Remembering a Bangali Hero

The case of Shaheed Dhirendra Nath Datta His role in Language Movement From Constituent Assembly 1948 to Killing in Mainamati Cantonment in 1971

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SHAHEED Dhirendra Nath Datta embraced death to bring freedom to the people of this land. He demanded "Bangla" as the State Language, based on the country's own language and culture after the immediate creation of Pakistan. For this, he was brutally killed by the merciless, savage Pakistani Army.

Dhirendra Nath Datta was a nationalist, patriot, political and social leader, parliamentarian and a lawyer. He was born in Ramrail, Brahamanbaria on November 2, 1886. From his student days he was very active in freedom movements and struggles and accepted Gandhian non-violent tenets. He was actively involved with Gandhi and participated in non-cooperation movement to free the country. All through his life in his entire political and social struggle he followed the non-violent and secular path to life and actions. He actively participated in almost all the secular movements that were organised in his lifetime like a valiant warrior. He was imprisoned several times during the British Raj and Pakistani regimes.

He was the member of the first Pakistan Constituent Assembly in 1947. Datta was the first parliamentarian in the Constituent Assembly who, at great personal risk, demanded 'Bangla' as the State Language on February 25 1948 in Karachi.



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Addressing the President he said in the Constituent Assembly, "Mr President, Sir, in moving this the motion that stands in my name -- I can assure in the spirit that this motion receives the fullest consideration at the hands of the members, I know, Sir, that Bangalee is a provincial language, but so far our state is concerned, it is the language of the majority of the people of the state and it stands on a different footing. Out of six crore and ninety lakh people inhabiting in this State four crore and forty lakh people speak the Bangalee language. So, Sir, what should be the state language of the State? The state language of the state should be the language which is used by the majority of the people of the State, and for that Sir, I consider that Bangalee language is a lingua franca of our State. The language of the State should be such which can be understood by the common man of the state. I know I am voicing the sentiments of the vast millions of our state and therefore, Bangalee should not be treated as a Provincial Language, it should be treated as the Language of the state".