

*LANGUAGE MOVEMENT (21<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY 1952)*

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# The Bangla Language Movement

The Bangla Language movement is a unique event in the history of the political Movement of Bangladesh. Bengali was the mother tongue of about 56 percent of the people of Pakistan. On the other hand, Urdu was the mother tongue of only 6 percent people of the whole of Pakistan. Although 56 percent of the people of Pakistan were Bengalis, the West Pakistani didn't want Bengali to become the state language.

## Various Stages of Language Movement

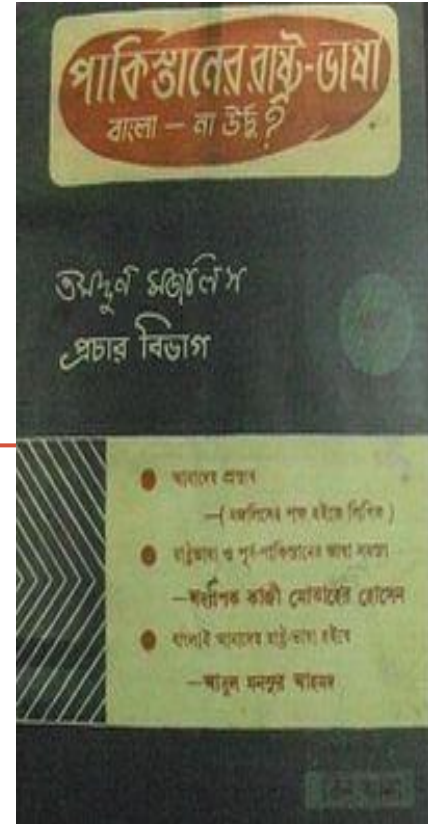


# The first stage of Language Movement

## Formation of Tamaddun Majlish:

On 15 September 1947 Tamaddun Majlish published the booklet on the Language Movement entitled “Pakistaner Rastrabhasha Bangla Na Urdu.” Prof. Abul Kashem, Dr. Qazi Motahar Hossain and Abul Mansur Ahmed were the authors of this booklet.

In October 1947, Tamaddun Majlish formed Rastrabhasha Sangram Parishad to give the Language Movement an organizational structure.



# The first stage of Language Movement

Declaration of Karachi  
education summit- Urdu will  
be the state language of  
Pakistan.

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- In response to it students  
of Dhaka university in a  
meeting demanded Bangla  
be made an official language  
on December 1947.

# 1948

-In February, Dhirendranath Datta proposed in the assembly to allow members to speak Bangla and allow to be used for official purpose.

-Ruling party rejected the proposal.



# 1948

-Sarbadaliya Rastrabhasha Sangram Parishad on March 2.

-11<sup>th</sup> March, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman arrested

-On that day, many students were injured and many leaders including Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Shamsul Huq and Oli Ahad were arrested. It was decided that 11 March would be declared '**Bengali Language Demand Day**'.

**-On 15<sup>th</sup> March, The Chief Minister Khwaja Nazimuddin** signed an agreement with SRSP. He agreed to release the arrested students, to investigate police excesses, to move a Bill in the Assembly for making Bengali a state language of East Bengal Province.

# 1948



**Announcement of Muhammad Ali Jinnah:** On *21 March 1948*, Muhammad Ali Jinnah visited Dhaka and addressed a public meeting at the then Racecourse Maidan. In that meeting, he declared, "Urdu and only Urdu shall be the state language of Pakistan".

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He repeated these words at the Dhaka University Convocation Ceremony held on *24 March at the Curzon Hall*, the students protested vehemently by shouting 'No, No'.



From this time (March'1948) on till he died Jinnah never again said that he wanted Urdu as the only state language of Pakistan (Rahman 2012. P. 99). Those who wanted Urdu as the only state language had just one argument to back them: it was, they said, an '**Islamic language**'. But we could not figure out how Urdu had ended up becoming as Islamic language' (Rahman 2012. P. 98).

