**Autobiography of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman**

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman shortened as Sheikh Mujib or Just Mujib, a Bangladeshi politician and statesman was born on 17 March, 1920 in Tungipara a village in Gopalganj District in the province in British India. His father’s name is Sheikh Lutfur Rahman and his mother’s name is Sheikh Sayera Khatun. He was the third child in a family of four daughters and two sons. His parents adoringly called him “Khoka”.

In 1929, Mujib entered into class three at Gopalganj Public School and two years later class four at Madaripur Islamia High School. Mujib withdrew from school 1934 to undergo eye surgery and returned to school only after four years. Later he passed his Matriculation from Gopalganj Missionary School in 1942 and Intermidiate of Arts from Islamia College in 1944 and BA from the same college in 1947. After the partian of India, he was admitted into the University of Dhaka to study law but he did not complete the course because he was expelled from the university.

 Mujib became politically active when he joined the ‘All India Muslim Students Federation’ in 1940. He joined the ‘Bengal Muslim League’ in 1943 and in 1946 he became general secretary of the ‘Islamia College Students Union ‘. In 1947, Mujib was one of the Muslim Politicians working under Suhrawardy. After the partition of India, Mujib chose to stay in the newly created Pakistan.

But on 21 March 1948, when Muhammad Ali Jinnah declared that the people of East Bengal would have to adopt Urdu as the state language, protests broke out amongst the population. Mujib immediately decided to start a movement against his former planned decision of Muslim League. In the same year on 2 March a conference was held at Dhaka University’s Fazlul Haq Muslim Hall with leaders of different political parties. In this conference, discussions about the movement against the Muslim League were discussed. From here on, the decision of the constitution of the All- party Parliamentary Council was decided. The strike was celebrated in Dhaka on 11 March 1948, at the direction of the council. During the strike, some other political activists, including Mujibur were arrested on 15 March. On the occasion of their release the Rastrabhasa Sangram Parishad (National Language Action Committee) arranged a rally which took place at Dhaka University. The police blocked this rally. In protesting police activities Mujib immediately announced a nationwide student strike on 17 March 1948. On 19 March, he organized a movement aimed at security the rights of the fourth class employees of Dhaka University. On 11 September he was again arrested. On 21 January 1949, Mujib was released from prison. Out of jail, he again became involved in the demand for the demand of the fourth class employees, for which he was fired from the University. On 26 April, Muslim League -backed candidate Shamsul Haq won a by-election in Tangail. Then Mujib on hunger strike in front of Vice Chancellors residence fro the success of his movement, for which he was again arrested. At that time he was expelled from Dhaka University. He was accussed of leading the movement of the fourth class workers’ rights in the university.

On 23 June, Suhrawardy and Maulana Bhashani formed East Pakistan Awami Muslim League. After the formation, Mujib left ‘Muslim League’ and joined this new team, the predecessor of the ‘Awami League’. Maulana Bhashani was elected as President and Yar Mohammad Khan was the treasurer. Mujib was elected joint Secretary of its ‘East Bengal Unit’ in 1949. While Suhrawardy worked to build a larger coalition of East Bengali and socialist parties. The Mujib focused on expanding the grass roots organization. He was elected to the East Bengal Legislative Assembly on a unit Front coalition ticket in 1954, serving briefly as the Mnister of Agriculture during A.K. Fazlul Huq’s government. Mujib was briefly arrested for organizing protest of the central government decision to dismiss the united front ministry. Later he was elected to the second Constituent Assembly of Pakistan and served from 1955 to 1958.But in 1956, East Bengal was renamed as East Pakistan as part of one unit. Then Mujib demanded that the Bengali people’s ethnic identity be respected. The word Bengal has a history, has a tradition. You can change it only after the people have been consulted. In 1958 General Ayub Khan suspended the constitution and imposed Martial Law. Mujib was arrested for organizing resistance and imprisoned till 1961. After his release Mujib started organizing an undergo political body called the ‘Swadhin Bangal Biplobi Parishad’ to oppose the regime of Ayub Khan. He was briefly arrested again in 1962 for organizing protests.

