

অমর একুশে

বিশেষ ক্রোড়পত্র

রবিবার ফেব্রুয়ারি ২১, ১৯৯৯

অঙ্গসজ্জা ও পরিকল্পনায় : ট্রিউন (প্রাঃ) লিমিটেড



রাষ্ট্রপতি
গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ
ঢাকা

০৯ ফাল্গুন ১৪০৫
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বাণী

ঐতিহাসিক ভাষা আন্দোলনের অমর একুশে ফেব্রুয়ারির শহীদদের স্মৃতির প্রতি আমি গভীর শ্রদ্ধা জানাই এবং তাঁদের রুহের মাগফেরাত কামনা করি।

জাতীয় পর্যায়ে মাতৃভাষা বাংলাকে স্ব-মর্যাদায় প্রতিষ্ঠিত করার আন্দোলনের মধ্য দিয়ে আমাদের স্বতন্ত্র জাতীয় চেতনার উন্মেষ ঘটে। স্বাধীন ও সার্বভৌম বাংলাদেশ প্রতিষ্ঠার সংগ্রামে এই চেতনা গণ আন্দোলন ও গণ অভ্যুত্থানে সবাইকে উজ্জীবিত করে। স্বাধীন বাংলাদেশে বাংলা ভাষার মর্যাদা আজ প্রতিষ্ঠিত।

মহান একুশের চেতনা আমাদের সাহিত্য, সংস্কৃতি ও রাজনৈতিক পরিমন্ডলে তথা সার্বিক অর্থে দেশবাসী ও প্রবাসী বাঙালিদের মধ্যেও উজ্জীবিত হোক—এ কামনা করি।

একুশের চেতনা বাস্তবায়নে নিরঙ্করতামুক্ত বাংলাদেশ গড়ার বিকল্প নেই। এ লক্ষ্যে আন্তরিক হওয়ার জন্য দল-মত-নির্বিশেষে সবার প্রতি আমি আহবান জানাই।

সহকারী
বিচারপতি সাহাবুদ্দীন আহমদ

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 Sangsad held at Fazlul Haque Muslim Hall on 5 November. In the meantime, on 7 September, East Pakistan Democratic Youth League was formed under the farsighted 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, Tasadduque 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 Moham-mad 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 in spite 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 Jubo League was founded on 27 and 28 March, 1951, through holding a conference on boats in the Buriganga river. The Jubo League also played a crucial role in the Language Movement.

After the assassination of Liaquat 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.

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-



Bangabandhu at Probhat Ferry with Moulana Bhashani and others. 21 February 1953

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 worked tirelessly in the drive for collecting signatures. On 4 January, 1948, the anti-government student organisation Bangladesh Chhatra League was founded under the leadership of Bangabandhu. The newly formed Chhatra League subsequently played a historic role in strengthening the anti-government

from Tamuddun Majlish, Democratic Youth League, Chhatra League, Publishers and Writers' Association, and different Dhaka University halls. The meeting was attended by 14 delegates and many leaders and workers including Sheikh Mujib. The Leader of S. M. Hall, Shamsul Haque was made the Convenor of the new committee. This Action Committee called a province-wide strike on 11 March demanding Bangla as the state language. As per the decision taken on the night of 10 March, the leaders took position in different spots of the town for picketing purpose. After a clash in front of the Secretariat, many leaders and workers including Shamsul Haque, Sheikh Mujib, Kazi Golam

If we look at history and analyse the events, we see that after the adoption of the Lahore resolution, the main issue in the social mobilisation of the Muslim community of the subcontinent was the creation of an independent Pakistan. Religious fanaticism suppressed the geographic separation and linguistic differences between the provinces which were included in the Pakistan resolution. After the announcement of the Mount Batten Plan on 3 June, 1947, the people of East Bengal started discussion on the language issue along with other problems likely to be confronted by Pakistan.

