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FROM: PIO, PID, DHAKA  
Fax: 9540553/9540026  
E-mail: piddhaka@gmail.com  
piddhaka@yahoo.com  
Web: www.pressinform.gov.bd

**News Brief**

The nation observed the Amar Ekushey and International Mother Language Day yesterday, paying glowing tribute to the martyrs of the historic Language Movement of 1952. President Md. Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina led the nation in placing wreaths at the Central Shaheed Minar at one minute past on February 21. The President and the PM, after placing wreaths, stood in solemn silence to pay homage to those who laid down their lives to establish Bangla as the state language.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has laid emphasis on practicing and using Bangla language properly and upholding the country's culture and heritage to promote its image across the globe. The PM made the emphasis while inaugurating a four-day programme arranged by International Mother Language Institute coinciding with the Ekushey February. The PM said, Ekush taught us not to yield to any oppression and that teaching eventually enabled us to earn our Independence.

President Md. Abdul Hamid left for Singapore yesterday night for medical check-up. A regular flight of Singapore Airlines carrying the President took off from Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport at 11:55 pm. The President is expected to return home on February 27.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina goes to Rajshahi today to join the 6th Corps Reunion of Bangladesh Army Engineering Corps. During the daylong visit, she will address a public meeting at Madrasa Moidan in the afternoon. The PM is scheduled to inaugurate 21 development projects and lay foundation stones of 12 other schemes.

Road, Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader has demanded, the Bangla language, in which around 30 crore people of the world read, write and speak, be declared as one of the official languages of the United Nations. The Minister made the demand as he was talking to journalists after paying homage to the language martyrs at the Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka yesterday .

Forty seven years after its independence, Bangladesh is set to celebrate the status of a 'Developing Country' in place of the existing LDC trajectory. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will formally announce Bangladesh as a Developing Country at a function in the city on March 22.

The Chinese State Council has finally given the go-ahead to the \$3.14 billion loan for the Padma rail link project that can be viewed as a massive thrust to the project's implementation. Of the 26 projects committed by China during its Premier's visit to Dhaka in 2016, the rail link is the most pressing one, receiving the highest amount of loan.

The Asian Development Bank has approved \$360 million in loans for Bangladesh Railway to buy modern rail equipment and support reforms in the state-run transportation system. The approval came at the meeting of the board of directors of the multilateral lender held at its headquarters in Manila, Philippines yesterday.

Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu has said, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is engaged in a battle against militancy and corruption."There will be no relief for corrupt elements nor will there be any leniency for war criminals," he said. The Minister was speaking at a meeting organized by Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal at Jaldhaka upazilla , Nilphamari on Tuesday.

The Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the United Nations observed the Language Martyrs' Day and International Mother Language Day in New York in a befitting manner. On the occasion, officials and staffs of the mission and Bangladesh expatriates placed wreaths at the Shaheed Minar temporarily set up at the mission at the first hour of February 21. The Day was also observed yesterday at the Vihara Mahadevi Park in Colombo in cooperation with the Bangladesh High Commission to Sri Lanka.

DSEX, the prime index of the DSE, closed on Tuesday with 5,909.03 points.

**Kamrun Nahar**  
Principal Information Officer  
Ph-02-9546091