







"We cannot forever offer an olive branch while Russia conducts missile tests and continues to amass

European Council President Charles Michel on Ukraine-Russia standoff

16 PAGES: TK 12.00

DHAKA MONDAY FEBRUARY 21, 2022

www.thedailystar.net

Plus 8-Page Special on AMAR EKUSHEY

EC POSTS

REGD. No. DA 781

Ex-bureaucrats dominate the final list too MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM

MOLLA and ASHUTOSH

SARKAR

The search committee is likely to propose names of former bureaucrats for the helm of the next Election Commission, sources said.

Although the committee has said it would not disclose the final nominations before submitting them to the president, committee sources said ex-bureaucrats, ex-army officials, former judges. university teachers and social workers make up the final nominations.

They also said a former Secretary, joint or deputy secretary may be recommended as the chief election commissioner SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



FALGUN 8, 1428 BS

A woman and her two sons watch fresh graffiti on a wall adjacent to the Central Shaheed Minar on Dhaka University campus. Artists of the Faculty of Fine Art adorned the walls in the area ahead of the **International Mother Language Day today.**

LOST WORDS

Soura language dying in absence of practice and protection

MINTU DESHWARA

RAJAB 19, 1443 HIJRI

Samra Soura, 85, the oldest resident of Soura village is forgetting his mother tongue. People of the Soura community mostly speak Bangla, Oriya and Sadri languages.

Oriya and Sadri communities are bigger than Soura in the tea estates.

"I can't speak my mother tongue even in my family. I am forgetting many words of the Soura language. Soura people can only speak a few words of their language," Samra told this correspondent recently.

International Mother SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

IMMEDIATE PAST EC A tenure defined by voter apathy

AVERAGE TURNOUT								
UPAZILAS	UPAZILAS MUNICIPALITIES UNION PARISHADS							
40.31 % in 2019	65 % in 2020-2021	71.92 % in 2021-2022						
61.23 % in 2014	74 % in 2015	76.25 % in 2016						

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

Voter turnout went down significantly in almost all local government elections under the immediate past Election Commission, compared to the polls held by the previous EC. On the other hand, the number of candidates elected

unopposed increased sharply. Experts see this as an ominous sign for democracy and say it reflects the people's dwindling trust in the country's electoral system.

The turnout dropped and a record number of candidates got elected uncontested because people lost their interest in participating in the polls. They no longer have confidence in the Election Commission and the electoral system," said Badiul Alam Majumdar, secretary of Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik (Shujan), a platform working to ensure good governance.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1







EVIDENCE ACT AMENDMENT Draft leaves one questionable section alone

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The government has drafted an amendment to the Evidence Act, seeking to repeal only one of the two sections that allow questioning the character of a rape victim in court.

The draft proposes to do away with Section 155(4) while keeping Section 146(3). According to Section 155(4), "When

a man is prosecuted for rape or an attempt to ravish, it may be shown that the prosecutrix was of generally immoral character.

"Explanation: A witness declaring another witness to be unworthy of credit may not, upon his examination-in-chief, give reasons for his belief, but he may be asked his reasons in cross-examination, and the answers which he gives cannot be contradicted, though, if they are false, he may afterwards be charged with giving

Section 146(3) allows the imposition of questions that may injure the character of the witness in order to verify their

According to it, "When a witness is cross-examined, he may, in addition to the questions hereinbefore referred to, be asked any questions which tend -to shake his credit, by injuring his character, although the answer to such questions might tend directly or indirectly to criminate him or might expose or tend directly or indirectly to expose him to a penalty or forfeiture."

The continuation of Section 146(3) of the act has disappointed and aggrieved the rights organisations, who have long been fighting a legal battle to protect rape victims from being undermined in court.

Even if Section 155(4) is repealed, Section 146(3) could still be an avenue through which the character evidence could be used to undermine rape complainants, Sharmin Akter Sheuli, a lawyer for the writ petitioners fighting for scrapping of both the sections, told The Daily Star yesterday.

She said if it is not amended, a rapist will have the scope to question the character of the victim during the cross examination in court as the victim themselves might be the main witness in the case and therefore this section needs to be amended.

Meanwhile, Deputy Attorney General Samarendranath Biswas, who placed the draft of the proposed amendment before the High Court on February 17, told this correspondent that if "Section 146(3) of the Evidence Act is repealed the scope for cross examination will shrink and ensuring justice will be hampered."

Yesterday, the HC bench of Justice Farah Mahbub and Justice SM Maniruzzaman fixed tomorrow for hearing the writ petition by Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust, Ain O Salish Kendra and Nari Pakkho seeking the cancellation of both sections.



Winners of the Ekushey Padak, the second highest civilian award in Bangladesh, posing for photos with Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Haque at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the capital yesterday.

Will spread Bangla, its literature further

Says PM while distributing Ekushey Padak

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the government was trying to spread Bangla, its literature and the country's culture and heritage across the world.

"Our efforts will be to spread Bangla language, literature, and culture more in the international arena and I believe that we will be successful in that," she said.

Hasina said this while distributing

the Ekushey Padak, the country's secondhighest civilian award, among 24 eminent personalities in recognition of their contributions to various fields. She joined the event at the capital's Osmani Memorial

virtually. Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Huq distributed the prestigious award on behalf of the prime minister. The premier

Auditorium from

the Gono Bhaban

added that the government has been working relentlessly to change the fate of the grassroots level and deprived people. "More importantly, we want to attain economic emancipation."

Briefly describing the struggle of the country's independence from Language Movement, Hasina said sacrifices of many people have made the Bangladesh independence possible.

"Independence does not come through a sudden declaration of any person; it came through the journey of the struggle. And that struggle was launched by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur

The PM went on to say, "The contributions of him [Bangabandhu] is the independent Bangladesh"

Recalling the efforts to erase the contributions of Bangabandhu after his assassination in 1975, Hasina said his contributions to the

> Liberation War had also been mostly erased. "But the reality is that no one could erase the truth and history."

Language Movement and

Congratulating the awardees, Sheikh Hasina said the new generation will come forward to devote themselves to the country's welfare

and its people following their footsteps. Hasina reiterated

her call to all to take Covid-19 vaccine as the

government is providing it free of cost when many rich countries are not doing so.

She urged all the responsible people, both in government and private sectors, to make sure their near and dear ones as well as neighbours are vaccinated.

Sheikh Hasina also called upon all to properly maintain health safety protocols.

State Minister for Cultural Affairs KM Khalid presided over the programme while its Secretary Abul Monsur delivered the welcome

Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam conducted the awardgiving ceremony and read out the citations of the recipients. 24 AWARDEES

This year, 24 prominent personalities won Ekushey Padak in different

Mostafa MA Matin (posthumous), and Mirza Tofazal Hossain Mukul (posthumous) have been recognised for their roles in the Language

Zeenat Barkatullah won this award for her contributions to dance and Nazrul Islam Babu (posthumous), Iqbal Ahmed, Mahmudur Rahman Benu to music, and Khaled Mahmud Khan (posthumous), Afzal Hossain and Masum Aziz to acting.

Motiur Rahman, Syed Muazzem Ali (posthumous), QABM Rahman and Amzad Ali Khandaker have been recognised for their contributions to the Liberation War.

MA Malek received the award for his contributions to journalism and Anwar Hossain for his role in science and technology and Prof Gautam Buddha Das in education.

SM Abraham Lincoln and Sangharaj Gyanasree Mahather won the award for their contributions to social work and Kamal Chowdhury and Jharna Das Purkayastha to language and literature.

Enamul Huq, Shahanaj Sultana and Jannatul Ferdous as a team and Abdus Sattar Mandal as an individual got the Ekushev Padak foi their contributions to research.

JOY BANGLA Cabinet okays

proposal on nat'l slogan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The weekly cabinet meeting yesterday approved the Cabinet Division's proposal to make "Joy Bangla" -- the slogan that helped unite Bangladeshis to fight against the Pakistani regime — the national slogan of the country.

The cabinet meeting was chaired by Prime

Minister Sheikh Hasina who joined virtually from her official residence the Gono Bhaban. The government will issue a gazette

notification within a couple of days to make it effective, Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam told reporters after the meeting.

Once the measure comes into effect, the cabinet secretary said "Joy Bangla" would be used at all state functions and assemblies of academic institutions. Those holding constitutional posts and all government officials will have to utter "Joy Bangla" at the end of their speeches at government programmes and on national days.

"Three or four categories are being considered. Constitutional post holders, all government officials and employees will say 'Joy Bangla' at the end of any state or government programmes. Assemblies of all educational institutions and other meetings and seminars will end with the slogan," Khandker Anwarul Islam said.

Fire kills teen in Mymensingh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A teenage boy died as he came in contact with a fire that broke out at a fruit store along Hazi Road in Mymensingh's Phulbaria upazila yesterday. The dead is Abu Raihan, 14, said police.

According to locals, he was sleeping inside the fruit store at night. The fire broke out around 4:00am, leaving him dead on the spot.

Primarily, the authorities suspected that the fire occurred due to an electric short circuit. Police recovered the body and handed it over to the family members.

A case was also lodged in connection with the

2 sent to jail for gang rape, robbery

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A Habiganj court yesterday sent two men to jail on charges of looting and gang-raping a woman in the district's Madhabpur upazila.

The arrestees are Askir Mia and Jasim Mia, of Kalinagar village in the upazila. In a statement, Rab said that the duo was

arrested from Brahmanbaria's Sarail on Saturday. They admitted their involvement in the crime during the primary interrogation.

According to the statement the arrested duo intruded into a house in the upazila and gangraped a woman. Later, they fled the house with gold ornaments and a mobile phone.

i ne vicum ilieu a case against iour persons with Madhabpur Police Station in this regard.

A tenure defined by voter apathy FROM PAGE 1 Under the Nurul this is an old tactic to avoid associated large and the second page 1.

commissioners, has appeared in people's democracy down on the verge of its death."

Talking to The Daily Star, several voters too Mymensingh city. talked about their apathy towards casting votes.

backed by the ruling party ruling Awami League, win every time. So, what's the point in casting my vote?" one of them asked, wishing not to be named.

Eight out of 15 people this newspaper reached in Dhaka, Sirajganj and Narsingdi districts said they did not vote in local government elections in their areas.

The five-year tenure of the EC, led by KM Nurul Huda, expired on February 14. Currently, a search committee is working to recommend names to the president for appointing chief election commissioner and other commissioners for the next five years.

EC data shows the turnout in the 2019 staggered upazila parishad polls under the Nurul Huda-led commission fell by 21 percent compared to the upazila polls held by the Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad-led commission in

Voters' presence fell by almost nine percent in the municipality elections and by 4.33 percent in the union polls, the data

Echoing his views, Mahbub Huda commission, 492 responsibility," he said. Talukdar, one of the out of 4,850 chairman country were elected the mayor election in February.

All the uncontested "We see candidates were candidates of the according to the data.

Immediately office in assuming February 2017, the Nurul Huda-led commission earned praises for holding elections to the Cumilla Corporation. It was also lauded for the Narayanganj city polls held

towards the end of its term. But it came under fire for its role in other local body polls marred by irregularities and violence.

At least 101 people were killed and several hundred others injured in violence centring the staggered union parishad polls held recently.

The BNP and several other political parties boycotted the upazila and union elections, saying no free and fair election was possible under the EC.

M Sakhawat Hussain, former commissioner, said the EC should have taken steps to hold discussions with the parties that refrained from joining the elections.

"They said they couldn't do anything if anyone does not participate in polls ...

The Nurul Huda immediate past election candidates in upazilas, commission held the said, municipalities and union staggered upazila polls Commission did not take "An aversion to elections parishads across the in 2019, municipality responsibility for the two, elections from December mind, and it is dragging uncontested, without a 2020 to March last year, in it," he also said. single vote being cast. and union parishad polls The same happened with from June last year to this correspondent

The data from the EC shows the average turnout winners, except for three, in the union parishad elections was 71.92 percent, down from 76.25 percent in 2016.

The average turnout in the polls to the 230 municipalities came down to 65 percent from 74 percent in 2015.

In the upazila parishad, the turnout was 40.31 percent, from 61.23 percent in 2014.

Similar trends could be found in the city corporation elections held at different times in the last five years. The polls to Dhaka, Cumilla, got elected unopposed in Rangpur, Gazipur, Khulna, Sylhet, and Narayanganj city corporations witnessed a

fall in the turnout. However, polls to Rajshahi and Barishal the upazila elections in cities witnessed a rise in 2014, but the number shot the turnout.

Sharmeen Murshid, chief executive officer of local election observer group Brotee, said, "The quality of conducting elections. elections has been deteriorating and so said almost all of the has been the voters' participation [in the

and violence are directly

decreasing participation of voters, he said.

MA Malek, editor of Dainik

Azadi, Ekushey Padak

winner for contribution to

journalism

the many voters have lost faith

Talking before the end of his tenure as a commissioner, Rafiqul Islam said the voter turnout dropped as many political parties, including the BNP, did not contest the polls. "The elections became less competitive as many diehard BNP supporters refrained from

voting." WINNING ALL TOO EASY According to EC data, a record number of candidates were elected uncontested in the local government elections during the tenure of Nurul Huda-led commission.

Chairman candidates 369 unions. The number Chattogram, was 207 in the 2016 UP polls.

No chairman candidate was elected unopposed during the five phases of up to 114 in 2019.

Seven municipalities chairman candidates were elected unopposed in 2015 while nine in the recent

Sharmeen candidates belonged to the ruling party, which indicates that "power and Election irregularities money play a big role in those polls".

Lost words

Language Institute identifies Soura as one of the 14 endangered languages of Bangladesh. Only 70 families of the community live in the country.

Twenty-two of families live in a village in Rajgat Union of Sreemangal, Moulvibazar. The neighbourhood near no man's land is only around 200 yards away from a border gate of India. The families are tea

estate workers and there is not a single member of the families who went to college. They say that their language, culture, and history are disappearing. Article 30 of the

International Convention on the Rights of the Child, which Bangladesh is signatory, states that individuals should not be deprived of the right to use language with

other members of their to learn." community.

Aarti Soura, 65, said, "Igot married watching the stars culture. But nowadays our

Three other members

of the community said it won't be long before their in the sky. It was part of our language gets lost forever.

Jamini Soura, another



Members of the Soura community in Moulvibazar's PHOTO: MINTU DESHWARA Sreemangal.

culture and our language are being lost.

"This ritual of marriage was called Sungkra," she said. "We want to teach our children our language and culture but they do not want even speak properly. Our communities.

sexagenarian, said, "Only two elders could speak our language to some extent. One of them died one and a half months ago. The other

language will disappear when he dies." Alkumar Soura, 52, said, "We have been demanding

the government to protect our mother tongue, but nothing has been done." Austro-Asiatic language

Soura is also found in Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Bihar in India. There are written forms of the language. There is also a textbook called Soura Primary in Andhra Pradesh. Researcher

Baraik said Bangladesh's International Mother Language Institute Act (2010) stresses on preservation of languages and introduction of written forms of all the languages of the ethnic groups.

Mesbah Kamal, professor of history at Dhaka University, said there are only three books in five is always sick and can't languages of the minority

Ex-bureaucrats dominate the final list too

FROM PAGE 1

meeting tomorrow. He declined to make commissioners.

Speaking to journalists, Justice Obaidul Hassan, chief of the six-member search committee, said, "The law says the committee will fix the working procedure. We fixed our working procedure and decided not to publish the final nominations. We will submit the names to the president and it is his domain. If he asks us to make the list

public, it will be published." After a two-and-a-halfhour-long meeting at the Supreme Court Judges Lounge, he said, "Without the president's permission, we cannot disclose the list."

He said the final 10 names will be fixed at the next

any comment when asked which professional group dominated the list so far.

The last five-member election commission, which had the first ever female election commissioner, was comprised of three former bureaucrats, one former judge and an ex-army officer.

The search committee is expected to submit the names to President Abdul Hamid on February 24, subject to the president's availability and the committee members' Covid clearance, committee

sources said. They added revealing the names before sending them to the president will

quarters may also create a president. controversy over it.

After its formation on February 5, the search transparency in the process, committee asked political parties, professional bodies and individuals to submit names for the upcoming EC, as the tenure of the one led by KM Nurul Huda expired

on February 14. The panel then met with eminent citizens, election experts and media personalities in four phases for suggestions and opinions

on the EC appointments. Many of the invitees recommended that the panel disclose all the names proposed. They also said the committee should publish the names of its picks be "discourteous", and some before sending them to the CEC and other four ECs.

They argued disclosing

saying people would be able to give opinions on the candidates. The BNP and some other opposition parties did not

the names would ensure

no confidence in the search committee. All the 322 proposed names were published on the cabinet division's website,

propose any names, citing

where ex-bureaucrats, followed by educationists and jurists, dominated the list. As per the EC law, the

committee will propose 10 names -- two names against each post -- to the president, who will then appoint the



An air of grief pervaded Old Dhaka's Churihatta lane yesterday, on the third anniversary of the horrific fire that took away 71 lives in 2019.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

'Not here to reminisce'

Affected families of 2019 Churihatta blaze mark anniversary with hard demands

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

They were not there to reminisce the loved ones they lost to the 2019 Chawkbazar fire. The members of the affected families who congregated at the location of the ill-fated inferno were there to drive home their demands

They were there hoping to get some compensation, some help, any kind of help. Three years of running families without the primary earning member has bore down hard on them. As such, yesterday's memorial to mark the anniversary of the incident did not feature a harmless ramble down the memory lane.

Instead, they came with hard demands, like completely rooting out the chemical industry from Old Dhaka and providing adequate compensation for the affected families. After all, as the authorities themselves stated, the 71 deaths from the fire could have been prevented had there not been a chemical warehouse in the residential area in the first place.

Dozens of burkha-clad women thronged the narrow lane in Churihatta where everything was burned to cinder just three years ago. They each carried laminated photo of their loved ones, their brothers, fathers, husbands, as if making an ardent appeal to society-at-

large: do not forget them. Their demands also include an end to being

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

'Living in France, running theft gang in Dhaka'

Local cohort arrested over burglary at 2 jewellery shops

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nasir Hossain (50) was already accused in several burglary cases before he left the country years ago, illegally, for France.

Before leaving, he had been involved in theft for about 15 years. But even when in France, he just couldn't stop his criminal activities.

Once a Bagerhat-based thief, Nasir now plans and organises for a gang that loots ornaments from jewellery shops in Dhaka and surrounding areas.

His name came up after the Detective Branch (DB) of police arrested Manjurul Ahsan Shamim (38), who took part in

the burglary of two jewellery shops at Rajanigandha Tower in the capital's Kachukhet area on February 5, AKM Hafiz Akhter, additional commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, told a press briefing yesterday. Owner of the two shops

- both named Rangapori Jewellers -- primarily estimated that more than 300 tola of gold ornaments worth around Tk 2 crore, diamond worth around Tk 35 lakh and Tk 5 lakh in cash were looted.

A team of DB's Mirpur division arrested Shamim on Saturday, after conducting raids in Gazipur and Munshiganj. DB recovered Tk 9.5 lakh from his possession, which he got from selling the looted

The DB official said other members of the gang also have several cases filed against them in Dhaka and

"Nasir's role is to plan and fund the operations through Shamim. With his money, the gang rented a house in Kishoreganj," the officials said. "After an operation, Nasir get's lion's share of the money, while the rest is shared among the other members.'

After primary interrogation, Shamim told DB officials SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Covid restrictions end tomorrow

Masks still a must, says cabinet secretary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As the transmission of Covid-19 continues to decline steadily, the government has decided to withdraw existing health restrictions from tomorrow, around six weeks after it was imposed on January 13.

However, all authorities concerned were instructed to ensure that everyone wears masks in all gatherings, said Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam, following yesterday's cabinet meeting where the decision was made.

"A clear instruction has been given to reopen schools (secondary and higher) tomorrow and primary schools on March 1. No Covid restriction will be effective anymore from February 22," Khandker Anwarul Islam said while briefing reporters after the Cabinet meeting.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina chaired the virtual meeting from Gono Bhaban, while others joined from the cabinet division of secretariat.

Yesterday, the daily case detection declined to 1,987 -- the lowest since January 13, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS). Besides, a total of 21 Covid patients died in the

past 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, raising the total number of casualties to 28,965. Due to the spread of the highly transmissible

Omicron variant, the number of Covid-19 cases skyrocketed since early last month.

The highest positivity rate was reported at 33.37 percent on January 28, which has also declined to 7.82 percent yesterday. Amid the spread of Omicron, which was first

detected in the country on December 9 last year, the government also stepped up its vaccination campaigns and introduced booster doses, initially for senior citizens and frontline workers.

Last week, the DGHS also announced a campaign to vaccinate one crore people with the first dose of Covid vaccines by Saturday.

