



An Infographic Representation of Ekushey February

Ekushey February
Reassertion of Heritage

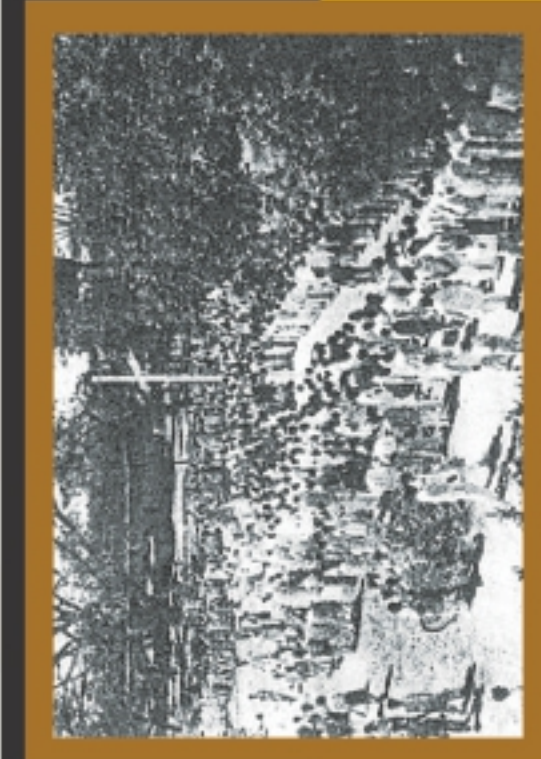
The Bengali Language Movement, also known as the Language Movement, was a political struggle in former East Bengal (today Bangladesh) advocating the recognition of the Bengali language as an official language of the then-Dominion of Pakistan in order to allow its use in government affairs, the assurance of its use as a medium of education, its use in media, currency and stamps, and to maintain its writing in the Bengali script.



Dharendra Nath Dutta demands, in the Pakistan constituent assembly meeting on February 25, 1948, that Bangla be adopted as the language to be used, besides Urdu, in parliamentary business.



Pakistan's prime minister Liaquat Ali Khan rejects Dutta's suggestion, terming it a conspiracy against the integrity of Pakistan...

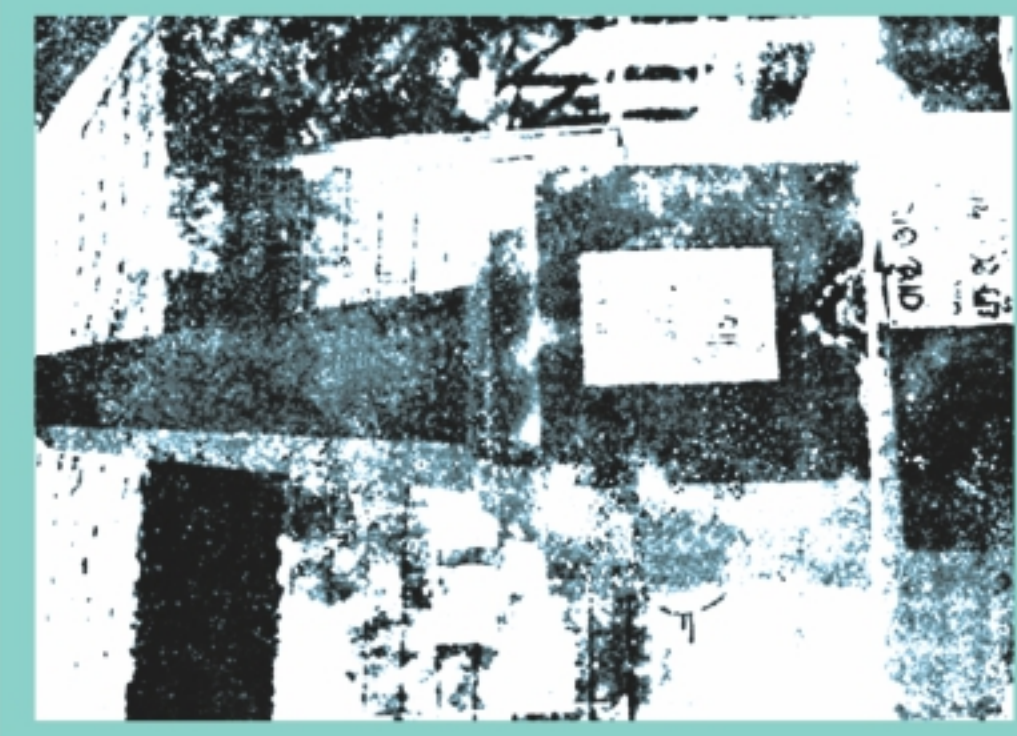


A general strike, called by students of Dhaka University demanding that Bangla be accorded the status of a state language, is observed all over the province of East Bengal on March 11, 1948.



