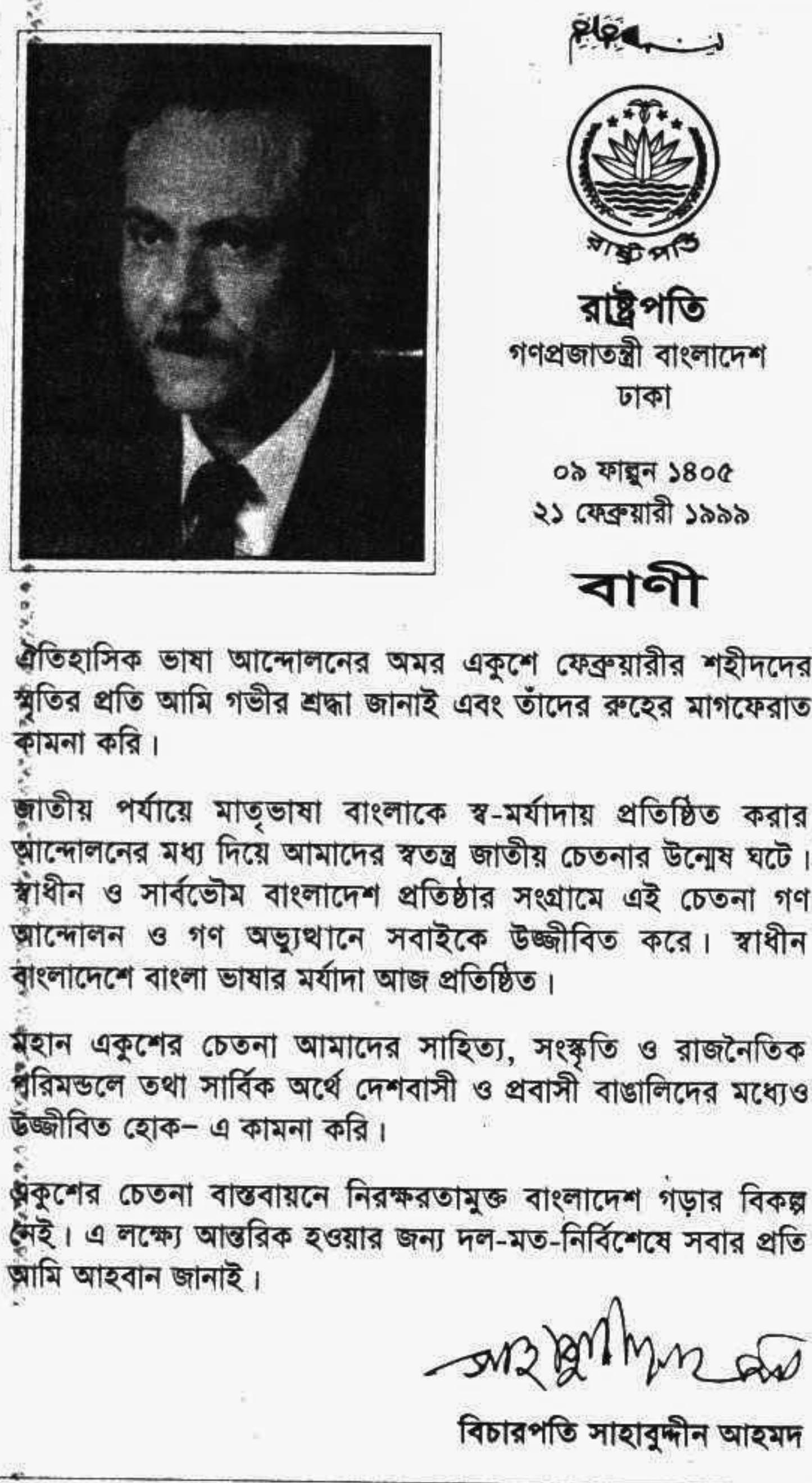


বিশেষ ক্রোড়পত্র

রবিবার ফেব্রুয়ারি ২১, ১৯৯৯

অঙ্গসজ্জা ও পরিকল্পনায় : ট্রিউন (প্রাঃ) লিমিটেড



The Language Movement and Bangabandhu

Rafiqul Islam Ratan

Hossein and Abul Mansur Ahmed. It created a sensation all around.

Resolute demands were again raised for state language Bangla at the meeting of East Pakistan Literary Sangsads held at Fazlul Haque Muslim Hall on 5 November. In the meantime, on 7 September, East Pakistan Democratic Youth League was formed under the foresighted leadership of young and dynamic leader of the student and youth community Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. In the preamble to the Youth League, Sheikh Mujib said that the only medium of education in East Pakistan would have to be Bangla. Bangla would be the state language. Bangabandhu's proposals were supported by all Youth League leaders including Shamsul Haque, Tasadduq Hossein, Akhlaqur Rahman and Ataur Rahman.

movement and giving impetus to the Language Movement. As the whole of East Pakistan became vocal on the issue of language in 1948, a session of the Pakistan Constituent Assembly started in Karachi on 23 February, 1948. In that session, the fiery and eloquent Dhirendranath Datta placed strong arguments in favour of using Bangla in the session side by side with English and Urdu. He put forward a resolution which caused an uproar in the House.

