

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA H 34.0 L 23.0	CHITTAGONG H 30.5 L 23.5	SYLHET H 31.0 L 23.0	RAJSHAHI H 32.6 L 18.8	KHULNA H 35.0 L 21.5	BARISAL H 33.7 L 22.8	RANGPUR H 30.7 L 20.6	COX'S BAZAR H 30.5 L 23.5
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Night and day temperatures may remain nearly unchanged over the country. **The sun sets in the capital today at 5:57pm and rises tomorrow at 6:26am.** Country's highest temperature 35.4 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Jessore, Patuakhali and lowest 18.5 in Teknaf.



Top row clockwise from left, Central Shaheed Minar in the capital being decorated with flowers laid since the early hours yesterday marking Amar Ekushey. Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha places a wreath. Chiefs of the Bangladesh Army, Air Force and Navy saluting the Language Movement martyrs. Middle row from left, a foreigner plays a musical instrument at Asia House in Copenhagen during a programme organised by the Bangladesh embassy and Asia House. A speech being delivered at the Consulate General of Bangladesh in Istanbul. The national flag being raised at half-mast at the deputy high commission in Mumbai. Ambassador Saida Muna Tasneem places a wreath at a makeshift Shaheed Minar at the Bangladesh embassy in Bangkok. Bottom row from left, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia places a wreath at Central Shaheed Minar. Foreign diplomats stationed in Dhaka pay their respects too.

PHOTOS: SK ENAMUL HAQ, ANISUR RAHMAN, COLLECTED

Defenders remembered, victory rejoiced

Nation celebrates International Mother Language Day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bare-footed, clad in black and white and holding flowers, people from all walks of life thronged Shaheed Minars across the country yesterday to pay tribute to Language Movement martyrs marking Amar Ekushey.

Programmes including discussions and colourful cultural sessions nationwide and in Bangladesh missions in Denmark, Thailand, Turkey and India reminisced the supreme sacrifice made by Salam, Barkat, Rafiq, Jabbar, Shafiur and others for Bangla, say messages received yesterday.

On this day in 1952, the Pakistani police had fired on peaceful protesters taking to Dhaka's streets demanding that Bangla be made one of the state languages of the then Pakistan.

The day is also observed across the globe with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) on November 17, 1999 proclaiming February 21 as International Mother Language Day.

DHAKA

Covered with flowers, Central Shaheed Minar donned a solemn look as a sea of people singing the Amar Ekushey anthem "Amar bhaiyer rokte rangano Ekushey February" paid their deep respects.

Areas around the monument and Dhaka University (DU) wore a festive look with murals, graffiti and street paintings com-

prising Bangla alphabets and verses on mother languages.

Amid tight security, President Abdul Hamid, followed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, placed a wreath at Central Shaheed Minar just as the clock struck one minute-past zero hour.

Ministers, lawmakers, political party leaders, dignitaries and hundreds of social, cultural, political and professional bodies followed suit.

Inspired by the Language Movement's spirit, many children were seen paying respects with their parents. "I have heard the tale of the Language Movement from Baba (father) many times. That is why I have come here," said Nazia Sultana, a class IV student.

Crossing different hurdles, persons with different disabilities also arrived to pay homage. Talking to The Daily Star, many demanded government steps to end using Bangla in a distorted manner, claiming this was a trend growing among children and youths.

"As many children are studying in English medium schools, they pronounce Bangla sentences in English style. This should be stopped," said DU student Sourav Roy.

Talking to journalists after paying tribute, Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha said delivering verdicts in Bangla at the Supreme

BNP men scuffle with volunteers at Shaheed Minar

DU VC welcomes Khaleda; teacher falls on ground due to shoving by JCD men

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Several people were injured in a scuffle between volunteers and BNP men at the Central Shaheed Minar in the capital early yesterday when people paid their tributes to the Language Movement martyrs.

The incident took place around 1:25am when BNP chief Khaleda Zia, flanked by party leaders and activists, placed wreaths at the monument, witnesses said.

Earlier, a Dhaka University professor was injured as leaders of BNP-backed student body Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal shoved a group of the university teachers.

Witnesses said that when Khaleda reached the Shaheed Minar, the DU teachers led by Vice Chancellor Dr AAMS Arefin Siddique welcomed the BNP chief. But some JCD men shoved the teachers from behind, and Chairman of Department

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

SEE PAGE 5 COL 4

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