In July, the Gana Azadi League led by Muslim League leader Kamaruddin Ahmed declared in its Manifesto titled 'programme for immediate demands', 'Bangla is our state language. All measures must be taken to use it in the country'. Tajuddin Ahmed was directly involved with this declaration. After returning from Calcutta, Sheikh Mujib also got fully involved in the Language Movement.

In July, 1947, the Vice Chancellor of Aligarh University Dr. Ziauddin Ahmed delivered a speech advocating for the recognition of Urdu as the only state language of Pakistan. Dr. Mohammad Shahidullah protested the idea immediately after his speech. After this event, on 1st September, the Tamuddun Majlish was founded under the initiative and leadership of Abul Kashem, who was a teacher of Dhaka University and later a Principal. From its very inception, personalities like Syed Nazrul Islam, Shamsul Alam and Fazlur Rahman Bhuiyan came to the aid of Tamuddun Majlish. Similarly, Sheikh Mujib also supported and helped it in matters related to the state language. For the first time in September, 1947, the Tamuddun Majlish 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 Language Movement is one of the most important chapters in our national history. Our Independence struggle blossomed by trekking the path of this very movement. Our mother tongue has now been established in its rightful place after journeying through a long road crossing many ups and down and many state sponsored intrigues. Our dearest mother tongue Bangla—which is the 8th International Language of the world in terms of adherents—has been glorified by the blood of innumerable martyrs like Salam, Rafiq, Jabbar, Barkat and Salaudin.

Attempts have been made in the past to distort history and hide the truth by providing wrong information about those who gave leadership to the Language Movement, were deeply involved in it and provided inspiration to the noble cause. Some people wish to look at the contribution of those luminous stars and language warriors of our history like Shamsul Haque, Principal Abul Kashem, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Kamaruddin Ahmed, Shamsul Alam, Nurul Haque, Gaziul Haque, Oli Ahad, Mohammad Toaha and Kazi Golam Mahbub in a crooked manner. Many of these people want to highlight the role of Golam Azam.

Their conscience is not poked even when they try to belittle the revered personalities like Dr. Moham-mad Shahidullah, Dhirendranath Datta, Professor Quazi Motahar Hossein, Abul Mansur Ahmed and Nawab Ali Chowdhury, who played a pioneering role in the Language Movement.

All history-conscious people know that the Language Movement did not start all of a sudden. The Language Movement is not confined to merely the tragic events of 21st February, 1952. The movement was also not the outcome of a sudden announcement by a leader or an army officer. This movement had a rationale, a background and a history. The language warriors were those who provided leadership in that eventful history and were involved during different twists and turns of the movement. They are our national pride.



প্রধানমন্ত্রী
গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

২১ মাঘ ১৪০৫
০৩ ফেব্রুয়ারি ১৯৯৯

বাণী

বায়ান্নর মহান ভাষা আন্দোলনের স্মৃতিবিজড়িত অমর একুশে ফেব্রুয়ারি বাংলা ভাষাভাষী জনসাধারণের জীবনীশক্তি ও প্রেরণার এক অন্তহীন উৎস। মাতৃভাষার অধিকার ও মর্যাদা প্রতিষ্ঠার সংগ্রামে বাঙালি জাতির অটল প্রতিজ্ঞা, বীরোচিত আত্মদান ও বিপুল ত্যাগ পৃথিবীর ইতিহাসে বিরল। ভাষা আন্দোলনের স্মারক এ দিবস বাঙালির জাতীয় জীবনে শোক ও গৌরবের এক অনন্যসাধারণ মহাকাব্যে পরিণত হয়েছে। আমি মহান ভাষা আন্দোলনের অকুতোভয় শহীদ রফিক, শফিক, জব্বার, বরকত, সালামসহ নাম না জানা অগণিত শহীদদের স্মৃতির প্রতি গভীর শ্রদ্ধা নিবেদন করছি।

