

---

# EMERGENCE OF BANGLADESH

Colonial Attacks on Language and Culture



# OUTLINE LECTURE: 6

## Colonial Attacks on Language and Culture

### *Learning Objectives:*

- **Understand nationalism and its theoretical framework.**
- **Know how Bengali nationalism emerged among the people of East Pakistan.**
- **Explain repressive treatment of West Pakistan over Bengali language.**
- **Get how cultural frontier played pivotal role in creating a political platform for Bengalis.**
- **Identify how Language Movement united the people of East Pakistan against the misrule of Muslim League.**

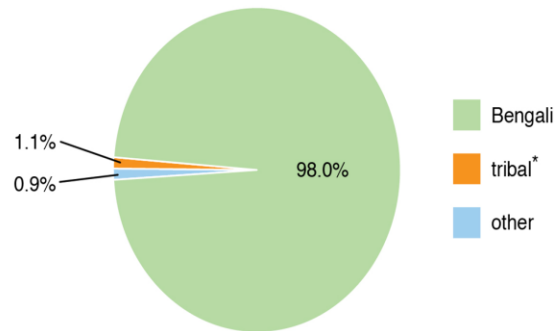
# DISSIMILARITIES BETWEEN TWO WINGS

## *Factors of difference*

- **Ethnic build-up**
- **Language**
- **Tradition**
- **Culture**
- **Social behavior pattern**
- **Economic activity**

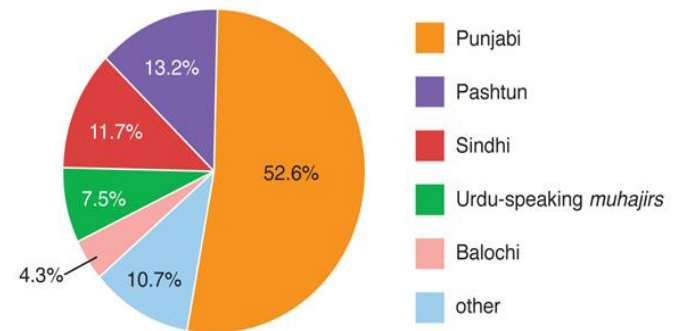


# ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF LANGUAGE IN PAKISTAN



© Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.

\*Includes Chakma, Saontal, and Marma tribal groups.



© Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.

## Ethnic composition in East Pakistan

## Ethnic composition in West Pakistan

### Adherence to Religious Sects, 1951

Area	Per cent of total adherents			
	Muslim	Hindu	Christian	Other
PAKISTAN	85.9	12.9	0.7	0.5
East Pakistan	76.8	22.0	0.3	0.9
West Pakistan	97.1	1.6	1.3	---

