

Phone: (202) 244-5071  
Fax : (202) 244-2771/7830  
E-mail: [press.bew@gmail.com](mailto:press.bew@gmail.com)  
Website : [www.bdembassyusa.org](http://www.bdembassyusa.org)



EMBASSY OF THE  
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH  
3510 International Drive, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20008

## **PRESS RELEASE**

August 15, 2016

Embassy of Bangladesh in Washington DC observed the National Mourning Day and 41<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of Martyrdom of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman today with due honor and solemnity. The program of the National Mourning Day at the Embassy began with the ceremonial placing of national flag at half-mast by Ambassador Mohammad Ziauddin. A special prayer was offered for the salvation of the departed souls of Bangabandhu and all the martyrs of 15th August 1975. He then paid homage to the Greatest Bangle of all time by placing floral bouquet at the portrait of Bangabandhu, which was followed by observing one-minute silence in memory of the Father of the Nation.

A general discussion on the life and achievements of Bangabandhu was held in the evening at the Bangabandhu Auditorium in the Chancery. Members of the audience in the packed 250-capacity auditorium included Congressman Ed Whitfield, several representatives from the US Department of State including Deputy Assistant Secretary Manpreet Anand, local diplomats, representatives from think-tanks, academia, journalists, Mission officials and members of their family, and members of Bangladesh community. This part of the program started reading out verses from holy books and messages from Hon'ble President, Hon'ble Prime Minister, Hon'ble Foreign Minister and Hon'ble State Minister for Foreign Affairs.

While welcoming the guests, Ambassador Mohammad Ziauddin in his remarks paid deepest tribute to the memory of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahaman and his family members who embraced martyrdom on the 15th August 1975. He mentioned that Bangabandhu, the greatest ever Bengali, was the architect of independent Bangladesh who liberated Bangali nation by breaking the shackles of subjugation of thousand years. When Bangabandhu was rebuilding war ravaged Bangladesh a group of disgruntled and renegade army officers committed an act of heinous crime in which Bangabandhu along with his family members were brutally assassinated, he added. Ambassador Ziauddin also mentioned that we all needed to be united under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to realize the dream of the Father of the Nation and also to root out the menaces of terrorism and violent extremism from the society.

A documentary on the life and achievements of Bangabandhu titled "Bangabandhu: Forever in our Hearts" was screened before the general discussion segment, where Professor Arnold Zeitlin, former Associated Press journalist, spoke on his association with Bangabandhu before and after the War of Liberation. He shared some of his interactions with Bangabandhu with the audience and appreciated Bangabandhu's prudent leadership with deep reverence. Mr. Anis Ahmed and Ms. Roquia Haider of Voice of America, and Mr. Mizanur Rahman of local Bangabandhu Parishad, also spoke on this occasion. Mr. Ahmed underscored that Bangabandhu transformed the Bengali nation into a nation-state, and he referred to the cover page of Newsweek published on 05 April 1971 to describe Bangabandhu's leadership where Bangabandhu was portrayed as "Poet of Politics". Deputy Chief of Mission, Mahbub Hassan Saleh, recited a poem penned by him on Bangabandhu titled "Tumi Amar" ("You are mine") in Bangla and English.

The program concluded by offering a special prayer for the salvation of departed souls of Bangabandhu and the martyred members of his family and slim the martyrs of 15th August 1975.

The 250-capacity Bangabandhu auditorium was packed during the programme.



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