

Martyred Intellectuals Day being observed

BSS – The Martyred Intellectuals Day is being observed today across the country.

The nation recalls the mass killing of a large number of Bangladesh's top brains by the Pakistan army and their collaborators visibly sensing their defeat just two days ahead of the emergence of Dhaka as the free capital of free Bangladesh.

The occupation troops and their Bengali speaking collaborators carried out a systemic killing throughout the nine months of Liberation War but the December 14 appeared to be a systematic massacre to expose the new born country to a state of brainlessness.

National programmes have been chalked out to observe the Martyred Intellectuals Day in a befitting manner. Different political and socio-cultural organizations have also drawn up various programmes in observance of the day.

On the eve of the day, President Mohammed Shahabuddin and Chief Adviser Professor Dr. Muhammad Yunus gave separate messages paying profound respect to the memories of martyred intellectuals.

As per state programme, the president and the chief adviser placed separate wreaths at Mirpur Martyred Intellectuals Memorial in the morning.

Liberation War Affairs Adviser, members of the martyred families and the valiant freedom fighters including wounded freedom fighters also placed wreaths at the Intellectuals' Memorial and Rayer Bazar killing ground to pay homage to the martyred intellectuals.

People from all walks of life, as well, started laying wreaths at the Intellectuals' Memorial from 8.30 am.

Different television and radio channels including Bangladesh Television (BTV) and Bangladesh Betar are airing special programmes while national dailies published special supplements highlighting the significance of the day.

Discussions will be held at all district and upazila levels of the country while special prayers will be offered at all mosques, temples, churches, pagodas and other places of worship marking the day.

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) has also taken elaborate programme to observe the day. BNP's Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman gave a message on the eve of the day.

To mark the day, national flags are kept half mast and black flags are hoisted atop all BNP offices across the country including central office at Nayapaltan in the capital at the dawn.

Leaders and activists of the party and its associate and front organizations pay tributes to the memory of martyred intellectuals by placing wreaths at the Mirpur Intellectuals' Memorial in the morning.

Martyred Intellectuals Day is the most poignant day in the history of the country's independence and struggle for freedom.

At the end of the nine-month bloody liberation war, when the people of the entire country were on the verge of final victory, the members of Razakars, Al-Badr, Al-Shams and the Peace Committee indulged in the massacre of intellectuals on that day.

This brutal massacre to deprive the nation of their intellectuals at the final moment of victory shocked the

entire nation and the entire world that day.

Just two days before the surrender of the Pakistani occupation forces, on the dark night of December 14, 1971, a gang of assassins blindfolded and took about 150 intellectuals and people of various professions to an unknown location in Dhaka city alone.

That night, under the curfew, teachers, journalists, doctors, engineers, lawyers, artists-litterateurs, cultural workers and high-ranking government and private officials were dragged out of their homes by following a list. Later, they were killed and left in the silent, eerie darkness.

The next morning, many lifeless bodies were seen lying scattered in the ditches and drain of Mirpur and Rayer bazar brickyards in Dhaka. Some were killed in bullet firing or tortured inhumanly.

Many had their hands tied behind their backs and their intestines had been removed with charging bayonets.

From the nationally published Martyred Intellectuals Day collection in 1972, news published in various publications and from the write-up of internationally renowned journalist Nicholas Tomalin at the international news magazine "Newsweek", the total number of martyred intellectuals is as high as 1,070.

In the long liberation struggle of the people of Bangladesh, these intellectuals inspired the organizers of independence through their intellect, thinking and writing. They showed the path to liberation. They inspired the entire nation in the struggle for rights. The birth of an independent state was not tolerated by the anti-liberation clique at all.

Although December 14 is remembered as the day of the massacre of intellectuals, this most heinous crime in history actually began on December 10. Throughout the week, the names of

intelligent and courageous people appeared one by one on their list.

Originally, from December 10, the listed intellectuals were blindfolded and taken from their homes to Rayerbazar and Mirpur killing grounds in the dark of night and brutally killed.

The first Martyred Intellectuals Memorial was built in Mirpur, Dhaka in memory of the martyred intellectuals. In 1991, construction of another memorial named the Martyred Intellectuals Memorial began in Rayerbazar, Dhaka, which was inaugurated on December 14, 1999.