Following Suhrawardy’s death in 1963, Mujib became the leading figure in and eventually the leader of the “Awami League”, which became one of the largest political parties in Pakistan. The party had dropped the word “Muslim” from its name in a shift towards secularism and a broader appeal to non-Muslim communities. Then Mujib was one of the key leaders to rally oppositions to president Ayub Khan’s Democracies Plan, the imposition of Martial Law and merged the provinces. Working other political parties, he supported opposition candidate Fatima Jinnah against Ayub Khan in 1964 election. Mujib was arrested two week before the election, charged with sedition and jailed for a year. In 1966, Mujib proclaimed a ‘6 point Plan’ titled ‘Our Charter or Survival’ at a national conference of opposition political parties at Lahore, in which he demanded self-government and considerable political, economic and defence autonomy for East Pakistan in a Pakistani Federation with a weak central government. Mujib’s points castalysed public support across East Pakistan, launching what some historians have termed the 6- point movement recognized as definitive gambit for autonomy and rights of Bengalis in Pakistan. Mujib was arrested by the Pakistan Army and after two years in jail, an official sedition trial in military court opened. Widely known as the Agartala Conspiracy Case, The outcry and unrest over Mujib’s arrest and the charge of sedition against him destabilised East Pakistan amidst large protests and strikes. Various Bengali political and student groups added demands to address the issues of students, workers and the poor, forming a larger ‘’11-Point Plan”. The government caved to the mounting pressure, dropped the charges on 22 February 1969 and unconditionally released Mujib the following day. He returned to East Pakistan as a public hero. He was again reception on 23 February at Racecourse Ground and conferred with the title “Bangabandhu’ meaning friend of the Bengal.

Joining an all parties conference convened by Ayub Khan, president of Pakistan, in 1969, Mujib demanded the acceptance of his six points and the demands of other political parties walked out following its rejection. On 5 December 1969 Mujib made a declaration at a public meeting held to observe the death anniversary of Suhrawardy, that henceforth East Pakistan would be called “Bangladesh”. In the Pakistani General elections held on 7 December 1970, the Awami League under Mujib’s leadership won a massive majority the provincial legislature. The largest and most successful party in the western wing of the nation was the ‘Pakistan People’s Party’ (PPP) headed by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. He was completely opposed to Mujib’s demand for greater autonomy Bhutto threatened to boycott the assembly and oppose the government if Mujib was invited by Yahya Khan, the president of Pakistan.

Following political deadlock, Yahya Khan delayed the convening of the assembly, a move seen by Bengalis as a plan to deny Mujib’s party, which formed a majority, from taking charge. It was known 7 March 1971 that Mujib called for Independence. Following a last ditch attempt to foster agreement, Yahya Khan declared Martial Law, banned the Awami League and ordered the Pakistan Army to arrest Mujib and other leaders and activists. The Army launched ‘Operation Searchlight to curb the political and civil unrest, fighting the nationalist militias speaking on radio even as the army began its crackdown, Mujib asked his fellows to create resistance against the Army occupation by telegraph at midnight on 26 March 1971. Mujib was arrested and taken to West Pakistan after midnight from Tejgaon Airport, while Bengali civilians, students, intellectuals, politicians and military defectors were murdered as part of the 1971 Bangladesh Genocide. During Mujib’s absence, many Bengalis joined the Mukti Bahini and helped by the Indian Armed Forces, defeated the Pakistan armed Forces during the liberation war. After nine month blood stained war of liberation, the Pakistani army surrendered to the joint force of Bengali Mukti Bahini and the Indian army and the leadership created a government in Dhaka which was called the Mujibnagar government.

Upon assuming the presidency after Yahya Khan’s resignation, ulfikar Ali Bhutton responded to international pressure and released Mujib on 8th January 1972. After release from prison, Bhutto and Mujib met Rawalpindi. In that meeting Bhutto proposed some links between Pakistan and Bangladesh. However Mujib said he could not commit to anything until he visited Bangladesh and talked to his colleagues. He was then flown to London where he met with British Prime Minister Edward Heath and addressed the international media at Claridge’s Hotel. Mujib then flew to New Delhi on a Royal Air Force (RAF) jet aircraft provided by the British government to take him back to Dhaka. In new Delhi he was received by Indian President varahagiri Venkata Giri and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi as well as entire Indian cabinet and chiefs of armed forces. Delhi was given a festive look as Mujib and Gandhi addressed a huge crowd where he publicly expressed his gratitude to Gandhi and ‘the best friends of my people, the people of India”. From New Delhi Sheikh Mujib flew back to Dhaka on the RAF jet where he received by a massive and emotional sea of people at Tejgaon Airport. Thus he is regarded “Jatir Janak” or “Jatir Pita” both meaning “Father of the Nation’” of Bangladesh.

