

Explain what is 'Hanadar Bahini'

On Sunday, the BNP, Jatiya Party and the Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh issued their statements on the occasion of Martyred Intellectuals Day without naming the Pakistani army and their local collaborators who spearheaded the killing of the intellectuals.

In her statement BNP chief Khaleda Zia said the intellectuals were killed by the “Hanadar Bahini” (occupation forces) and their collaborators.

Jatiya Party chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Raushan Ershad also mentioned Hanadar Bahini.

The Jamaat acting secretary general in his statement said the entire nation remembers with due respects the intellectuals who embraced martyrdom on December 14 [1971], without mentioning who killed them or why.

For BNP and Jamaat, shying away from mentioning Pakistani forces is nothing new. But we would like to know why BNP, Jamaat and JP feel shy about pinpointing who the killers were and who their collaborators were.

What could be the reason? Is it that they feel mentioning Pakistan’s name or its collaborators – the Razakars, Al Badr and Al Shams – would be improper?

Is it possible that mentioning Pakistan’s name might offend Pakistan and BNP, Jamaat and JP do not want to ‘hurt’ the feelings of their friendly nation?

Is it possible that they believe the Pakistani army or the collaborators were not involved in the killings?

Or is it possible that BNP, Jamaat and JP just want to wash off our hands from the history and say: let’s forget the past and let’s look to the future. No point in bringing the murky part of history.

Maybe the BNP, Jamaat and JP believe all of the above. But then they must explain why they want to pay homage to the martyred intellectuals. If they must pay their homage then they must recognise who killed them and why they were killed. They must also explain who are these ‘Hanadar Bahini’? Until then, their homage means nothing to this nation because it’s shrouded in self-contradiction, deceit and greyness.

When the Pakistani forces killed our people – they did not feel shy. And today Pakistan still arrogantly denies committing atrocities during the 1971 war.

It’s sad to see that a major party like BNP is harping the tune of Pakistan. By saying Hanadar Bahini once again, BNP, JP and Jamaat are denying the country’s history.

The word “Hanadar Bahini” was ironically introduced in the country by General Ziaur Rahman, a sector commander in the Liberation War who rose to power following the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in August 1975.

Though a freedom fighter himself – Ziaur Rahman – who took over presidency in 1977 –changed the reference of Pakistani forces and Razakars or Al-Badr from all occasions, news and even text books. The word Hanadar Bahini replaced the Pakistani forces.

Ziaur Rahman also reinstated Razakars into the mainstream politics and brought them into his cabinet; lifted ban on Jamaat-e-Islam’s politics; built children’s park in the place where

Pakistani forces surrendered to the Allied forces in the Suhrawardi Udyan; erased records of rape victims who were rehabilitated after independence and took many other measures that would only make Pakistan happy.

It was his twisted politics that made pro-liberation forces look guilty and pro-Pakistani forces heroes.

But times have changed. Replacing “Pakistani forces” with “Hanadar Bahini” did not change the history – but has left Ziaur Rahman a controversial freedom fighter today. We all know who the Hanadar Bahini was.

Our politicians must realise that the treacherous politicians who still regret the birth of Bangladesh have no future in this country. The people of this country are proud of its history and know who killed the intellectuals; the roles of Razakars or Al-Badr and they do not like political parties who still feel shy about the country’s history.

The BNP must be black and white on this issue. And Jamaat could redefine its politics by admitting role of its leaders in killing the intellectuals and people of this country. Or else these parties themselves will rapidly become history in this country.

[News Source](#)

Bangladesh’s municipal election candidates start campaign

The Election Commission yesterday allocated electoral symbols to municipality mayor and ward councillor candidates, paving the way for launching campaign with symbols.

Soon after the allocation of symbols, contenders started visiting door-to-door with leaflets and other campaign materials to seek blessings from voters. Many aspirants used loudspeakers and hung posters in their localities.

Meanwhile, violating the electoral code of conduct, Awami League lawmaker from Pabna-5 Golam Faruk Khandaker along with AL mayor aspirant Rakib Hasan Tipu yesterday joined a programme in the town.

