

No force in world can stop Bangladesh's war crimes trial

The BNP chief's paying tribute to Martyred Intellectuals' Memorial was nothing but a mockery, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said yesterday, adding no one in the world could stop the war crimes trial initiated by her government.

The Pakistani occupation forces and their local collaborators, including Razakars, Al-Badr and Al-Shams, killed poets, writers, teachers, journalists, doctors and many other intellectuals from different fields on December 14, 1971 in the then East Pakistan.



Bangladesh' Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, daughter of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

Their aim was to make the country to be born, Bangladesh, intellectually bankrupt, the PM said at a discussion organised by the ruling party at the Institution of Engineers in the capital to mark Martyred Intellectuals Day.

"Those who committed such crimes are now undergoing trial and their trial will go on alongside the war crimes trial," said Hasina, chief of the ruling Awami League.

Earlier, a one-minute silence was observed remembering the martyrs of December 14, 1971, four martyred national leaders and all the martyrs of the Liberation War, democratic movements of the country and the August 15, 1975 carnage.

The BNP chief is following in the footsteps of her husband Ziaur Rahman, the PM said, criticising Khaleda Zia for making those, executed for war crimes, ministers during her tenure as prime minister.

How she could pay tribute to the martyred intellectuals after making war criminals ministers, Hasina questioned.

"This is nothing but a mockery... She (Khaleda) thinks our people do not understand anything, but they understand everything."

Before the recent execution of two war criminals, Khaleda returned from London in a hurry, Hasina said, in a bid to save them through waging a movement.

The Prime Minister also took a swipe at those freedom fighters who accompanied Khaleda to the memorial.

Hasina continued saying that following the assassination of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman along with most of his family members on August 15, 1975, Bangladesh lost its glory and dignity it had attained through the war.

But as the Awami League assumed power after 21 years, she said, Bangladesh began regaining its lost glory.

Neither of the Pakistani occupation forces and their collaborators could forget their defeat and so they want to destroy the spirit of the Liberation War, halt the economic development of the country and force Bangladesh into slavery again, the PM said.

“Their conspiracy is going on and will go on, but we must move on foiling all the conspiracies.”

Hasina said some considered Ziaur Rahman the proclaimer of independence and a freedom fighter.

“If Zia were a true freedom fighter, he could not have put war criminals in state power.”

Hasina also reiterated her resolve not to bow to anyone and lead Bangladesh into becoming a hunger and poverty-free prosperous country by 2041.

[News Source](#)

In Mourning, In Fury

Observance of the Martyred Intellectuals Day was markedly different this year.

The day was observed yesterday with a renewed demand for banning Jamaat-e-Islami, and a call to sever ties with Pakistan for denying the atrocities it had carried out during the 1971 Liberation War.

People from all ages and professions, including family members of the martyred intellectuals, thronged the Martyred Intellectuals' Memorial at Mirpur and the Rayerbazar Mausoleum, with different cultural and political organisations placing wreaths at the altars.

The nation, for the first time this year, saw the execution of a war criminal, Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed, Jamaat leader and a top brass of Al-Badr, for the killing of intellectuals in 1971.

Dr Nuzhat Choudhury Shampa, daughter of martyred physician Dr Abdul Alim Chaudhury, said, “This year's December 14 is different because the nation saw the hanging of Al-Badr commander Mojaheed. We are hopeful that the government will try the remaining war criminals.”



People from every walk of life pay tribute to the martyred intellectuals, placing wreaths at the Rayer Bazar Memorial in the capital on the occasion of Martyred Intellectuals' Day. Photo Star

A diplomatic spat soon followed between Bangladesh and Pakistan over the execution of Mojaheed with Pakistan summoning the acting high commissioner of Bangladesh in Islamabad to deny the atrocities it had committed in 1971.

People from all walks of life yesterday expressed their outrage at Pakistan's denial.

When the Pakistani occupation forces were certain about their defeat, they, aided by local collaborators, particularly the Al-Badr, abducted the country's brightest minds and killed them, often after brutal torture, in an effort to cripple the emerging nation intellectually.