As a fall-out to this episode, a militant procession was brought out in Dhaka which was led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. On 2 March, the second All Party State Language Action Committee was formed after reconstituting the first committee at a meeting held at Fazlul Haque Hall and attended by delegates

Mahbub and Oli Ahad were arrested. In protest, a non-stop strike was started in all educational institutions of the province including Dhaka University from March 13.

This movement added a new episode to the annals of movements in this country.

On 14 March, a complete work-stoppage was observed. In the meantime, while preparing the ground for the arrival of Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the Chief Minister Khawaja Nazimuddin met with the leaders of the Action Committee on 15 March and signed a 7-point agreement. As per the terms of this agreement signed by Khawaja Nazimuddin and Kamaruddin Ahmed, the arrested leaders including Shamsul Haque and Sheikh Mujib were released in the evening by the government.

ception held at Racecourse Maidan on 21 March, he declared that only Urdu would be the state language of Pakistan. Immediate protests followed from Shamsul Haque, Sheikh Mujib, Tajuddin, Abdul Matin and Oli Ahad who shouted 'No, No', while standing in a group at the site.

When Jinnah could not make much of a headway while meeting the leaders of the Action Committee on 24 March, he left the venue. The leaders then submitted a memorandum to Jinnah.

After the sudden death of Jinnah on 11 September 1948, the attitude of the ruling class softened a bit.

At this time, when the class four employees of Dhaka University went on a strike in support of their various demands, many including Sheikh Mujib supported it. In this backdrop, the University authorities expelled 6 student leaders including law student Mujib for 4 years, 15 were expelled from halls, 5 were fined Taka 5 and one was fined Taka 10. Among the expelled students, Dabirul Islam, Oli Ahad, Hemayet Uddin Ahmed, Abdul Matin, Umapada Mitra, Abdur Rahman Chowdhury and others returned to the University after 4 years.

Some even paid the fines. But as Sheikh Mujib refused to pay the fine, he could not be back at the University to take the degree. He did not bow his head to injustice.

When the Awami League was founded at Rose Garden of Old Dhaka on 23 June, 1949, Sheikh Mujib was elected the Joint Secretary despite of being in captivity; due consideration was given to his past contributions. Moulana Bhashani became the President and Shamsul Haque the General Secretary.

Sheikh Mujib was once again arrested at the end of 1949 when he was leading a militant movement in the backdrop of a food crisis.

Then on 9 March, 1950, the 'Dhaka University state language action committee' was formed with Abdul Matin as the convener.

The rulers were again forced to release Sheikh Mujib from jail in the face of intensification of the Language Movement. But he was again arrested while leading a procession in observance of the state language day on 11 March, 1951.

It was on his directive that the East Pakistan Judo League was founded on 27 and 28 March, 1951, through holding a conference on boats in the Buriganga river. The Judo League also played a crucial role in the Language Movement.

After the assassination of Aliquat Ali Khan in Rawalpindi on 16 October, 1951, Khawaja Nazimuddin again became the Prime Minister of Pakistan. The Language Movement was also going on in full swing then. On 31 January, 1952, a pledge was made to uphold the dignity and honour of the state language at an all-party conference held at the Dhaka Bar Library.

Mohammad Ali Jinnah arrived in Dhaka on 19 March and at a civic re-



Bangabandhu at Prohhat Ferry with Moulana Bhashani and others. 21 February 1952

The first state language action committee was formed in October, 1947 at Fazlul Haque Hall after a discussion on the question of language. Through the initiative of this committee, a memorandum signed by hundreds of leading citizens of the province was submitted to Prime Minister Khawaja Nazimuddin demanding recognition of Bangla as the state language. Sheikh Mujib also supported and helped it in matters related to the state language. For the first time in September, 1947, the Tamuddun Majlis brought out a compilation titled "Pakistan's state language : Bangla or Urdu". Three exceptional articles were published in the compilation demanding Bangla as the state language which were written by Professor Abul Kashem, Professor Quazi Motahar.

The released leaders were driven around Dhaka city on trucks with bouquets of flowers around their neck. Later, they were given a rousing reception at Fazlul Haque Hall. Held on 16 March, Sheikh Mujib presided over this meeting as per unanimous decision and after his fiery speech, a huge procession marched towards the Assembly Building. This procession was also led by Sheikh Mujib. But Police resorted to lathi charge to disperse the procession. The next day, all-out strike was observed in all educational institutions at the call of Chhatra League and the Action Committee.