As of vesterday, around 10.25 crore people received the first dose, which is around 86 percent of the target population. Noting the special campaign, the cabinet

secretary said the cabinet has requested the media



- Schools (secondary and higher) reopen tomorrow
- Primary schools to reopen on Mar 1
- 7.82pc positivity rate as of yesterday
- 10.25cr vaccinated with first dose

All authorities concerned have been instructed to ensure that everyone wears masks in all gatherings.

to conduct a massive circulation of the vaccination

He also said the field administrations, including DCs, SPs and civil surgeons, mayors, chairpersons, other local government representatives and members of different political parties were asked to conduct an all-out campaign so that no one is left out of the vaccination coverage after February

Besides, the health ministry is mulling to vaccinate children aged under 12, adopting experiences from other countries.

On January 13 last year, the government imposed an 11-point Covid-19 restriction till February 7. Later, the restrictions were extended up to February 21.

The education ministry closed all educational institutions from January 21.

Fear of sexual harassment triggering child marriage: survey Star journo wins Plan Int'l **Bangladesh Media Award**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A recent survey by Plan International Bangladesh found that fear of sexual harassment and social exclusion are the major reasons behind parents marrying off their daughter at an early age

The national level survey was conducted last year among 4,305 households.

The survey, which is yet to be launched officially, showed that around 35.3 percent of parents think that fear of sexual harassment is a big factor behind them marrying off their underage daughters while 25.6 percent does the

same out of concerns of

exclusion from the society.

"This fear must be overcome. e media must convey this message to the public that marriage is not the solution to these problems," said Kashfia Feroz, director of

Girls' Rights, Plan International Bangladesh. She made the remarks yesterday during the handover ceremony of "Plan International Bangladesh Media Award 2021: Building Better Future for Girls", organised by Plan International Bangladesh, at Jatiya Press Club in the capital. Nine national and regional journalists were

awarded at the event. The Daily Star's journalist Nilima Jahan has been awarded for her report titled "Good

initiative, yet ineffective". The report focused on how union-level

committees to prevent child marriage SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
Azan	5-20	12-45	4-30	6-03	7-30
Jamaat	5-55	1-15	4-45	6-07	8-00
S	OURCE:	ISLAM	IC FOL	INDATION	

Ekushey fervour takes over Boi Mela

DIPAN NANDY

On the day before February 21, there was an onrush at the Amar Ekushev Boi Mela yesterday to find books on the Language Movement. From visitors' enthusiasm to publisher's marketing, books on the topic took up the fair grounds since morning. However, publishers cited a lack of

new books on the movement, with only two publishing a handful of titles.

Among them are Uzan and Agami Prokashoni, whose proprietor Osman Gani told this correspondent writers don't really delve into this topic much, as it requires substantial research. "If we get good write-ups, we're definitely interested to publish more," he said.

According to Bangla Academy, 468 new books have arrived over the first six days of the fair, including 89 that were published yesterday.

Although there's no separate category to record books on the Language Movement, this correspondent came across five, including M Abdul Alim's "Rashtra Bhasha Andolan: Jilla Bhittik

Itihash" and Habibullah Fahad's "Dui Bhasha Sangramir Mukhomukhi: Ahmed Rafiq and Rafiqul Islam". All five books are written by the two authors.

> However. all publishers could unveil new books on the topic, most

of them republished old titles. Meanwhile, yesterday's sudden bout of rainfall scared publishers, some of whom chose not to open shop out of this fear.

Majeedul Hasan of Jayati Prakashan said, "It rains around this time every year. We accept this adversity but hope that the rain won't be too much of a peril for us."



On the day before Ekushey February, much of the fervour centring International Mother Language Day could be felt at the Boi Mela, with visitors looking for books on the Language Movement.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Low-priced essentials for 1cr needy in Ramadan Hasina directs commerce minister STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Hasina has given directives to provide essentials

at low prices to 1 crore needy families during the upcoming Ramadan. Food will be distributed

to the families twice during the holy month at cheaper prices.

The prime minister gave the directives to Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi during cabinet meeting yesterday.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Two pistols smuggled from Italy seized in Ctg

Arms were imported as household goods

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Customs officials vesterday seized two pistols and 60 bullets smuggled through postal service in Chattogram from Italy, in the name of importing household goods.

The officials also recovered two other pistols, deemed fake, inside the consignment that arrived at the foreign post office section of Chattogram Customs, said Mohammad Salahuddin Rizvi, deputy commissioner of the customs

The official said they found the weapons hidden in the carton along with frying pans, drill machines, glass, soaps and chocolate.

"Two of the four pistols were initially thought to be toys and made of plastic. Law enforcement will ascertain the matter," he said.

According to customs documents, the parcel was sent from Rome by a Bangladeshi expatriate named Rajib

contractual modality:

It was supposed to be delivered to one Mozumdar Kamrul Hasan from the port

city's CGS Colony.

When this newspaper called the mobile number mentioned on the carton. One Nuruddin received it from Chatkhil, Noakhali.

However, he told this correspondent that he is unaware of the consignment.

This correspondent also visited the address given on the package, but Kamrul Hasan was not available.

Neighbours said Kamrul is working with the income tax office of customs and has been residing at the area for 30 years. He also has some construction-related business.

His wife Umme Salma said Rajib Barua Muna is her husband's friend. Before going abroad, Rajib also lived in this colony.

She said she knew that they were supposed to get some chocolate, shampoo, oil and soap from him but she did not know anything about the weapons.

The deputy commissioner said the weapons will be handed over to police. Filing of a case was underway, he added.

Not here FROM PAGE 3

forgotten by the authorities, who had promised them compensation and other The families said they have heard reports of 30 private banks donating Tk 40 crore to the government's national relief fund, but they are yet to see any of it.

"Following the incident, affected families received cleaning jobs from the city corporations, while four families got Tk 2 lakh," said Ashiq Uddin Sainik, secretary of a collective of victims' families.

"Four others were told they would receive jobs befitting their higher degrees. studies Thev were asked to check back after a while, but then the city corporation ceased all communication with them," alleged Sainik.

Beyond a lump sum of Tk 20,000, given when the bodies were handed over from the morgue, most of the families haven't received any other kind of support. Like the last two, this anniversary too passed with the families' demands unmet, leading them to question how much longer they must have to wait.

Fear of

FROM PAGE 3

and gender-based violence remained mostly nonfunctional.

Shahed Shafiq of Bangla Tribune, Naznin Akhter of Prothom Alo, Sazzad Parvej of Jamuna Television and Jahangir Alam of Jagonews24 have also been awarded at national levels.

"Child marriage is one of the major obstacles when it comes to social development. Although the government has been working diligently to prevent child marriages and we have come a long way -- the pandemic made things difficult," said Meher Afroz Chumki, chairperson of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Women and Children Affairs Ministry.

Farida Yasmin, the first female president-elect of press club, said it's important to make parents aware of the consequences of child marriage and the empowerment of their daughters.

Journalist ZI Mamun, cultural activist Shahnaz Khushi Plan and International Bangladesh's project manager Nazrul Islam Chowdhury also spoke at the programme.

Living in

FROM PAGE 3

that two other gang members -- Masud and Ilias -- joined Rajanigandha Tower as security guard and cleaner, obtaining security details of the market and sharing them with the gang.

As part of their plan, gang member Shaheen Master rented a shop at the market and brought iron cutters and other tools inside a box table to the building, under the guise of shifting furniture to his shop, the official said.

Around 1:00am on February 5, two other members -- Srikant and Raja Mia -- entered the premises and looted the two shops along with other cohorts. They then went to their rented house in Hasnabad Keraniganj's area in the morning, later selling the ornaments to a goldsmith and sharing the money among themselves before going into hiding.

Asked if action would be taken against the security company that employed Masud and Ilias, the DB official said, "We are still investigating, though we can say the company did not do thorough screening before recruitment."

They are trying to arrest others members of the gang, he added.

Low-priced

FROM PAGE 3 Later the minister told journalists that six items - sugar, oil, lentils, onions, dates and chickpeas -- will be sold to disadvantaged families at cheaper prices.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

উপজেলা প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয় www.lged.gov.bd



Date: 19/02/2022

Memo No. 46.02.1831.000.14.000.22.93

Seale	ad tenders are hereby invited from the		e tender documents for the under	mentioned works as per terms and c	conditions stated below.				
Paci	lo.	Name of works ইপ্ৰেক্ষণ নিৰ্বাহী অভিসাৱেৰ ৰাগভ্ৰৱন থ শাৱিৰীক নিৱাপত্তাৰ জন্য আনগাৰ সদস্যকে আৰাজন কৰম নিৰ্মাণ।		Tender security (Tk)	Time for completion (days)	Price of tender documents (Tk) 989.99			
				80,000,00	৬৫ (মাট) দিন				
1	Source of funds	GOB.	V. N. M.						
2	Procurement method	Limited Tendering Method (I	TM).						
		Place: Office of the undersig	Date: 27-02-2022, Time: 11.00am and Place: Office of the undersigned,						
5	Last date, time and places of receiving tender	Date: 07-03-2022, Time: Up Places: (a) Office of the und	o to 1.00pm. ersigned. ngineer, LGED, District: Chuadang	ja.					
6	Date, time and place of opening Date: 07-03-2022, Time: 2.00pm. Place: Office of the undersigned, Damurhuda, Chuadanga.								

্ৰত্বপথা ক্ষাপ্ত কৰিব হাস্যের পৰকৰা ৫% (পাঁচ) ভাগ অধিক কম দৰ বা কোন প্ৰকাষ উপ্সাদ দাখিল কৰিসে সৰপপ্ৰটি সৰাসৰি বাজিল বাগায় পথা হবে। সৰণাত্তৰ সাম বাসনাগান বিকাসৰী দাইবাসেৰ কটোকৰি, ছাটি, আৰক্ষ ও এছি সাইবেন্দেৰ কটোকলি এবং শিকুইও আনেট (Bank Statement) পৰণাত্ৰৰ বামে দাখিল কৰিকে হাক সৰণাত্ৰৰ বামনৰ টাকা পে-আৰ্জ্য, ডিমাছ ড্ৰাপট আবাৰে লাগিল কৰিকে হবে। যে কোন দৰণৰ বাজিল বা একৰ কথাৰ মহনৰ কৰুঁপথা সংবাদন কৰেনে।

রাঙ্গামাটি বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় স্থাপন (১ম সংশোধিত) শীর্ষক প্রকল্প ঝগড়াবিল, রাঙ্গামাটি-৪৫০০

ফোনঃ ০১৭০৪-৩৮৩৬৪২, ইমেইলঃ contact@rmstu.edu.bd ওয়েবঃ www.rmstu.edu.bd

Request for Expression of Interest (REOI)

DESCRI		Science and Technology University (1st Revised)
1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Education.
2	Agency	University Grants Commission of Bangladesh.
3	Procuring entity name	Project Director, Establishment of Rangamati Science and Technology
4	,	University (1st Revised).
5	Procuring entity district Expression of Interest (EOI) for	Rangamati. Selection of Consultant to prepare detailed Master Plan for Rangama
	ELEVENTE # PERSON FOR SAMPLE STATE AND THE STATE OF THE STATE OF THE SAMPLE STATE OF T	Science and Technology University.
6	EOI Ref. No.	রাবিপ্রবিস্থাপ্র/পিডি/পওউ/কনসালটেপি ফর মাস্টার প্ল্যান/২০২১
7	EOI publication date	22 February 2022
8 PROCII	EOI closing date & time REMENT INFORMATION	16 March 2022 at 3.00pm.
9	Procurement method	National Competitive Bidding.
10	Procurement sub-method	Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS).
FUNDIN	G INFORMATION	
11	Budget and source of fund	GOB.
PARTIC 12	ULAR INFORMATION Brief description of the assignment	a) Examine the RMSTU campus site, conduct digital survey and prepar
INFORM 13	ATION FOR APPLICANT Qualification and experience of the firm	an inception report; Carry out necessary site analysis, topographic survey, sub-soil and hydrological investigation followed by an inception report; Preparation of feasibility study, EIA SIA report, masterplan report; Preparation of detailed master plan, land-use plan, zoning plan phasing plan and infrastructure and utility plan, road network drainage system etc.; Preparation of design plan including design of site development scheme and design of common infrastructures like academic administrative, institutional, residential facilities, structural and utility services design and all other designs in the approved master plan; Preparation of 3D perspective views, animation and 3D Dioram model of the whole master plan; Preparation of technical specification, cost estimation with BoQ. The interested consulting firm should have at least 15 (fifteen) year of general experience in the field of consultancy services with qualified experts, engineers and other technical key personals (in case of JV, each member shall meet the requirements). Previous experience in university/educational institute master planning will be preferred. b) The consulting firm must have at least 07 (seven) years of specific or relevant experiences in similar assignment (in case of JV each member shall meet the requirements). c) The response should include descriptions of similar assignment conducted, experience in similar conditions, and availability of appropriate staff. d) The consulting firm should have a team of architects, engineed professionals as per scope of services in ToR; e) Award winning consulting firm will be given preference; f) Consulting firms may associate to enhance their qualifications, bushould mention whether the association is in the form of a "joint venture" or of "sub-consultancy". All members of such association should have real and well-defined inputs to the assignment and it is preferable to limit the total number of firms/institutes in the association of three.
14	Contract execution period	The duration of the contract is expected to be 12 months.
15	The criteria for shortlisting	The criteria for shortlisting of firm will be: a) Firm history, specifically age of the firm/ year of registration incorporation; b) Previous specific experience of the firm for handling similar assignments; c) Quality and experience of team leader and key experts; d) Experience in hilly region as well as extensive working experiences of the qualified experts and other key experts in hilly areas/region; e) Financial health of the firm;
16	Documents comprising the Expression of Interest (EOI)	 a) Brochure/company profile; b) Experience details; c) Income tax certificate (for the last 2 fiscal year); d) Up-to-date trade license, TIN and VAT/BIN certificates etc. e) List of professionals.
17	Place of receiving the EOI	Rangamati Science and Technology University, Jhagrabil, Rangamati.
	RING ENTITY DETAILS	
18	Name & designation of the official inviting EOI	Professor Dr. Pradanendu Bikash Chakma, Project Director.
19	Address of official inviting EOI	Office of the Project Director, Establishment of Rangamati Science an Technology University (1st Revised), Jhagrabil, Rangamati.
20 21	Contact details of official inviting EOI Particular instruction	a) Procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all EO for any reason whatsoever; b) The Expression of Interest must be delivered in a written form in sealed envelope in 7 (seven) copies; 01 (one) marked a "ORIGINAL" and other 6 (six) as "COPY" in separate envelope, but the "ORIGINAL" and "COPY" shall have to cover within a single envelope clearly marked as "EOI for consulting services for RMST master plan" to the address of the undersigned (in person or by postimal) by 3pm,16/03/2022. c) Consultant will be selected in accordance with the procedure set or in Public Procurement Act (2006) and Public Procurement Regulation.

(2008);

website: www.rmstu.edu.bd

This EOI notice and details of Terms of Reference are available in the

Signed

Professor Dr. Pradanendu Bikash Chakma

Project Director

Establishment of Rangamati Science and Technology University (1st Revised)

BANGLADESH (IUB) IUB

Data Management Associate/ SSA

description please visit our websites:

Vacancy Announcement (Full-time positions)

World Health

Organization

Bangladesh

VACANCY NOTICE

World Health Organization (WHO) invites applications from the interested

and eligible candidates for the following position under following

For further details on submission of applications including detailed post

WHO has a smoke-free environment and does not recruit smokers or other

INDEPENDENT UNIVERSITY,

https://www.who.int/bangladesh/about-us/employment

https://careers.who.int/careersection/ex/jobsearch.ftl

Qualified *female candidates* are highly encouraged to apply.

Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB), one of the leading private universities in the country, invites applications for the following positions:

School of Environment and Life Sciences

Department of Environmental Science and Management Assistant Professor

School of Pharmacy and Public Health

Assistant Professor

Office Manager

Department of Pharmacy

School of Engineering, Technology and Sciences

Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering ◆ Lecturer B ◆ Laboratory Technician

Department of Physical Sciences

Lecturer B

Department of Computer Science & Engineering

Research and Development Officer

For details and to download the Application Form, please visit http://www.iub.edu.bd/jobs; fill it in and email it to: hrdept@iub.edu.bd by March 6, 2022 Only online Application Forms will be acceptable



Local Government Engineering Department Office of the Executive Engineer District: Bagerhat www.lged.gov.bd

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

मुक्तिय গ্রাম শহরের উন্নতি

e-Tender Notice (OTM): 28/2021-2022

Memo No. 46.02.0100.000.07.002.21-756 e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of stated below:

Tender TDs	Package Description & No.	Last date & time of depositing document fees		
662881 (OTM)	Construction of 18.00m long RCC Girder Bridge on Amragachia RHD-Rajapur GC road at Chainage 2300m under Replacement Category, [Road ID-201772002] [Sharankhola] [Bagerhat] & SupRB/Bager/Replace/21-22/W-186	09.03.2022 Time: 5:00pm		
662882 (OTM)	Construction of 18.00m long RCC Girder Bridge on Khontakata UP(Rajore)-Baniakhali GC Road at Chainage: 1250m under Replacement Category, [Road ID-201773002] [Sharankhola] [Bagerhat] & SupRB/Bager/Replace/21-22/W-187	20.03.2022 Time: 5.00pm		
662883 (OTM)	Construction of 18.00m long RCC Girder Bridge on Gilatala G.C Chaksree G.C Road at Chainage: 269m under Replacement Category, [Road ID-201732002] [Rampal) [Bagerhat] & SupRB/Bager/Replace/21-22/W-188	20.03.2022 Time: 5.00pm		

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender shall be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and

no offline/hard copies shall be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have

to be deposited online through any registered banks branches.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd). Md. Sharifuzzaman

Executive Engineer Phone: 0468-63096 GD-336 Email: xen.bagerhat@lged.gov.bd





It's like a blanket of red, yellow and brown has been pulled over this garden at the banks of Sunamganj's Jadukata river. Across this 100 bighas of land, Shimul flowers have blossomed in more than 3,000 trees. It's a delightful scene, and visitors are finding it hard to not spend time here, alone or with their loved ones. This photo was taken from Tahirpur upazila's Badaghat area recently.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Toronto gets permanent Shaheed Minar



PHOTO: COLLECTED

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladeshi expatriates in Toronto are going to observe International Mother Language Day this year by offering floral wreaths to a permanent Shaheed Minar built at the city's heart.

The Shaheed Minar, officially named as International Mother Language Monument, has been built inside Toronto's Dentonia Park. After approval from authorities, construction started in November 2020 and finished in April 2021.

Marking the day, Organisation for Toronto International Mother Language Day Monument Inc, a Bangladeshi expatriates-run platform, will hold programmes today from 11:00am local time.

Toronto Mayor John Tory, Canadian-Bangladeshi politician and Ontario's provincial parliament member Doly Begum, and Bangladesh Consul General in Toronto Lutfor Rahman, among others, are expected to attend the event.

For 2 days, it was known as the 'Control Room'

The Language Movement did not just come to be. Behind the historic movement, that brought about a turn of events for Bangladesh, are a million stories — of people, of premises, of places. In this 10-part series, we explore some of the places and premises vital to the movement. Establishments that we've lost to time, buildings that today bear no sign of the glories they once hosted. For part nine, we take you to the "control room", which was at the very spot where the Central Shaheed Minar now stands.

DIPAN NANDY

On February 4, 1952, an announcement was made from Dhaka Medical College Hospital's Bel Tala for the general strike on February 21. From the get go, the strike started gaining mass engagement. Seeing this, the then Pakistan government felt compelled to declare a Section 144 in Dhaka.

To thwart the curfew, barrack 20 of DMCH was turned into a control room by its students. It is at this very spot that the Central Shaheed Minar stands today.

It can be known from history that the control room became central for the movement after February 21's bloody events.

It became the gathering place for activists and leaders of the movement. From its microphone and speakers, stories of the student killing spread across the city, fast. Soon, shops, hostels and restaurants started closing down one by one.

Besides student leaders, members of the East Pakistan Ain Parishad also delivered speeches from the control room. After walking out of the Parishad building in protest of the violence, Abdur Rashid Tarkabagish went there and delivered an antigovernment speech. Aside from his speech, the control was always abuzz with declarations and slogans, as well as announcements of the programmes and activities for the coming days. Inevitably, the

GD-335

control room became a target of the then government. On February 22, a joint drive by the police and army laid waste to the place. Terrorising students with bayonets, they snatched the microphone in a move to silence them.

In 1952, Sharfuddin Ahmed was GS of Chhatra Union's DMCH unit, and one of the main organisers behind the control room. He later went on to become a colonel.

place thanks to Yahya, who was particularly adept at such things. We hung up a speaker high up on a mango tree at the northwest corner of the hostel, almost parallel to the Parishad building."