After the butchery, the bodies were left to rot in the killing fields.

Talking about Pakistan's outright lies, Maj Gen (retd) KM Safiullah Bir Uttam, chairman of Sector Commanders Forum (SCF), said, "Bangladesh should cut all ties with Pakistan until it seeks apology for its recent statement."

Later, the SCF handed over a protest letter to the Pakistan High Commission in Dhaka, demanding an unconditional apology from Pakistan for the barbarity of its forces in 1971.



Awami League Joint General Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif said the relationship with Pakistan had been severed in 1971.

A huge number of students from different schools and colleges too gathered at the memorial sites. Many children came with their parents.

A mock mass killing of intellectuals was staged afterwards. An exhibition of photographs on 1971 and paperclips attracted people's attention at the Rayerbazar graveyard.

DU CUTS ACADEMIC TIES WITH PAKISTAN

Dhaka University severed all academic ties with Pakistan from yesterday for the country's denial of the genocide committed in 1971.

The decision came yesterday at an emergency syndicate meeting with Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique in the chair at Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhaban.



“We have cut all bilateral relations with Pakistan, including exchange of teachers and students ... from today [yesterday] as Pakistan denied the genocide committed during the Liberation War of Bangladesh,” said the VC at a press briefing following the meeting. From now on, teachers, students and representatives from the DU will not be able to go to any Pakistani institutions and the university will not accept any representatives from the country for academic purposes.

“Dhaka University bears evidences of the atrocities, which are available in the archives of many foreign universities, international media, yet Pakistan keeps lying,” he said.

The DU VC also demanded the trial of 195 Pakistani army officers who had committed many crimes in 1971.

President of Federation of Bangladesh University Teacher's Association (FBUTA) Prof Farid Uddin Ahmed said they would hold meetings with the entire public university teachers' associations to sever academic ties with Pakistan.

Meanwhile, Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister Rashed Khan Menon said the government, if necessary, would go to the international court demanding the trial of the 195 Pakistan army persons who had committed war crimes.



At a programme at Dhaka Reporters' Unity yesterday, he said Pakistan was bound to bring the 195 Pakistan army personnel under trial following the Shimla agreement.

MIRPUR MAUSOLEUM

President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina paid their tributes to the martyred intellectuals by placing wreaths at the Martyred Intellectuals Memorial at Mirpur, reports UNB.

President Abdul Hamid placed wreaths at 8:00am followed by the prime minister. They stood there in solemn silence for some time.

A contingent of Bangladesh Armed Forces gave a state salute as the bugle played the last post.

After placing wreaths, the president talked to war-wounded freedom fighters and family members of the martyred intellectuals there and inquired about their well-being.



Flanked by central leaders of the party, Sheikh Hasina, also president of Bangladesh Awami League, laid another wreath at the Martyred Intellectuals Memorial as the party chief. She too talked to the war-wounded freedom fighters and inquired about their well-being.

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia paid her tributes at the memorial at 10:20am.

Cabinet ministers and political leaders also paid their homage to the martyred intellectuals at the memorial site.

[News Source](#)

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.

May be 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 Hanader 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 Pourasava 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](#)

Freedom Party Leader's House Raided, systematically destroyed

Former Freedom Party leader and renowned journalist Mr Chowdhury Mohammad Farouque's Dhaka based apartment in Eskaton was raided by Awami League terrorists, who demolished nearly BDT 1 lac worth of property inside. Our correspondent has informed us that none of Mr Farouque's family members were present during the incident.

Our source further informed us that the incident occurred on the evening of this past Wednesday, 10th June, when a gang of 10-12 thugs led by local terrorist Masud raided the house in Eskaton. Upon entry, the hooligans began smashing down the doors and windows of the house whilst simultaneously shouting out the names of Mr Chowdhury Mohammad Farouque's family members. It is worth pointing out that Mr Chowdhury Mohammad Farouque had been living in the UK ever since the current regime came into power. On the 1st of November 2014 this eminent journalist and politician tragically passed away at the age of 63, in his apartment in London.