In Golapganj of Sylhet, a government official took part in the electioneering of AL mayor candidate Zakaria Ahmed.

In another development, the EC yesterday asked the police authorities to withdraw the OC of Uttar Matlab Police Station in Chandpur for allegedly working in favour of an AL mayor candidate, said EC sources.

The commission also formed an enquiry committee to probe the complaint of the BNP mayor aspirant in Chatkhil of Noakhali that he was forced by some ruling AL men to affix sign to a paper for withdrawing his candidature.

Mayor elections will be held in 228 municipalities on December 30 as six AL mayor hopefuls are going to be elected uncontested in Pirojpur Sadar, Tungipara of Gopalganj, Feni Sadar, Parshuram of Feni, Chatkhil of Noakhali and Madarganj of Jamalpur municipalities.

Voters in Parshuram municipality of Feni will be totally deprived of exercising their franchise

as all the 10 councillors of the pourashava are also going to be elected unopposed.

Besides, 64 general and reserved women ward councillors are likely to be elected uncontested in different municipalities, including 44 in pourashavas of Feni.

According to EC statistics, 923 mayor, around 8,500 general and 2,533 women reserved councillor aspirants will take part in the polls.

LAWMAKER 'FLOUTS' LAW

In Pabna, AL lawmaker Golam Faruk Khandaker joined the opening ceremony of Rana Shopping Complex and Evening Touch Hotel on Press Club Road in the town. AL mayoral nominee Rakib Hasan Tipu was present.

As per the electoral code of conduct, ministers and lawmakers cannot go to an electoral area other than joining state functions, EC's Deputy Secretary Shamsul Alam told The Daily Star.

Faruk, however, claimed that it was not an electoral programme.

OFFICIAL IN CAMPAIGN

Several candidates complained that Borhan Ahmed of Kailashtilla Gas Field took part in the electioneering of AL mayor nominee Zakaria Ahmed.

Returning Officer Saidur Rahman said he would take action against the official if anybody lodged a complaint with his office.

'WITHDRAW OC'

The EC yesterday asked the police authorities to withdraw the officer-in-charge of Uttar Matlab Police Station in Chandpur.

The OC was allegedly working in favour of Rafiqul Alam George, AL mayor candidate in Changerchar Municipality under Uttar Matlab Upazila.

"We made the decision after we had found evidence to support the allegation," an election commissioner told this newspaper seeking anonymity.

The commission will also look into some similar allegations against the OCs of Kulaura Police Station in Moulvibazar and Habiganj Sadar Police Station in Habiganj.

CHATKHIL MUNICIPALITY

Mostafa Kamal, BNP's mayor candidate in Chatkhil Municipality of Noakhali, yesterday alleged that he was kidnapped and forced by some ruling AL men to affix sign to a paper for withdrawing his candidature.

In a letter to Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad, he appealed the EC to allow him to take part in the polls.

BNP Joint Secretary General Mahbub Uddin Khokon submitted the application to the EC in favour of the party candidate. The EC later formed an enquiry committee to look into the matter.

BNP NOMINEE FINED

In Faridganj Municipality of Chandpur, the returning officer fined BNP mayor hopeful Harunur Rashid Tk 5,000 for conducting electioneering with a motorcade.

Meanwhile, the High Court yesterday directed the authorities concerned to allow Oliur Rahman to contest as a mayoral candidate in Moulvibazar Poursava polls on December 30.

The HC bench of Justice Naima Haider and Justice Mustafa Zaman Islam passed the order after hearing a writ petition filed by Oliur, a BNP candidate, challenging the returning officer's decision of canceling his nomination.

The court pronounced the order as it found no anomalies in his income tax documents.

[News Source](#)

Bappi Lahiri, Kumar Sanu get lifetime achievement awards from Bengal

Veteran music composer Bappi Lahiri and singer Kumar Sanu were on Monday presented lifetime achievement awards by the West Bengal government.

