

# Awami League never violates human rights, says PM

December 15, 2022

**The Daily Morning Voice Online Desk:** Prime Minister and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina on Wednesday said her party never violates human rights rather protects it, criticizing efforts of several countries which are out branding Bangladesh negatively despite the fact that they are protecting human rights of the killers. “The Awami League never violates human rights. It will give protection. Awami League ensures rights of the people,” she said while presiding over a discussion meeting organized by the Awami League at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre (BICC) in Dhaka marking the Martyred Intellectuals Day on Wednesday.

The prime minister said military dictator and founder of the BNP Ziaur Rahman had initiated the culture of disappearances and killings in Bangladesh with killing hundreds of armed forces officers and soldiers in jails across the country and firing ground in Dhaka cantonment alongside killings numerous Awami League leaders and workers. Relatives of the victims have yet to get bodies of their near and dear ones, she said, adding that Khaleda Zia had followed the same path that her husband did and killed thousands of Awami League leaders and activists. “In which mouth, the BNP is now talking about the disappearances and killings,” she questioned.

Sheikh Hasina said after returning to the country in 1981 she even did not want to seek justice for killing of her father, mother and brothers on August 15 carnage in 1975 due to enactment of the indemnity ordinance which gave exemption to the killers of the charges despite the country’s constitution guarantees of getting justice to this end. Ziaur Rahman enacted the indemnity ordinance to give impunity to the killers of the Father of the Nation and most of his family members and rewarded them by giving postings in various foreign missions. “Is it not a violation of the human rights to save killers by enacting law and rewarding them (killers) with postings at foreign missions?” she asked.

The prime minister said she can also question where her human rights were when she was barred from filing case in the grisly murder of her father, mother and brothers. Military dictator Ziaur Rahman and her wife Khaleda Zia rehabilitated the killers of Bangabandhu and war criminals in the politics of Bangladesh by making them ministers, lawmakers and advisers. “I can also say where my human rights are, why we could not see the bodies of my parents. Why were we not getting information on our parents? Why were we not allowed to come to the country for six years. Why did Ziaur Rahman not renew the passport of my younger sister Sheikh Rehana? Will they (BNP) give its answer?” she questioned.

Sheikh Hasina said her government has repeatedly requested the USA and Canada governments to hand over the killers of Bangabandhu, but they did not pay heed to it. “Rashed who killed four-year-old Sukanto, three cousins, my uncle (husband of paternal aunty) and shot at my paternal aunty after storming their house on August 15 in 1975, is now staying in the USA. We have requested time and again to return the convicted killer to us,” she said. The premier also said killer Noor who was involved in the killing of the Father of the Nation, his wife, three sons and two daughters-in-laws, is now in Canada. “They (America and Canada) are not returning the convicted accused Rashed and Major (sacked) Noor as they are protecting the human rights of the killers,” she said.

The prime minister indicated anxiety of some countries about the human rights violation of criminals, saying, “They are busy with ensuring human rights of any terrorist or militant or drug dealer who was killed. But, there is no discussion that they (criminals) have violated human rights.” At the meeting, Road Transport and Bridges Minister and AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader, MP, gave the address of welcome.

Awami League Presidium Members Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, MP, Agriculture Minister Dr Muhammad Abdur Razzaque, MP and Abdur Rahman, Joint General Secretaries Mahbul Alam Hanif, MP, and AFM Bahauddin Nasim, Organising Secretary Advocate Afzal Hossain, Health and Population Affairs Secretary Dr Rokeya Sultana, Dhaka South and North City AL General Secretaries Humayun Kabir and SM Mannan Kochi, among others, addressed the meeting. Publicity and Publication Secretary Dr Abdus Sobhan Golap, MP, and his deputy M Aminul Islam, conducted the discussion. At the outset of the programme, one-minute silence was observed to show respect to the martyred intellectuals, freedom fighters and martyrs of the August 15 and November 3 in 1975 massacres and all the democratic and progressive movements. As many as 200 illustrious sons of the soil, including educationists, journalists, physicians, artistes, engineers, lawyers and writers, were abducted from their respective residences blindfolded from December 10 to 14 in 1971. Just two days ahead of the country's final victory for independence on this day 51 years back, the Pakistani occupation forces with the help of their local collaborators – Razakar, Al-Badr and Al-Shams – killed the most prominent intellectuals of the country. Since then, the day is being observed as the Martyred Intellectuals Day.

The Day's program started with paying glowing tributes by the Prime Minister to the martyred intellectuals by placing wreaths at the Martyred Intellectuals Memorial at Mirpur. She also paid rich tributes to Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman by placing wreaths at the portrait of the Father of the Nation at Dhanmondi here. Sheikh Hasina came down heavily on BNP for not taking any program to observe the Intellectuals Day despite the nation including her party observing the day with due respect. "Today, we are observing Intellectuals Day. Is there any program of the BNP on Intellectuals Day? Do they have any?" she said. So, it is clear that the BNP has intimacy with killers of the intellectuals and the Father of the Nation and war criminals, she added.

The Prime Minister said the BNP-Jamaat clique only knows how to loot and kill the people alongside engaging in corruption. "So, they don't show any respect toward the intellectuals. What respect can they show? We can't expect that they would show respect (to intellectuals)," she said. The Awami League president said that they had held trials of the killers of intellectuals and executed the punishment as well. Pointing finger at the BNP-Jamaat alliance, she said those who distorted history of the country by banning to play the Historic 7th March speech of Bangabandhu and Joy Bangla slogan, have been thrown to the garbage of the country's history forever.

The anti-liberation forces came to power after the August 15, 1975 changeover after the killing of Father of the Nation and banned the historic 7th March Speech and Joy Bangla slogan. But, now the historic 7th March Speech of Bangabandhu included in the Memory of the World International Register, a list of world's important documentary heritage maintained by Unesco while the Joy Bangla slogan was made national, she said adding, "The history can never be suppressed."

The prime minister said that ensuring human rights not only protects the lives of the countrymen, but also gives them an improved and beautiful life. She said her government has been working tirelessly to ensure food security, education, healthcare services and accommodation to protect human rights of the masses.

The prime minister said Bangladesh has attained dignity as a developing nation due her government's timely measures, adding that they would transform the country into a developed and prosperous one as envisioned by the Father of the Nation. "Today, it is our commitment to march the country ahead with the spirit and ideal of the Liberation War as we never allow the blood of martyrs to go in vain," she added.