We spoke to the caretaker of the apartment complex, Mr Delowar Hossain, who informed us that, "A few well-known local terrorists tried to gain access to the apartment by force which he tried to stop them from doing. At this point a couple of men slapped him and told me to shut up, whilst fishing out a revolver to scare him. Out of fear for his life, he chose to keep quiet at the time while 8-9 other terrorists entered the building. The terrorists further interrogated him demanding he tells them which apartment belongs to Chowdhury Farouque, and where do his family members live and when do they come here. Delowar replied that his apartment has been locked up for a while now."

The terrorists spent nearly 40 minutes there. Later on The Flat-Owners Society's general secretary Mr Jalal Uddin telephoned the Romna Police Station. But the on duty officer who answered his call, Mr Shibli Noman, informed him that it will not be possible to press formal charges against the perpetrators, unless those who own the house lodge any complaints. It is a

political dilemma, and there is nothing that the police station can do.

Many inhabitants inside the Eskaton apartment complex have expressed their distaste at the whole incident. One of the inhabitants who wished to remain anonymous, said that, "It is unthinkable to see such atrocities pan out in a civilized country like this. A gentleman's home was held at gunpoint and completely destroyed. It was his apartment today, what guarantee is there that it won't be mine tomorrow?" At this point she expressed her gross disappointment over the whole political system of Bangladesh.

The neighbouring inhabitants also reported that Mr Chowdhury Mohammad Farouque's family members have been in hiding for a long time.

Haluaghat Resident Gets MP To Strong-arm Own Brother's Family into Handing Over Their Inherited Property

News of land extortion, that will not shock anyone in Bangladesh, emerged from a small town called Gazirvita in Halughatthana, Mymensingh today, as a man threatened his own brother's family, in a bid to seize a number of properties that they own in and around Mymensingh.

The perpetrators one Mr Abdul Hamid and Abdul Jalil, went all out in coercing their own brother's family to give up certain pieces of land they own in beltoli, Gazirvita union, Thana Haluaghat and in Haluaghat Mohila college road, Thana Haluaghat.

So far according to our correspondent who went down there as quickly as he could, the men have involved Haluaghatthana's MP Mr Jewel Areng himself. Mr Areng hails from the Awami League of course, who are currently at the helm of the nation, unchallenged.

Mr Hamid and Jalil went so far as to involve other family members of the late Mr Abdur Rashid Sarker, including 3 of his cousins. They include a Mr Babul Hossain, Mr Liakat Ali, and Mr Deluwar Hossain who shockingly is Gazirvita's elected Union President. The whole group in conjunction have been threatening the late Mr Abdur Rashid Sarker's family constantly since his death.

This left the family terrified, according to our correspondent, and as such they have been on the run ever since. According to the locals the late Mr Abdur Rashid Sarker, is comprised of his wife Mrs Sabina Sultana and his sons, one Mr Muhammad Shajibul Sarker and Mr Samiul Alon. Mr Muhammad Shajibul Sarker, our correspondent understands, currently lives in United Kingdom.

The locals unfortunately were unclear as to where the family is now, citing that MP Jewel Areng and Deluwar Hossain both have a notorious reputation when it comes to land extortion. The family understandably, must be overwhelmed by the sheer depth of the influence at play here, with their insecurity is what perhaps has prompted them to disappear and lay low for the time being. With that said we were able to obtain a telephone number for Mr Muhammad Shajibul Sarker in UK, however sadly when we tried the number it appeared to be inactive.

Now land extortion, stories of coercion, violence being used to settle disputes over land is not unheard of. If anything it is part of Bangladesh's overall social structure. However what is embarrassing of course is that how even family members find themselves incapable of exercising any self control when there is the opportunity to prey on the weak and earn a few gains. At that point, blood or relationship mean little and greed takes over. It is a perpetual

cycle of slow degrading humanity or humane qualities. The people of Bangladesh continue to succumb to it, showing little inclination to change. That has been the story of our young, flawed nation.

Part of the responsibility falls on the government's shoulder of course to enact social change, by revamping and/or making land ownership laws more transference.

