.

Mentioning that the garments sector has been playing a great role in the country’s development, the premier said, ‘You should give more importance to the diversification of products to boost exports further.’

Referring to a meeting held in London with Bangladeshi envoys stationed in the European countries, the Prime Minister said she had asked the envoys to explore new markets for the Bangladeshi products.

About the impact of Brexit on Bangladesh, she opined that Brexit will not hamper the business especially export of Bangladesh as the export related agreements with the foreign countries, particularly the European ones, will remain intact.

Newly elected leaders of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, led by its president Rubana Huq, met the Prime Minister at her office and put forwarded various demands before her.

PM’s private industry and investment adviser Salman Fazlur Rahman, former BGMEA presidents Anisur Rahman Sinha, Anwar-Ul-Alam Chowdhury Parvez, and Siddiqur Rahman, and first senior vice president Mohammad Abdus Salam and senior vice president Foysal Samad, among others, spoke on the occasion.

Principal secretary Md Nojibur Rahman and PM’s press secretary Ihsanul Karim were present. *Source: The New Age*

**5 September, 2019**

### **Ocean nations call for sustainable use of marine economy**

The Dhaka Declaration of the third ministerial conference of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) has called for sustainable use of the blue economy resources ensuring balanced approach between conservation and development.

"Ideas, principles, and norms of blue economy contribute significantly towards the eradication of poverty," said the 17 point declaration of the two-day conference that ended in the city on September 5.

These are also "contributing to food and nutrition security, mitigation and adaptation of climate change and generation of sustainable and inclusive livelihoods."

IORA member states are Australia, Bangladesh, Comoros, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Seychelles,



*Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina seen with the ministers and delegates of countries participating in the 3rd IORA Blue Economy Ministerial Conference 2019 at a hotel in the city on September 5*

Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the UAE and Yemen took part in the conference that started on September 4.

Earlier, addressing the conference, foreign minister Dr AK Abdul Momen said to promote sustainable and responsible fisheries management and development, IORA should adopt joint capacity building projects and information sharing on aquaculture to address food security and fishing in the Indian Ocean region.

"IORA should also assume the central role to combat the scourge of maritime piracy, armed robbery, human trafficking by sea, illegal arms trafficking, etc. It is only possible through a common understanding of maritime governance and its pragmatic application with orchestrated efforts," he added. *Source: The Financial Express*

**11 September, 2019**

### **Maintain peace for economic development, PM tells police**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina expressed the hope that the police would continue their sincere efforts to maintain peace and discipline in the country which is essential for economic development.





Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina launching the 'Community Bank Bangladesh Limited' by video conference at Ganobhaban in the city on September 11

"For economic development, maintaining peace and discipline is very much essential, and this responsibility very naturally goes to the police force. I hope that the police will discharge their duties with utmost sincerity as they're doing now," she said.

The Prime Minister said this while inaugurating the operation of Community Bank Bangladesh Limited approved under Bangladesh Police Kalyan Trust on September 11.

She opened it through a videoconference from her official residence Ganobhaban.

The latest bank takes the number of commercial banks to 59.

Inspector General of Police Javed Patwary will be the chairman of the bank by dint of his post.

The vision of the bank, owned by Bangladesh Police Welfare Trust, is to reach out to the members of different communities with innovative banking services.

The bank received its licence in 2018 to start its operation with the authorised capital of Tk 4 billion and paid-up capital of Tk 1 billion.

The bank will initially start its operation with branches in the Dhaka's Police Concord Plaza, Motijheel, Narayanganj, Gazipur, Habiganj and Chattogram.

In her speech, She said with the sincere efforts of the police the government will be able to take the country forward where the next generation will have a beautiful and better life. *Source: The Financial Express*

**16 September, 2019**

### **Sheikh Hasina receives Dr Kalam Smriti International Excellence Awards**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina received on September 16 the Dr Kalam Smriti



*Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina receiving the Dr Kalam Smriti International Excellence Awards-2019 from Advisory Council Ambassador T.P. Sreenivasan at the Prime Minister's Office in the city on September 16*

International Excellence Awards-2019, constituted to disseminate the ideals and teachings of noted scientist and former Indian President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam.