Although Shaheed Minar is a fitting replacement of the control room, very few know about its importance.

Language Movement veteran Dr Ahmad Rafiq said, "Judging the



In a memorial piece, he wrote, "We took a decision to break February 21's curfew after discussing with Union VP Golam Mawla in the morning. With this aim, I along with Sayeed Haider, Abul Hashim, Ahmad Rafiq and more turned DMCH's shed-20's room 1 into a control room, complete with microphones and other facilities."

other facilities."
"By noon, everything was in

political climate of those times, the establishment of the control room is a significant historical event. Within just two days, it became the heartbeat of those who loved their mother language. The meetings, statements, announcements and activities carried out from here shook the authorities to their core. To be honest, for those couple of days, it seemed like there was no administrative authority in Dhaka."

Date: 16/02/2022

RAJSHAHI'S FIRST SHAHEED MINAR

Reconstruction project aborted midway

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

In the immediate aftermath of February 21, 1952, residents of Rajshahi went to work and built a Shaheed Minar near the Muslim Hostel premises of Rajshahi Government College.

The Shaheed Minar still stands today, though not with as much prestige as Dhaka's Central Shaheed Minar is afforded. In fact, the entirety of Rajshahi city doesn't have a Central Shaheed Minar, which means on the International Mother Language Day, people pay homage to the martyrs at the ones at Bhubanmohan Park Memorial and the court area.

In light of this, Language
Movement veterans
started demanding
preservation of the
Muslim Hostel
Shaheed Minar,
which led
Rajshahi City
Corporation
to take up
a project in
this regard in
October 2018.

One Sabera
Enterprise was tasked
with the construction
works, which were slated to
be completed by June 2020.
But four-and-a-half years have

passed by and the project is yet to finish.

According to RCC, the work was estimated to cost

Tk 50 lakh, which

was later revised

midway. Owner of Sabera Enterprise Zulfikar Haider told this correspondent they completed the foundation works for the project at a cost of Tk 35 lakh. However, he alleged that the city corporation is yet to pay his bills, which has compelled him to suspend the works.

Contacted, RCC Executive

Engineer Nur Islam claimed the project has been halted as they want to redo the minar with an improved design. "We will restart the works soon," he said.

Meanwhile, Rajshahi lawmaker Fazle Hossain Badsha said he doesn't know the reasons behind the project's delay. He also mentioned that he has allocated Tk 50 lakh for the project.

RCC Mayor AHM Khairuzzaman Liton blamed the delay on working in an "unplanned way", mentioning that they are taking up a new project to construct a separate Central Shaheed Minar spending Tk 16 crore.

"We've already got the allocation. We'll be inviting tenders within a month or two," he said, adding that they are on the process of acquiring Rajshahi Zilla Parishad land to build the minar.

Talking to The Daily Star, former principal of Rajshahi Government College Prof Habibur Rahman said, "The works should not be delayed as it is concerned with the memory of Language Movement veterans. This Shaheed Minar was the first of its kind in Rajshahi, and thus it should be preserved for the future generations."

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

District Primary Education Office Dhaka

www.dpe.dhaka.gov.bd
Memo No. জেপ্রাশিঅ/ঢাকা/২২/২২৭

Invitation for Tender (Goods)

e-Tender Notice No. 01/2021-2022 e-Tender are invited in the National e-GP System (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of the following packages: Tender ID Package No. Name of works Tender Tender proposal method 596017 NBIDGPSP-1/ Furniture Supply for 75 Nos. Class Room and 8 NCT Last Selling 02.03.2022 OTM G1-0090 Nos. Teachers Room of selected 19 Nos. of Govt. at 17.00 Primary School at different location of Dhamrai and Submission: Savar Upazila of Dhaka district. 09.03.2022 at 13.00 Last Selling 02.03.2022 635184 2 NBIDGPSP-1/ Furniture Supply for 66 Nos. Class Room and 7 G1-0091 Nos. Teachers Room of selected 14 Nos. of Govt. OTM at 17.00 Primary School at different location of Keranigonj Submission: Upazila of Dhaka district. 09.03.2022 at 13.00 636539 NBIDGPSP-1/ Furniture Supply for 96 Nos. Class Room and 11 Last Selling 02.03.2022 Nos. Teachers Room of selected 20 Nos. of Govt. OTM G1-0092 at 17.00 Primary School at different location of Dohar and Submission: Nababgonj Upazila of Dhaka district. 09.03.2022 at 13.00

These are online tenders where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through and registered bank's branch. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Sd/- 16.02.2022

Aleya Ferdousi Shikha

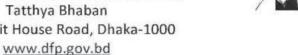
District Primary Education Officer
Dhaka
02-48041059

E-mail: dpeodhaka@gmail.com



Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Department of Films & Publications
Ministry of Information & Broadcasting
Tatthya Bhaban
112 Circuit House Road, Dhaka-1000



Memo No: 15.57.0000.003.07.022.21.936

Date: 20.02.2022

Invitation for e-Tender

SI No	Tender ID	Procurement Nature, Title	Ministry, Division, Organization, PE	Tender Publishing date & time	Tender closing date & time	
01	661578	Procurement of Printing Books on the Bangladesh Quarterly	Ministry of Information & Broadcasting Department of Films & Publications (DFP)	Date: 20 February 2022 time: 10.15	Date: 15 March 2022 time: 13,00	
02	658801	Procurement of Printing Books on the Monthly Sachitra Bangladesh	Ministry of Information & Broadcasting Department of Films & Publications (DFP)	Date: 20 February 2022 time: 10.10	Date: 15 March 2022 time: 11.30	
03	645217	Procurement of Printing Books on the Monthly Nabarun	Ministry of Information & Broadcasting Department of Films &	Date: 20 February 2022 time: 10.00	Date: 15 March 2022 time: 10.00	

- This is an online tender, only e-tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no office/hard copies will be accepted
- Further information and guidelines are available in the e-GP system portal and e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)

Deputy Director (Admin)
Department of Films & Publications
112 Circuit House Road, Dhaka-1000
Phone: 8300682

GD- 332

বিশেষ ক্রোড়পত্র

অঙ্গসজ্জা : চলচ্চিত্র ও প্রকাশনা অধিদপ্তর (ডিএফপি) 🔸 সহযোগিতা : তথ্য অধিদফতর (পিআইডি), তথ্য ও সম্প্রচার মন্ত্রণালয়





গণপ্ৰজাতন্ত্ৰী বাংলাদেশ

২১ ফ্রেক্য়ারি মহান শহিদ দিবস ও আন্তর্জাতিক মাতভাষা দিবস উপলক্ষ্যে আমি মাতৃভাষা বাংলার অধিকার আদায়ে জীবন উৎসর্গকারী ভাষা শহিদ রফিক, সালাম, বরকত, জব্বার, শফিউরসহ নাম না জানা শহিদদের গভীর শ্রন্ধার সাথে

বাণী

মহান ভাষা আন্দোলন আমাদের জাতীয় ইতিহাসে এক অবিশ্বরণীয় ঘটনা। আমি সশ্রদ্ধচিত্তে স্মরণ করি জাতির পিতা বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমানকে, যিনি ১৯৪৮ সালে মাত্ভাষার দাবিতে গঠিত 'সর্বদলীয় রাষ্ট্রভাষা সংখ্যাম পরিষদ' এর নেতৃত্ দেন এবং কারাবরণ করেন। স্মরণ করি তৎকালীন গণপরিষদ সদস্য ধীরেন্দ্রনাথ দত্তসহ সকল ভাষা সংগ্রামীকে, যাঁদের দূরদৃষ্টি, অসীম ত্যাগ, সাহসিকতা, সাংগঠনিক দক্ষতা ও তাৎক্ষণিক সিদ্ধান্ত গ্রহণের ফলে ১৯৫২ সালের ২১শে ফেব্রুয়ারি ভাষা আন্দোলন চূড়ান্ত পরিণতি লাভ করে। বাঙালি পায় মাতৃভাষার অধিকার। ভাষা আন্দোলন ছিল আমাদের মাতৃভাষার অধিকার প্রতিষ্ঠার পাশাপাশি নিজস্ব জাতিসত্তা, স্বকীয়তা ও সাংস্কৃতিক স্বাতন্ত্র্য রক্ষারও আন্দোলন। আমাদের স্বাধিকার, মুক্তিসংগ্রাম ও মুক্তিযুদ্ধে অমর একুশের অবিনাশী চেতনাই যুগিয়েছে অফুরন্ত প্রেরণা ও অসীম সাহস। ফেব্রুয়ারির রক্তঝরা পথ বেয়েই অর্জিত হয় মাতৃভাষা বাংলার স্বীকৃতি এবং এরই ধারাবাহিকতায় ১৯৭১ সালে আসে বাঙালির চিরকাঞ্জিত স্বাধীনতা, যাঁর নেতৃত্ব দিয়েছেন সর্বকালের সর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ বাঙালি জাতির পিতা বঙ্গবদ্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান।

১৯৯৯ সালে কয়েকজন প্রবাসী বাংলাদেশির প্রাথমিক উদ্যোগ এবং সর্বোপরি মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী শেখ হাসিনার স্বতঃক্তৃর্ত আগ্রহ ও ঐকান্তিক চেষ্টায় জাতিসংঘ কর্তৃক ২১ ফ্রেক্রয়ারি আন্তর্জাতিক মাতৃভাষা দিবস হিসেবে স্বীকৃতি লাভ করে। এটি জাতি হিসেবে আমাদের একটি অন্যতম গৌরবময় অর্জন। আমি আন্তর্জাতিক মাতৃভাষা দিবস ২০২২ উপলক্ষ্যে বাংলাসহ বিশ্বের বিভিন্ন ভাষাভাষী জনগণ ও জাতিগোষ্ঠীকে জানাই আন্তরিক ভভেচ্ছা ও অভিনন্দন। মাতৃভাষা এবং নিজন্ব সংস্কৃতি ও ঐতিহ্য সংরক্ষণে এ দিবসটি উদ্যাপন একটি অনন্য উদ্যোগ

কালের আবর্তে পৃথিবীতে অনেক ভাষাই আজ বিপন্ন। একটা ভাষার বিলুপ্তি মানে একটা সংস্কৃতির বিলোপ, জাতিসন্তার বিলোপ, সভ্যতার অপমৃত্যু। তাই মাতৃভাষা ও নিজস্ব সংস্কৃতির বিকাশসহ সকল জাতিগোষ্ঠীর ভাষা ও সংস্কৃতি রক্ষায় বিশ্ববাসীকে সোচ্চার হতে হবে। বিশ্বের বিকাশমান ও বিলুগুপ্রায় ভাষাগুলোর মর্যাদা ও অধিকার রক্ষায় গবেষণার জন্য ২০০১ সালে ঢাকায় আন্তর্জাতিক মাতৃভাষা ইনস্টিটিউট প্রতিষ্ঠিত হয়েছে। বাংলাদেশে ক্ষুদ্র নৃগোষ্ঠীগুলোর রয়েছে নিজস্ব ভাষা ও সংস্কৃতি। এর মধ্যে অনেকগুলো ভাষার সুনির্দিষ্ট লিখিত রূপ নেই। এসকল ভাষার সংরক্ষণ ও উন্নয়নে উদ্যোগ গ্রহণে আমি সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের প্রতি আহ্বান জানাচ্ছি। একই সাথে যে বাংলা ভাষার জন্য আমরা জীবন দিয়েছি তার উন্নয়নে সর্বস্তরে গুদ্ধ বাংলার প্রচলনের উপর গুরুত্ব দিতে হবে। তথ্যপ্রযুক্তির কল্যাণে আজ আমরা গ্লোবাল ভিলেজের বাসিন্দা। তাই উন্নত বিশ্বের সাথে তাল মিলিয়ে এগিয়ে যেতে হলে বর্তমান প্রজন্মকে আন্তর্জাতিক যোগাযোগের মাধ্যম হিসেবে স্বীকৃত বিভিন্ন ভাষার উপর প্রয়োজনীয় দক্ষতা অর্জন করতে হবে। নিজ ভাষার উন্নয়ন ও সংরক্ষণের পাশাপাশি বহুভাষিক শিক্ষার মাধ্যমে টেকসই ভবিষাৎ বিনিৰ্মাণ করতে আন্তর্জাতিক মাতৃভাষা দিবস উদ্যাপন ইতিবাচক অবদান রাখবে বলে আমার বিশ্বাস।

বিশ্বের বিভিন্ন ভাষাভাষী মানুষের নিজস্ব ভাষা ও সংস্কৃতি রক্ষায় অমর একুশের চেতনা আজ অনুপ্রেরণার অবিরাম উৎস। এ চেতনাকে ধারণ করে পৃথিবীর নানা ভাষাভাষী মানুষের সাথে নিবিড় যোগসূত্র স্থাপিত হোক, পুগুপ্রায় ভাষাগুলো আপন মহিমায় নিজ নিজ সম্প্রদায়ের মধ্যে উজ্জীবিত হোক, গড়ে উঠুক নিজস্ব ভাষা ও সংস্কৃতির বর্ণাঢ়া বিশ্ব – মহান শহিদ দিবস ও আন্তর্জাতিক মাতৃভাষা দিবসে এ কামনা করি।

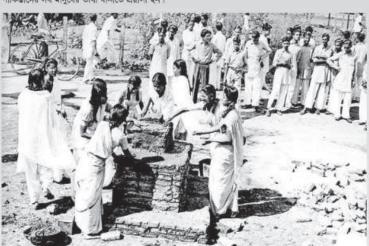
খোদা হাফেজ, বাংলাদেশ চিরজীবী হোক।



ভাষা আন্দোলন, বাংলাদেশের অভ্যুদয় ও তারপর অধ্যাপক ড. আবদুল মান্নান চৌধুরী

বাঙ্কালি মুসলমানদের ভাষা বাংলা কি উর্দু হবে সে বিভর্ক ১৯১১ সাল থেকে দৃশ্যমান হলেও কার্যতঃ পাকিস্তান সৃষ্টির কিছু আগ থেকেই তার তীব্রতা অবদোকন করা যায়। এই সময় বাংগার অভিজাত মুসলমান বিশেষতঃ খাজাগজা, জমিদার তালুকদারদের পারিবারিক ভাষা ছিল উর্দু। তাদের অনেকেই আলীগড়ে শিক্ষা লাভ করে আভিজ্ঞাত্য বজায় এবং চাষাভ্যাদের কাছ থেকে নিরাপদ দ্রত্ব বজায় রাখার অভিপ্রায়ে বাঙালি মুসলমানের ভাষা হিসেবে উর্দুর পক্ষেই ওকালতি করে আসছিল। তার বিপরীতে সৈয়দ নওয়াব আলী, ড. মৃহম্মদ শহীনউল্লাহ, মাণ্ডলানা আক্রাম খা, রেনেসা সোসাইটি এবং সম্মিল্লাহ হলের সাহিত্য সম্মেলন থেকে বাংলাকে ভারতের অন্যতম রষ্ট্রিভাষা করার দাবি উচ্চারিত ১৯৪৭ সালের ২৯ জুলাই আলীগড় বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের উপাচার্য ড, জিয়াউদ্দিন আহমদ উর্দুকে পাকিস্তানের রাষ্ট্রভাষা

১৯৪৭ সালের ১১ আগস্ট পাকিস্তান গণপরিষদের প্রথম সভায় গভর্ণর জেনারেল মোহাম্মদ আলী জিল্লাহ স্পষ্ট ঘোষণ দিয়ে বসলেন যে, এ দেশের মানুষের পরিচয় মুসলমান বা হিন্দু নয়, তাদের পরিচয় হবে 'পাকিস্তানি'। জিন্নাহর এই বজবোর কিছুদিন পর অর্থাৎ ১৯৪৭ সালের নভেম্বর মাসে করাচীতে পাকিস্তান এডুকেশনাল কনফারেঙ্গ থেকে উর্পুকে পাকিস্তানের একমাত্র রাষ্ট্র ভাষা করার জোরালো দাবি জানানো হয়। বাংলাভাষী বা বাংলা অঞ্চলের বসবাসকারী তথাকথিত বিশিষ্টগণের কেউ কেউ তাতে সমর্থনও দিলেন। এটাকে ভিত্তি ধরে সাধারণ মানুষের মতামতকে তোহাক্কা না করে কেন্দ্রের কাঞ্চকর্মে, পোস্ট কার্ড, মানি অর্ডার ফরম ইত্যাদিতে উর্দুর প্রচলন হয়ে যায়। পূর্ববঙ্গে কর্মরত মোহাজের ও অভিউৎসাহী দেশীয় কর্মচারীরা ওদ্ধ-অওদ্ধ উর্দুতে 'বাতচিত' এবং চাযাভূষা ও শিক্ষিত বাঙ্কালিদের প্রতি নাক সিটকানো শুরু করে। এত দ্রুত উর্দুর দাবিকে কার্যকরী করা ও 'পাকিস্তানি' জাতি সৃষ্টির সাথে নিশ্চয়ই একটি যোগসূত্র ছিল। যোগসূত্রটি হচ্ছে জিন্নাহকে মুসলমান জাতির পিতা হিসেবে গ্রহণে অপারগতা। কারণ মুসলমান জাতির পিতা হলেন হয়রত ইব্রাহিম (আঃ)। মুসলমান জাতির পিতা হতে পারেন না বলে চতুর জিল্লাহ তাংক্ষণিক পাকিস্তানি জাতিসন্তার প্রবক্তা হয়ে এই জাতিসন্তার সাধারণ ভিত্তি সৃষ্টির প্রয়াসে 'উর্দু' নামক একটি ভাষাকে পাকিস্তানের সব মানুষের ভাষা বানাতে প্রয়াসী হন



১৯৪৭ সালের নভেম্বর মাসে পাকিস্তানের কেন্দ্রীয় সরকার উর্দুকে রাষ্ট্রভাষা হিসেবে ব্যবহার করতে জরু করে; যার প্রতিবাদ করে নীলক্ষেতে বসবাসকারি বাংলাভাষী তৃতীয় ও চতুর্থ শ্রেণির কর্মচারীগণ। কার্যতঃ সে মাসেই ঢাকা কেন্দ্রিক বুদ্ধিজীবীগণ বাংলাকে রাষ্ট্রভাষা করার পক্ষে দাবিনামা পেশ করে। ডিসেম্বর মাস জুড়ে সভা ও সমাবেশ হতে থাকে যার সাথে মাওলানা আক্রাম থা ও ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের শিক্ষার্থীগণ একাজ্বতা প্রকাশ করেন। এই মাসেই তমনুন মজলিশের উদ্যোগে প্রিন্সিপাল আবুল কাশেম বাংলাকে অন্যতম রাষ্ট্রভাষার দাবি পেশ করলেন। ১৯৪৮ সালের ৪ঠা জানুয়ারি শেখ মুজিবের নেতৃত্বে মুসলিম ছাত্রলীগের জন্ম হলে তারাও ভাষার প্রশ্নে এক ধরনের চরমপদ্বী ভূমিকা গ্রহণ করে। ১৯৪৮ সালের ২৫শে ফেব্রুয়ারি পাকিস্তান গণপরিষদ ধীরেন্দ্রনাথ দন্ত উত্থাপিত বাংলা ভাষাকে সঠিক মর্যাদায় প্রতিষ্ঠার দাবি পাকিস্তানিদের কাছে অগ্রহণযোগ্য হলে তা পূর্ববঙ্গের কতিপয় শিখন্তী ছাড়া বলতে পেলে সর্বস্তরে ব্যাপক আলোড়ন সৃষ্টি করে।

একে কেন্দ্র করে ছাত্র পর্ণবিক্ষোভ দানা বাঁধতে তরু করলে ২১ ফেব্রুয়ারি অনেককেই গ্রেফভার করা হয়। আন্দোলনের ধারাবাহিকতায় ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ছাত্ররা ১১ মার্চ ভাষার দাবিতে ধর্মঘট পালন করে। ১৯৫২ সালের ২১ ফেব্রুয়ারির পূর্ব পর্যন্ত এই ১১ মার্চ 'ভাষা দিবস' হিসেবে পালিত হতো। ১৯৪৮ সালের ১৫ মার্চ প্রাদেশিক ব্যবস্থাপক সভায় আবারও ধীরেন্দ্রনাথ দত্ত ভিন্নরূপে ভাষার প্রপ্লটি নিয়ে আসেন।

