Amar Ekushey

THE country observed the 60th anniversary of the Language Movement, commemorating the martyrs of 1952. Thousands of people from all walks of life and of all ages trekked barefoot to the Central Shaheed Minar to pay tribute to the Language Movement heroes. They sang the February 21 anthem: Amar bhaiyer rokte rangano ekushey February. Many placed flowers at the graves of the martyrs at Azimpur graveyard in the capital. The Shaheed Minar and its adjacent areas on Dhaka University campus wore a different look with street paintings and graffiti with Bangla alphabets on the walls. On this day in 1952, students and people from all strata of society took to the streets in Dhaka to protest the then Pakistan government's refusal to recognise Bangla as one of the state languages and its attempt to impose Urdu as the only official language of Pakistan. The day has been observed as International Mother Language Day following a Unesco declaration in 1999.

Photo: ANISUR RAHMAN