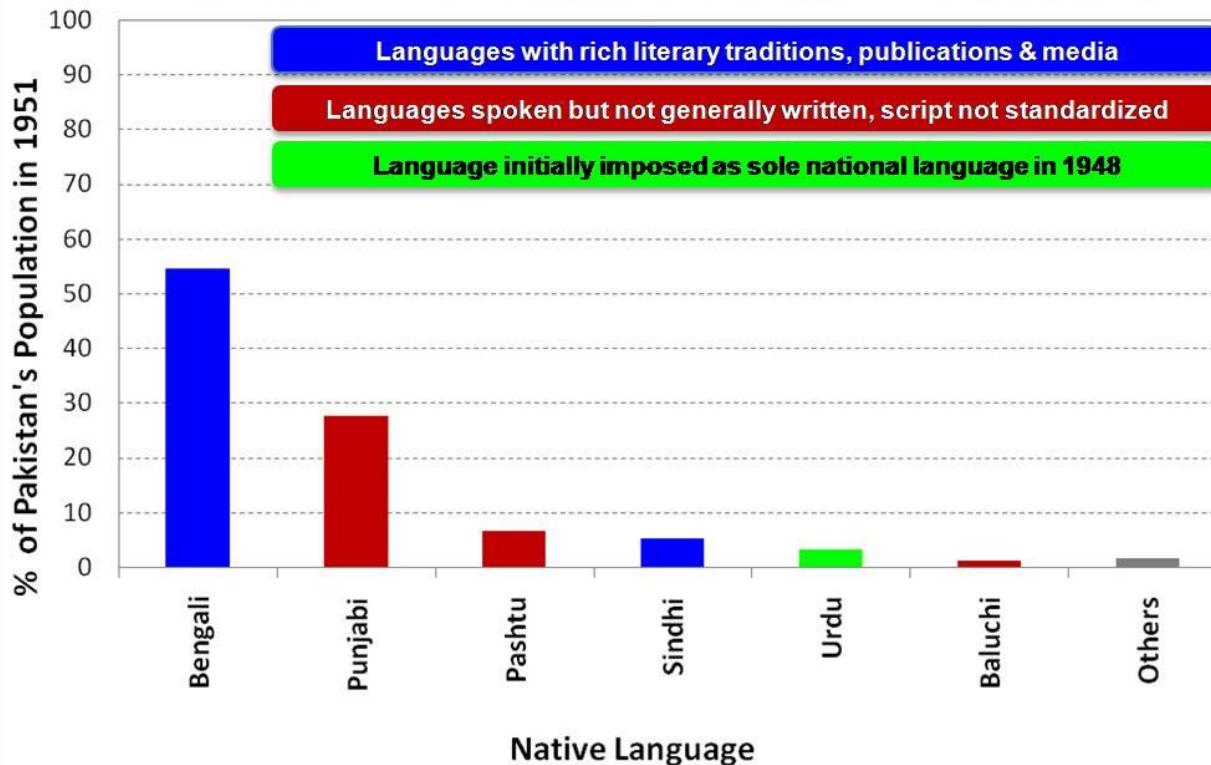
Source: Census of Pakistan, 1951, I, Table 6-2.

Source: *A Survey of Pakistan Society, 1956* by Maron, Stanli.

# URDU AS A STATE LANGUAGE

## Linguistic Demographics of Pakistan (1951)

Source: Katharine Adeney (2007); Charted at: <http://www.theleftcoaster.com>



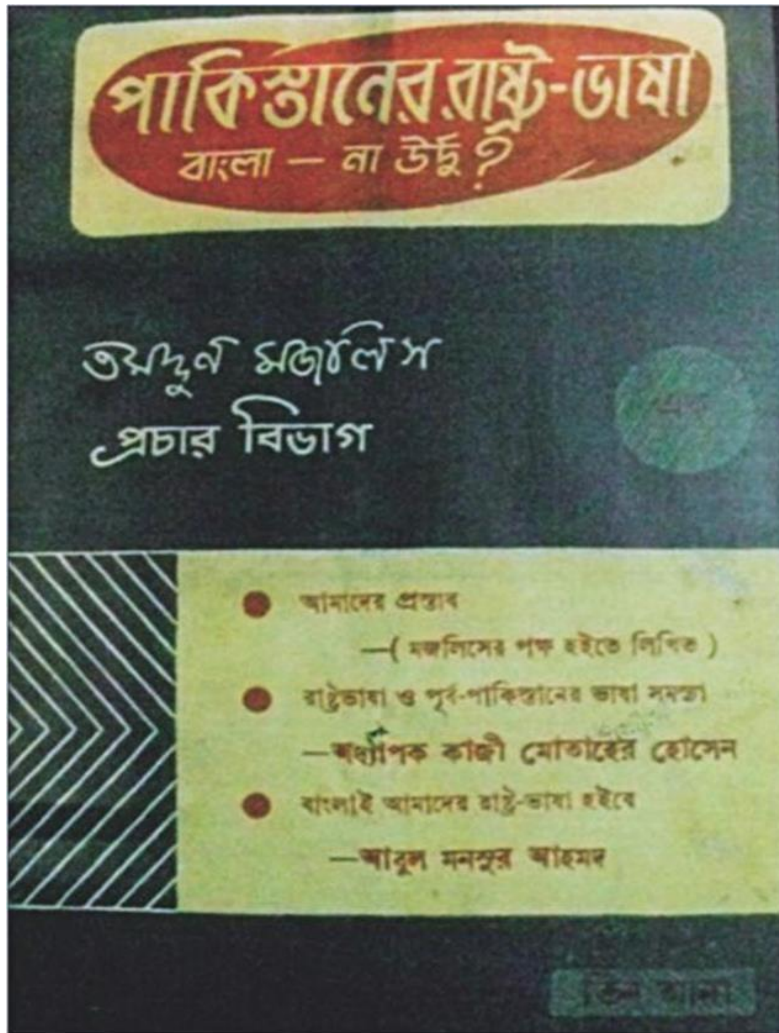
- **URDU** was the language of the 'Ashraf' class
- Urdu was spoken by 3% of the population
- Bangla was spoken by more than 50% of the population of Pakistan
- Bangla was rich in literature

