

An Ignored Chapter in the History of Language Movement: The Cultural Activities and Mass Movement that Strengthened the Movement in 1952 from Chattogram, Bangladesh

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DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.8100172>

Received: 08 October 2024; Accepted: 12 October 2024; Published: 13 November 2024

ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the great Language Movement in the port city, Chattogram in the then East Pakistan. The city's residents enthusiastically participated in the Language Movement, which was the most courageous manifestation of Bengali nationalism. However, it is quite unfortunate that the movement activities of the Chattogram people are not mentioned much in books, research papers, or the news. By disregarding all democratic standards, Pakistan's ruling elites attempted to make Urdu the official language. This movement attracted participants of all genders and expanded throughout East Pakistan. The political, cultural, and social context of East Bengal was significantly impacted by the unified and resilient Chattogram language movement. People from all around Bengal were involved in this, and people in Bangladesh have a right to know the true history that contributed to the rise of Bengali nationalism. This article has made numerous attempts to present the movement's true features which were truly an ignored chapter in the history of Bangladesh.

Key words: Language Movement, Ignored Chapter, First Poem, Women, Chattogram, Bangladesh.

INTRODUCTION

For some reason, language Movement in Chattogram had the least attention in the printing media during the movement period. Radio Pakistan, daily news papers, other printing leaflets and bulletins focused on the movements based on Dhaka and surroundings. As such, the movement to establish Bangla eventually started practically everywhere in East Pakistan from the time the state of Pakistan was established. A significant and consequential movement happened in Chattogram, which gained not much attention in the news papers other publications at the time. The article focuses on the public movement and cultural activists in Chattogram during the language movement in East Pakistan, which received little attention by the historical records and printing media of the time.

The Language Movement in Chattogram: An Overview

The language movement in Chattogram (previous name Chittagong), similar to that in Dhaka, commenced on 11 March 1948, marked by the observance of 'Protest Day'. Notable strikes and protest rallies took place on 11 March and 14 March, 1948 across various educational institutions in the district, encompassing Chattogram city as well [1].

Activists in Chattogram implant the seeds of Language consciousness by creating awareness through printing materials from 1940's. The Simanto (meaning the Horizon), a monthly periodical jointly edited by Mahabubul Alam Chowdhuryⁱ and Sucharit Chowdhury, was first published in Chittagong in 1947. All progressive movements of Chattogram were organized with the Simanto centric which had this motto – 'men above all', 'secularism', 'against fundamentalism', 'democracy' and 'traditionalism'. Mahabubul Alam Chowdhury wrote an editorial in favor of Bengali as state language in the second issue of the Simanto. He wrote "By this time

many discussions have arisen about which will be the state language of East Pakistan. The litterateurs of East Pakistan have sent a memorandum to the Prime Minister, requesting to make Bengali as state language. Their request is not sudden at all. The question is which should be the state language? If the state is democratic, than the people's language should be that in which he speaks ungrudgingly, and in which he is capable of expressing his emotions. That language should be the state language, this is natural. ----- But beside this, question arises for 'but'. But this question does not arise from mass people of East Pakistan, but from only a handful of people. Though they are few but they have strong voice, otherwise memorandum or discussions would not have been needed. Mass people would not be suddenly anxious as well with the pressure of this very few. If the mass people's language would not take place in the state than this must be said- hard times for democracy are to come. Dignity of democracy was never given by reciting of democracy. If this is justified to the point of language, Bengali is not ostracized; rather it can comfortably take place in the world of classic literature. If this is justified to the point of people's number, there are very few countries in the world where so many people speak in a language. But why should these need to be considered for state language? If the state is for the people than people's language will take place in the state..." [2].

The numerous Simanto reports and editorials, as well as the discussions of writers and intellectuals published from all across the nation, though very little helped the people of Chattogram become more aware of the state language. State regulated news papers could not publish all news because of the restrictions from the central government.