Lahiri thanked Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who handed over the award at the inauguration of the annual Bangla Sangeet Mela.

Sanu could not be present, and was given the award in absentia.

The Bishesh Sangeet Samman was awarded to Dwijen Mukhyopadhyay, Ajoy Chakraborty and Sandhya Mukherjee.

Shantanu Moitra was honoured with Maha Sangeet Samman along with Mohammad Aziz, Kumar Bose and Shibaji Chattopadhyay.

Sriradha Bandyopadhyay, Dileep Kumar Bose, Fakir Alamgir, and Nachiketa were given Special Sangeet Samman.

Banerjee said that over 6,000 artistes will perform across 10 venues during the Bangla Sangeet Mela between December 15 and 21.

AAP, Congress playing dirty politics over slum dwellers: BJP

BJP's Delhi unit president Satish Upadhyay on Monday accused the Aam Aadmi Party and the Congress of doing "dirty politics" over the demolition of a slum in the city.

"They have no concern for the betterment of the lives of slum dwellers. All the concern being shown is a part of vote bank politics," Upadhyay told reporters here.

He said slum dwellers very well understood that both Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi were "just playing with their emotions".

"The tears being shed by Rahul Gandhi reflect political opportunism," the BJP leader said,

adding that both parties should stop playing politics and work to provide a better life to slum dwellers.

More than 500 hutments were demolished by Indian Railways authorities in Shakur Basti in west Delhi on Saturday, leaving hundreds homeless in the winter chill. An infant allegedly died during the drive.

Upadhyay said over 2,000 shanties existed on the railway land in Shakur Basti, of which almost 1,600 were demolished during the Congress rule in 2011-12 without payment of any compensation.

He said over 7,000 flats meant for slum dwellers at Narela and around 40,000 flats with the Delhi government were lying vacant for the last five years.

"If Kejriwal is true to the cause of slum dwellers at Shakur Basti, he should allocate those flats to them," Upadhyay added.

Arsenal back on top as Villa capitulate again

Arsenal eased to a comfortable 2-0 victory at Aston Villa to soar to the Premier League summit and leave their hapless opponents rooted to the bottom of the table on Sunday.

What manager Arsene Wenger described as a "great week" for Arsenal had the perfect conclusion when rivals Tottenham Hotspur stalled in pursuit, their long unbeaten run ending in a 2-1 defeat by Newcastle United with a last-gasp Ayoze Perez goal.

Liverpool's challenge under Juergen Klopp also stuttered before they escaped with a 2-2 draw at home to West Bromwich Albion thanks to a deflected stoppage time Divock Origi effort.

Arsenal celebrated a 50th Premier League goal for Olivier Giroud – a penalty converted four days after his Champions League hat-trick against Olympiakos Piraeus – which swiftly brought more gloom to Villa Park after eight minutes.

Mesut Ozil then produced his 13th assist of the season to allow Aaron Ramsey to slot home in the 38th minute and enable Arsenal to move on to 33 points, one point clear of Manchester City and Leicester City.

Leicester have the chance to regain the leadership when they entertain Chelsea on Monday.

"Overall for us, it was a great week," Wenger said on Sky Sports, referring to his side's heroics when they managed, against the odds, to qualify for the knockout phase of the Champions League for the 16th straight season.

The defeat left Villa stranded at the foot of the table on six points from 16 games, six adrift of 19th-placed Sunderland.

Clean sheet

Arsenal goalkeeper Petr Cech equalled David James's all-time Premier League record with his 169th clean sheet, in 349 games, prompting Wenger to hail him as "an absolute all-time great".

Giroud's splendid week quickly gained a new sheen when Arsenal were awarded a penalty, which referee Kevin Friend took a while to consider before adjudging that Theo Walcott had been bundled over unfairly in the area by Alan Hutton.

From the spot, Giroud converted his 14th goal of the season and 50th Premier League goal in all for Arsenal in 113 appearances, a landmark reached quicker for the Gunners only by Ian Wright and Thierry Henry.

