University, Chowdhury was expelled from Salimullah Hall, his residential dorm, because of his involvement in leftist politics. This led to a new era in Chowdhury's life, as he explored his literary talents, initially by writing plays for the Dhaka Radio to pay for his education, and later by penning some of the most influential plays in the country's history. Munier Chowdhury is deservedly called the father of modern drama in Bangladesh. His play *Kobor* was performed by prisoners during his spell in jail to commemorate the first anniversary of the Language Movement on February 21. He continued to write even after being freed from prison, some of his most notable works being *Roktakto Prantor*, *Chithi* and *Polashi Barrack O Onyanno*.

"I became a novelist because Ayub Khan sent me to jail." Another martyred intellectual Shahidullah Kaiser famously said this when asked about his career as a writer. Kaiser started his career as a journalist, joining the daily Ittefaq in the 1949, before playing an important role in the Language Movement. Like many others, Kaiser too was imprisoned by the Pakistani regime for his role in the language movement and in the next 10 years, he spent a total of eight years in prison. As Kaiser himself stated, his writing career truly began behind the bars, as it is there that he penned a number of remarkable plays, short stories and novels. His novel *Sangsaptak* is considered to be one of the most significant fictions of Bangladesh's literary canon. Almost all his works including *Sareng Bou*, *Rajbondi'r Rojnamcha*, *Timir Belay*, *Naam Nei* and *Jadu-i Halwa* were written in confinement. The only book that he wrote after being freed from prison was the unfinished novel *Kobey Pohabe Bibhabori*, which was an account of the horrors inflicted by Pakistani forces. He would write it during the night and bury the copies in the courtyard of his residence before dawn broke, digging it out again when night fell. Unfortunately, he was killed before finishing the four-part novel.

On February 23, 1948, Dhirendranath Datta, another martyr of '71, made a compelling speech calling for Bengali to be made into one of the official languages of Pakistan at the Pakistan Constituent Assembly in Karachi. It was the first formal call for Bengali to be made into a state language and this demand led to the Language Movement of 1952. Datta's demand was met with derision from the Pakistan government, and he was targeted as a threat to the regime. Datta, a lawyer by profession, was a lone ranger, whose plea was not supported by the majority of Bengali leaders at that time but he could foresee that the future of the Bengali people would remain uncertain and under the regime's control until there was a demand for their language to be officially acknowledged was met.



On the 20th anniversary of Bangladesh's independence, postage stamps featuring the martyred intellectuals were issued.

The country has all but forgotten the contributions of Dr Mohammad Fazle Rabbee. A renowned cardiologist and medical researcher, Rabbee could have spent his life in comfort and luxury but he decided to forgo more fruitful opportunities by working for his people, trying to secure free medical benefits for all and always walking on the path of humanity. As a student of Dhaka Medical College, Rabbee completed his MBBS in 1955, receiving a gold medal for achieving the highest grades in all of Pakistan. He became the Registrar of Medicine at the 'ripe old' age of 27 and earned a couple of MRCP degrees in cardiology and internal medicine within two years. After completing his graduation, Rabbee worked at the Hammersmith Hospital and the Middlesex Hospital in London but left his flourishing career in favour of his country to which he returned in 1963. After returning home, Rabbee was more involved in promoting the idea of good medical care for free but instead of being lauded, he was imprisoned by the Pakistani