

Homage to language martyrs



STAR REPORT

Bare-footed, wearing black and white and holding flowers, thousands of people from all walks of life thronged the Central Shaheed Minar in the capital and elsewhere of the country to pay homage to the Language Movement heroes yesterday.

Humming the tune "Amar Bhaier Rokte Rangano Ekushey February", people remembered the supreme sacrifice of the martyrs.

The environment reverberated with the Ekushey anthem as the hallowed monuments got slowly covered with flowers. Areas around the monuments wore a festive look with murals, graffiti, and street paintings comprising Bangla alphabets and verses on mother languages.

The day is observed worldwide as International Mother Language Day. In 1999, the Unesco had declared February 21 as the International Mother Language Day.

On February 21, 1952, students and people from all walks of life took to the streets in Dhaka to protest the then Pakistan government's refusal to recognise Bangla as one of the state languages and imposition of Urdu as

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The Shaheed Minar stands as a representation of the right to expression and resistance against all injustice. Imbued with the spirit of Ekushey, people from all walks of life paid their tributes to the fallen heroes who earned them the right to speak their mother tongue. The photos were taken in Sylhet, Chattogram and Barishal yesterday.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR, RAJIB RAIHAN, TITU DAS

Dua Mahfil held for Rouf Chowdhury

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dua Mahfil for eminent businessman A Rouf Chowdhury was held at the Gulshan Central Masjid in the capital after Asr prayers yesterday.

Eminent personalities, businessmen, bankers, friends and hundreds of well-wishers joined the event and prayed for the salvation of the departed soul.

Rouf Chowdhury, founding chairman of Rangs Group and Sea Resources Group, passed away at his residence in the capital on Saturday.

He was 86 years old. Chowdhury had a dynamic foothold in the print media; he was one of the directors of Mediaworld Ltd, the parent company of The Daily Star.

The noted entrepreneur is survived by his son Romo Rouf Chowdhury, and daughters Romana Rouf Chowdhury and Sohana Rouf Chowdhury.

The dynamic businessman, who was blessed with extraordinary farsightedness, was laid to eternal rest at his ancestral village in Malkhanagar area of Munshiganj beside the graves of his parents.

Attending the Dua Mahfil programme, Prime Minister's Energy Adviser Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury lauded Rouf Chowdhury's contribution in employment generation in banking and other sectors.

Romo Rouf Chowdhury sought blessing from the attending guests for the eternal peace of his father's departed soul.

Graduated in business management from Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the US, A Rouf Chowdhury founded over 50 firms over the last four decades.

He invested in automobiles, petroleum, pharmaceuticals, real estate, IT, deep-sea fishing, telecommunications, electronics, food processing, banking, and insurance firms.

He started his career at a pharmaceutical company and began his own business in 1979.

His thoughts opened doors to economic development and introduced new dimensions to the country's trade and industry.

Chowdhury spearheaded the formation of Bank Asia in 1999 by acquiring the Bangladesh operations of the Canadian Bank of Nova Scotia.

He received numerous awards, including the lifetime achievement award from the UK Bangladesh Catalysts of Commerce & Industry.



MAYOR ANNISUL HUQ ROAD

The curse of illegal parking



SAJJAD HOSSAIN

Mayor Annisul Huq Road, a major thoroughfare in Dhaka, is severely plagued with illegal parking.

Despite efforts by the Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) to prevent vehicles from parking illegally, the road has become increasingly narrow due to the two additional rickshaw lanes. This has led to increased traffic congestion, with trucks, pickups, and covered vans continuing to park on the road, said locals.

Experts said the situation has become dire for the capital's residents, who are struggling to navigate the city due to the illegal parking on this major road. DNCC has been criticised for its inability to enforce parking laws and provide alternative parking options.

The road connects Tejgaon, Farmgate and Karwan Bazar with Mohakhali, and Banani-Gulshan-Niketon. Many people use this road, including students from at least 10 educational institutions, and employees of government and private offices.

In December 2015, late DNCC mayor Annisul Huq cleared the road of these vehicles, overcoming strong opposition from transport workers. It has thus become an embodiment of the late mayor's tireless efforts to bring down traffic congestion.

However, the road, which was named Annisul Huq Road following

road safety," he added.

Another rickshaw-puller Didar Mollah said, "I have to face verbal abuse from passengers who are getting late due to the traffic congestion."

Meanwhile, school students, who regularly use the road, have also expressed the difficulties caused by the traffic congestion.