Arsenal, in effortless command, struck again thanks to the industry of Ramsey, who won the ball not far outside his own box from Idrissa Gueye to set up a dazzling counter, then sprinted upfield to get on the end of Ozil's unselfish square pass and double the lead.

"We believe we have an opportunity to win the title," man of the match Ramsey told Sky Sports. "We have to maintain our focus and belief."

Newcastle revival

Spurs, unbeaten for 14 league games since their opening day defeat at Manchester United, were stunned to become victims of Newcastle's mini-revival under Steve McClaren at White Hart Lane.

The defeat means the Londoners stay fifth on 26 points, missing the chance to move into the top four ahead of Manchester United who suffered a shock 2-1 loss at Bournemouth on Saturday.

Tottenham midfielder Eric Dier met Christian Eriksen's corner with a 39th minute glancing header, which was just reward for their early superiority, but Newcastle, fresh from beating Liverpool last week, were inspired by a double substitution.

First, Spurs failed to deal with a free kick enabling Aleksandar Mitrovic to bundle home a scruffy 74th minute goal, practically the Serb's first touch of the match.

Then the other substitute Perez's 93rd minute volley, that goalkeeper Hugo Lloris let squirm through his grasp, earned Newcastle their first back-to-back wins in the league for a year, taking them out of the relegation zone into 15th place, one above champions Chelsea.

Liverpool's recent optimism in Klopp's reign may be evaporating at Anfield after returning captain Jordan Henderson had put them ahead against Albion, only for a Simon Mignolet mistake to gift an equaliser to Craig Dawson on the half-hour.

Jonas Olsson, who earlier had a goal disallowed, put Albion in front after 73 minutes before Divock Origi's speculative shot took a big deflection in the 96th minute to earn Liverpool a draw which moves them up to ninth on 24 points.

Clashes in southeast Turkey kill seven, new curfews declared

Seven people were killed in clashes with security forces in Turkey's mainly Kurdish southeast, officials said on Monday, as authorities

declared curfews across the restive region.

The clashes are the latest in months of violence following the collapse of a ceasefire between the government and the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in July. Since then, Ankara has imposed round-the-clock curfews in many areas.

Two people were killed as police clashed with crowds protesting against a security crackdown in the main southeastern city of Diyarbakir, a hospital official and witnesses said.

Further south, five Kurdish militants were killed in Mardin province's Dargecit district, another area under curfew, security officials said. It was not clear exactly when they were killed.

Armoured police vehicles roamed Diyarbakir's streets, firing water cannon and tear gas as hundreds gathered for a march called by the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) to protest a two-week-long curfew in the city's district of Sur.

Teargas billowed in the city streets as armoured vehicles sped around and protesters lobbed stones at police. Shopkeepers shuttered their stores ahead of the protest, which the government said was banned. Few buses were operating, rubbish was not collected and most students did not go to school.

Youths with scarves masking their faces tried to block streets with piles of bricks and burning wood before police pursued them into side streets.

In Sirnak province, the governor imposed a curfew in two towns near the borders of both Syria and Iraq from Monday night, a day after teachers were seen streaming out of the area on the orders of education authorities.

Locals, anticipating that the teachers were being recalled ahead of a curfew, formed queues at bakeries and shops to buy food, witnesses said. Several thousand teachers are based in the towns.

The two towns of Cizre and Silopi were under tight security, with police armoured vehicles stationed at the entrances to both, witnesses said.

"A curfew is declared to neutralise separatist terror group members, remove explosives-laden barricades and ditches ... and secure public order," the Sirnak governor's office said in a statement. It said the curfew would begin at 11 p.m. (2100 GMT).

A curfew was also imposed on Monday in the town of Nusaybin on the Syrian border to restore order "in response to increasing terror incidents", state authorities in the town announced.

According to data compiled by the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey, 52 curfews have been imposed since mid-August across seven Turkish provinces in the region, affecting areas where some 1.3 million people live.

The Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) militant group launched its insurgency in 1984 and more than 40,000 people have been killed in the conflict. It is designated as a terrorist group by Turkey, the United States and European Union.

