

Love for mother tongue brings them together

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Thousands of Bangla speaking Indians and Bangladeshis came together breaking barrier of national borders and sang 'Amar bhaier rokte rangano ekushe February' to pay their tribute to the martyrs of Language Movement.

To mark the International Mother Language Day the border guards of the two nations also shook hands and laid floral wreaths at a makeshift Shaheed Minar on non-man's land at Benapole-Petrapole border.

The day long programme began in the morning with

the hoisting of the national flags and singing the national anthems of the two countries. The function turned into a union of thousands of Bangla speaking people from both sides of the border. They hugged each other and some talked about Salam, Barkat, Rafique Zabbar, and many others who sacrificed their lives for establishing Bangla as our national language. Close up one singers Beauty and Muhin sang in the function which has been organized every year since 2002.

The programme was jointly organized by Bongaon Ekush udjapan committee of West Bengal and Benapole Ekush udjapan committee of Bangladesh. West Bengal ministers Abdur Razzak Mollah, Srimoti Rekha Goshwami and Bangladesh parliament member Sheik Afil Uddin of Jessore-1 constituency were present at the function. BSF and BDR allowed peoples from both countries to pay homage to the martyrs together.



PHOTO: STAR

Parliament member from Jessore-1 Sheikh Afil Uddin, former Indian Lok Sava member Amitav Nandi, West Bengal Land Minister Abdur Rezzak Molla, Planning Minister Rekha Goswami arrive in Benapole to place wreaths at the temporarily built Shaheed Minar on the 'no man's land' to pay respect to the 1952 Language Movement martyrs on International Mother language Day yesterday.

QUARREL OVER PLACING WREATHS

31 hurt as ruling party men clash in 2 dists

STAR NATIONAL DESK

At least 31 people, including three policemen, were injured in clashes between rival ruling party men in Gaibandha and Rangpur districts over placing wreaths at shaheed minar on Ekushey.

In Gaibandha, Two factions-one led by lawmaker Engineer Monowar Hossain and the other by Gobindaganj Upazila chairman Principal Abul Kalam Azad--came to local shaheed minar to place wreaths one minute past midnight on Ekushey, according to our correspondent.

Witnesses said when the Monowar groups came forward to place wreaths at the shaheed minar, Azad groups prevented them, prompting a clash between the two groups.

Both sides used lethal weapons and hurled bricks during the clash that continued for two and a half hours, leaving 23 people, including three cops, injured.

Of the injured, two BCL men--Shaheen and Laiju--were first admitted to Gobindaganj Upazila Health Complex and later shifted to Bogra Medical College Hospital as their condition

deteriorated.

The injured cops are Sub-Inspector Nizamuddin, ASI Mizanur Rahman and constable Bidhu Chakraborty. They are undergoing treatment at the upazila health complex.

Police charged batons to disperse the clashing groups and brought the situation under control.

Eight activists of Awami League Pargachha unit under Rangpur district were injured in a clash between two rival groups yesterday morning, reports our correspondent.

The injured included Secretary of AL Chhawa Union unit Motiar Rahman and activists Ranjit, Suman Miah, Abdur Rashid.

Witnesses said local AL leader Rezaul and his men swooped on Motiar and his supporters when they were going to local shaheed minar to place wreaths in the morning.

Both groups hurled bricks and chased each during the clash that lasted for half an hour.

In Lalmonirhat, Criminals partially damaged a shaheed minar on the premises of Kulaghat High School in Sadar upazila on Saturday night,

says a correspondent.

Local Awami League leaders blamed local Jamaat-Shibir men for this criminal act.

Jubo League and Chhatra League yesterday brought out a joint procession demanding immediate arrest of the persons involved.

Lalmonirhat Sadar Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Raja Miah visited the spot yesterday morning. He said the local administration will take immediate action against the culprits who damaged the shaheed minar.

Our Patuakhali correspondent reported that students of Monoharkhali High School under Mirzaganj upazila could not place wreath at the shaheed minar prepared with banana plants on the school premises as two students of the same school ransacked it at around 9:00pm on Saturday.

Protesting the incident, students of the school blocked traffic on Patuakhali-Mirzaganj road for an hour from 8:00am demanding exemplary punishment to the students responsible for ransacking the shaheed minar.

Language hero Motiar wants to donate land for old home

BSS, Bogra

Motiar Rahman, a language veteran of the district, is passing his days lonely and almost unsung despite his role in 1952.

He passes his days only recollecting the memories of the turbulent days in the small town of Bogra when he along with others built resistance against the colonial force that tried to suppress the movement for rights to speak in mother language.

Motiar, although 93 now, still dreams of establishing Bangla at all national spheres as he dreamt at his early age.

Influential quarters have gobbled up his landed property in the town, on which he dreamt of building a home for the elderly people.

Talking to this correspondent Motiar sought government help to recover his property from the grabbers.

Vice-president of Awami League Bogra district unit and language veteran Sadeq Ali

Ahmed recalled the contribution of Motiar Rahman to the Language Movement saying his presence was obvious in all meetings, processions and movements.

By profession, Motiar was 'kobiraj' (traditional healer) and he had a chamber at Satmatha of Bogra town. He used to publish a weekly newspaper 'Chabuk' (whip).

Motiar was the editor of the Chabuk and was always at the forefront of all programmes of the Language Movement, said elderly journalist Jahedur Rahman Jadu.

Only a few local cultural organisations gave him accolade for his role in the Language Movement.

"Nobody thinks for me and nobody takes care of me,..... and I don't expect that from any body," said Motiar, a confirmed bachelor. "I only want use of Bangla language in all national spheres and peace, progress of the nation," he added.

Recalling the events of February 21, 1952, he said,

"We totally paralysed Bogra town when we heard the rumour of death of Gazil Huq, noted language movement veteran in police firing in Dhaka."

"We barricaded the roads and tore off all signboards written in Urdu," he said adding many people were picked up and put behind the bar from Satmatha where we held an emergency meeting the next few days saw ceaseless student strike, protest meetings, and agitation, he said.

Motiar said All-party Rastra Bhasha Sangram Parishad was formed in Bogra a few days before February 21. Nurul Hossain Mollah, Mokhesur Rahman, Golam Mohiuddin, Durgadas Mukherjee, Jalal Uddin Akbar and Sadeq Ali Ahmed were at the fore of the movement.

Motiar said he wants to donate his landed property for welfare of people. If the government wants, he would give away his land for building an 'old home.'

HOMAGE TO LANGUAGE MARTYRS



People from all walks of life gather at Central Shaheed Minar in Chittagong to pay respect to the language martyrs, 2) Dashmina upazila Chairman and upazila Awami League General Secretary Abdul Aziz leads an oath taking of local AL leaders and activists after placing flowers at the altar of the Shaheed Minar, 3) Family members of language martyr Rafiquddin Ahmed places wreaths at the Shaheed Minar at the martyr's home at Paril village in singair upazila of Manikganj, 4) A child along others at the Central Shaheed Minar in Barisal, 5) Foreign Minister Dr Dipu Moni places wreath at the Central Shaheed Minar at Chandpur, 6) Teachers and students of Sheulbagh Bidyapith at Narsingdi place wreaths in honour of the martyrs, 7) Central Shaheed Minar in Pabna gets covered with wreaths, 8) Children take part in an art competition organised by Gono Moitry Sangskritik Sangathan on the premises of Shaheed Minar in the court area of Rajshahi city, 9) Members of Prothom Alo Bandhusava pay respect to the language martyrs at the Shaheed Minar on the premises of Thakurgaon Government College.

PHOTO: STAR