১৯৪৮ সালে পূর্ববন্ধ সফরে এসে মিঃ জিন্নাহ একুশে মার্চ লক্ষাধিক লোকের সমাবেশে 'উর্দু এবং উর্দূই পাকিস্তানের রাষ্ট্রভাষা হবে' বলে দড়োভি করেন। ১৯৪৮ সালের ২৮ মার্চ ঢাকা ত্যাগের প্রাকালে মিঃ জিল্লাহ উর্দর প্রশ্নে তার সিদ্ধান্তে অটল থাকলেন। ২৭ শে জানুৱারি ১৯৫২ সালের পন্টানের জনসভায় পাকিস্তানের গভর্নর জেনারেল নাজিমুদ্দিন কর্তক উপ্ট হবে পাকিস্তানের রাষ্ট্রভাষা পূর্ণঘোষিত হলে ঢাকা শহরের বৃদ্ধিলীবাঁ, রাজনৈতিক নেতা, ছাত্রসমাজ ও সাধারণ মানুষ আন্দোলনে অধিকহারে সংযুক্ত হতে থাকে। ২১ ফেব্রুয়ারিতে সরকারের ১৪৪ ধারা ভঙ্গ করে শিক্ষার্থীরা ধর্মঘটে যোগ দিলে পুলিশের গুলিতে সেদিন ও পরবর্তী দিনগুলোতে ছাত্রজনতা হত্যার প্রেক্ষাপটে আন্দোলনের ব্যাপকতা সারাদেশে ছন্ডিয়ে পড়ে। তারপর আন্দোলন স্তিমিত হলেও থেমে থাকেনি যার প্রতিফলন ঘটে ১৯৫৪ সালের যুক্তফ্রন্টের অভূতপূর্ব নির্বাচনি বিজয় দিয়ে। যুক্তফ্রন্ট সরকারের কালেই ২১ যেক্রেয়ারিকে ছুটির দিন বলে ঘোষণা করা হয় এবং ১৯৫৬ সালের পাকিস্তানের শাসনতন্ত্রে বাংলাকে অন্যতম রাষ্ট্রভাষা হিসেবে গৃহীত হয়।

১৯৪৯ সালের ১৪ আগস্ট থেকে লিয়াকত আলী ও নাজিমুদ্দিনের প্রত্যক্ষ প্ররোচণায় উর্দুকে পাকিস্তানের একমাত্র ভাষা হিসেবে প্রতিষ্ঠান তোড়জোড় বহুমাত্রায় বেড়ে যায়। ১৯৫২ সালের ২৮ জানুয়ারি থাজা নাজিমুদ্দিন কর্ত্তক জিল্লাহর মতোই উন্ধানিমূলক বক্তব্যের রেশ ধরে ৩০ জানুয়ারি আবদুল মতিলকে আহ্বায়ক করে 'বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় রষ্ট্রি ভাষা কমিটি' গঠিত হয় যা পরবর্তীতে গোলাম মাহবুবের নেতৃত্বে 'সর্বদলীয় রাষ্ট্র ভাষা কর্মপরিষদ' নামে আবির্ভ্ত হয়। সে বছর ১১ মার্চ ভাষা দিবস পালনের প্রস্তৃতিকালে সরকার, সরকারি দল মুসলিম লীগ এবং সরকার সমর্থক পত্রিকাণ্ডলো অতিশয় বৈরী অবস্থান গ্রহণ করে। মুখ্যমন্ত্রী নূরুল আমিনের নেতৃত্বে আন্দোলনকারীদের ভারতের দালাল, হিন্দুর চর, কমিউনিস্ট এবং পাকিস্কান ও মুসলমানের শত্রু আখ্যায়িত করে নির্যাতনের স্টিমরোলার চালানে হয়। ১৯৫২ সাল থেকে শুরু করে পরবর্তী পর্যায়ে ভাষা আন্দোলনের শিখাটি যারা প্রঞ্জলিত রেখেছিল তারা হলো আওয়ামী লীগের মতো মধ্যমপন্থীরা বা বামপন্থীরা। ১৯৬৯ সালে এসে ভাষা আন্দোলন আর ভাষায় সীমাবন্ধ



থাকেনি। আগরতলা ষড়যন্ত মামলা, ১১ দকা আন্দোলন ও ১৯৭০ সালের নির্বাচনের মধ্য দিয়ে বাঙালি ধারা অপ্রতিরোধ্য গতিতে এগিয়ে। ১৯৭১ সালে মাটির অধিকার আন্দোলনে বাম-মধ্যমদের বিভক্তির নিরসন টেনে হাজার বছরের বিশাল অর্জন স্বাধীনতাকে ছিনিয়ে আনে। ভাষা আন্দোলন ও তৎপরবর্তী ইতিহাসের এই নাতিদীর্ঘ বর্ণনা একটি কথাকে স্পষ্ট করে যে ভাষা আন্দোলনের বিভিন্ন ধাারার বিভিন্ন লক্ষ্য ছিল। ভাষা আন্দোলনের যে ধারাটি এটাকে একটি End itself হিসেবে বিবেচনা করেছিল, তারা বাংলা ভাষার রাষ্ট্রীয় স্বীকৃতির পর তার প্রয়োগ ও উৎকর্ষের কাজে হাত দেয়। রেনেগাঁ গোসাইটি ও তমদুন মজলিসকে এই দলে ফেলা হয়। ভারা পাকিস্তানের কাঠামোতে পূর্ব গাকিস্তানে মুসলমানের ভাষা বাংলাকে সংস্কৃতের কবল থেকে উদ্ধার করে আরবি ফারসি উর্দু দিয়ে সমৃদ্ধ করতে চায়। এদের কাছাকাছি কিছু ব্যক্তি বন্ধু বেশে ভাষা আন্দোলনকে বিভ্রান্ত করার জন্য কারও এজেন্ট বা পোষা হিসেবে অবস্থান করে। তাদেরকে সাম্রাজ্যবাদ, সামন্তবাদ

ও তাদের তস্য দালাল পাকিস্তানের গুরুচর হিসেবেই চিহ্নিত করা যায়। ভাষা আন্দোলনের আর একটি প্রোত আন্দোলনটিকে একটি Means হিসেবে গ্রহণ করে। তালের একটি উপধারা পাকিস্তানের সকল ছাতিসন্তার সাবলীদ বিকাশে ভাষার ভূমিকার স্বীকৃতি দিয়ে একটি মানবিক পাকিস্তানের স্বপ্ন দেখত। নিঃসন্দেহে গোপন কমিউনিস্ট পার্টি বা যুবলীগ পরবর্তীতে ন্যাপ ছাত্র ইউনিয়ন এবং সেকালের গণতন্ত্রী পার্টি এই উপধারায় ছিল। তারা পাকিস্তানের প্রতিটি জাতিসভার অন্তিতসহ তাদের খতপ্র ভাষা, সাহিত্য,সংস্কৃতি, ধর্ম ও জীবনবোধের প্রতি শ্রদ্ধাশীল ছিল। তাই তারা বাংলাকে পূর্ববাংলার এবং উর্দুকে পশ্চিম পাকিস্তানের ভাষা না বলে সব জাতিসভার ভাষার রাদ্রীয়

এ দুটো স্রোত বাদ দিলে ভাষা আন্দোলনকারী শক্তির একাংশ প্রথম থেকেই একে একটি চূড়ান্ত গন্তব্যে নিয়ে যাবার প্রত্যাশী ছিল। পাকিস্তান মুসলিম ছাত্রলীগ ও পূর্ব পাকিস্তান মুসলিম আওয়ামী লীগের একাংশের কথাই এখানে বলা হচ্ছে। প্রথমদিকে সোহরাওয়ালী, আবুল মনসূর আহমদ, আবদুস সালাম খান প্রমধ্বের প্রচন্ত দাপটে তারা মনের কথাটি প্রকাশ করতে পারেনি। তবে ক্রমশঃ উপরিউভ উপধারটা বাস্তবতা ও তারুপোর আঘাতে দুর্বল হয়ে যায়, শেখ মুজিবের নেতৃত্ব মেনে নেয় বা তার থেকে বিচ্ছিন্ন হয়ে পড়ে।

শেখ মুজিবের নেতৃত্বাধীন বাঙালি যে ধারাটির কথা বললাম তা বাজবতার ক্যাঘাতে উপলব্ধি করেছিল যে পাকিস্তানের রাষ্ট্রীয় কাঠামোতে তাদের নিজম্ব পরিচিতি, ভাষা, সাহিত্য, সংস্কৃতি, অসাম্প্রদায়িক মানবিক জীবনবোধ ও

শোষণহীন সমাজ স্বপ্ন বান্তবায়ন অসক্তব। তাই ৬ দফা ও ১১ দফাকে সামন্তরাল রাখলেও প্রতিটি পদক্ষেপে তিনি এক দফার দিকে এগিয়ে যাছিলেন। ইতিহাস বলছে যে বসবদ্ধ এই অগ্নযাগ্ৰায় তাৱ এককালের সহক্ষী এবং পরবর্তীতে ভিন্ন ক্যাম্পে অবস্থানকারীদের বাংলাদেশ প্রতিষ্ঠায় একাকার করতে সক্ষম হয়েছিলেন।

শাধীনতাই ছিল বঙ্গবন্ধুর ধ্যান, জ্ঞান, সাধনা ও কর্ম-যজ্ঞ

আমাদের জাতির মহান স্থপতি বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান ছাত্রাবস্থায় পাকিস্তান আন্দোলনের সাথে ঘনিষ্ঠভাবে জড়িত ছিলেন। তবে সেই বাকিস্তান ছিল লাহোর প্রস্তাব ভিত্তিক পাকিস্তান যেখানে অস্ততঃ পূর্বাৎশে এবং পশ্চিমাংশে একটি করে সায়তুশাসিত রাষ্ট্র থাকবে বলে সিদ্ধান্ত ছিল। পূর্বাংশে যাতে যুক্ত বাংলা থাকতে পারে তার চেষ্টাও কেউ কেউ করেছিলেন যদিও মিঃ জিল্লাহ ও মিঃ জওয়াহের লাল নেহেরুর পরোক্ষ বিরোধিতার কারণে এই উদ্যোগ ব্যহত হয়। তবে লাহোর প্রস্তাব ভিত্তিক পাকিস্তানকে বাদ দিয়ে দিল্লী প্রস্তাব ভিত্তিক পূর্ব ও পশ্চিমাংশ মিলিয়ে এক কেন্দ্ৰিক পাকিস্তান সৃষ্টির কারণেই অনেকের সাথে শেখ মুক্তিব আশাহত হলেন। শেখ মুক্তিব নবসূষ্ট পাকিস্তানে এসে ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের আইন বিভাগে ৩১শে ডিসেম্বর ১৯৪৭ সালে ভর্তি হন।

তবে ১৯৪৮ সালে দ্বিতীয় বারের মত তার ধারনায় গভীর চিড় ধরল। বাধ্য হয়ে তিনি ভাষা আন্দোলনে শরীক হলেন এবং কারাবরণ করেন। তিনি কারারুদ্ধ অবস্থায়ই আওয়ামী মুসলিম লীণের যুগ্ম-সাধারণ সম্পাদক নিয়োজিত হলেন। ১৯৫২ সালের ২১ শে কেব্রুয়ারিতে তিনি জেলে ছিলেন কিন্তু সে দিনটির সফলতার মূলে রাজবন্দি শেখ মুজিবের একটা উল্লেখযোগ্য ভূমিকা ছিল। ভাষা বিতর্কের মধ্যে 'রাষ্ট্রভাষা বাংলা চাই' জাতীয় স্রোগানের পাশাপাশি 'বাংলা ভাষার রাষ্ট্র চাই' জাতীয় একটা বোধ তাকে নাভা দিতে থাকে। সাম্পতিক তথে জানা যায় যে শেখ মুজিব ১৯৫৪ সাল থেকে জামালপুরে গঠিত বাংলাদেশ মুজিফ্রন্টকে বৈষয়িক, তাত্ত্বিক ও মনস্তাত্ত্বিক সাহায্য দিয়ে এই লক্ষো এগোচিংলেন। ১৯৫৪ সালের যুক্ত ফ্রন্ট নির্বাচনে, সোহরাওয়াদী ও মাওলানা ভাসানির প্রিয় নেতা ছিলেন শেখ মুজিব। যুক্ত ফ্রন্টের শাসনামলে তিনি মন্ত্রীতু পেয়ে অনেকটা পদ-প্ৰদীপের আলোতে উদ্ধাসিত হজ্ঞিলেন। মন্ত্ৰীত ছেভে এ'পৰ্যায়ে তিনি দলের সাধারণ সম্পাদকের দায়িত গ্রহণ করেন যার মতলবটা ছিল সুস্পাষ্ট। স্মরণীয় যে ১৯৫৫ সালে মুজিব পাকিস্তান গণপরিষদে পূর্ব পাকিস্তান শন্ধটির পরিবর্তে পূর্ববঙ্গ কথাটি ব্যবহারের

শেখ মুজিব ১৯৬৬ সালে ভারত-পাকিস্তান যুদ্ধের প্রেক্ষাপটে পূর্ববঙ্গের পূর্ণাঙ্গ খারতু শাসনের রূপরেখা স্বরূপ ও দফা দাবি পেশ করেন। ও কা দাবি বিশ্লেষণ করলে দেখা যায় যে এর মাধ্যমে লাহোর প্রভাব বাস্তবায়ন সম্ভব হলেও অন্তিমে পাকিস্তান থেকে বিচ্ছিন্ন হয়ে স্বাধীন সার্বভৌম সন্তা সৃষ্টিও সন্তব। ১৯৬৬ সালে ৬ দকা দাবি পেশের পূর্বে শেখ মুক্তিব ফ্রৈলোক্যনাথ মহারাজ্যের মাধ্যমে ভারতের সরকার ও ইঙ্গিরা গান্ধীর সাথে সংযোগের নতুন হার উন্মোচন করেন।

ও দফাকে কৰৱ দেবার মানসে আইয়ুৰ খান তাকে ও তার দলের অধিকাংশ শীর্ষ নেতাদের জেলে প্রেরণ করে এবং আওয়ামী লীগকে কার্যতঃ বিলোপ করার কর্মসূচি গ্রহণ করে। তদুপরি, ১৯৬৪ সালের সশস্ত্র অভ্যাথান আকাক্ষি ৩৪ জনের সাথে শেখ মুজিবকৈ ১ নদর আসামি করে আগরতলা ষড়যন্ত্র মামলা নামে রাইন্রোহিতার মামলা দায়ের করা হয়। প্রচণ্ড গণ-আন্দোলনে আইয়ূব সরকার এই মামলা প্রত্যাহার করতে বাধ্য হয় এবং পূর্ব বাংলার জনগণ শেখ মুজিবকে 'বঙ্গবন্ধু' উপাধিতে ভূষিত করে। ১৯৬৯ সালের ১১ দফা আন্দোলনটি ছিল রূপাস্তরিত ৬ দফা আন্দোলন। মুক্তিলাভের পর বঙ্গবন্ধু দেশ স্বাধীনের জনো নিয়মতান্ত্রিক ধারা ও সমান্তরাল সশস্ত্র ধারার কার্যক্রম অব্যাহত রাখেন। ১৯৬৯ সালের শেষভাগে চিকিৎসার নামে লন্তনে গমন করেন। স্পষ্ট ভাষায় তিনি ইন্ধিরাকে তার চূড়ান্ত অভিপ্রান্তের কথা ব্যক্ত করলে ইন্ধিরা স্বাধীনতাকামীদের ভারতে প্রশিক্ষণ, অর্থায়ন, অন্ত সম্ভার প্রদান ও প্রচার সুবিধার প্রতিশ্রুতি ব্যক্ত করেন। এই পর্যায়ে চিত্ত সূতারকে যোগসূত্রের দারিত্ব দেয়া হয়। ১৯৭০ এর নির্বাচনে শুমিঞ্চস বিজয়ের মাধ্যমে বঙ্গবন্ধু বাংলাদেশের অবিসংবাদিত নেতা হিসেবে আবির্ভূত হন এবং মার্চে ইন্ধিরা ভারতের ক্ষমতায় প্রত্যাবর্তন করেন। ১৯৭০ সালের ১২ নভেমরের ঘূর্ণিঝড় পরবর্তী প্রেস-কনফারেঙ্গে জনৈক সাংবাদিকের স্বাধীনতা সম্পর্কিত প্রশ্নের জবাবে তিনি 'Not Yet' বলে তাকে থামিয়ে দেন। কেন্দ্রীয় ও প্রাদেশিক সংসদের নির্বাচিত সদস্যদের ১৯৭১ এর ৩রা জানুয়ারির শপথ এহণ অনুষ্ঠানে ও বক্তরে তিনি ৬ দফার প্রতি বিশ্বাস ওক্ষারীদের চরম শান্তির ব্যবস্থা ঘোষণা করেন। তখনই বাংলাদেশ লিবারেশন ফুন্টের নাম বদলিয়ে বাংলাদেশ লিবারেশন ফোর্স রাখা হয়। এই ফোর্স কথাটির মধ্যে তার যুদ্ধ-প্রস্তুতির বিষয়টি স্পষ্ট হয়। ক্রমে বিভিন্ন নামে ও কমাণ্ডে বিভক্ত বিভিন্ন বাহিনী একটি কেন্দ্রীয় কমান্তে নিয়ে আসার কৌশল হিসেবে পুৰ্ণগঠিত বাংলাদেশ লিবারেশন ফোর্সের (বিএলএফ) এর দায়িত্ব শেখ ফজলুল হক মনি, সিরাজুল আলম খান, আবদুর রাজ্জাক ও তোফারেল আহমদকে দেওয়া হয়। মার্চ মাদের কোন এক সময় ভান্ডার আৰু হেনাকে গোপনে চিন্ত সূত্যরের সাথে সাক্ষাতের জন্য প্রেরণ করা হয়। সৰকিছু পাকাপাকি করে তিনি ফিরে আসেন। ভারতীয় হাই কমিশনের কর্তা ব্যক্তিদের সাথে তাজউদ্দিন আহমদের নিবিড় পরিচয় ঘটিয়ে দেওয়া হয়। জহিকল কাইউমের মাধামে ত্রিপুরা হয়ে আর একটি সংযোগের উদ্যোগ নেয়া হয়। ভারতীয় দূভাবাসের কর্তাব্যক্তি দিল্লীতে খবর পৌছিয়ে আসতে আসতে ক্র্যাকডাউনের লগ্ন এসে যায়।

পাকিস্তানিদের অপারেশন সার্চলাইট গুরুর সাথে সাথেই বঙ্গবন্ধু স্বাধীনতার ঘোষণা দেন। তারপর তাঁকে বন্দি করা হলেও যুদ্ধ সর্বত্র ছড়িয়ে পড়ে। বঙ্গবন্ধুর সুযোগ্য সহকর্মীদের নেতৃত্বে নয় মাসের সশস্ত্র যুদ্ধে জয়ী হয়ে বাঙালি 'বাংলা ভাষার রাষ্ট্র বাংলাদেশ প্রতিষ্ঠা করে'

স্পন্নতঃ দেখা যাচ্ছে ভাষা আন্দোলনের মাঝে বাঙালির জাতীয়তাবাদী চেতনা বিক্ষোৱিত হয় এবং পরবর্তীতে বঙ্গবন্ধুর একনিষ্ঠ ও মৃত্যুজয়ী প্রয়াসে বাঙালি এগিয়ে যায়। ১৯৫২ সাল থেকে টানা ১৯ বছরের আন্দোলন সংগ্রামের থারাবাহিকতার ১৯৭১ সালের সমস্ত যুদ্ধের মাধ্যমে ও সর্বাধিনায়ক বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমানের কৌশলী পরিচালনায় স্বাধীন সার্বভৌম দেশের অভ্যুদয় বটে।

নির্ধিধার বলা যায় ভাষা আন্দোলনের ন্যায় একটি সাংস্কৃতিক আন্দোলনকে রাজনৈতিক আন্দোলনের রূপকার হলেন বঙ্গবন্ধু শেষ মুজিব। এর থেকে স্বাধিকার ও পূর্ণাঙ্গ স্বায়তুশাসন বোধ পরিপক্তা অর্জন করে। এরি ধারাবাহিকতায় সকল আন্দোলনের নেতৃত্ব আওয়ামী লীগের হাতেই চলে যায়। সশস্ত্র যুদ্ধের মত চরম সিদ্ধান্তও বাঙালিকে উদ্দীপ্ত করে।