Chief Adviser of the Dr Kalam Smriti International Advisory Council Ambassador T.P. Sreenivasan handed over the international accolade through a ceremony at the Prime Minister's Office in the afternoon.

The award is conferred upon Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in recognition of her commitment to a close and mutually satisfying India-Bangladesh relations, welfare of her people, particularly women and children, and international peace and cooperation.

Addressing the function, Sheikh Hasina dedicated the award to the people of Bangladesh. "You've honoured me which means you've honoured the people of Bangladesh."

"This award will certainly inspire me and my government to strive for the achievement of greater inclusive development for my people while keeping in mind the need to ensure the conservation and protection of our natural ecosystems," she said.

The Prime Minister extended her sincere thanks to the organisers for conferring upon her the Dr Kalam Smriti International Award.

The citation reads: "Dr. Kalam Smriti International Excellence Award, instituted in the name of outstanding scientist and visionary statesman Bharat Ratna Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam is presented to Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina, an architect of modern Bangladesh rapidly progressing towards being "Sonar

Bangla" (Golden Bengal), as envisioned by the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman." *Source: The Financial Express*

**17 September, 2019**

### **PM asks Biman officials to gain trust of passengers**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina formally inaugurating the newly-procured Boeing Hinting at purchasing two more Boeing aircraft for Bangladesh Biman. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina asked on September 17 the authorities of the national flag carrier to work with honesty and sincerity to ensure the quality of passenger services.

"Apart from the existing aircraft, three Dash Bombardier planes will be added to the Biman fleet. We have also got news that Boeing is interested to sell its two aircraft soon, the order of which was cancelled by somebody else... we'll take this opportunity," she said.

The Prime Minister was addressing as the chief guest the induction ceremony of Biman's 4th Dreamliner, 'Rajhangsa', at the VVIP Terminal of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA) in the city on September 17 afternoon.

Earlier, the premier formally commissioned the newly-procured state-of-the-art aircraft of the national flag carrier by cutting a ribbon at the VVIP Tarmac of HSIA.

After the inauguration, Sheikh Hasina boarded the aircraft, inspected it and talked to the pilots and the crew members. *Source: The Financial Express*



*Prime minister Sheikh Hasina in the cockpit of 'Rajhangsa', a Boeing 787 Dreamliner of Biman Bangladesh Airlines at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on September 17*

**17 September, 2019**

### **ECNEC okays Tk 2.25b gridline project**

The ECNEC approved installation of a high-voltage power transmission line project at a cost of Tk 2.25 billion in a bid to import power from Jharkhand in India.

Presided over by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) meeting on September 17, endorsed the project along with seven others at a combine cost of Tk 89.68 billion.

After emerging from the meeting, Planning Minister M A Mannan told journalists that the ECNEC endorsed eight projects, including Installation of Rahanpur-Monakosha power transmission grid project.

The government will import power from Jharkhand with the proposed power grid to augment local power supply.

Under the project, the state-run Power Grid Company of Bangladesh (PGCB) will lay a 28-kilometre-long 400-kilovolt (kV) transmission line from Rahanpur to Monakosha border in Chapai Nawabganj.

The ECNEC meeting also approved a Tk 23.88-billion cost project, under which 100-bed full-fledged cancer centres will be set up in every government medical college hospital in the divisional cities.

The planning minister said the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) will establish the cancer centres under "Establishment of 100-bed full-fledged cancer centre in government medical college hospital in divisional city project". The project will be completed in September 2022. *Source: The Financial Express*

**18 September, 2019**

### **CIP status for 182 exporters, businesspeople**

The government on September 18, bestowed the commercially important person (CIP) status on 182 exporters and businesspeople in recognition of their stellar contribution to exports and trade for 2017.

Of the recipients, 136 were given the cards in export category and 46 in trade category.

The CIP cards given under the trade category are for the president, vice-presidents and directors of the country's apex trade body, the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI).