During the discussion time, Chattogram was home to numerous significant cultural organizations, such as Jagriti (meaning the awakening), Arya Sangeet (Aryan Song), Sanskritik Baithak (Cultural Meeting), Pioneer Club, Krishti Kendra (Cultural center), Railway Shilpi Sangha (Railway Cultural Organization), Prantik Nabanatya Sangha, and Sangeet Parishad (Singing artists group). These organizations have played a significant role in advancing Bengali language and culture since 1948 by raising public awareness about the sentiment of the mother tongue which was the main instrumental of the language movement within the community. These groups constantly remind the public about Bengali traditions, customs, and national pride through plays, musicals, and other cultural events. In this sense, they have worked with artists and cultural activists. Raising public awareness of and support for the language movement was the aim of these campaigns. Writers, artists, and activists in Chattogram were unwavering in their commitment to preserving Bengali identity and language despite barriers and persecution from the Pakistani government.

It took extraordinary fortitude for the writers, artists, and activists of Chattogram to oppose Pakistan's attempts to make East Bengalis speak Urdu. In the face of imprisonment and torture, they continued in their commitment to protect Bengali language and culture. Writers and cultural activists in Chattogram organized peace processions and rallies against the Pakistani government's divisive actions during the language movement, which were meant to provoke conflicts between Muslims and Hindus. Hindu communities were even shielded from inter communal violence by them. The movement actually started just after the birth of one new state, named 'Pakistan' with two individual wings. The people from East Pakistan soon realized that, the Basic Principles Committee Report was a conspiracy to establish West Pakistani rule upon East Bengal and to make East Pakistan as a colony of West Pakistan[3].

But, prior to this report, On March 11, 1948, a hartal (Strike) was declared throughout the province of East Pakistan to express disapproval of the ruling class's undemocratic choice. Chattogram was the starting point for the hartala's triumph. On March 12, 1948, the Pakistan Constituent Assembly's Basic Principles Committee Report was released. The report on the autonomy of East Pakistan and the use of state language received no feedback, leading to the formation of the Basic Principles Committee Report against the Rastro Bhasha Shongram Committee (State Language Action Committee) by March. The Railway Workers Employee League chose Mahabubul Alam Chowdhury and Mahabubul Hoque as general secretaries, and Rafiquddin Siddique, the then-president of the Muslim League of Chattogram, as conveners. They organized some protest meetings [2]. Following a meeting called by the Basic Principle Committee Report against Struggle Committee, the people attacked the residences of Nur Ahmed Chowdhury, the Chairman, and AK Khondokar, two MLAs from Chattogram. They were given a written promise that they would step down if they were unable to make Bengali the official language of the state.

Objective of the Study

The Language Movement in Chattogram hadn't been widely recognized in research papers, written materials or other printed media for many reasons. Additionally, the researchers also paid less attention about their mobility. Therefore this essay inquires about to reaffirm the significance of the Chattogram activists' actions, which helped to forge Bengali nationalism in East Bengal as well.

Statement of the Research Problem

Despite the lack of comprehensive documentation, the narratives of language activists were a valuable source of information about Chattogram's language movement. Few of the Chattogram language movement activists have survived to this day, while the most have already lived out their lives. The primary issue with the study project was that information or records pertaining to this subject were not adequately preserved. Because previously published newspaper and magazine sources have often skipped over into the movement's complexities, instead concentrating on the events of February 21, 1952, in Dhaka.