বাংলাদেশ কায়েমের পর সর্বন্তরে বাংলাকে প্রচলন সাংবিধানিক দায়িত্ব হিসেবে গৃহীত হয় এবং ১৯৭৪ সালে বঙ্গবন্ধু জাতিসংঘে বাংলায় বকুতা দেন। ১৯৯৯ সালে শেখ হাসিনার শাসনামলে ২১ শে ফেব্রুয়ারি আন্তর্জাতিক মাতৃত্তাষা দিবস হিসেবে স্বীকৃতি পায়। তারই শাসনামলে অন্তৰ্জাতিক মাতৃভাষা ইনস্টিটিউট প্ৰতিষ্ঠিত হয়। তাই দেখা যায়, আন্দোলন এখনও শেষ হয়নি, এখনও বাংলাকে সাৰ্বজনীন করার দায়িতু রয়েছে, দায়িতু রয়েছে অপর ভাষাভাষিদের অধিকার সূপ্রতিষ্ঠিত এবং বাংলাকে জাতিসংঘের ভাষা হিসেবে গ্রহণীয় করা। বিশ্লেষণে দেখা যায় ভাষা আন্দোলন একটা চলমান প্রক্রিয়া, তার সূচনা চিহ্নিত করা যায়; তবে তাকে ২১ শে ফেব্রুয়ারি ১৯৫২ সালে নিগড়বন্ধ করা অবিমৃশ্যকারিতার লক্ষ্ম। 🗖

লেখক : অখ্যাপক ড. আবদুল মান্নান চৌধুরী, বিশিষ্ট শিক্ষাবিদ ও বীর মুক্তিযোদ্ধা।





श्रथानमञ्जी গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

আমি মহান শহিদ দিবস এবং আন্তর্জাতিক মাতৃতায়া দিবস উপদক্ষ্যে বাংলাসহ বিশ্বের সকল ভাষাভাষী ও সংস্কৃতির মানুষের প্রতি শ্রন্ধার্থ নিবেদন করছি। বাংলাসেশের সঙ্গে ইউনেস্কো ২০০০ সাল থেকেই এ দিবসটি যথাযোগ্য মর্যাদার উদুয়াপন করে আসতে। দিবসটির এবারের প্রতিপাদ্য-'প্রযুক্তির বাবহারের মাধ্যমে বছুভাষায় জ্ঞানার্জন: সংকট এবং সম্ভাবনা'- যা আমার বিবেচনায় অভাস্ক বৃক্তিযুক্ত হয়েছে। কারণ, আওয়ামী লীগ সরকার ভিন্নিটাল প্রযুক্তি ব্যবহারের মাধ্যমে শায়সঙ্গত ও অন্তর্জুক্তিমূলক শিক্ষানীতি বান্ধবায়নে দীর্ঘদিন ধরে কান্ধ করে আসছে।

ৰাঙালির মুক্তিসঞ্চামের ইতিহাসে ভাষা আন্দোলনের গুরুতু অপরিসীম। এই আন্দোলনের মধ্য দিয়েই সংযামের বিনিময়ে আমাদের মা, মাটি ও মানুষের মর্যাদা সমুদ্রত হয়েছে।

১৯৪৭ থেকে ১৯৫২ বাছালির গৌরবময় ভাষা আন্দোলনের ইতিহাস যুগে ছুগে আমানের জাতীয় জীবনে অনুপ্রেরণার উৎস হিসেবে কাজ করছে। জাতির পিতা ভাষা আন্দোলনের নেভুতু দিতে গিয়ে বার বারু কারবেরণ করেছেন। ১৯৪৭ সালের ২৭ নভেম্বর করাচিতে অনুষ্ঠিত শিক্ষা সম্মেদনে উর্কুকে পাকিতাদের বন্ধিভাষা করার সিদ্ধান্ত হয়। ঢাকায় এ খবর পৌছা মাত্রই ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ছাত্ররা থাজা নাজিমুদ্দিনের বাসভবনের সামনে ভাৎক্ষণিত প্রতিবাদ করে। এর কিছুদিন পরেই ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের আইন বিভাগের ছাত্র শেখ মুজিব তার সাংগঠনিক অভিজ্ঞতাকে কাজে লাগিয়ে ঢাকায় ১৯৪৮ সালের ৪ জানুমারি ছাত্রশীশ প্রতিষ্ঠার ক্ষেত্রে অত্যন্ত গুরুত্বপূর্ণ কৃমিকা রাখেন। ২৩ মেকোয়ারি গণপরিয়দের প্রথম অধিবেশনে কৃমিল্লার বীরেন্দ্রনাথ দন্ত বংলাকে গণপরিষদের ভাষা হিসেবে অন্তর্ভুক্ত করার দাবিতে এক সংশোধনী প্রস্তাব উত্থাপন করেন। প্রস্তাবটি প্রত্যাখন করে খাজা নাজিমুদ্দিন আইন পৰিষদে ঘোষণা সেয়া, পূৰ্ব বাংলার জনগণকে উৰ্দুকে বাষ্ট্ৰজাষা হিসেবে যেনে নিতে হবে। কিন্তু নাজিযুদ্দিনের এই হঠকারী সিদ্ধান্তের প্রতিবাদে ২ যার্চ ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ফজলুল হক হলে ছাত্রলীগ, তযুদ্দিন মজলিস ও অন্যান্য দলের সমস্বক্তে সর্বললীয় ছাত্রসংহাম পরিষদ গঠিত হয়। ১১ মার্চের বর্মঘটে নেতৃত্ব দিজে গিয়ে শেখ মুক্তিবসহ অনেক ভাষাসৈনিক সচিবাদয়ের সামনে থেকে গ্লেফডার হন এবং ১৫ মার্চ যুক্তি পান। যুক্তি পাওয়ার পরদিন অর্থাৎ ১৬ই মার্চ শেখ যুক্তিবের নেতৃত্বে পুনরায় ছাত্ররা প্রাদেশিক পৰিষদ তবদ খেৱাও কৰে, সেখাদে পুলিশের লাঠিচার্চ্চে আদেকেই আতে হন। বিদ্ধাহ ২১ মার্চ চার্চার রেসকোর্স ময়দানে উর্দুর গক্ষে বক্তবা রাখে এবং ২৪শে মার্চ কার্ত্তন হলে আয়োজিত সমাবর্তন অনুষ্ঠানে তদুকে পাকিস্কানের রক্সিভাষা বলে ঘোষণা দিলে ছাত্ররা ভাংক্ষণিক প্রতিবাদ করে।

ভাষা আন্দোলনকে জাতীয় আন্দোলনে রূপনান করতে শেখ মুজিব নেশব্যাপী সক্তরসূচি তৈরি করে জ্ঞাৰা আন্দোলনকে জাতার আন্দোলনে ক্র'লনান করতে শেখ মুখ্যক দেশবাশা সক্ষর্পাচ তোর করে বাগক প্রচারনায় অংশগ্রহণ করেন এবং সভা-স্মানবোদ কতাবা গ্রাথন। তিনি ১৯৪৮ সালের ১১ সেপ্টেম্বর ক্ষরিনপুর থেকে প্রক্রাতার হন এবং ১৯৪৯ সালের ২১ জানুয়ারি মুক্তি পান। ১৯ এপ্রিল আবার প্রেফতার হয়ে ছুলাই মাসে মুক্তি পান। এবংগর ছিনি ১৯৪৯ সালের ১৪ অটোবর প্রেফতার হলে ১৯৫২ লালের ২৭ ক্ষেত্রয়ারি মুক্তি পান। শেখন মুক্তির ১৯৫২ সালের ১ জানুয়ারি থেকে ঢাকা কেন্দ্রীয়ার কারাসারে অন্তর্জীন থেকে ছালাসিনিক ও ছাত্রসীপ নেতৃত্বদদের সঙ্গে মোগাযোগ ছাপ্ল-করেছেন এবং আন্দোলনকে বেগবান করতে নানা প্রাথম্প কিরছেন। তিনি ও স্কেল্ডগারি ১৯৫২ ক্রিক্তির প্রক্রমার মুক্তির ১৯৫২ ক্রিক্তির প্রক্রমার স্থায়ক করেছেন। এবিন ও স্কেল্ডগারি ১৯৫২ ক্রিক্তির প্রক্রমার স্থায়ক করিছেন। প্রক্রমার স্থায়ক করিছেন এবং প্রক্রমার স্থায়ক স্থায়ক করিছেন। প্রক্রমার স্থায়ক করিছেন এবং ক্রিক্তির স্থায়ক স্থায়ক করিছেন এবং ক্রিক্তির স্থায়ক স্থায়ক করিছেন প্রক্রমার স্থায়ক স্থানিক স্থায়ক স্থায়ক স্থাপন করিছেন করেন স্থায়ক স্থায করেছেশ এবং আপোলদকে বেগবান করতে নানা পরারশ ালরেছেশ। তিনে ৩ কেন্দ্রয়ার ১৯৫২ ভিনালন দৃত মারকত ববর পাঠান, ২১ ক্রেন্স্রয়ারি দেশবাপি ব্রতাগ ডাকতে হবে এবং মিছিল করে ব্যবস্থাপক পরিষদের সভাস্থল ছেরাও করতে হবে। ৪ ফ্রেন্স্যারি ছাত্রদের মিছিল পেনে এই ঘোষণা জানিয়ে দেওয়া হয়। এক পর্যায়ে শেখ মুজিব আমরণ অনশন ঘোষণা করলে ১৬ ফ্রেন্স্যারি কারা কর্তৃপক্ষ তাকে ভাকা থেকে করিপপুর জেলে স্থানাস্তবিত করে।

১৯৫২ সালের ২১শে মেক্তমার পূর্ব-নালো বাবছাপক পরিষদের বাজেট অধিবেশনের জনা নির্ধাবিত ছিল। পেখ মুজিবের পরামর্শ ও নির্দেশ অনুযায়ী ঐদিন সারাদেশে সাধারণ ধর্মঘট আহ্বান করা হয়। পরিস্থিতি মোকাবিপার জন্য মুললীম লীগ সরকার ২০ কেক্তমারি থেকে ঢাকা শহরে এক মানের জন্য ১৪৪ খারা জারি এবং সকল প্রকার সভা, সমাবেশ, বিশ্বিল ইডাালি নিষিত যোগালা করে। ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে সমবেক ছাত্ররা ১৪৪ খারা তক করে বিশ্বিল বিভাগে করে এবং সেখাকে পুলিশ নির্বিচারে জলি চাপালে কত্ততলো তালা প্রাণ নির্মাক্তর বাহে, অনুসকল অত্যাব করে। তালা প্রাণ নির্বিচারে জলি চাপালে কত্ততলো তালা প্রাণ নির্মাক্তর বাহে, অনুসকল আহত হন, অনেকে প্রকারত হন। প্রক্রিম ১৮ বাহি প্রক্রের করে প্রক্রের প্রক্রিয়ালয়ে স্বর্জন সমস্বাবিদ্যালয়ে প্রক্রের প্রক্রের স্বর্জন স্বর্জন স্বর্জন প্রক্রের প্রক্রের স্বর্জন স্বর্জন প্রক্রিম ১৮ বিশ্বিম ১৮ বাহি স্বর্জন স্বর্জন স্বর্জন প্রক্রিম ১৮ বাহি মান স্বর্জন স্বর্জন স্বর্জন প্রস্তিবার স্বর্জন স্বর্জন প্রস্তিবার স্বর্জন স্বর্জন স্বর্জন প্রস্তিবার স্বর্জন স্বর প্রাদেশিক পরিষদের করেজজন সলস্য অধিবেশন কক্ষ সেকে জ্যাকজাউট করেন। পরদিন ২২ ফেব্রুয়ারি ঢাকার স্বতক্ষ্পর্তভাবে হরতাল পালিত হয়। নিরূপায় হয়ে সরকার সেনাবাহিনী তলব করে, কার্যু জারি করে এবং প্রাদেশিক পরিষদে বাংলা ভাষার প্রস্তাব গ্রহণ করে।

সমূহ করে বাবে আওয়ানাল নালবাদে বাবের অনুষ্ঠান ব্যক্তর বাবের বাবের নির্মান করে নিরন্ত্রণ করে। ১৯৫৪ সালের ৮ মার্চ আওয়ামী দীগ নেক্তর্গাধীন যুক্তরুক্ট নৌক প্রতীক নিরে নির্বাচন করে নিরন্ত্রণ কিন্তর গাত করে। আওয়ামী দীগ সদস্যপূর্ণ বাংলাকে রাষ্ট্রভাগ করার চাপ প্রয়োগ করতে থাকে। এরই মধ্যে ৩০ মে গাকিস্তানের গতর্লন ১৯৫৬) ধারা আরি করে যুক্তরুক্ট মন্ত্রিসভাকে তেনে করে। ১৯৫৬ সালে অওয়ামী দীগ পুনরায় মন্ত্রিসভা বর্তন করে, মুজবন্ধ সকল নেতৃপুল মেকতার হল। ১৯৫৬ সালে আগুয়ামা লাগ পুনরার মাজসভা গঠন করে, বাংলাকে রাষ্ট্রভাষার মর্যাদা দেরা, প্রথম ২১শে কেন্ত্রনারি-কে শহিদ দিনস হিসেবে ঘোষণা করে একং এই দিনে সরকারি ছুটি ঘোষণা করে। সেই সরকারই শহিদ মিনার তৈরি, বাংলা একাডেমি থেকে সাহিত্য-বিজ্ঞানের বই প্রকাশ এবং বাংলা টাইপ-রাইটার উদ্ভাবনের জন্ম প্রথম প্রকল্প গ্রহণ করে। দুর্ভাগা, ১৯৫৮ সালের ও অজ্ঞাবের সামরিক শাসন জারির ফলে সেই আকাঞ্চান্ডলো আর পূর্য হয়নি। ।াখীন বাংলাদেশে জাতির পিতা সকল দাঝবিক কাজে বাংলা ভাষা ব্যবহারের নির্দেশ দেন। তিনি সংবিধানে বাংলাকে রাষ্ট্রভাষা করেন। বাংলায় জাভিসংকের ১৯৩ম সাধারণ অধিবেশনে বজুকা দিয়ে আমাদের মাতৃভাষ্যকে বিশ্বসভায় মর্যাদার আসনে অধিষ্ঠিত করেন। আমাদের সরকারের ১৯৯৬-২০০১ মেয়াদে কানাতা প্রবাসী রফিক এবং স্থালাম নামে দু'জন বাংলাদেশি করেকজন আন্তর্জাতিক সম্প্রদারের সদস্য মিলে 'মাতৃভাষ্য সংরক্ষণ কমিটি' গঠন করে। ২১ ফেব্রুয়ারিকে 'আন্তর্জাতিক মাতৃভাষ্য দিবস' সদস্য মিলে 'মাতৃভাষা সরক্ষণ কমিটি 'গঠন করে। ২১ ফেন্ডুয়ারকে 'আন্তর্জীতিক মাতৃভাষা দিবস' উদ্যাপনের জন্য জাতিসংঘে প্রজাব হৈবল করে। জাতিসংঘ রাষ্ট্রের পক্ষ থেকে প্রজাবটি ইউনেক্ষোতে প্রেরণ করের পর্যামর্শ দের একএক সাংগ্রের পক্ষ থেকে প্রজাবটি ইউনেক্ষোতে প্রেরণ করের পরামর্শ দের ১৯৯৯ সালের ১ জর্জেরর ইউনেজ্যেতে আমানের সরকারের পক্ষ থেকে প্রজাবটি পুনরায় প্রেরণ করে। ফলে ১৯৯৯ সালের ১৭ নডেমর ইউনেক্ষো ২১শে দেরুল্যারিকে আন্তর্জাতিক মাতৃতাম্বা নিবস' ইংসেরে 'বীকৃতি প্রদান করে। আমরা আন্তর্জাতিক মাতৃতাম্বা ইনস্টিটিউ প্রতিষ্ঠা করেছি। নিপুত্রপ্রায় জাষা নংক্রপণ ও তালের মানা করেছি। আমরা প্রাপ্তামর করেছি। তথাপ্রস্তুতিতে বাংলা ভাষার বাবহার নিশ্চিত করেছি। নু-গোষ্ঠীনের ভাষা ও বর্ণমালকে করেছি। অবহরে করিছি নিবস্তি করের জন্ম করেছি। এবহরে উল্লেম্ব করেছি লাম্বার প্রায়ের প্রস্তিত করেছি। এবহরে উল্লেম্ব করেছি লাম্বারণার করেছি। আমরা বাংগাকে জাতিসংসংসে মাতৃত্বক প্রবাহন করেছি। এবহরে উল্লেম্ব ক্রিকার্ডি নেয়ার ক্রেষ্ট চালিয়ে যান্তির। লাতিসংযের দাগুরিক ভাষা হিসেবে স্বীকৃতি নেয়ার চেষ্টা চালিয়ে যাছিং।

জ্ঞা আন্দোলনে বাঙালি কৃতি সম্ভাননের চয়ম আফ্রতাণের মাধ্যমেই বাঙালি জাতীয়তাবাদ প্রতিষ্ঠিত হয় এই জাতীয়তাবাদ প্রতিষ্ঠা থেকে তক্ত করে পূর্ব বাংলার মানুকের জন্য একটি স্বাধীন সার্বভৌম রাষ্ট্র প্রতিষ্ঠার মহানায়ক, সর্বকালের সর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ বাঙালি জাতির পিতা বসবস্থু পেথ মুক্তিরুর রহমান-এর আদর্শকে ধারণ করে গত ১৩ বছরে দেশের আর্থসামাজিক থাতের প্রতিট ক্ষেত্রে আমরা বাপুক উন্নয়ন আদাশ্যন বারণ করে গও ১৩ বছরে দেশের আদ্যানাজক খাতের আনতা দেশতে আন্ধা পাপত প্রৱাদ সাঘন করেছি। বাংলাদেশতে আমরা বিশ্বে উন্নয়নের রোগমতেশ-এ পরিকাত করেছি। সম্পতি আমরা এসডিজি প্রোয়েস আগ্রয়ার্ড লাভ করেছি। আমরা সাধীনতার সুবর্গজয়ন্তী উদযাপন করেছি এবং মুজিববর্ব উন্নয়াপন করাছি। রপকল্প-২০৪১ অর্জান্ত সামনে রোখে দ্বিতীয় প্রেক্তিত পরিকল্পনা ব্যক্তরায়ন কল করেছি। বাংলাদেশ ব-বীপ পরিকল্পনা-২১০০ বাছবেয়ন করাছি। আমার দুচ্ বিশ্বাস, অভিরেই আমরা জাতির পিতার স্বপ্লের উন্নত, সমূভ ও আত্মর্মাদাশীল 'সোনর বাংলাদেশ' প্রতিষ্ঠা করব।

জয় বাংলা, জয় বঙ্গবন্ধু par ENSON

তোমাকে কী নামে ডাকি মিনার মনসুর

যে সবে বঙ্গেত জন্মি হিংসে বঙ্গবাণী। সে সব কাহার জন্ম নির্ণয় ন জানি। –আবদুল হাকিম (১৬২০-১৬৯০)

যখন নদীরা মরে পড়ে থাকে (যেমন ছিলেন পড়ে রায়ের বাজারে কিংবা মিরপুর জল্লাদখানায়) চক্রান্তের শরে বিদ্ধ- হস্তপদ বাঁধা-জিহ্বাও কর্তিত; যার বুকখানি ছিল চিরায়ত এক নদী (যখন জেনেছো তুমি) ছাতু হয়ে গেছে তাঁর বুকের পাঁজর এবং আচমকা

ট্রামের তলায় ঝাঁপ দিয়ে পড়ে ধানসিড়ি নদী কে তখন বয়ে যায়, কে তখন গেয়ে ভঠে ভাটিয়ালি গান?

মানবের গর্ভজাত আদিহীন অন্তহীন রক্তঝড়ে ডুবে যেতে যেতে যখন মাতম করে রুদ্ধবাক বঙ্গোপসাগর-যখন জালালাবাদ (বুকে নিয়ে শত সম্ভানের শব) মাথা কুটে মরে ধ্যানমগ্ন বায়েজিদ বোস্তামির নিধুয়া পাথারে যখন তোমাকে ঘিরে–আসমুদ্র হিমাচলজুড়ে–বিচিত্র শকুন ওড়ে কে তখন- কে তখন গেয়ে ওঠে সঞ্জীবনী গান?

যখন পশ্চিমাকাশ ভেঙে নাঙ্গা তলোয়ার হাতে

ফাঁসিকাষ্ঠে বাংলাদেশ–বটমূলে বয়ে যাচ্ছে রক্ত-অশ্রুধারা নন্দিভৃঙ্গি নৃত্য করে (এবার নিশ্চিত পদ্মা-ষড়যন্ত্র-জলে যাবে ভেসে মুজিবের সোনার বাংলার নাও!) তখন– তখন আইফেল টাওয়ারে, জাতিসংঘ সদর দপ্তরে ইথিওপিয়ার কোনো বিরাণ প্রান্তরে আালাওল, আবদুল হাকিমের সুবর্ণ অক্ষরে কী আশ্চর্য সন্মোহনী সুরে দামামার মতো বেজে ওঠো তুমি।

তোমাকে কী নামে ডাকি- বলো- কোথায় তোমাকে রাখি! করোটির অন্ধকারে ফুটে থাকা ঝিঁঝি পোকা, ঘাসফুল, লজ্জাবতী লতা



INTERNATIONAL



Israel PM sees Iran nuke deal 'shortly'

Warns it'll be weak

AFP, Jerusalem

Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett yesterday said that Iran may "shortly" agree a new nuclear deal with major powers but warned it will be weaker than the original 2015 agreement.