# INITIAL STAGE OF LANGUAGE MOVEMENT

- Issue of language was raised immediately after the creation of Pakistan
- Attempt from West Pakistani leaders to create a *lingua franca* (a common language) as the state language
- Prof. Ziauddin Ahmed proposed Urdu as the state language of Pakistan
- Language was considered as political tool to solidify unity between East and West Pakistan
- Number of youth organizations were formed in East Pakistan (Gono Azadi League, Democratic Youth League, TAMADDUN MAJLISH, East Pakistan Youth League)



# TAMADDUN MAJLISH



- *Tamaddun Majlish* played the pioneering role to protest against the attempt of making Urdu as the only state language of Pakistan.
- *Tamaddun Majlish* issued a pamphlet on 15 September 1947 titled *Pakistaner Rashtra Bhasha: Bangla na Urdu* (Pakistan's State Language: Bangla or Urdu) edited by Professor Abul Quasem.
- *Tamaddun Majlish* took initiatives to form the first *Rastrabhasa Sangram Parisad* (State Language Committee of Action) on 1 October 1947.

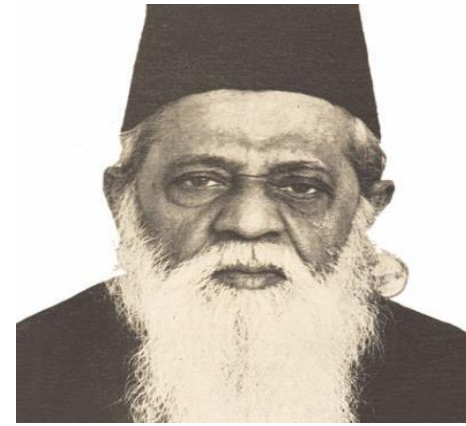
# TAMADDUN MAJLISH



**Dewan Mohammad Azraf**



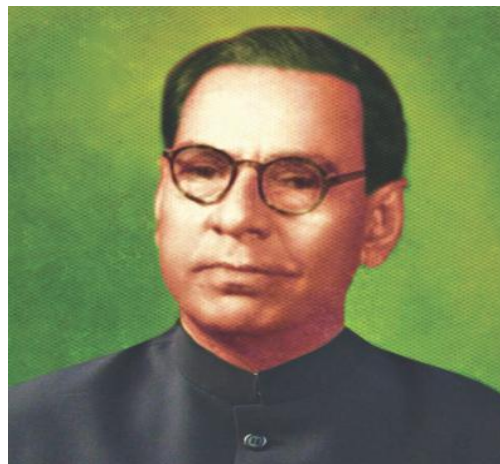
**Kaji Motahar Hossain**



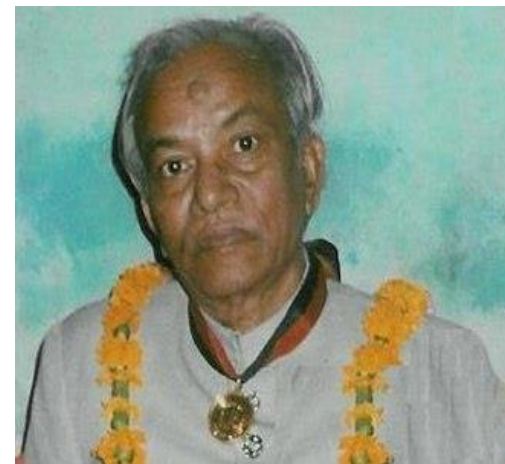
**Dr. Muhammad Shahidullah**



**Kazi Golam Mahbub**



**Abul Mansur Ahmad**



**Principal Abul Kashem**

Some leaders and activists of *Tamaddun Majlish*



# ON LINGUA FRANCA



*Syed Mujtaba Ali* wrote “Purba Pakistan er Rastrobhasha” in 1949 where he predicted Bengali will never accept Urdu and it will eventually lead to separation.

