

## **Book Review**

### **Bango Bhango Theke Bangladesh (From Partition of Bengal to Bangladesh By Mohammad Abdul Mannan**

Mohammad Abdul Mannan is a prolific writer, a former journalist and a well known banker. He has made a valuable contribution in the field of literature by writing a large number of articles and books on diverse subjects.

Abdul Mannan has a keen interest in the “History of Bengal” and “Bengali Muslim Heritage”. His books include “Amader Jatiswattar Bikashdhara” (The History of Evolution of our Nationhood, “Bangla O Bangalee (Bengali language and Bengali National)”, “Mukti Sangramer Mooldhara (Mainstream liberation struggle)”, “Amader Jatiswattar Bikashdhara (A History of Evolution of our Nationshood)”, “Gobeshonar Nity O Paddhaty (Principles and Methods of Research)”, “Islami Bank Byabastha (Islamic Banking System)”, “Banglar Muslim Jagorone Dui Pathikrit : Shah Waliullah Dehlawi O Jamaluddin Afgani (Two Pioneers of Muslim Renaissance: Shah Waliullah Dehlawi and Jamaluddin Afgani)”, “Sonar Desh Bangladesh (Golden Bangladesh)”, “Saudi Arobey Bangladeshi Obhibasi : Ekti Sorejomin Shomikkha (Bangladeshi expatriates in Saudi Arabia: a survey”.

A number of his books on history, culture & travels are also awaiting publication.

“Bangobhango Thekey Bangladesh (From Partition of Bengal to the Creation of Bangladesh)” was published by Kothamela Prokashan, Dhaka, Bangladesh. The famous Bangladeshi poet Al-Mahmud has contributed an introduction, highlighting the importance of learning the history of Bengal.

In “Bangobhango Thekey Bangladesh”, the author has provided a chronology of events starting from the partition of Bengal by the-then British Administration in 1905 to the creation of Bangladesh as an independent state in 1971.

Abdul Mannan has provided a brief introduction touching on the geographical boundary of Bengal and the people of this area from the ancient time to the present. He has provided a detailed account of the advent of British rule in the sub-continent and the role played by local Hindu businessmen, leaders and others in this regard. He has described the sufferings of the Muslims of the Bengal under the political and economic oppression of the ruling class, who claimed that “partitioning Bengal is equivalent to cutting open the body of the Mother which would be incomprehensible to any Hindu”. Ironically, they then supported the “creation of East Pakistan by dividing Bengal” because they did not want to be a minority where the majority would be Muslims.

According to the author, four momentous events of the last one hundred years have shaped the socio-political map of Bengal. These were

- 1) Creation of the province of East Bengal and Assam in 1905 with Dhaka as its capital;
- 2) Lahore resolution in 1940;
- 3) Creation of Pakistan in 1947 on the basis of Jinnah's "Two Nations Theory"
- 4) Creation of Bangladesh in 1971.

During the colonial period Muslims experienced considerable disadvantage. Their indifferent attitude to English education and the hostile attitude of the ruling class contributed this state of affairs. They were treated with contempt by their rulers. They were also exploited and extorted by the local landholders. The Partition of Bengal and the formation of the new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam was a ray of hope to the Muslims of this area while the upper-caste Hindus saw it as an attempt to establish their hegemony in Bengal. It is no surprise therefore that Muslims of Bengal voted overwhelmingly in favour of a Muslim homeland in the form of Pakistan.

The author has discussed the issues faced by Pakistan from its inception. The misunderstanding between regions, lack of honest leadership, internal and external challenges and the departure from the founding principles of Pakistan.

Abdul Mannan has made two comments about the creation of Bangladesh which may be debatable. He has mentioned that the "Partition of Bengal in 1905 was basis for the creation of present Bangladesh". The second was that "the creation of Bangladesh was the fulfilment of the Lahore resolution of 1940."

Even so, this is an important book on the history of Bengal and every citizen of Bangladesh should read this book.

**By Dr Muhammad Akhteruzzaman, BMRI UK.**