Bennett was speaking ahead of a cabinet meeting following indications that the outline of a deal was taking shape at talks in Vienna.

"We may see an agreement shortly," Bennett said, adding that the deal that appeared to be in the making "is shorter and weaker than the previous one".

Bennett has been a staunch opponent of the deal and repeatedly warned any revenue Tehran sees as a result of new sanctions relief will be used to purchase weapons that could harm Israelis.

'Biggest war since 1945' on the cards

Warns UK PM if Russia invades Ukraine: Berlin, Kyiv push back against US warnings



AFP, London

Russia is preparing to plunge Europe into its worst conflict since World War II, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has said, warning that any invasion of Ukraine would freeze Moscow out of global finance.

The fact is that all the signs are that the plan has already in some senses begun," he said in a BBC interview broadcast yesterday from the Munich Security Conference, after two Ukrainian soldiers were killed in attacks around rebel-held

"People need to understand the sheer cost in human life that could entail," he said, after previously indicating that the West would continue to support any Ukraine resistance after an invasion.

"I'm afraid to say that the plan we are seeing is for something that could be really the biggest war in Europe since 1945, just in terms of sheer

US President Joe Biden had said earlier on Friday that he was "convinced" Russian President Vladimir Putin had "made the decision" to attack Ukraine, sending fears soaring that a major conflict could break out in Europe. Johnson has urged western countries to be united like never before to face the challenge.

But the message of unity was slightly undermined by ," German FM Annalena Baerbock's refusal to echo US claims that Russia could invade Ukraine any moment now, "We do not know yet if an attack has been decided on," Baerbock said.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, attending the same conference, also pushed back against Washington's dire predictions.

Speaking on the main stage in Munich, Zelensky said it was "difficult for me to judge" the US intelligence behind the warnings, but "I trust Ukrainian intelligence, who understand what's going on along our borders".

Saudi Arabia plans for fresh round of talks with Iran

REUTERS, Dubai

Saudi Arabia's foreign minister said on Saturday the kingdom was looking to schedule a fifth round of direct talks with rival Iran despite a "lack of substantive progress" so far, and urged Tehran to change its behaviour in the region.

Saudi Arabia and Iran, which cut ties in 2016, launched talks last year hosted by Iraq as global powers sought to salvage a nuclear pact with Tehran, which Gulf states deemed flawed.

Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud said if the 2015 nuclear pact was revived that should be "a starting point, not an end point" in order to address regional concerns, and that Riyadh remained interested in talks with Iran.

Earlier this month, Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi said Tehran was ready for more talks if Riyadh was willing to hold them in an atmosphere of mutual understanding and respect.

Sunni Muslim Saudi Arabia and Shia Iran are vying for influence in a rivalry that has played out across the region.

UK Queen catches 'mild' Covid: palace

AFP, London

Britain's 95-year-old Queen Elizabeth II tested positive for Covid-19 yesterday but her symptoms are "mild" and she intends to continue with light duties at her Windsor Castle residence, aides said.

The news comes after Prince Charles, the queen's eldest son and heir, tested positive on February 10, two days after meeting his mother at Windsor.

No information was given then on whether Queen Elizabeth -- who this month marked 70 years on the throne -- had taken any Covid tests

She resumed in-person audiences at the castle last week, but complained to one attendee of suffering from stiffness and was photographed holding a walking stick.

While normally secretive about the queen's health, the palace has previously confirmed she is fully

vaccinated against Covid-19. Britain's Press Association said "it is understood a number of cases have also been diagnosed among the Windsor Castle team". UK health secretary Sajid Javid, tweeted: "Wishing Her Majesty The

Queen a quick recovery." Keir Starmer, leader of the main opposition Labour party, also tweeted his best wishes for "a speedy recovery", adding: "Get well soon, Ma'am."

Nationwide celebrations to mark the queen's Platinum Jubilee are due to be held in June.

The queen, whose husband Prince Philip died aged 99 last April, has spent much of the coronavirus pandemic at Windsor Castle, with a reduced number of household staff dubbed "HMS Bubble". Respecting the government's then rules on Covid distancing, she sat alone at Philip's

Fresh hearing, fresh hope

and ordered that Myanmar takes provisional measures to prevent further acts of genocide in the Rakhine

October 23, 2020, Gambia filed a memorial of more than 500 pages in its lawsuit against Myanmar, detailing how the then Myanmar government was responsible for the Rohingya genocide.

Myanmar has not yet taken any initiative to grant citizenship or ensure other basic rights that Rohingyas have been deprived of.

Moreover, the Aung San Suu Kyi-led government while in power raised 2002. objections on January 20 last year over the eligibility whether this would by cooperating with the the Dhaka University's

The political scenario through a "bureaucratic democracy and supporting changed in Myanmar with idiosyncrasy" the ICJ has international criminal the country's military control the elected Suu Kyi-led Brussels who were under implications. government running a parallel government, the

Although the NUG is recognition, the UN NUG said.

General Assembly has kept Kyaw Moe Tun --Kyi-led government -- as Representative Myanmar to the UN.

said it had withdrawn all preliminary objections to the case and that it accepts the jurisdiction of the ICJ for hearing the allegations.

The NUG also said it will work towards international criminal accountability and grant jurisdiction to the International Criminal Court for all crimes within Myanmar covered by the Rome Statute since July

of The Gambia for filing the affect the legal process ICJ, its public statements international been communicating with justice for the junta's control.

"Should the

The NUG said given that the "illegal military appointed during the Suu junta itself has unlawfully detained Myanmar's the incumbent Permanent agent and deputy agent", Ambassador Tun is the acting alternate agent On February 1, the NUG authorised to engage with

> According to a Reuters report, the registered representatives Myanmar were juntaappointed Ko Ko Hlaing, its envoy for international

coordination, Myanmar Union Attornev General Thida Oo, who will head an eight-member legal team for the hearings. International relations

NUG is trying to gain It however is not certain international recognition as the NUG said that of working for a federal department Myanmar diplomats in could have far-reaching

"Majority of Myanmar ICJ people are against military for National Unity Government recognise the military, it rule and we believe the community yet to get international daily atrocity crimes," the the legitimate elected government," said Nay San

Lwin, co-founder of Free Rohingya Coalition.

The NUG also has many secret documents proving the military junta's genocidal intent -- a fact that can establish the genocide case in the ICJ, he

Former Foreign Secretary Shahidul Haque said it does not matter if the military or NUG represents at the ICJ. The issue is Rohingya justice, and the NUG is publicly pledging to ensure it. "In recent times, the

Rohingya genocide case appeared dormant. This hearing is bringing the analysts say while the issue to the fore again," he said.

> relations Myanmar military is now under serious international Rohingyas pressure and even the ASEAN is not including it in meetings.

"This is the right time the international to come would embolden the junta NUG would regain power together strongly on the to continue and escalate its today or tomorrow as case of Rohingya justice, their citizenship and repatriation," he said.

ACC puts up 13 allegations

FROM PAGE 12

individuals suspected of corruption without a court

There was also an allegation that Sharif kept about Tk 93.6 lakh, which was seized from an accused, in his own custody for one year and four months.

Sharif said he kept the money at the vault at ACC office in Chattogram by informing his superiors, which is a common practice.

"I requested the bank to impose a no debit status on the accounts. It was a procedural mistake. It was done in good faith. I informed the bank that and taking advantage by I would get a court order

In June 2021, Sharif was transferred to Patuakhali from Chattogram. A rights organisation then filed a writ challenging the transfer order. A fake order stating that "the High

was circulated at the time. The HC then asked the ACC to probe the matter. At the press conference yesterday, the ACC did not clarify whether Sharif had any involvement with the

fake order. Other allegations against Sharif were summoning innocent investigating at whim, misusing power.

Sharif said allegations were not true and said the ACC should prove the charges. About the allegation

that he failed to join the workplace in Patuakhali on time, Sharif said he Court stayed his transfer" had Covid at the time and medical documents about the infection were submitted to the commission.

Ten days before he was sacked, Sharif filed a general diary with Khulshi Police Station in Chattogram mentioning that his life had been threatened by individuals he was investigating.

The ACC secretary vesterday said the commission was not aware the termination of Sharif.

of the matter. However, The Daily Star

has a copy of a letter Sharif wrote to the commission about the threats. There was also an allegation that he misused power to get his brother

Gas Distribution Company Limited (KGDCL). Sharif said in 2017, the KGDCL outsourced certain tasks to dozens of vouths

recruited at Karnaphuli

including his brother. He said he didn't talk to

any KGDCL official about recruitment. Meanwhile, 10 Supreme

Court lawyers, wrote to the registrar general, requesting him to examine

Cabinet okays

The cabinet secretary also cited a High Court order in 2020 that directed the government to take necessary steps to make "Joy Bangla" the national slogan.

"Joy Bangla" was the strongest slogan during the Liberation War and it helped Bangladeshis get united and fight against

the Pakistani regime. The

slogan, translates as "Victory to Bengal", was not merely a political one, but a sign of commitment to the motherland and a symbol of national spirit and patriotism.

It became a rallying cry of people of all classes and ages irrespective of political affiliation during War in 1971.

National poet Nazrul Islam used the words "Joy Bangla" in his poem "Purna Abhinandan" in 1922.

Eighteen hailed citizens the government's decision to make "Joy Bangla" a state slogan.

They are Abdul Gaffar

the nine-month Liberation Chowdhury, Syed Hasan Imam, Anupam Ramendu Ferdousi Majumdar, Sarwar Ali, Abed Khan, Selina Hossain, Hossain, Abdus Salam, eminent Mofidul Hoque, Shofi Ahmed, Shahriar Kabir, Nasiruddin Yousuff Muntassir Mamoon, Sara Zaker, Shimul Yousuff and Golam Quddus.



Facing it together

the place of Dr Osman a heavy heart. After some time, we

brought out a procession which went towards Race Course Ground. Police didn't stop us. Our procession returned to the Medical College gate and ended there. The whole area was devastated. We

returned to the hostel with

Shafia Khatun was the vice president of Dhaka University Students' Union during the Language Movement

Source: Bhasha Andolon Shatchallish theke Baanna (Ed. Mostofa Kamal, Bangladesh Co-operative Book Society Ltd, 1987).

Poet Quazi Rosy

January 1, 1949, she was a former official departments of information and films and publications.

received the Bangla Academy Award in literature in 2018 and the Ekushey Padak in 2021

"Pothghat Manusher Naam" and "Amar Piraner Kono Map Nei" are the

among her literary works. After a state honour at her Dhanmondi home, the freedom fighter was buried at Mirpur Martyred Intellectuals' graveyard.

Diplomacy

for her contributions to

FROM PAGE 12

must take Russia's security demands 'seriously'. Putin and Macron agreed to 'intensify' diplomatic efforts on Ukraine and work for ceasefire, Macron's office said.

with Putin, Macron talked with Zelensky on the telephone, the French presidency said.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken yesterday said President Joe Biden ready to engage Putin "at After the conversation any time in any format".



EDITORIAL

The Baily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

Justice eludes Churihatta fire victims

Old Dhaka with its many warehouses remains a ticking time bomb

S is often seen in the wake of tragedies in Bangladesh, it seems the authorities have all but forgotten about the 71 lives lost in a warehouse fire that took place in a residential building in Chawkbazar's Churihatta area on February 20, 2019. How else would you explain the behaviour of the owners of the same building who, again, rented out its basement parking lot as a warehouse for plastic toys (a known fire hazard)? Even after three years since the tragedy, the renovated basement has no fire exits, and only four fire extinguishers. Warehouses like this continue to fly in the face of the Bangladesh Environment Conservation Rules 1997, which states that no industrial units using hazardous chemicals or goods can operate in and around a residential area.

The accused in the Churihatta fire case, including the building owners, are currently out on bail, enjoying their unearned freedom. Conversely, the families of the victims and survivors, far from getting justice, are living a life of uncertainty. Out of the 71 people who died, the families of only 21 received some compensation from the government. Others got shops to run or cleaning jobs with the DSCC. This is but a poor attempt at making up for their loss, barely enough to sustain an average family.

And what of the reported Tk 30 crore deposited into the government's national relief fund solely to help the survivors and victims' families? A collective of the families says that they have not received a penny from that fund, not even in the form of a loan. How heartwrenching that the families of those who perished in a fire caused by the authorities' negligence should have to plead for compensations that they are entitled to.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation's promise to relocate the chemical stores and plastic factories of Old Dhaka to a designated place after the Nimtoli fire—which killed at least 124 people on June 3, 2010—remains unfulfilled. At least 1,924 chemical warehouses are currently operating in the area, 98 percent of which fall under the category of "moderately risky." Their number, of course, would be much higher if we count all the residential buildings housing illegally set up warehouses like the one mentioned above.

We urge the government to speed up the pace of its warehouse relocation process. New establishments stocking hazardous materials in Old Dhaka must be prevented from being set up, while existing factories must be shuttered as soon as possible regardless of when the relocation project is completed. Most importantly, victims and survivors of previous fire tragedies must be given justice and due compensation.

Indomitable Ekushey

But have we done enough to honour the sacrifices of the martyrs?

S we observe the 70th anniversary of the historic Ekushey February, which in 1952 saw the culmination of a bloody struggle for the state recognition of Bangla language, we humbly recall the sacrifices made by the martyrs and all those who were engaged in the fight to put Bangla in its rightful place, and establish our right to talk, write and conduct official work in our mother tongue. It is a tribute to the martyrs—and a matter of pride for us—that February 21 has been recognised as the International Mother Language Day by Unesco.

But along with the joy of recognition and all the festivities comes a troubling question: Have we done enough to fulfil the dreams of our language fighters and martyrs? We often forget that Ekushey February had laid the foundation of our nationhood based on mother language. But has Bangla been given its rightful place in the country? Have other mother languages that exist here? In fact, one would not be remiss in suggesting that Bangla, as the official language of Bangladesh, has suffered from neglect at all levels. One notices with regret the lack of use of Bangla in official communications and correspondences. While no one can take issue with acquiring proficiency in a second language—which, in our case, is English— the poor treatment that Bangla is routinely accorded is a far cry from the vision we so proudly embraced in 1952.

Although the High Court Division issued a rule on February 17, 2014 for use of Bangla at all levels, offices and forums in the country—and there happens to be a Bangla Language Implementation Act, 1987—Bangla still suffers from abject neglect. Admittedly, it is a matter that neither a judicial decree nor an act of parliament can help resolve. It has to be internalised by all of us, and ingrained in our collective psyche. Only then can Bangla be fully established as a national

We believe that learning Bangla should be made compulsory at all levels and facilities should be provided to pursue higher education in Bangla, which—given the current condition in which Bangla books of references are few and far between—is well-nigh impossible to do. We should also not lose sight of the fact that there are a number of ethnic groups who have their own languages. They have the equal right to use their mother languages. And there can be no better tribute to the martyrs than helping them nurture their native languages.

A modern tax system can generate more resources



MACRO MIRROR

Dr Fahmida Khatun is executive director at the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD). Views expressed in this article are the author's own.

FAHMIDA KHATUN

N the run-up to the budget for the 2022-23 fiscal year (FY), L the National Board of Revenue (NBR) has initiated discussions with various professional and business organisations—like the previous years. The finance ministry also does the same. The NBR's focus is mainly to seek fiscal proposals from the stakeholders. This is a commendable practice, which extends the opportunity to businesses and organisations to suggest not only how various sectors can get respite from tax burden, but also how to improve the revenue mobilisation by improving the collection system. It is widely discussed that despite Bangladesh's impressive growth, the domestic resource mobilisation is too poor. Unfortunately, the NBR is yet to gain any visible success in bringing all the eligible income earners under the tax net. It is hoped that, through such regular consultations between the NBR and stakeholders, a better tax system will come about in the near

The NBR has the most important role in creating fiscal space for the government to undertake its activities. However, the target imposed on it has remained unfulfilled in the last several years. Indeed, the targets seem to be unrealistic and beyond the NBR's capacity given its current institutional framework. One may recall that, in the budget for FY2021-22, the revenue income—which includes both tax and non-tax incomehas been set to be 11.3 percent of GDP. Of the total revenue target, tax mobilisation is the highest—about 85 percent. Also, in FY22, the revenue growth target has been set at 27 percent. But the trend of revenue growth in July-October of FY22 indicates that achieving this target will require more dynamic efforts, since revenue mobilisation has to grow by 30.7 percent in the rest of the fiscal year.

Though several infrastructural projects are being financed through foreign loans, domestic resource mobilisation is crucial for achieving the government's short-, medium- and long-term objectives. With domestic resources, the government can prioritise its spending in line with policy priorities. But the constant shortfall of domestic resources creates

a real challenge for the government in fulfilling such pledges. At the current level of domestic resource mobilisation, implementing its political commitments is difficult.

As Bangladesh is set to become a developing country by 2026, higher domestic resource mobilisation will become even more important. As a developing country, we will not be eligible for foreign aid and concessional

government to eliminate such perceptions by providing hassle-free services to the citizens. The policymakers will also have to ensure that taxpayers' money is not wasted in the name of development or misappropriated through corruption. Good governance in the implementation of development projects and economic and social programmes is, therefore, key to mobilisation of higher domestic resources.



ILLUSTRATION:

While there is a lack of awareness regarding the responsibility to pay tax as a citizen of the country, there is also a strong argument for not doing so. The onus is, hence, on the government to eliminate such perceptions by providing hassle-free loans. Of course, the country's image will be enhanced and the strength of our economy will help us source funds from the global market. But that may be expensive, since we have to pay the market rates of interest for securing such loans. This could increase the debt burden on the country. As the size of the economy is expanding, the need for additional finance will continue to increase. With the current effort for tax collection, it is not possible to meet the resource requirements.

It was reported in the FY22 budget speech that the number of taxpayers in Bangladesh was only 2.5 million. In a country of more than 165 million people, this number is astonishingly low. Reasons for tax avoidance are many. Some people feel once they have a tax identification number (TIN), they are stuck forever and have to pay tax even when they have income below the threshold level. Some feel there's no point of paying tax since they don't get their expected service from the government as citizens. Some feel since they need to pay bribes at levels of the government to get their jobs done, they shouldn't have to pay additional money as tax. So, while there is a lack of awareness regarding the responsibility to pay tax as a citizen of the country. there is also a strong argument for not doing so. The onus is, hence, on the

As for the NBR, a number of specific measures should be taken to increase revenue mobilisation. One is implementing e-governance. Technology can help establish an easy tax collection procedure and increased compliance as well. It can also be used to track people's lifestyle to determine their tax rates. Often, there is a mismatch between the declared income of individuals and their expenditure patterns. This is known to the NBR. With a modern system, more human resources and higher skills, NBR's efficiency can be enhanced in this regard.

A number of reform measures proposed a few years back are yet to be completed. Among the proposed measures are the upgradation of Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA), consolidation and integration of Integrated Budget and Accounting System (iBAS++), electronic return filing, electronic tax deducted at source (e-TDS), automated customs risk management, and introduction of authorised economic operator system. These measures could help bring much efficiency in tax management. As the NBR formulates revenue measures for various sectors in the national budget for FY2022-23, the operationalisation of reform measures, some of which are already on the table, should not be sidelined.

What about the ethics of fashion retailers?



RMG NOTES

Mostafiz Uddin is Managing Director of Denim Expert Limited, and Founder and CEO of Bangladesh Apparel Exchange (BAE) and Bangladesh Denim Expo.

MOSTAFIZ UDDIN

requirements of buyers in the past few years. The cost of auditing alone is quite frightening at times, and the trend for these costs is upwards. However, I do feel compelled to point out another aspect to this issue. The headline of this story was "Retailers ditch unethical suppliers." What about the ethics of these retailers? I have to be honest: such headlines do grate on one's nerve, given the experiences of the past couple of years. When the Covid

these cases? Missing in action, it would seem. This is not just an issue around the

This is not just an issue around the pandemic—the challenge of purchasing practices continues to be a huge concern for all suppliers. This is why there are so many different initiatives in this area. If the purchasing practices by brands were focused on ESG issues and were supportive of sustainability among suppliers, we wouldn't be constantly having conversations about this issue.

But we all know that this is not the case. While some fashion retailers are supportive and ethical where purchasing practices are concerned, others—some of whom are big names—continue to push the limits of what is fair, or even legal, in some instances.