Pakistan's founder and first governor-general Mohammad Ali Jinnah arrives in Dhaka on March 19, 1948. On March 21, at a public meeting at the Race Course, he states his position that only Urdu will be Pakistan's state language.

THE FIRST SHAHEED MINAR



The first Shaheed Minar was built overnight on 23 February 1952 by two students of Dhaka Medical College, Said Haider and Badrul Alam. It was inaugurated on 24 February by the father of Shaheed Shafiqur Rahman. The minar was, however, destroyed by the police, in association with the army, on 26 February 1952.

CENTRAL SHAHEED MINAR



The foundation stone of the present-day Shaheed Minar was laid by Chief Minister Abu Hossain Sarkar on 21 February 1956. After much delay caused by political and bureaucratic interference, the Shaheed Minar, originally designed by Hamidur Rahman with contributions from Novera Ahmed, was inaugurated on 20 February 1963.

The Shaheed Minar was one of the first targets of the Pakistan occupation army, which bulldozed it on the night of 25 March 1971. The soldiers placed some bricks there, intending to build a mosque on the sight of the minar.

Within weeks of liberation in December 1971, the Shaheed Minar was rebuilt in early 1972.

1956

Pakistan adopts a constitution on March 23, 1956, making Bangla one of the two state languages of the country.

1958

Pakistan goes under martial law in October 1958, leading to repression on East Bengal.

1966

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman announces Six Point programme of regional autonomy and is arrested by the military regime.

1970

In Pakistan's first general election held in December 1970, Bangabandhu leads his party to a sweeping victory.

1971

- The junta and West Pakistani politicians refuse to hand over power and instead launch a genocide on March 25, 1971.
- The People's Republic of Bangladesh emerges after a nine-month guerrilla war against Pakistan on December 16, 1971.

After 1971

- In the world's history, no other nation has had to struggle so much, shed so much blood, to be able to hang on to their right to speak in their Mother Tongue. Bangla becomes the language of the state, finally.
- Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman addresses UN General Assembly in Bangla on 25 September, 1974.

1999

In 1999, in recognition of the Bangla Language movement, UNESCO adopted a resolution declaring 21st February as the World Mother Language day. The day has been celebrated with due respect to the martyrs of the movement at UN member states.

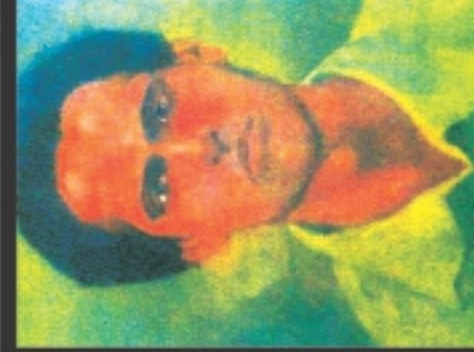
1952



Abul Barkat



Abdul Jabbar



Rafiq Uddin Ahmed



Abdus Salam

Fazlur Rahman, a Bengali minister in the central government, suggests on December 27, 1948, that Bangla be written in the Arabic script. Howls of protests ensue in East Bengal. Dr. Muhammad Shahidullah says that Bengalis, Hindu and Muslim, share an indivisible culture through Bangla.

Jinnah addresses Dhaka University students at Curzon Hall on March 24, 1948 and repeats his statement in defence of Urdu. Loud protests are heard in the hall.

Students of Dhaka University decide to break Section 144 imposed in Dhaka on February 21, 1952. Police fire on them, leading to a number of deaths. Abdul Gafar Chowdhury composes the immortal song, Amar Bhaiyer Rokte Rangano Ekushey February.



Bangla-speaking population around the world