মাতৃভাষা বাংলা প্রতিষ্ঠার দাবিতে ১৯৫২ সালের একুশে ফেব্রুয়ারিতে এদেশের দামাল ছেলেরা বুকের রক্তে ঢাকার রাজপথ রঞ্জিত করেছিল। ব্রিটিশ ঔপনিবেশিক শাসন অবসানের পর পাকিস্তানি ঔপনিবেশিক, স্বৈরাচারী, সাম্প্রদায়িক ও সামরিক শাসকগোষ্ঠী বাঙালির মাতৃভাষার অধিকার হরণের যে দুর্ভিত্তিসন্ধিমূলক প্রয়াস শুরু করেছিল, এদেশের জনসাধারণ তার বিরুদ্ধে প্রতিবাদে গর্জে ওঠে। শুরু হয় ভাষা আন্দোলন। আমাদের মহান নেতা জাতির জনক বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান কারাবুরালে থেকেও ভাষা আন্দোলনে বলিষ্ঠ ভূমিকা পালন করেন এবং এর সাথে একাত্মতা ঘোষণা করেন।

একুশের পথ ধরে শুরু হয়েছিল বাঙালির স্বতন্ত্র জাতিসত্তা অর্জনের অগ্রযাত্রা। চূড়ান্ত নির্বাচন, পাকিস্তানি সামরিক স্বৈরাচারের বিরুদ্ধে আন্দোলন, ছয় দফা ও এগার দফা তথা স্বাধিকারের আন্দোলন, উনসত্তরের গণঅভ্যুত্থান ও একাত্তরের মুক্তিযুদ্ধে হানাদার বাহিনীর বিরুদ্ধে বাঙালি জাতির বিজয় অর্জন সে অগ্রযাত্রারই সাফল্যগাথা ও গর্বের ইতিহাস। মহান ভাষা আন্দোলনের বিস্মৃত চেতনাই দক্ষিণ এশিয়ায় একমাত্র ভাষাভিত্তিক রাষ্ট্র হিসেবে স্বাধীন বাংলাদেশের অভ্যুদয়ে অনিবার্য ও বাস্তব করে তোলে।

মহান একুশে ফেব্রুয়ারি উপলক্ষে উচ্চশিক্ষা, গবেষণা, শিল্প, সাহিত্য, সংস্কৃতিসহ জীবনের সর্বস্তরে বাংলা ভাষার অনুশীলন, প্রয়োগ ও প্রসার ঘটিয়ে এ ভাষার উৎকর্ষ সাধনের মাধ্যমে একুশের শহীদদের প্রতি সর্বোচ্চ শ্রদ্ধা প্রদর্শনের জন্য আমি দেশবাসীর প্রতি উদাত্ত আহবান জানাই।

জয় বাংলা, জয় বঙ্গবন্ধু
বাংলাদেশ চিরজীবী 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. But considering his all-pervasive influence in the movement, he was again shifted to Faridpur. At Narayanganj on way to Faridpur, hundreds of people thronged to see him.

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-

known to all. Sheikh Mujib was released from Jail on 27 February. He was so sick then that he had to be brought to the Jail-gate on stretchers. After receiving treatment for some time and getting cured, the undisputed leader of Bengal rejoined the movement with full gusto. 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. Wherever he led a movement, he emerged victorious.

Doesn't the above events prove the contribution of Sheikh Mujib in different places of the Language Movement? We wish to tell those people who are adept at creating a smoke-screen of deceit by hiding the truth that the policy of the wise is to accept the truth. (Reference: "Purbangla Bhasha Andolon O Tatkalin Rajniti" by Badruddin Umar, "Bhasha Andolon O Sheikh Mujib" by Dr. Mazharul Islam, "Principal Abul Kashem O Bhasha Andolon" by Justice Mostafa Kamal, "Bhasha Andolon—Shatchallish thekey Bahanno" by Mostafa Kamal and "Bhasha Andoloner Iti-hash" by Md. Abul Kashem).

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