The awardees represent diverse sectors such as jute and jute goods, garment and textiles, leather and leather goods, fruits and vegetables, frozen fish, sea foods, processed and agricultural foods, software and IT services, home textile, tea, engineering products, ships and yarn.

Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi handed over the cards to the awardees at a function jointly organised by the commerce ministry and the Export Promotion Bureau at InterContinental Hotel in Dhaka. *Source: The Daily Star*

**19 September, 2019**

### **Rohingyas are big burden for country, PM tells UK team**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said on September 19 Myanmar should take the

displaced Rohingyas back as they have emerged as a big burden for Bangladesh. "Rohingyas are a big burden for Bangladesh. Local people of Cox's Bazar have to face sufferings because of them (Rohingyas)... Myanmar should take their citizens back," she said.

The Prime Minister said this when visiting Chair of UK All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) Anne Main-headed UK Conservative Friends of Bangladesh (CFoB) and the delegation of UK APPG on Population, Development and Reproductive Health jointly met the Prime Minister at the latter's official residence Ganobhaban in the city.

The Prime Minister said Bangladesh provided shelter to the Rohingyas on humanitarian ground and extended her sincere thanks to the local people of Cox's Bazar for enduring sufferings caused by the Rohingyas.

Sheikh Hasina recollected that some 10 million Bangladeshis had taken shelter as refugees in India during the 1971 Liberation War.



*Chair of UK All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) Anne Main-led UK Conservative Friends of Bangladesh (CFoB) and the delegation of UK APPG on Population, Development and Reproductive Health jointly met Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her official residence Ganobhaban in the city on September, 19*

The visiting team appreciated Bangladesh for showing the humanitarian gesture by giving shelter to the displaced people.

The UK delegation visited the Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar and handed over a written report to the Prime Minister. *Source: The Financial Express*

**20 September, 2019**

### **Bangladesh makes progress in cutting child, maternal mortality: WHO**

Bangladesh is among countries that showed "substantial progress" in reducing child or maternal mortality, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

More women and their children are surviving today than ever before, according to new child and maternal mortality estimates released by United Nations groups led by UNICEF and WHO.

Despite progress, a pregnant woman or a newborn dies somewhere in the world every 11 seconds.

Since 2000, child deaths have reduced by nearly half and maternal deaths by over one-third, mostly due to improved access to affordable, quality health services, according to a media released issued from New York on September 20.

The world has made substantial progress in reducing child and maternal mortality. Since 1990, there has been a 56 per cent reduction in deaths of children under 15 from 14.2 million deaths to 6.2 million in 2018.

Bangladesh, Belarus, Cambodia, Kazakhstan, Malawi, Morocco, Mongolia, Rwanda, Timor-Leste and Zambia are some of the countries that have shown substantial progress in reducing child or maternal mortality, according to WHO.

Success has been due to political will to improve access to quality healthcare by investing in the health workforce, introducing free care for pregnant women and children and supporting family planning, WHO says.

Many of these countries focus on primary healthcare and universal health coverage.

"In countries that provide everyone with safe, affordable, high-quality health services, women and babies survive and thrive," said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of WHO. "This is the power of universal health coverage." *Source: The Financial Express*

**23 September, 2019**

### **PM Sheikh Hasina conferred with 'Vaccine Hero' award**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has been conferred with the prestigious "Vaccine Hero" award in recognition of Bangladesh's outstanding success in vaccination.

Global Alliance for Vaccination and Immunizations (GAVI), a global Vaccine Alliance, conferred the award on the Prime Minister at a ceremony at the UN Headquarters in New York on September 23 evening local time.

Receiving the award from GAVI Board Chair Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, the Prime Minister dedicated it to the people of Bangladesh.



*PM Sheikh Hasina receiving the prestigious 'Vaccine Hero' award in recognition of Bangladesh's outstanding success in vaccination to immunize children from Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala*

"The award that I received today is not of mine, the award belongs to the people of Bangladesh and I dedicated this award to them," she said.

The Prime Minister simultaneously urged the countrymen to continue immunization program which will keep their children healthy.

"The healthy children will run the country and take the country forward ... a healthy generation is very much necessary for economic development," she said, adding healthy new generations will build a prosperous and developed Sonar Bangla as dreamt by Father of the Nation.

