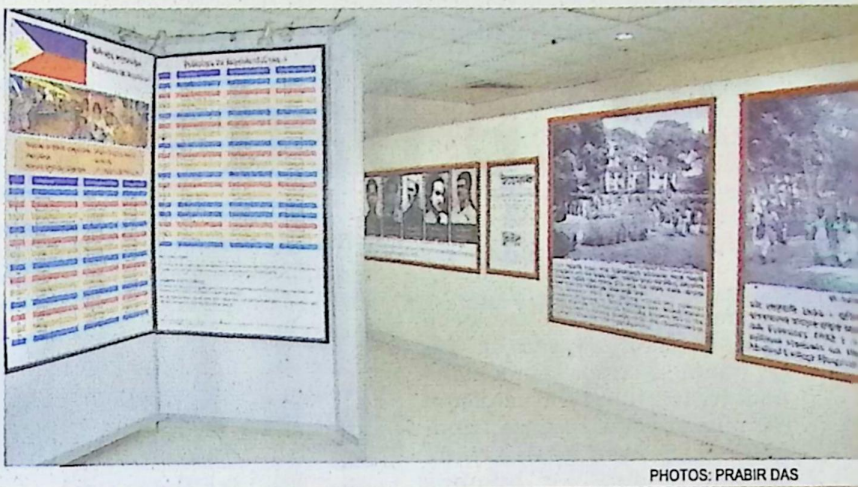
oping a writing system for it so as to pave the way for publishing literature and textbooks of that language. "Thus language planning entails discovering the features of an oral language and preparing its grammar, primer and producing a dictionary," he says.

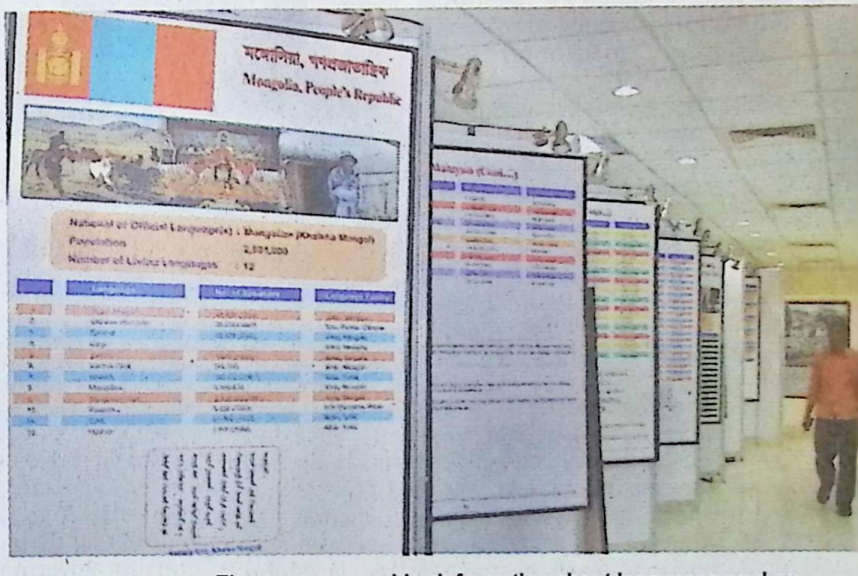
To develop the various languages that are currently spoken in Bangladesh, the IMLI is planning an ethno-linguistic survey of Bangladesh. Dr Ali plans language documentation through revitalisation and revivalism. "In the first phase we will form an ethno-linguistic account or profile of Bangladesh," he says adding that this process will reveal the number of languages used in this country. "Once we know that, we can do the works necessary for each respective language." He informs that renowned linguists and anthropologists of the country have been requested to participate in this programme.

Already a pilot project on language documentation has been carried out in Moulvibazar where 20 different ethnic minority groups can be found, relates Dr Ali. Mentioning community participation as a popular process of language documentation, he says a language teacher or informant, who has extensive knowledge about the language of his/her community, will be developed from within a community. "S/he will create the language inventory and it will be done through an audio-video lingual process," he informs. He says that the institute will provide logistic and intellectual support to these informants or researchers. An authentication board of international standard will in turn certify the findings by the community researchers about their languages. Based on the findings, the institute can develop the grammar and revive the language, which can be used in literature, media, and textbook and so on.

The institute also plans to provide scholarship to researchers and scholars who can associate themselves to the institute's area of work. Dr Ali says that research assistance will be provided for language documentation, learning, archives, computational linguistics and such other areas which will enrich the institute.



PHOTOS: PRABIR DAS



The museum provides information about languages spoken in different countries of the world, their routes and families.

At present the institute has a complete infrastructural and administrative set up. It has also opened its language museum for the public, which displays the languages spoken in different countries in Asia and the Pacific, the number of speakers, language family and sample of text of the major languages of the country. The slides are from last year's 'language fair' prepared for the three- day international conference on 'Cultural Diversity Ministerial Forum of the Asia-Pacific Region- 2012', informs Dr Ali. The museum also provides a visual chronological account of the language movement of Bangladesh. Photographs of old Bengali scripts and its derivation are also displayed in the museum. For a quick visit to the roots of the words that we use in our daily lives a peek at the International Mother Language Institute is a must.