The study mentioned above talked about unethical suppliers being ditched. Perhaps they deserved to be ditched. But, perhaps, there were also suppliers who simply could not afford to invest in the kind of accreditations that their buyers insisted they acquire. Or maybe the suppliers felt they had already jumped through enough hoops and felt aggrieved at being asked to pay for multiple audits, many of which checked the same thing.

As an RMG supplier, I will always beat the drum for a more sustainable industry, and I am pleased that ESG is now being discussed in our industry. There should be no place in our industry for businesses who treat their workers poorly, and the results of this survey suggest that there no

longer will be, as we move forward.

At the same time, large retailers in the West surely cannot talk about the importance of ESG on the one hand, while using cowboy tactics themselves when doing business on the other. To take our industry as an example, it is only right and proper that we are all held to the same standards where ESG is concerned.

For a truly sustainable industry, with ESG at its core, we must all do our part (retailers and suppliers). We should all walk the walk, not just talk the talk.

K retailers ditch unethical suppliers," cried a recent headline in several international news outlets. Did I read that correctly? Apparently so. A new report from a major global commercial bank claims that the pandemic and an increasing focus on environment, sustainability and governance (ESG) issues are shifting business priorities among retailers in the West. The bank carried out a study on more than 300 retail decisionmakers. The majority (51 percent) said sustainability was more important now than it had been two years ago, while 49 percent said the same about ethical standards.

The report highlights fashion buyers—our customers—as a key driver of the trend, with RMG retailers cancelling an average of 7.5 contracts compared to an overall average of six. The most common reasons for cancelling contracts were the use of unsustainable materials (39 percent), unfair working hours among suppliers (37 percent), and a lack of accreditation to an ethical or sustainable membership organisation (32 percent).

There are two ways of looking at these findings. Firstly, they reaffirm the belief that, as suppliers, we have to invest more heavily in environmental and social governance issues. As this report makes it clear, if we, as suppliers, are found wanting in this area, our customers will ditch us.

I accept this argument to a large degree, and there is no doubt that RMG suppliers have spent heavily to meet the Ethical standards in fashion is not just the suppliers' responsibility; the retailers are equally accountable.

FILE PHOTO: **STAR**

pandemic broke, many fashion retailers cancelled orders. Then they refused to pay for those orders, even when the orders were either complete or had already been shipped to the clients. In other cases, retailers demanded huge discounts on orders which had been completed. Suppliers were left with little choice but to agree to the discounts.

We all know that the pandemic was tough on everyone when it first broke out in 2020. Some retailers went bust, while others could barely afford to pay their bills—just like their suppliers. But there were some others who refused to pay their bills simply to protect their balance sheets. Where was the "governance" in

70TH ANNIVERSARY OF AMAR EKUSHEY

Our Language Movement: Moments, Momentum, Milieu



Dr Azfar Hussain is interim director of the graduate programme in social innovation, and associate professor of integrative, religious, and cultural studies at Grand Valley State University in Michigan, US. He is also the vice-president of the US-based Global Center for Advanced Studies

AZFAR HUSSAIN

UR *Bhasha Andolan*—the Language Movement—was undoubtedly a major event in our political history. In fact, it was the first major political movement in East Pakistan (present-day Bangladesh). Although 1952 is taken as the year of this movement, it neither began, nor did it end, in 1952 as such. Its history can be traced as far back as 1947 with the formation of the first Rashtra Bhasha Sangram Parishad (State Language Movement Council) in October that year. But Ekushey February—February 21, 1952—marks a watershed moment in our history, when thousands of students assembled in front of the old Arts Faculty building of Dhaka University, shouting slogans like "Rashtra Bhasha Bangla Chai" (We Demand Bangla as the State Language), and later disobeyed Section 144. The police eventually opened fire, killing five students and injuring many more. As a Bangla poem succinctly put it once, "Bangla was written in blood in 1952" (translation is author's own).

Indeed, the students themselves gave a conjunctural, but decisively fierce, voice to the Language Movement. But it quickly morphed into a people's movement, as Badruddin Umar's monumental, threevolume historical study of this movement rigorously reveals. Language itself turned

out to be a massive site of class struggle. In fact, this movement would not have been possible without the extensive participation of peasants and workers. And the movement increasingly assumed a liberationist, emancipatory character, at least cutting the first turf for our national liberation movement of 1971 fundamentally a people's war against Pakistani neocolonialism—driven as it was by its three distinctly pronounced principles: equality, justice, and human dignity. But the very anticolonial ethos of our Language Movement was also evident right from the beginning, as the movement confronted and

combatted what I

wish to call linguistic

colonialism. But the era of linguistic colonialism is by no means over. Our middle-class, soggy, sentimental nationalism continues to celebrate the Ekushey on a yearly basis, while erasing, obscuring, and even occulting the sites of actual material contradictions and antagonisms that involve—among other things—the questions of class and gender, as well as the question of equality. This routine celebration also continues to evacuate the Ekushey of its radical content and emancipatory politics. Also, given the ways in which our mainstream, ruling-class political culture has

people, anti-democratic, and even fascist elements today—the Dhaka-centric annual "celebration" of the Ekushey repeatedly reveals how it's reduced to a narrow "cultural" event, giving one the outrageously misleading impression that our Language Movement has nothing to do with the emancipatory aspirations and struggles of the oppressed in Bangladesh. And the question remains: Along with economic justice or economic equality, where is linguistic justice or

linguistic equality in our country today? There are violently unequal power relations between the privileged ones who know or use English, and the wretched of Bangladesh who speak or use Bangla (the ruling-class folks also use Bangla; but, no, I'm not speaking of them, and obviously they don't belong to the wretched in question). The language question in this instance

evolved-a culture characterised by anti-

continues to be the question of class, although the former also ranges beyond the latter. There are also unequal power relations between what is institutionally and otherwise legitimised as "standard Bangla," and non-standard Bangla/ regional languages/dialects, etc. And, no less significantly, the languages of other nations, indigenous peoples, or ethnic

minorities in Bangladesh decisively remain the most marginalised languages in the country. Of course, despite the narratives of so-called progress—the Caribbean poet Derek Walcott's line comes to mind, "Progress is history's dirty joke"—we haven't had any egalitarian language policy at the national level yet.

What all this means is that we have not yet been able to live up to the anticolonial spirit of our Language Movement. In fact, both our Language Movement and Liberation Movement have remained decisively and disastrously unfinished.

Finally, I'm not against learning English (or any foreign language), nor am I against what is called "technological progress." But then, I question those who continue to celebrate the English language in the name of globalisation, conveniently mystifying the stubborn facts that globalisation itself is a euphemism for the current stage of disaster capitalism and digital imperialism; that it is a "globaloney" (to use Eduardo Galeano's word) for many; that this very "globalisation" globalises unequal class relations, unequal race relations, unequal gender relations, and even unequal language relations themselves, as globalisation keeps unevenly connecting and interconnecting peoples, places, cultures, and languages across the world. And I think it is in this light that what has come to be known as the Fourth Industrial Revolution should be critically interrogated. But what we actually need is a new, even revolutionary politics that remains deeply committed to ensuring the integrity and equality of all mother tongues, among other things.

Bangla is our first language, we should treat it as such



Dr Mohammad Azam is a professor at the Department of Bangla in Dhaka University.

MOHAMMAD AZAM

EVENTY years after the events of February 21, how far have we really been able to live up to the anti-colonial spirit of our Language Movement? The answer to this question is by no means a simple one.

If we look at the Pakistan regime as a colonial rule, we could say that we have succeeded, since the Language Movement is considered to be the foundation of our independence struggle in any discourse. But if we consider the issue of colonialism from a broader perspective, there are more failures than successes. The reason for our failure is that we have not been able to establish a similar critical view in the case of English as we did for Urdu. Other non-English-speaking nations deal with the dominance of English, a global language,

in their own ways, but we have not been able to come up with any mechanism yet to deal with it. From that perspective, we can say that we have not been able to live up to the spirit of our Language

There is much to be done when it comes to fully embodying the overarching spirit of our language struggle.

Given our history of struggle to give our own language, Bangla, its due respect, one may wonder: What ought to be its role in today's globalised world. Unfortunately, we have not been able to ensure proper use of Bangla in our country. This is because, as much as we have seen Bangla from a nationalist point of view, as much as we have seen it emotionally, we have not seen it as a language of practical use.

First, I want to problematise the use of the word "mother tongue" when referring to Bangla, and use instead the term "first language". There are many first languages in Bangladesh, but Bangla may be the language which is most in

First language can be used in offices,

A language must have its own economic potential something we have failed to achieve in the last 70 years. And it won't happen, unless we can establish Bangla as the first language

at all levels

of education,

everywhere.

in higher education and for many other purposes. Although the use of Bangla is widespread in primary, secondary and even tertiary education, the same cannot be said in case of higher education and research. While common people use Bangla in their day-to-day life, we can't say the same for our elite neighbourhoods. The section of people who are able to use English for economic purposes are not actually using Bangla. They are also not interested in teaching their children Bangla effectively as a language to read or write. A language must have its own economic potentialsomething we have failed to achieve in the last 70 years. And it won't happen, unless we can establish Bangla as the first language at all levels of education,

Establishing the use of Bangla in every sphere of society is important, because without doing so, we cannot make any plans for our entire population. What we need to do is use Bangla as the first language of instruction in education, while English should be made the second language. This doesn't mean English should be neglected, however.

English should be taught systematically, so that students can achieve a good command over the English language through 12 years of schooling, which will ensure that they face no difficulty in using English when they pursue higher education. It is a wrong idea that our books in higher education should be in Bangla. Our students must be proficient in using English books, but the medium of instruction should be Bangla. All the research work must be done in Bangla as well. We should also use online platforms to teach English everywhere in the country. No one should feel that they are falling behind because they have no scope for learning the language.

If we can establish the use of Bangla in higher education and research, we will automatically see the changes we want everywhere. I think we should make a plan to teach at least 50 percent of the courses in higher education in Bangla by the next 20 years. If we can do that, we will be able to rid ourselves of the unnecessary worry of falling behind

As told to the Editorial Desk of The Daily Star.

QUOTABLE Quote



NELSON MANDELA

(1918 - 2013)Former South African president

If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 1 Dog's dogs 5 Gift bag liner 11 Soothing stuff 12 Black Sea 13 Whittle down 14 Straight 15 Makes major demands 17 Pig's place 18 Heavy drinker 22 Western resort 24 Sleep sound 25 - Jima26 Relieve 27 "Meet John Doe" director 30 Fishing spots 32 Bandleader Kay 33 Co. abbr.

34 Buffet staple Amer. 38 Pleistocene 10 Corn unit period 41 Tug-of-war need Homer 42 Brosnan's Bond prefavorite decessor 43 Fencing port sword 44 Set straight 45 Helper: Abbr.

DOWN 1 One of a bear trio 2 Weary word 3 Artisans' places 4 Handles 5 Turnpike cost 6 Lunkheads 7 Forwarded 8 Toronto-to-D.C. dir. 9 Much of N.

16 Pro vote 19 One of Simpson's 20 War of 1812 21 Some wines 22 Clock sound 23 Not at home 28 Sales offer 29 Region of Spain 30 Tell tales 31 Tenor Bocelli 35 Lane's coworker 36 Big galoots 37 Convene

38 Altar

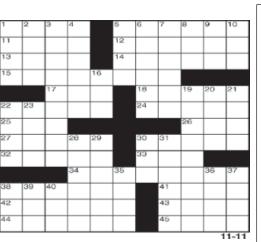
promise

SUV

39 Sedan or

40 Yale rooter

WRITE FOR US. SEND US YOUR OPINION PIECES TO



SATURDAY'S **ANSWERS**

F	A	C			Ø	U	Α	S	Α	R
- 1	R	0	Ζ		\supset	Ν	L	Α	С	E
S	E	Α	Т		Е	L	0	Р	Е	D
Н	Α	L		В	Е	Ε	Т			
		М		Ε	Z	S		G	0	0
Α	Р	Ι	Ν	G		S	С	0	0	Р
L	Υ	Ν	Х				Н	Α	Z	E
Р	R	Е	S	S		Н	E	L	Е	Ν
S	0	S		Т	R	Α	W	L		
			J	0	Е	Υ			П	0
R	E	В	U	K	Е		0	Ν	U	S
E	٧	Α	D	Е	D		R	Е	Е	L
Р	E	Т	Е	R	S		Α	S	Т	О



ANTI-COLONIAL MOVEMENTS AS PASSIVE REVOLUTION

ABDUR RAZZAQ'S insights on 1947

Razzaq is at his best where he rises to lay bare the secret of Indian nationalism: "Political movements, basically, have voiced the sentiments and expressed the needs of these allies. There is no question of a struggle by the educated middle class against the indigenous allies of imperialism

in India for

reason that

the educated

middle class

belonged to

as the allies

themselves"

Political

Parties

India

(Razzaq 2022:

has essentially

the same class

the simple

SALIMULLAH KHAN

This stain-splattered daybreak, this night-bitten

This is not the dawn which we were waiting for

This is not the dawn with longing for which Friends walked on hoping to find somewhere or

(Faiz 1971: 122-23)

These lines which open Faiz Ahmed Faiz's famous poem Subh-e-Azadi (August 1947), translated as 'Freedom's Dawn (August 1947)', agonised and agonising as it is, the poem also provides a measure of naïveté. As if a daybreak of the kind was never apprehended. Included in *Dast-e-Saba* (1952), the poem became emblematic of what commentators would call the pity of Partition. A Bengali contemporary of the Panjabi poet's, 'Abdur Razzaq of Dhaka', as he was known to some in England, around that time was engaged in drafting a thesis on political parties in undivided India (Wilson 1971: Dedication).

When the Independence of India Act, passed in the British parliament on July 16, 1947 and received royal assent in two days, setting up the two Dominions of India and Pakistan was providing for, among many other things, the territorial division of British India, constituting two provinces each in the former Panjab and Bengal of British India, Abdur Razzaq was a graduate student at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), described as "an institution of higher education for elites within the British Empire, in particular India" (Moscovitch 2012: 35).

The Act also provided a separate Governor General for each Dominion and a legislature with full authority to make laws, thus bringing British colonial rule to an end. Razzaq was neither surprised nor lamented the facts. He analysed instead. Going beyond sale patters and platitudes, he only asked two elementary questions: what imperatives determined the liquidation of British rule in India and what propelled it to divide their handiwork into two Dominions of India and Pakistan? Conclusions he reached in 1950 may appear new even three quarters of a century later because they are facts of experience. Setting the loose talk aside, Razzaq goes for the plain facts of experience. He records: "When Independence did come, it came in the form of an Act of Parliament". But why? In asking this question, he had to ask, necessarily, probe another: what on earth were the political movements in India doing, only to discover that they had no programme beyond the demand of freedom from foreign domination principle?

> Abdur Razzag had no time the anti-climax: it was all a business deal at the rush hour. The trail to this anti-climax, which he follows, is bi-modal: one mental and the material. The manner and method of exercise of power in India followed material developments in the means and relations of production. Political ideas always played second fiddle to changes on the material plane. "The political process in India," writes Razzaq, "had not been carried to its logical denouement on the wings of fiery resolutions either of the Congress or the Muslim League or of any other political or semipolitical body. The

served to draw attention to changes or impending changes in the manner and method of the exercise of power in India. Independence did not come as a dramatic culmination of mass struggles against an implacable foe, but as a legal undertaking initiated by Parliament to cede control over its previous colony (Razzaq 2022: 2-3)

Abdur Razzaq's take on the failure of the much-trumpeted revolutionary idea of Swaraj in the early 1920s to attain its avowed goal is also deceptively simple. Non-cooperation, an idea integral to its attainment, lacking appropriate sanction, remained in the end only a great idea. "The reason behind its failure to bring about Swaraj," Razzaq observes, "was that the action taken to create sanction behind the idea was not commensurate with its greatness. The predominant body of men on whose active cooperation the Government was being carried on in the 1920s came from the educated and propertied classes. The great idea alone had no power to move them in the direction of noncooperation" (Razzaq 2022: 4).

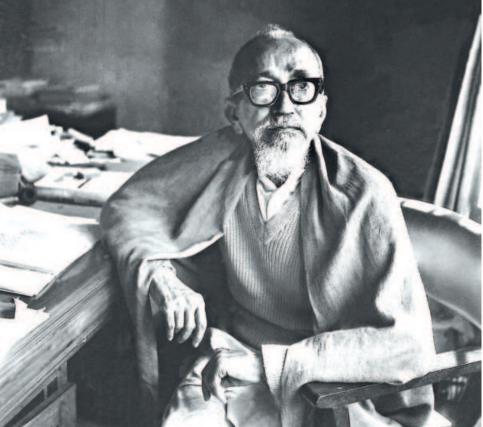
classes' from which came the ostensible

non-cooperators also provided the principal cooperators to the British administration in India. "The fact," he rightly observes, "is that the political evolution of India has been the result not merely of a political struggle" (Razzaq 2022: 78). Objective trends include developments in the state apparatus as well as the economic laws of motion underwriting the social formation. The state apparatus in British India, as elsewhere, formed no exception to the rule of forming historical blocs. In colonial India too, the exercise of political power, at least since land revenue ceased to be the principal source of government's income following changes in the economic formation, depended on the native allies of the foreign bureaucracy collaborating with the master.

Razzaq is at his best where he rises to lay bare the secret of Indian nationalism: "Political movements, basically, have voiced the sentiments and expressed the needs of these allies. There is no question of a struggle by the educated middle class against the indigenous

broke the fabric of India's body politic? The mountain Razzaq took on shoulders is to provide the answer: the educated Indian, the Indian bourgeoisie or the middle class, you name it, who was also in part the product of the British rule in India. Abdur Razzaq took the challenge "to explain the division of India with reference to the climate of thought of the educated Indian whose task it was to initiate the political movements in India" and I am obliged to say that he achieved it remarkably well. His method is all the more remarkable inasmuch as he sought the thought-climes of the educated Indian, "in the permanent contributions to the two vernacular literatures of Bengali and Urdu in India," leaving behind resolutions of political bodies, press clippings, etc., to the proper baskets they belong. "In the permanent contributions to these literatures," Razzaq adds, "is enshrined the results of the searchings of the heart that began in the early years of the 19th

century," or so Razzaq writes (Razzaq 2022: 5). The place where Razzaq uncovers the political



National Professor Abdur Razzag.

allies of imperialism in India for the simple reason that the educated middle class has essentially belonged to the same class as the allies themselves" (Razzaq 2022: 79).

What, then, was the eventual contribution of Swaraj in the actual political development of India's freedom movement? The mentality of a pressure group only, to be brief, and no political programme or party for that matter: "The attempt to fashion a political party with a positive programme was suddenly abandoned. In its stead, the political movements since 1920 formulated their problem in the negative terms of liquidating foreign control over the country'

(Razzaq 2022: 4). Class composition of the political movements, in other words, explains it all. "The Congress consisting as it did of diverse elements and ideologies was united in one thing only—that of achieving freedom from foreign domination. The predominance of pressure group mentality consequent upon the absorption in a negative task, had fatal consequences for the growth of political parties in India." These consequences, of course, included the prevention of working out a common political programme. Abdur Razzaq's thematic question, "Why was there no political party in India?", was thus firmly answered: no programme, no party. "[The] notion of a positive welfare state," interpolated he, "could not be reconciled with 'ploughing the wilderness' to pursue the one-point agenda that the Congress programme had become" (Razzaq 2022: 4-5).

For Razzaq, the Independence of India Act, 1947, with its provisions for dividing India into two states—India and Pakistan—owes it to this lack of a programme for a positive welfare state. The imaginary opinion which treats the division of 1947 as a function of the Machiavellian tactics of the 'third party' bent on dividing "what nature and history of man in India had designed as a unity," according to Razzaq is not sustainable (Razzaq 2022: 5).

The idea of India's 'natural unity' itself is a cultural idea, 'an article of faith' for a long time, indeed, and moreover, a highly contested idea. There were, to be brief, many nations in India, some developed and some still developing. The 'unity of India' or otherwise has always been an administrative fiat even before the British rule united the sub-continent by the fact of conquest and subordination. "The concept of the unity of India, the one concept on which political India was irreconcilably divided," Razzaq writes, "was primarily derived from the history of British administration in India" (Razzaq 2022: 96).

If it was the Briton who united it, who then

PHOTO: NASIR ALI MAMUN/PHOTOSEUM

feat par excellence of the educated Indian is on the plane of the mind, the second mode on the trail. If this class or class-bloc, if you will, was not good for much else, they were worthy in preventing further split in the successor Dominions by their permanent hostility to selfflagellation.