Mujib briefly assumed the provisional presidency and later took office as the Prime Minister of Bangladesh. A new country, Bangladesh begins with a lot of “rampage and rape of Bangladesh economy’ by the Pakistan occupation force. Mujib described the fallout of the war as the’ biggest human disaster in the world,” claiming the deaths of as many as 3 million people and the rape of more that 200,000 women. Although the state was committed to secularism, Mujib soon began moving closer to political islam through state policies as well as personal conduct. He revived the Islamic Academy (which had been banned in 972 for suspected collusion with Pakistani forces and banned the production and sale of alcohol and banned the practice of gambling, which had been one of the major demands of Islamic groups. In his public appearances and speeches, Mujib made increased usage of Islamic greetings, slogans and references to Islamic ideologies. In his final years Mujib largely abandoned his trademark “Joy Bangla” salutation for “Khuda Hafez” preferred by religious Muslims. He also declared a common amnesty to the suspected war criminals, on some conditions, to get the support of far right groups as the communists were not happy with mujib’s regime. He declared, “I believe that the brokers, who assisted the Pakistanis during the liberation war have realized their faults. I hope they will involve themselves in the development of the country forgetting all their misdeeds. Those who were arrested and jailed in the collaborator act should be freed before the 16th December1974”. He charged the provisional Parliament in order to write a new constitution, and proclaimed the four fundamental principles of “nationalism, secularism, democracy and socialism,” which would come to be known as “Mujibism”. Mujib nationalized hundreds of industries and companies as well as abandoned land and capital and initiated land reform aimed at helping millions of poor farmers. A constitution was proclaimed in 1973 and election was held which resulted in Mujib and his party gaining power with an absolute majority. He further outlined state programs to expand primary education in Bangladesh, sanitation, food, healthcare, water and electric supply across the country.

However, Mujib’s government soon began encountering increased dissatisfaction and unrest. His programs of nationalization and industrial socialism suffered from lack of trained personnel, inefficiency, rampant, corruption and poor leadership. Mujib focused almost entirely on national issues and thus neglected local issues and government. The party and central government exercised full control and democracy was weakened, with no virtually, no elections organized at the grass roots or local levels. Political opposition included communists as well as Islamic fundamentalists, who were angered by the declaration of a secular state. Mujib was criticized for nepotism in appointing family members to important positions. Intense criticism arose over the lack of political leadership, a flowed pricing policy and a rising inflation amidst heavy losses suffered by the nationalized industries. Mujib ambitious social programs performed poorly, owing to scarcity of resources, funds and personnel and caused unrest amongst the masses. In 974, when political unrest gave rise to increase violence, during the famine, then in response, Mujib began increasing his powers, declared a state of emergency. On 25 January 1975, the fourth Amendment to the constitution of Bangladesh was passed, replacing the parliamentary system with a presidential system, reducing the power of the National Parliament and Supreme Court and codifying a one party state into law.

On 24 February 1975, Mujib formed a new party, on 7th June 1975 Mujib’s political supports in his party and a few others amalgamated to form the only legal political party, the “Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League, commonly known by its initials- BaKSAL. All MPs were required to join BaKSAL. The party identified itself with the rural masses, farmers and laborers and took control of all mechanisms of government. However, BaKSAL was protested by different groups but they were killed by Jatiya Rakkhi Bahini militia.

On 15 August 1975 at the age of 55, a group of junior army officers invaded the presidential residence with tanks and killed Mujib, his family and personal stuff. Only his daughters Sheikh Hasina and Sheikh Rehana who was visiting West Germany at that time e, escaped’. Mujib’s death plunged the nation into a political turmoil. The coup leaders were soon overthrown and a series of counter- coups and political assassinations paralyzed the country.