In the Pakistan Constituent Assembly in 1948, *Dhirendranath Datta* demanded the use of Bangla along with English and Urdu for conducting Assembly proceedings.



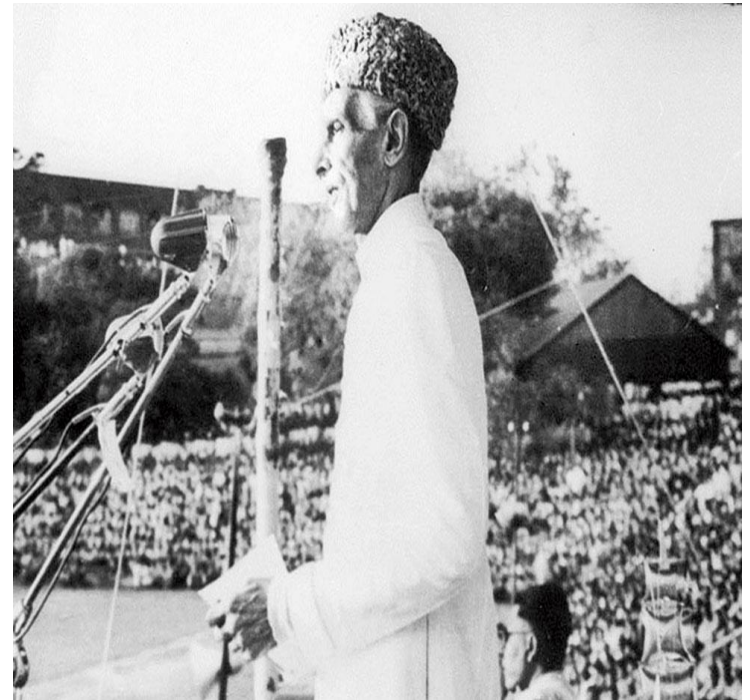
# STUDENTS IN MOVEMENT

- State Language Committee of Action (SLCA) was formed consisting to representatives from the organizations such as: **Gono Azadi League, Democratic Youth League, Tamaddun Majlis, Salimullah Muslim Hall, Fazlul Haque Muslim Hall, and East Pakistan Muslim Students League, Student Union**
- SLCA along with other organizations later evolved to **All Party State Language Committee (1948)**
- Number of strikes were held from february till early March



# STUDENTS IN MOVEMENT

- Bengali Newspapers were banned
- A conferences took place between the SLCA and Khwaja Nazimuddin regarding negotiation over state language and Nazimuddin accepted 8 points by the SLCA, Nazimuddin was mostly in support of Urdu
- Some of Youth Representatives were released from jail
- Jinnah Arrived in Dhaka 19th March 1948
- Jinnah Declared Urdu as the only language and Nazim Uddin's deal was void
- Students protested immediately after Jinnah's speech



