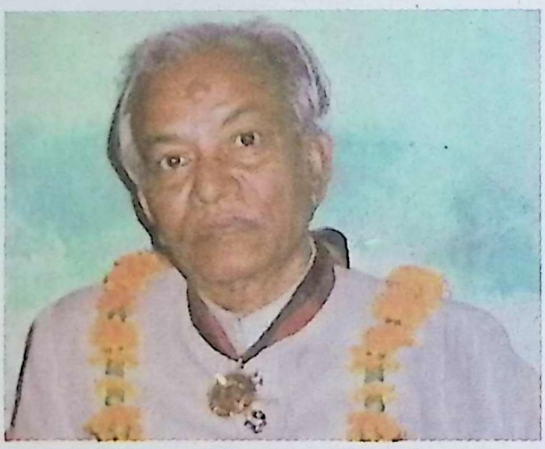
An Architect of the Language Movement

Mohammad Abul Kashem (1920-1991) is considered one of the architects of Bangladesh's historic language movement. He was a renowned politician, author and an eminent educationist. His contributions during the early days of independence from the British Raj were monumental. On his 23rd death anniversary on March 11, we remember this great scholar and activist for his pioneering contributions.



Principal Abul Kashem, 1987, after receiving the Ekushey Padak.

- Abul Kashem was born on June 28, 1920 in Chandanaish, Chittagong
- He completed his bachelor's and master's degrees in physics from Dhaka University in 1945
- Famous mathematician and physicist Satyendranath Bose was the supervisor of his master's thesis
- Later he began his career as a lecturer in the Physics department at Dhaka University in 1946

- As a teacher Abul Kashem was the first person to deliver lectures in Bengali at the Dhaka University
- He was the first person to demand the recognition of a as state language Bengali
- He was the founder of a Islam oriented cultural organisation known as Tamaddun Majlish, that had many eminent personalities of the historic language movement
- He formed the Rashtrabhasha Shangram Parishad (State Language Committee of Action) which led the language movement
- He founded the weekly *Sainik* in 1948, which acted as a mouth piece of the Language Movement



Principal Abul Kashem, 1952, taken during the Bengali Language Movement.



Principal Abul Kashem

- Abul Kashem was the forerunner in introducing textbooks in Bengali for higher education
- He felt the need of introducing Bengali as the medium of higher education in colleges and universities
- With his dream, he established the Bangla College at Mirpur, Dhaka in 1962 and served as its Principal till 1981
- Abul Kashem became famous as Principal Abul Kashem

- Abul Kashem was closely involved in politics
- He was a member of the provincial assembly as a United Front nominee in 1954 from the Patia-Boalkhali constituency in Chittagong
- On September 30, 1956 as a member of the Legislative Assembly he proposed Bengali as the state-language and it was unanimously approved
- Thus, Bengali received constitutional recognition as one of the State languages of Pakistan

- For his contributions, Abul Kashem was awarded with the Ekushey Padak in 1987
- For his book *Biggan, Shomaj o Dhormo* (Science, Soceity and Religion) he received the Bangla Academy Award in 1982
- Principal Abul Kashem authored nearly 100 books on Islam, science, politics and culture
- He also wrote 40 textbooks on physics and other science subjects for college and university students
- Pincipal Abul Kashem, a man of knowledge and culture, died in Dhaka on March 11, 1991

– MD SHAHNAWAZ KHAN CHANDAN