In December 2015, late DNCC mayor Annisul Huq cleared the road of these vehicles, overcoming strong opposition from transport workers. It has thus become an embodiment of the late mayor's tireless efforts to bring down traffic congestion. However, the road, which was named Annisul Huq Road following his death in 2017, has continued to suffer from the same problem.

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"As a rickshaw-puller, navigating this road has become a daily struggle for me," said Alauddin Hossain. "Not only does this affect my income but it also increases my struggle to navigate through the

Tariq Hossain, a student of Rajdhani High School, said, "I often arrive late to school due to the increased traffic congestion caused by parked vehicles."

Pedestrian Jannat Mirza, a private university student, said,

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Conning people inside the secretariat 7 of gang that 'stole crores' by promising jobs held

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

As per the plan, the gang first arranged for entrance passes to get into the secretariat.

The members then welcomed at least 20 applicants for a fake recruitment test inside the establishment.

Finally, they gave fake appointment letters with a barcode to selected candidates. For "recruitment", the gang took around Tk 12 lakh from each candidate through cheques.

This is just one of the episodes of how these criminals defrauded job seekers.

This whole strategy centres around a recruitment advert the Public Works Department published on April 6, 2022 to appoint 449 officials.

Although actual appointments have been completed, the gang has reportedly embezzled crores from at least a hundred people by making them believe that recruitment is still open.

The arrestees even used names of noted ruling party leaders in Noakhali and ministers to assure job seekers that a special written and viva test will be held under a quota system.

MASHIUR RAHMAN
Deputy Commissioner of DB
(Lalbagh)

Police's detective branch (DB) disclosed this information following the arrest of seven gang members from different areas of Dhaka and Rajbari recently.

DB (Lalbagh division) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police seized several hundred applications, certificates of hundreds of people, test questions, fake appointment letters, bank cheques, phones, and laptops from their possession.

The arrestees are Alamgir Hossain, Rezaul Hoque Titu, Humayun Kabir, Polash Chandra Sarker, Md Asadul Haque, Jahid Hasan, and Asaduzzaman alias Babu.

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'Bring the officer to book immediately'

Rights, journalist orgs condemn police assault on Kaler Kantho reporter

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Manabdhikar Sanskriti Foundation (MSF) decried the police assault and harassment faced by a journalist of daily Kaler Kantho, which happened while covering the recent Gulshan fire.

In a statement sent to the media, signed by its founder Sultana Kamal, the organisation expressed deep concern about how an officer of Gulshan Police Station assaulted Jahirul Islam, staff reporter of the newspaper, while the latter was carrying out his professional duties.

"He was beaten up and injured, harassed, verbally abused, and his phone was snatched away," alleged the statement. During the assault, Jahirul was live broadcasting the fire at a residential building in Gulshan-2.

"MSF believes that the way police treated the journalist is extremely unjust and unexpected. When the government states that it believes in the freedom of press, incidents like this prove the impediments to independent journalism," said the statement.

The organisation demanded that the police officer be identified and brought to justice.

A separate statement issued by Dhaka Reporters' Unity said it is unacceptable that

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SCBA election likely on March 15, 16

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The annual election of the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) is likely to be held on March 15 and 16.

SCBA Secretary Md Abdun Nur Dulal told The Daily Star that the current body of the country's prime bar association will officially announce the schedule on February 23.

More than 8,000 lawyers have registered their names

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Back from the procession at Shaheed Minar, many walked right into Boi Mela yesterday. A large number of children were also seen browsing through the stalls and pavilions with their parents, dressed in clothes that reflected the spirit of the day. This photo was taken in Suhrawardy Udyan.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Aglow with Ekushey spirit

DIPAN NANDY

As scores of people placed floral wreaths on the pedestal of Central Shaheed Minar yesterday, they also thronged the nearby Ekushey book fair, which commemorates the sacrifice made in 1952 through literature.

Many tagged along with their family and friends, adorned in black and white clothes with Bangla alphabets printed on top. Faces of little ones were seen covered in the alphabets too.

The spirit of Ekushey was emphasised further by the music playing on speakers and speeches from the stage.

Yesterday was the fair's longest day, opening from 8:00am and continuing all till 9:00pm. Throughout

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PRAYER TIMING
FEBRUARY 22

Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5:20	12:45	4:30	6:03	7:30
JAMAAT 5:55	1:15	4:45	6:07	8:00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION