

SHANGHAI NOW

Friday, December 17, 2021

Memorial ceremony for victims of Nanjing Massacre

IN front of the darkly dressed crowd, China's national flag flew at half-mast as the country held its eighth national memorial ceremony on Monday for the victims of the Nanjing Massacre.

Despite the winter chill, thousands of people who observed epidemic prevention protocols attended the ceremony in Nanjing, east China's Jiangsu Province, with white flowers on their lapels conveying condolences.

At exactly 10:01am, sirens blared out and the city came to a halt. Drivers in the downtown area stopped their cars and honked; pedestrians paused for a minute of silence in remembrance of the victims.

The commemoration proclaimed the Chinese people's firm stance on learning from history to create a bright future and their noble aspiration for adhering to the path of peaceful development, said Chinese Vice Premier Sun Chunlan while addressing the ceremony.

Sun, also a member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, was joined by about 3,000 people from all walks of life wearing white flowers on their lapels.

Under the leadership of the Party, the Chinese people have realized the first centenary goal of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects as scheduled and embarked on a new journey to build China into a great modern socialist country in all respects, Sun said. She added that China's national rejuvenation became a historical inevitability.

"It is the greatest consolation to the victims of the Nanjing Massacre, the martyrs, and all those who died during the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression," Sun said.



Left: A Shanghai resident bows outside the Sihang Warehouse Memorial on Monday as China marked the eighth national memorial day for the victims of the Nanjing Massacre.

Below: White chrysanthemum flowers were placed by residents outside the Sihang Warehouse Battle Memorial in Shanghai. — Photos by Jiang Xiaowei



Following Sun's speech, 84 teenagers read out a declaration of peace. Six citizen representatives struck the Bell of Peace. A total of 3,000 white doves, symbolizing peace, were released over the memorial square.

In Shanghai, white chrysanthemum flowers were placed by residents outside the Sihang Warehouse Battle Memorial.

Immigration inspection officials took off their hats and placed white flowers at the site.

"We had to come here today. We should remember history and also tell the next generation about it," said a visitor.

Due to the pandemic, the

regular memorial ceremony was not held to avoid crowds. But a WeChat mini program for the memorial was launched, allowing people to light a virtual candle online for peace.

The Nanjing Massacre took place when Japanese troops captured the city on December 13, 1937. Over the next six weeks, they killed more than 300,000 Chinese civilians and unarmed soldiers in one of the most barbaric episodes of World War II.

In 2014, China's top legislature designated December 13 as the national memorial day for the victims of the massacre.

(Shanghai Daily/Agencies)

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