Sheikh Hasina said the country was freed from polio, cholera and various communicable diseases. "In this regard, we got cooperation from the GAVI," she said.

Before handing over the award, a citation was read out by Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala. *Source: The Asian Age*



*Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina receives an award titled 'Champion of Skill Development for Youth' for Bangladesh's great success in youth skill development on September 27*

**27 September, 2019**

### **PM receives 'Champion of Skill Development for Youth' award**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has received an award titled 'Champion of Skill Development for Youth' for Bangladesh's great success in youth skill development.

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) conferred the award on the premier at a ceremony at Labouisse Hall of UNICEF House in the UN Plaza here on September 27 evening.

UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore handed over the award to the Prime Minister amid thunderous clappings of the audience.

Receiving the award, the Prime Minister thanked the UNICEF for conferring her the recognition. “It’s fact the people of Bangladesh, especially the children of the country, and also in the world deserve this recognition,” she said.

After the emergence of Bangladesh, she said, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman realised that without the fulfillment of the potentials of the youths, it is not possible to progress.

“We’re committed to building a knowledgeable young generation who can face challenges and help build Golden Bengal as envisioned by the Father of the Nation,” she said.

The Prime Minister said her government is working tirelessly to create jobs for the youths. “Each year two million youths enter into the labour market in Bangladesh,” she said.

“We’ve focused on the importance of skill development and taken several initiatives to equip youths with proper knowledge and skills. We’re also encouraging them in self employment,” she said.

The Ministry of Education has taken initiatives to update the status of technical and vocational education and training according to the local and global market demands, she added.

“The government is establishing 100 technical schools and colleges (TSCs) in 100 selected upazilas. Such schools and colleges will be established in rest of the upazilas in the country gradually,” she said.

Sheikh Hasina said her government designs development plans based on the principles of leaving no one behind. “The Ministry of Youths and Sports has undertaken a project to transform the unemployed and unskilled youths into human resources,” she said.

In her speech, the UNICEF executive director Henrietta Fore highly praised Bangladesh’s tremendous development in different sectors under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

She appreciated the Bangladesh government for framing a time-befitting National Skill Development Policy and implementing it.

The UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador expressed his confidence that very good policies and programmes of the government will contribute to further achievements in economic growth, equity and sustainable development goals.

*Source: The Daily Star*

**27 September, 2019**

### **Rohingya crisis regional threat: Sheikh Hasina**

#### **She places four proposals at UNGA**

With a pleading that Myanmar must manifest a clear political will for sustainable return and reintegration of Rohingyas to their homeland, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has placed a four-point proposal before the 74th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) to resolve the Rohingya crisis.





*Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing the 74th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York on September 27*

"The Rohingya crisis is now becoming a regional threat", said Sheikh Hasina, seeking expeditious interventions from the international community for a permanent solution to the crisis.

"Myanmar must manifest clear political will supported by concrete actions for sustainable return and reintegration of Rohingyas to Myanmar," she said in her first proposal while delivering the country statement in the General Debate of the 74th UNGA Session.

Sheikh Hasina delivered the statement in Bangla like every year in the past at the General Assembly Hall in the UN

Headquarters here on September 27 afternoon local time.

This year's theme of the general debate is "Galvanising multilateral efforts for poverty eradication, quality education, climate action and inclusion".

Tijjani Muhammad-Bande of Nigeria was elected the President of the 74th UNGA Session.

In her second proposal, the premier said that Myanmar must build trust among the Rohingyas by discarding discriminatory laws and practices and allowing "go and see" visit to the Northern Rakhine by the Rohingya representatives.

"Myanmar must guarantee security and safety of the Rohingyas by deploying civilian monitors from international community in the Rakhine State," she said in her third proposal.

The premier in her last proposal said the international community must ensure that the root causes of Rohingya problem area addressed and the violation of human rights and other atrocity crimes committed against the Rohingyas are accounted for. *Source: The Financial Express*

***Report Compilation: Tahmina Begum, Mazharul Hoque, Md. Mamun Hossain***

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