Abdur Razzaq catches the Indian National Congress out in its own words, as incarnated in an official history, c. 1935. The Congress, according to its official historian, was destined to full two great missions. It, on the one hand, as an avowedly national body was committed to the political objective of uniting all Indians, irrespective of religious creed, caste, or nationality, for attaining freedom from foreign power. While also assuming as "the organ and exponent of national renaissance" the solemn duty of evolving a grand synthesis of various schools of Hindu religious thought, "so as to be able to dispel prejudice and superstition, to renovate and purify the old faith, and reconcile Vedantic idealism with the nationalism of the new age." It is indeed a pity that the Congress did not quite look in the face to see any contradiction between its two great missions. Razzaq's wry remark undeniably reaches its target: "In the degree to which [it] attained success in fulfilling this great mission, the Congress was, by implication, working hard for the division of India, notwithstanding the numerous protestations to the contrary'

(Sitaramayya, 1935: 22-23; Razzaq 2022: 5-6). The third party, however, had supplied the final cause: English education as the royal road to social and economic power. An imbecile middle class, since the third quarter of the fateful 18th century, "came into being through embracing the deliberate attempts to introduce English education" as "all roads to improved status during Company rule in India have been through the connection with company's administration" (Razzaq 2022: 103). As Razzaq has noted neither the great merchants and traders, nor even the members of the landed aristocracy as such were the dominant groups in Indian society, because entry to the landed aristocracy itself was determined primarily by way of connections with the servants of the Company. "The growing classes of Indian employees of the Company," in Razzaq's words, "were the men who were the natural leaders of Indian society. Undoubtedly, they held minor positions in the Company but still as a class they were the most powerful as well as prosperous among the Indians. The principle and the method of their recruitment, as well as the manner in which they were educated and the subjects on which they were educated, determined the intellectual climate of the

coming middle class" (Razzaq 2022: 104).

If one primitive motif that drove English education in the late 18th century was providing men able to understand the language well enough working as interpreters between the English merchants and indigenous trading classes, the other was the moral regeneration of the people insofar as it would facilitate conversion to Christianity. The content of the education imparted through English, or adapted from the English source materials, had invariably this all-important objective in view. "The first organized attempt to introduce English," as Razzaq notes, "was inextricably connected with the missionary aim of conversion" (Razzaq 2022: 107).

It must be one of those ironies of history, that the missionary efforts at promoting English education to facilitate conversion to Christianity 'seemed to produce only a reformed Hinduism", as men like Rammohan Roy were moved by altogether different motives. "The missionary," notes Razzaq, "in fact, by his uncontrolled and indiscreet enthusiasm had achieved an end exactly contrary to his wishes. The indigenous movement for reformation was the direct answer to the proselytizing zeal of the missionary. So far as the larger question of the long-term development in the society was concerned, it had one very unfortunate consequence. The introduction of English which could have been a wholly secular question was as a matter of fact, instrumental in bringing forth a revivalism in the educated class which did not exhaust itself even by the end of the century" (Razzaq 2022:

On Rammohan Roy, protagonist of English education and European-at least Englishleaning in India, Razzaq only has this unsavory remark to offer: "All through the period of his active life the subjects to which he was mostly devoted were purely religious" (Razzaq 2022: 108). The worse was yet to come though. The owl of Minerva only takes flight after the sun has set. "If the society had contained the devotees of one religion, this religious trend might have developed into a secular outlook. But in the context of India, with devotees of more than one religion, it was merely a prelude to further and disastrous complications" (Razzaq 2022: 109).

With Bankimchandra Chatterjee, who dominates the field of creative activity in the late 19th century, push comes to shove, disastrous complications became a full-fledged trauerspiel. In Bankim's most widely appreciated literary work Ananda Math, "a piece of most impassioned writing on the theme of Hindu-Muslim struggle," occurs 'Vande Mataram', war song of the sons going to battle against the Muslims. "The book," remarks Razzaq, "is

Abdur Razzaq's take on the failure of the much trumpeted revolutionary idea of Swaraj in the early 1920s to attain its avowed goal is also deceptively simple. Non-cooperation, an idea integral to its attainment, lacking appropriate sanction, remained in the end only a great idea.

the work of a genius who has portraved the whole of his talents in the creation of a hymn of hatred against the Muslims" (Razzaq 2022: 115). He leaves us with two questions: "Under the circumstances, how did the national movement come to pick its theme song from such a book? How did the book come to be so popular?" (Razzaq 2022: 115).

It's a pity that I now run out of room for either of these or the question of Muslim reform and revivalist movements in India, something only slightly older than its Hindu counterpart. However, let us say for a thread that the disaster came not when people had gone 'fanatic', but only when the revivalist phase died down yielding place to a 'secular' frame of mind.

Abdur Razzaq's none too edifying remarks on Mohandas Gandhi also seem to be echoed by a later writer who probably couldn't consult him. "Perhaps this is a jarring note," writes Antony Copley, "on which to end this comparison, and it is not intended to suggest that Gandhi was in the least a Fascist; it is simply to comment on the way any political movement with a religious idiom is in danger of arousing a religious and communal response within India's religiously plural society" (Copley 1988: 19).

Salimullah Khan is a Professor at the General Education Department, University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB).

References

Antony Copley, 'Congress and the Risorgimento: A comparative study of nationalism,' in D. A. Low, ed., The Indian National Congress: Centenary Hindsights (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 1-21.

Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Poems by Faiz, Victor Kiernan, trans. (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1971). Brant Moscovitch, 'Harold Laski's Indian students and the power of education, 1920-1950,' Contemporary South Asia, vol. 20, no. 1 (March 2012),

Abdur Razzaq, Political Parties in India, Ahrar Ahmad, ed. (Dhaka: University Press Limited, 2022). Dick Wilson, Asia Awakes: A Continent in Transition, reprint (New York: New American Library,



Abdur Razzaq hits the bull's eye with this one simple fact. The 'educated and propertied

What to What to

T SPORTS
PSL
Lahore Qalandars vs Peshawar
Zalmi
Live from 08:00 pm

Celta Vigo vs Levante Live from 02:00 am (Tuesday) VH1 India Serie A Bologna vs Spezia Live from 02:00 am (Tuesday)



SL deny Aussies perfect summer

REUTERS

Opener Kusal Mendis struck an unbeaten 69 off 58 balls to help secure a consolation five-wicket victory for Sri Lanka, who fired with both bat and ball against Australia in the fifth and final T20I on Sunday.

The hosts posted a middling 154-6 after opting to bat in Melbourne, but the Sri Lankan batsmen finally found their feet to reach 155-5 with one ball remaining, ending the series 4-1 in Australia's favour, although they were hurt by a first loss in any format since losing to England in the Super 12 stage of the T20 World Cup on October 30, 2021.

Mendis batted positively, but sensibly, with captain Dasun Shanaka (35) in an 83run partnership which powered Sri Lanka to their first win against Australia in any format since 2017.

Aaron Finch said: "Sri Lanka are a very dangerous side and to win four games in a row was really good."

Tigers looking to counter spin threat

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will take on Afghanistan in the first of three ODIs on February 23 and the visitors' spin threat will be the key component around which the Tigers base their strategies.

Despite Āfghanistan's dominant spin attack, national selector Habibul Bashar said that the Tigers, having gotten back key players, are confident going into the series

"Afghanistan have world-class spinners in their side like Rashid Khan and Mujeeb Ur Rahman alongside others like Qais [Ahmad] who have quality. Afghanistan are also a good side in the white-ball format but we have a stable side at the moment and ODI is a format that experienced players in the side find more favourable. Every side has a key option to rely on and such players can make the difference. But when it comes to international cricket, you have to have the ability to come up with answers to such challenges," Bashar told The Daily Star yesterday.

Bangladesh last played an ODI in July last year during a three-match ODI series against Zimbabwe. Although the core remains intact for the Afghanistan series, there are quite a few changes to the squad.

"Our best players are in the side. Although there may have been some issues with batting previously, batters are finding their rhythm. We expect to do well with these players. We have been out of ODI cricket for a while and the pressure of doing well at home only adds to the challenge. But I feel the players are confident enough to bring out good performances," Bashar stated.

The wickets will be in focus at Chattogram but the recently-concluded



BPL has seen high scores. "The tracks at Chattogram have been batting-friendly. We will know more when we get there," he concluded.

The Bangladesh squad reached Chattogram yesterday and took part in their first practice session, albeit without two key stars in Shakib Al Hasan and Mustafizur Rahman. It was learned that both would arrive in Chattogram today.
Squad members alongside staff tested
negative for Covid-19 after the latest round
of tests on Saturday before entering the
bio-secure bubble, but batting coach
Jamie Siddons tested positive yet again.
Jamie, who initially tested positive on
February 12, will have to isolate in Dhaka.
However, under current guidelines, he
will be able to join the side in a few days
without any further tests.

"Siddons returned a positive test once again. But it has been eight days since he initially tested positive. According to the Tokyo 2020 Guidebook, he can join the team without undergoing any test 10 days after returning a positive for the first time. He is also doing well," Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) physician Monzur Hossain Chowdhury informed The Daily Star vesterday.

Afghanistan also underwent their first practice session in Chattogram following a week-long preparation camp in Sylhet. Former Bangladesh coach Stuart Law, who was named interim head coach by Afghanistan on Saturday, oversaw the practice session.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Cricket Board is trying to convince concerned authorities to permit the stadium to operate at 50 per cent capacity during the upcoming series. The full version of DRS was not available during the BPL, but will be available for the series against Afghanistan, BCB confirmed.

Real extend lead

REUTERS, Madrie

Real Madrid dug deep in a 3-0 home win against lowly Alaves, scoring all three in the last 27 minutes of the game after the visitors gave them a few scares early on and threatened to pull off an upset at the Bernabeu stadium on Saturday.

Marco Asensio roused the Bernabeu in the 63rd minute with a brilliant curled shot into the top right corner from outside the box.

Vinicius Jr extended the lead in the 80th minute, and Karim Benzema added one more with a stoppage time penalty kick.

The LaLiga leaders moved up to 57 points from 25 games, seven ahead of Sevilla and 14 clear of Real Betis - both of whom have a game in hand over Real. Champions Atletico Madrid are fourth with 42 points, three more than Barcelona.

"Our fans ask us to win always and we have to deliver it, we are used to the pressure, and in the second half they gave us the support we needed to win," Dani Carvajal told reporters.

"I understand the fans being upset, in Real Madrid the highest level is a must," Carvajal said, referring to booing from the stands after a goalless first half against the second-from-bottom side.

While the result may have looked comfortable, Real looked tired and sluggish from the start, managing only two shots on target in the first half. The win may give Real a bit of breathing room at the top of the table - but not enough to lower the pressure or expectations they face from their fans.



Nantes stun wasteful PSG

REUTERS, Paris

Nantes stormed into a three-goal halftime lead and then rode their luck to win 3-1 at home on Saturday and hand runaway leaders Paris St Germain their second Ligue 1 loss of the season.

Nantes saw little of the possession, had a player sent off only to see the red card overturned on VAR review and then watched as Neymar squandered a penalty in a thrill-a-minute clash at the Stade de la Beaujoire.

PSG, who started the game 13 points clear of second-placed Olympique de Marseille, pulled a goal back a minute into the second half as Lionel Messi set up Neymar for a clinical finish.

The Brazilian, back in the starting line-up for the first time since November, then had a chance to further reduce the deficit when Appiah again brought down Mbappe, but Neymar's penalty was a weak effort straight at Alban Lafont.

Mbappe then produced an uncharacteristic miss from point-blank range in the final 20 minutes as PSG kept up the pressure but were unable to make use of their numerous chances.

The win saw Nantes leap from 10th to fifth in the Ligue 1 standings as they push for a spot in next season's European club competition.

Conte masterminds 'perfect game'

REUTERS, Manchester

Antonio Conte praised his Tottenham Hotspur side's ability to turn defence into attack as they shrugged off a dreadful recent run to stun Premier League leaders Manchester City with a Harry Kane-inspired 3-2 win at the Etihad Stadium on Saturday.

After three successive league defeats, Tottenham's top-four ambitions but the Italian, who has been under the spotlight all week after an interview in which he appeared to suggest Tottenham had been left weakened in the transfer window, masterminded the "perfect game" to stop the Man City juggernaut.

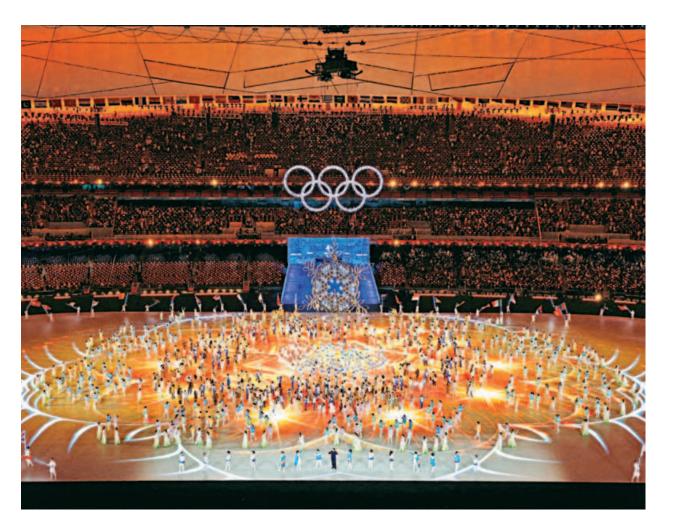
Tottenham only had 28% of possession against City, but defended diligently and somehow always looked a threat on the counter-attack with Kane, who scored twice including the 96th minute winner, linking superbly with Son Heung-min.

City had made it 2-2 in stoppage time through Riyad Mahrez's penalty, and it looked likely that the leaders would even snatch a last-gasp win, but Tottenham had other ideas as they revived their hopes of challenging for



the top four. "You know when you play Manchester City you will concede 70% of possession. But I say to my players that when you are defending, in your mind you must always be attacking. In your mind you want to win the ball and attack," Conte said.

"To have this thought, in the final minutes, their goal could have killed you. Instead my players wanted to win. I think in every moment of the game my team wanted to attack them. Every time we had the ball I was thinking we could hurt them." The surprise win lifted Tottenham back into seventh



Beijing doused its Olympic flame on Sunday night, closing a Games that will be remembered as much for the extremes of its anti-Covid-19 measures as the performances on display. Chinese President Xi Jinping was on hand for the snowflake-themed ceremony at the Bird's Nest stadium, where IOC President Thomas Bach described the Beijing Games as "truly exceptional" before declaring them closed.

PHOTO: REUTER:

Sports Clinic to begin activities

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Association of Sports Medicine (BASM) has decided to begin activities of the Sports Medicine Clinic to ensure modern treatments to athletes.

The decision was made at the first meeting of the newly-formed BASM executive committee on Saturday, chaired by its president and BSSMU vice-chancellor professor Dr. Md. Sharfuddin Ahmed. "The BASM, along with the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, will begin activities of the Sports Medicine Clinic immediately with the help of experts to ensure the modern and contemporary health service and treatments to sportspersons and the individuals related to the sports," said a BASM statement today.

The establishment of a Sports Medicine Institute at the BSMMU was also finalised.





FIRING OF SHARIF

ACC puts up 13 allegations

The former officer refutes them all

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three days after sacking Sharif Uddin, the Anti-Corruption Commission yesterday came up with 13 allegations against the former

officer whose investigation into a land acquisition scam made headlines in 2020 and 2021.

ACC Secretary Mahbub Hossain at a press conference at his office in the capital said Sharif was sacked to bring order to the commission. "He [Sharif] tortured Idris,

an accused in a graft case filed on March 10, 2020. It is a clear violation of the law," Mahbub said. Soon after the ACC press conference, Sharif

sent an email in the evening to journalists with his response to the allegations. He said Chattogram Medical College Hospital in

a report on January 29 concluded that Idris was not tortured. Another allegation mentioned that Sharif did

not properly investigate the case regarding the land acquisition scam in Cox's Bazar.

Sharif said he submitted his investigation report to the deputy director in January 2021. "If there were loopholes, why wasn't it mentioned at the

Another allegation against Sharif mentioned that he imposed no debit status on 33 bank accounts of SEE PAGE 7 COL 5



Poet Quazi Rosy passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ekushey Padak-winning poet Quazi Rosy, who played a significant role as a prosecution witness in the war crimes case against executed Jamaat leader Abdul Quader Mollah, died at a city hospital yesterday. She was 74.

Former MP Rosy, also a freedom fighter, was hospitalised on January 30 after contracting Covid-19, said her daughter Sumi Sikander.

President Abdul Hamid, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury and many cabinet members and noted personalities and organisations expressed condolences at the demise of Rosy, a lawmaker in a reserved seat for women in the 10th national parliament.

Born in Satkhira on

Diplomacy on amid war fears

Putin says US, Nato must take Russia's security demands 'seriously' over Ukraine



Protestors gather to oppose a US war with Russia over Ukraine at Grand Central Terminal in the Manhattan borough of New York City, US on Saturday.

AGENCIES

Last-ditch diplomatic efforts were underway yesterday to prevent what Western powers warn could be the imminent Russian invasion of Ukraine and a catastrophic European war.

Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskiy yesterday called for an immediate ceasefire in the eastern part of the country, where clashes between pro-Russian separatists and Ukrainian forces intensified in

He also said Ukraine supports peace talks within the Trilateral Contact Group, where Ukraine

participates along with Russia and the Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe (OSCE).

"We stand for intensifying the peace process. We support the immediate convening of the TCG and the immediate introduction of a regime of silence," Zelenskiy said on Twitter.

French President Emmanuel Macron yesterday called Russian leader Vladimir Putin about the situation in Ukraine.

During talks with Macron which lasted 105 minutes, Putin blamed Kyiv's 'provocations' for escalation on frontline and said US and Nato

SEE PAGE 7 COL 4

Facing it together

SHAFIA KHATUN

As the vice president of Women's Students' Union, I was responsible for organising female students. I sent some of them to girls' schools to bring the girls

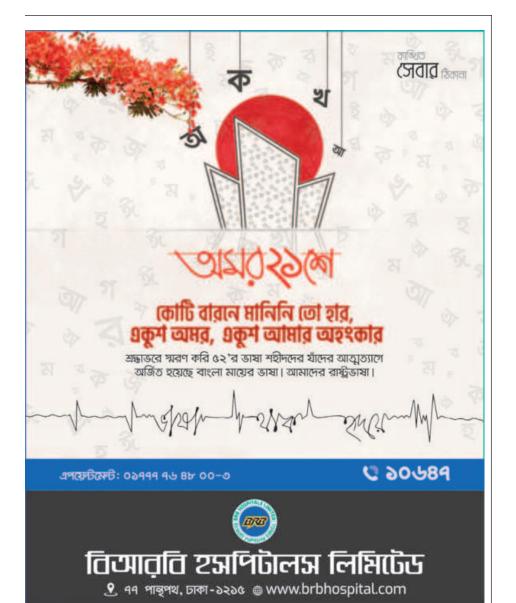
> to the meeting at Āmtala [February 21, 1952]. I can't forget their enthusiasm for the movement. They have immense contribution to the language movement. The meeting started around 11:0 am. Initially, student leaders were not in favour of violating Section 144.

It created a heated debate. Finally, someone suggested that students should come out in groups of four. I was adamant to break Section 144. I told them to take a firm decision and march forward unitedly instead of in groups. Seeing them hesitant, I denounced the meeting and went to the women's common room. After some time, some male students came and requested us to attend the meeting in the greater interest of students' unity. Then we decided to go and face it together.

Meanwhile, police took position in the campus area. As the meeting ended, students started coming out in groups. We were in the third batch. Police stopped the first two batches of male protesters and rounded them up. But they let us march forward. When we reached the main gate of the Medical College, police started firing tear gas shells. I was seriously affected by tear gas. Someone took me to the Medical College for treatments.

After getting some first aid, I came out and tried again to organise female students. Meanwhile, police opened fire on students. I managed to gather some girls, and took shelter at

SEE PAGE 7 COL 4



ICJ ROHINGYA CASE Fresh hearing, fresh hope

PORIMOL PALMA

The International Court of Justice will begin a fresh round of hearings into the Rohingya genocide case amid renewed hope for justice today, a little over two years after The Gambia filed the case with the court.

The first round of hearings from Myanmar and The Gambia will be held at The Hague on February 21 and 23 and the second round on February 25 and 28 in a hybrid format, combining virtual and in-person presence.

The Gambia, backed by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), opened the case against Myanmar at the ICJ in November 2019 for failing to prevent the genocide against

About a million Rohingya refugees, who faced persecution in Myanmar's Rakhine State, are sheltered in Bangladesh. The largest influx of Rohingyas -- some 750,000 -- to Bangladesh was in 2017 following a military crackdown that the UN said had "genocidal intent".

After a preliminary hearing, the ICJ found that The Gambia's claims were substantial SEE PAGE 7 COL 1