Mohammad Ali Jinnah arrived in Dhaka on 19 March and at a civic re-



বায়ান মহান ভাষা আন্দোলনের শুভিবজ্ঞাতি অমর একুশে ফেব্রুয়ারি বাংলা ভাষাভাবী জনসাধারণের জীবনীগতি ও প্রেরণার এক অঙ্গীকৃত উৎস। মাতৃভাষার অধিকার ও মর্যাদা অতিরিক্ত স্থানে বাংলা জাতির অটল প্রতিজ্ঞা, বীরোচিত আস্তান ও বিপুল ত্যাগ পৃথিবীর ইতিহাসে বিরল। ভাষা আন্দোলনের স্থারক এ দিবস বাংলার জাতীয় জীবনে শোক ও পৌরবের এর অনন্যসাধারণ মহাকাব্যে পরিপূর্ণ হয়েছে। আমি মহান ভাষা আন্দোলনের অক্তোভ্যু শহীদ রফিক, শফিক, জবরি, বরকত, সালামসহ নাম জানা অগমিত শহীদের স্মৃতি প্রতি গভীর প্রতি গভীর।

মাতৃভাষা বাংলা প্রতিষ্ঠাতা দাবিতে ১৯৫২ সালের একুশে ফেব্রুয়ারিতে এদেশের দামাল ছেলের রক্তে ঢাকাৰ রাজপথ রঞ্জিত করেছিল। বিশেষ প্রশংসনীয় শাসন অসমানের পর পাকিস্তান প্রেসিডেন্সি, বৈরাচারী, সাম্প্রদায়িক ও সামরিক শস্তকমোচী বাংলাভাষার মাতৃভাষার অধিকার হরণের যে দুর্বিসম্মূলক প্রয়াস তুর করেছিল, এদেশের জনসাধারণ তার বিরুদ্ধে প্রতিবাদে গঞ্জে ওঠে। তুর হয় ভাষা আন্দোলন। আমাদের মহান নেতা জাতির জনক বস্তুবৰ্তু শুভ মুজিবুর রহমান কার্যসূচারে থেকেও ভাষা আন্দোলনে বলিষ্ঠ ভূমিকা পালন করেন এবং এর সাথে একাত্মা ঘোষণা করেন।

একুশের পথ ধরে শুরু হয়েছিল বাংলার বৃত্তজ্ঞ জাতিসভা অঙ্গনের অধ্যাত্মা। চুকানৰ নির্বাচন, পাকিস্তান সামরিক বৈরাচারের বিরুদ্ধে আন্দোলন, ছয় দফা ও এগাৰ দফা তথা দ্বাদশিকৰণের আন্দোলন, ও একাত্মৰ মুক্তিযুদ্ধে হানাদার বাহিনীর বিরুদ্ধে বাংলালি জাতির বিজয় অঞ্জন সে অঞ্চলাতোৱে সাফল্যগাথা ও গৰ্বে ইতিহাস। মহান ভাষা আন্দোলনের বিমুক্ত চেতনাই দক্ষিণ এশিয়ায় একমাত্র ভাষাবৰ্তীক রাষ্ট্র হিসেবে ভাষান্বাংলাদেশের অভ্যন্তরকে অনিবার্য ও বাস্তব করে তোলে।

মহান একুশে ফেব্রুয়ারি উপলক্ষে উক্তশিক্ষা, গবেষণা, শিল্প, সাহিত্য, সংস্কৃতিসহ জীবনের সর্বত্ত্বের বাংলা ভাষার অনুভাবীল, প্রয়োগ ও প্রসার ঘটিয়ে এ ভাষার উৎকর্ষ সাধনের মাধ্যমে একুশের শহীদের প্রতি সর্বোচ্চ শহীদ প্রদর্শনের জন্য আমি দেশবাসীর প্রতি উদ্বোধ আহবান জানাই।

জয় বাংলা, জয় বস্তুবৰ্তু
বাংলাদেশ তৈরীজীবী হোক

শেখ হাসিনা

The Students' Action Committee launched a fund-raising campaign with the slogan "we want state language Bangla" from a procession taken out in Dhaka on the occasion of 'Flag Day' on 11 and 13 February, 1952. On 20 February, Khawaja Nazimuddin instructed the provincial Chief Secretary over telephone to impose section 144. The newly formed state language action council announced a programme for country-wide strike, demonstration and procession declaring 21 February, which was the inaugural day of the Budget Session of East Bengal Legislative Assembly, as the language day.

Sheikh Mujib started fasting from 16 February in support of the demand for state language Bangla. He sent a message to the action council via a Police Inspector Manik to defy Section No. 144 on 21 February. When the intelligence people learnt that Sheikh Mujib was directing the Language Movement from within jail, they decided to shift him. He was shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital as he became sick due to fasting. He again took up the mantle of leadership. After the General Secretary of Awami League Shamsul Haque fell sick, Sheikh Mujib had to discharge the responsibility of General Secretary upon his release from jail. Then on 9 July, 1953, when he was made a full-fledged General Secretary at the Council Session of his party, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib did not have to look back.

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There, he delivered a speech directing continuation of the movement for realising the demand for state language.

What happened on the day of 21 February is well-

Translation:
Helal Uddin Ahmed