



36 anniversary of India recognition to Bangladesh observed **Liberation of Bangladesh in '71 was not possible** **without unprecedented support of India**

Liberation of Bangladesh in '71 was not possible without unprecedented support of India. The then Indian Government led by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi provided shelter, food, clothing and medical aid for 10 million refugees, helped freedom fighters with training, arms & amunations, campaigned for release of Bangabondhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and mobilized international public opinion in favor of independence of Bangladesh. At least 22 thousand members of Indian Armed Forces sacrificed their lives to liberate Bangladesh, said writer journalist Shahriar Kabir, acting president of 'Ekattorer Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee' (Forum for Secular Bangladesh) at BILIA auditorium on 6 December 2007.

While addressing a discussion program to mark 36 anniversary of India's recognition to Bangladesh Shahriar Kabir further said, Jamat-e Islami and other pro-Pakistanis branded our freedom fighters as agent of India and enemy of Islam & Pakistan. They branded our liberation war as a conspiracy of India to break up Pakistan. But the people of Bangladesh refused to accept such allegation, they joined the liberation war and we liberated Bangladesh with the help of Indian armed forces and all-out support of Indian govt. and people.

The chief guest of the discussion program Maj. General (retd.) K M Shafiullah Biruttam, Commander of the 'S' Force of the liberation war, former army chief and chairman of 'Freedom Fighters Foundation' said, the first recognition to Bangladesh came from India on 6 December of 1971, ten days before the surrender of Pakistani army, which inspired the freedom fighters

tremendously that led us to total victory. First we fought guerilla war against Pakistani occupation army and received arms and amunations from India and finally we fought an all-out war under Indo-Bangladesh Joint Command led by General Aurora, GOC of India's Eastern Command. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's courageous leadership helped us to achieve our goal within a short time.

HT Imam, the Cabinet Secretary of war time govt. of Bangladesh led by Tajuddin Ahmed said, India's help during the liberation war was multi-dimensional. Even in running the govt. and the administration during those critical days of war we received all kind of support from our Indian counterpart. India officially recognized Bangladesh on 6 December, but support was extended when Pakistan army made the crackdown on unarmed civilian and panic-stricken people started crossing the border. The way India provided shelter to ten million refugees with food and other essentials there is no parallel in the history.

Abdur Razzak, Presidium Member of Awami League, former Minister and Commander of 'Bangladesh Liberation Force' (BLF) said, India's support in the liberation of Bangladesh is on the basis of certain ideology and principle. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and founders of modern India believed in secular democracy and so did our father of the Nation Bangabondhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. We fought against Pakistan, a country based on Jinnah's 'two nation theory' and defeated it on the soil of Bangladesh. We buried Jinnah's 'two nation theory' in the soil of Bangladesh and established secular democratic Bangladesh. But after the assassination of Bangabandhu, pro-Pakistani military grabbed the power and wiped out the spirit of liberation that is secular democracy from our constitution. We have to fight another freedom struggle to re-install '72's constitution that enshrined democracy, secularism and Bengali nationalism as our main principle.

Presided over by Prof. Kabir Chowdhury the discussion program was also addressed by Justice K M Sobhan, freedom fighter Mohiuddin Ahmed, former Secretary of Foreign Ministry, freedom fighter Prof. Ajoy Roy, educationist Shamoly Nasreen Chowdhury, wife of Dr. Alim Chowdhury a martyr of the liberation war and Kazi Mukul General Secretary of Nirmul Committee.

The speakers said, if we forget to remember India's contribution to the liberation war of Bangladesh we shall be treated as traitor in the history. The speakers called upon the govt. in recognition of India's contribution to our liberation war two main street of Dhaka should be named after Indira Gandhi and General Aurora and also to build up a memorial at Sohrawardi Udyan (Park) for the members of Indian Armed Forces those who sacrificed their lives to liberate Bangladesh.

At the beginning of the discussion program one minute silence was observed to pay homage to martyrs of the liberation war both of Bangladesh and India.