**Proposed of the introduction of Arabic script:** In 1948, It is proposed that introduction of Arabic script or Urdu letters for writing Bengali. Dr. Shahidullah was proposed to be appointed for the purpose of introducing the Arabic script. But he rejected the proposal.



# 1948

On that day, Rastrabhasha Parishad submitted a memorandum to Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

Abul kasem, Kamruddin Ahmed, Tajuddin Ahmed,  
~~Lili Khan, Oli Ahad, Mohammad Toaha~~ were present.

Ali Jinnah Rejected the aggrement of Najimuddin and Rastrabhasha Sangram Parishad.

# Final stage Of Language Movement

## **Formation of Purbo Bangla Bhasha Committee:**

On 9 March 1949, the Government of East Bengal formed the Purbo Bangla Bhasha Committee for reforming the Bengali language. Maulana Akram Khan was the President of this Committee.

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**Announcement of Liaquat Ali Khan:** In September 1950, The Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan declared in the Constituent Assembly that only Urdu would be the state language of Pakistan. But in the face of strong protest from the people of East Bengal, the Constituent Assembly postponed the discussion.

**1952**

-27<sup>th</sup> January Khwaja Nazimuddin repeated the similar demand.

-31 January, All Party central Language Action committee formed.

-4 February Procession by the students of Jagannath College

-Action committee called for an all out protest on 21 February.

# 1952

-Imposition of section 144

-Students violated section 144, police arrested several students and opened up fire and killed a number of students including Salam, Rafiq, Barkat and Zabbar.



The first Shahid Minar. This photograph was taken on Feb 24, 1952. It appears to be the only surviving high-quality photograph of the first Shahid Minar

— Photo: Dr Abdul Hafiz

# Major Events after 21<sup>st</sup> February

**On 22 February:** “Gayebana Janaza” held for Ekushey martyrs. Then a big rally, came out on the street as a mark of protest. Police opened fire on this rally too. As a result, Safiur Rahman was killed. On the same day, in a meeting of the students held at the Dhaka Medical College hostel, it was decided to build a Shaheed Minar. Accordingly, the Students erected a 12-feet high Shaheed Minar in front of DMC.

**On 23 February:** The father of Shaheed Safiur Rahman formally inaugurated the Shaheed Minar. But in the evening of 24 February, police demolished this Shaheed Minar. In memory of that, another Shaheed Minar was built later the same site and that is the present Central Shaheed Minar.



# 1954

-After continued unrest and widespread protest, on 7<sup>th</sup> may the constituent assembly grant official status of Bangla.

-It becomes the second official language on 29<sup>th</sup> February 1956.

For more knowing, you may follow the recommended video link.....

- <https://youtu.be/IQ6jJG0qYRU?si=5p9e3v3SSdwbjjHR>
- <https://youtu.be/HOJ8ahH8cco?si=-GJK2un9I2NNSk1F>

# Significance

The Language Movement of 1952 was the first organized expression of the consciousness of the exploited and deprived masses of Bangladesh.

~~This consciousness born out of the Language Movement inspired all the subsequent Movements and helped to achieve the political, the cultural and the economic freedom leading to independence.~~



## Significance

- ❑ This movement laid a major foundation of our liberation war.
- ❑ On February 29, 1956: Recognition made on the Pakistan constitution that “The state language of Pakistan shall be Urdu and Bengali.”
- ❑ UNESCO recognized 21<sup>st</sup> February as International Mother Language Day in 1999.
- ❑ International Status of Bangla Language (*Sierra Leone*)

# Significance

This movement acted as the inspirational for the following movements:

- ❑ Landslide victory in the provincial election in 1954 (In the East Bengal Legislative Assembly the United Front got 236 out of 309 seats)
- ❑ Constitutional Movement in 1956
- ❑ Education Movement in 1962
- ❑ Six-points Movement in 1966
- ❑ Mass-uprising in 1969
- ❑ Great victory in 1971

**Thank You**

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