Today in Bangladesh, if you have enough money or influence, combined with immoral government officials no strangers to taking bribes, you can actually register your name in a property lease/ownership document, instead of the rightful owner! This can happen despite the fact that the person you are blatantly stealing it from has owned the property for years or has rightfully inherited it (in the case of the late Mr Abdur Rashid sarker's family)! This can happen even if the victims have documents to demonstrate that they are rightful owners of the land/property being seized/extorted from them!

Nonetheless, that is a topic for another day.

Our correspondent was able to learn that the local police station, unsurprisingly have not launched any enquiries into the incident. Indeed according to the local when the harassment first started, the victim family actually went down to the local police station to lodge a complaint. However they were rebuffed as the local law enforcement authorities were reluctant in taking on the might of both MP JuwelAreng and Union President Deluwar Hossain. Thus the next trip our correspondent made was to Haluaghat local police station in order to glean out whether any official complaints have been made against Mr Abdul Hamid, Abdul Jalil, MP Areng and co. Sadly, the local police station flat out refused entry, hurrying, hassling our correspondent out.

Meanwhile Union President Deluwar Hossain was unavailable for comment. His very irate assistant cited that "Mr Hossain is unwell and resting at home at the moment".

Awami League civil war: Rajoir the scene of destruction as Shamsuddin & Shahjahan groups clash

For the residents of Rajoir, Madarpur according to our local correspondent, this was an inevitability. Tensions had long since existed between prominent local Awami League Leaders, Advocate Shamsuddin Mia, and Shahjahan Khan. And locals feel MP Shahjahan Khan has made the first move, although others disagree and state that Shamsuddin Miah's public declaration started it all.

Nevertheless, it was supposed to be a normal working day, intermingled with Mr. Shamsuddin Miah's aggressive political campaign in a bid to be Rajoir's next elected official, on behalf of the Awami League of course. Unfortunately, it did not turn out to be the case as a public election campaign quickly took a turn for the worse as a group of armed men, laid siege to the whole scene. People dispersed in panic, shop owners quickly forced down their shutters, whilst

the attending political leaders were left stunned. Led by the notorious Kali Khan, sponsored by none other than current Member of Parliament and Awami League Leader Shahjahan Khan flung themselves at Mr. Shamsuddin Miah and his entourage which includes advocates Advocates Kader Ali, Hasan Firoj, along with South Rajoir Awami League leader Mobin Hossain.

The group dismantled everything in sight. Indeed there are unsettling reports that they used petrol to set ablaze some surrounding houses. 4 people were confirmed to be critically injured, and the list includes Mr. Shamsuddin Mia, Advocates Kader Ali and Hasan Firoj. They were rushed to the nearest hospital and according to latest reports are in a vulnerable physical state.

Our local correspondent swiftly identified the source of the enmity between these two Awami juggernauts of Rajoir. Namely (as stated above) Mr. Shamsuddin Miah's public declaration of intent towards installing himself as the prime electoral candidate, did not go down well with Mr. Shahjahan Khan, with Mr. Khan hoping to reassert his own authority as an existing Member of Parliament, and eligibility as the ideal candidate in the upcoming general elections. It wasn't until today that ensuing political tension, as a result, boiled over to actual civil unrest, with Residents of Rajoir now left embattled and devastated by the very men they were going to root for in the upcoming elections. Strangely the locals blame the attending law enforcement agencies in allowing a tragedy like this to happen. They claim Kali Kahn and his hoodlums approached the on-site police first in their bid to provoke Mr. Shamsuddin Miah and his attendees, with Kali Khan even loudly declaring that,

"There is only one leader in Rajoir, and that is Shahjahan Khan, everyone else are Jamat-Shibir lap dogs".

The police of course flatly declined to comment on their potential role in the incident as suspected by the local of course. In fact, our local correspondent was not allowed inside the police station even with a spokesperson for the police stating that any outstanding investigations need to be concluded first and "an official complaint needs to be lodged in the first place in order to do that".

This of course tells us that no one has officially pressed any charges yet, so we urge our readers to stay tuned and watch this space for future information.