# EAST PAKISTAN AWAMI MUSLIM LEAGUE

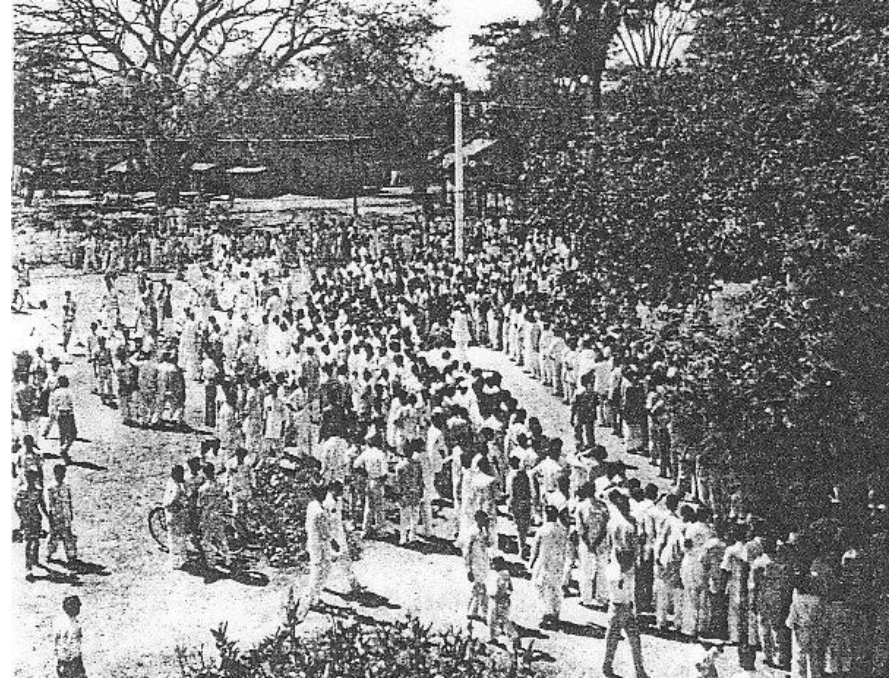


From the left Sheikh Mujib, Maulana Abdul Hamid khan Bhashani, Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy (1949)

- The Awami Muslim League was founded in Rose Garden of KM Das Lane, Dhaka on 23 June 1949
- Maulana Abdul Hamid khan Bhashani was the president of the Awami League



# 21 FEBRUARY, 1952



The historic gathering of students in front of Dhaka Medical College entrance and Language Martyrs

- The Dhaka University State Language Committee of Action took the initiative to violate the 144 CrPc. Oli Ahad, Abdul Matin, Shamsul Alam, Dr Golam Mawla voted to violate the 144 CrPc.



## 21 FEBRUARY, 1952

- Police Fired at the protestors where a student and an unknown boy on the roadside died immediately. Later on till 22nd february total number of confirmed martyrs were 8.
- Police removed the bodies on the night of 21st to the Azimpur graveyard secretly.



Abdul Awal



Mohammad Ohiullah



# A NATIONWIDE MOVEMENT



**22 February rally after janaza at Dhaka Medical College**

- The reaction to the police killings in students' procession was immediate.
- All over the country, schools and colleges held protest meetings, rallies and processions. on 22-23rd February



**Students of Dhaka Fine Arts Institute brings out a rally on 21 February 1953**

# SPIRIT OF THE MOVEMENT



**Abdul Gaffar Chowdhury**

Wrote the Poem “আমার ভাইয়ের রক্তে রাঙানো” in 1952 in spirit of the language movement

**Altaf Mahmud**

Composed the “Ekusher Gaan” based on the poem in 1969

Brutally murdered as an intellectual during the time of Liberation War (1971)



# ATTACK ON CULTURE CONTINUES

- Demand for status of state language for Bangla continues
- Though Bangla was considered as a state language in 1956 constitution the assault on Bengali culture continued.
- During Ayub era the idea of writing Bangla in Roman script was propagated.
- Considering the poems and songs of Rabindranath Tagore as against values of Pakistan state government stopped broadcasting those in Radio Pakistan in 1967.
- Bangla New Year Celebration, *Pahela Baishak* was considered as a festival of the minorities, the Hindu community.
- Relation of language and employment was a serious issue, urdu speaking people would get special privileges



# 1948-1956 in pictures



১৯৫৬ সালে সেই সময়ের আবু হোসেন সরকারের বিরুদ্ধে ভাখা মিছিল। সামনের সারিতে বাম দিক থেকে তাজউদ্দিন আহমদ, মাঝখানে কালো চশমা পরিহিত অলি আহাদ, ইয়ার মোহাম্মদ খান, জাহিরুদ্দিন আহমদ, আতাউর রহমান খান, মহিউদ্দিন আহমদ ও মন্টু খান



১৯৫৫ সালে ফুলবাড়ীয়া রেল স্টেশনে মাওলানা আব্দুল হামিদ খাঁঁ ভাসানী, অলি আহাদ, শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান



# Suggested Readings

**The Emergence of Bangladesh**

**Volume I**

**(1947-1958)**

**by Badruddin Umar**

**Chapter: 5,20,21**

**Link to Timelines:**

<https://www.timetoast.com/timelines/time-line-a-brief-history-of-the-bangla-language-movement-2671e6a4-e08f-4710-aa7d-6348ac63dd3c>

<https://www.thedailystar.net/entertainment/theatre-arts/news/abdul-gaffar-chowdhury-legacy-beyond-words-3613551>