CONFLICT EMERGED ON THE LANGUAGE ISSUE IN EAST PAKIST

The language problem in East Bengal, which was first primarily seen as a political issue, eventually piqued popular interest because of its profound cultural and economic consequences. An important turning point was the creation of the 'Rashtrabhasha Sangram Parishad' (National Language Action Committee) in 1st October 1947, an organization in favor of Bengali as a state language, was formed. The committee aggressively started protesting the exclusion of the native language, Bengali. Nurul Huq Bhuiyan, a professor of Chemistry of the Tamaddun Majlish founded the committee which attracted a large number of students and teachers from Dhaka University and other educational institutions [4]. On February 25, 1948, the Constituent Assembly met in Karachi, West Pakistan. Urdu as the national language bill was introduced. Dhirendranath Dutta, a Member of Parliament from East Pakistan, protested strongly. His proposal to include Bangla as one of Pakistan's state languages was rejected by the Constituent Assembly on August 25, 1948; it sparked demonstrations at Dhaka University [5]. Both the March 11 strike and the protests that followed against Muhammad Ali Jinnah's adoption of Urdu as the only official language of the state received significant media coverage.

The formation of the first Shorbodolio Rashtra Bhasha Sangram Parishad (All Party State Language Action Committee) was first expanded in a joint meeting of Tamuddin Majlis and Muslim Chhatra League (Muslim Students League, a student's political wing of Awami League; the leading political party of Bangla) held at Fazlul Haque Hall on March 2, 1948 under the chairmanship of Kamruddin Ahmad. It is known as the Rashtrabhasha Sub-Committee (state language subcommittee) or the Extended Rashtrabhasha Sangram Parishad of Tammadun Majlis and Muslim Chhatra League. Action taken by these groups as-

1. Shamsul Alam was elected as the convener of the first National Language Struggle Council. At a Muslim League conference in Dhaka on January 27, 1952, Khwaja Nazimuddin declared Urdu to be Pakistan's only official language [6,7].
2. On January 31, representatives from a number of political parties came together to form the All Party State Language Action Committee as a result of this announcement [8].
3. On February 21, the council declared a walkout in support of Bengali's official state language status.
4. The Dhaka University Rashtrabhasha Sangram Parishad organized students to support this cause at the same time.

Besides, in response to Nazimuddin's statement,

1. An all-party Rashtrabhasha Sangram Parishad emerged in Chattogram on 4 February [2]. While the Dhaka Parishad consisted mainly of students with Dhaka University at the forefront, the Chattogram Parishad included political parties, cultural groups, workers, youth, women and students.
2. Actions were taken from 4 February to ensure the success of the strike scheduled for 21 February.
3. The Chattogram student walkout began peacefully but gathered momentum after news of police brutality against students in Dhaka surfaced[9].

4. On February 22, an impromptu hartal (Strike) was announced, encompassing the rural regions surrounding Chattogram [10].
5. On February 23, the hartal continued, and the next day, there was a sizable public gathering in Laldighi Maidan (a huge play ground name, Laldighi)[11].

Women, along with the Males in the Movement: Chattogram

The history of the language movement includes numerous written accounts and mentions of the involvement of female students in Dhaka, although it is not comprehensive. The documentation on women's participation in the Chattogram movement is ambiguous. It is notable that Chittagong women also took part vigorously in the Language Movement. Their unexpected involvement was prominent in processions, publicity, and other areas too. Before 1952, the notion of women participating part in street assemblies or processions was simply unthinkable[12].

The historic significance of female students' in Chattogram involvement in the Language Movement is now recognized through interviews, features, photographs, news papers and research papers that highlight their awareness and contributions. Female participants in the movement, both directly and indirectly, played vital roles, often overshadowed by male accounts of history. The Movement's strengthening in Chattogram when it reached its height on February 21, 1952. But before that, women activist were not silent regarding the issue. Through their involvement in protests, fund-raising efforts, cultural activities, and grassroots mobilization were the main inspiring force of the movement. Women such as Begum Sufia Kamal, Pratibha Mutsuddi, and others from Chattogram and Kolkata left enduring imprints on the Movement.

On March 11, 1948, similar demonstrations to those in Dhaka broke out in Chattogram, demanding for Bangla to become the state language of Pakistan and leading to the prohibition of public gatherings. Politically aware people eventually came together in support of the cause. The movement in Chattogram was further accelerated by the active involvement of female students in protest marches, cultural symposiums, and language rights demands. In defiance of obstacles, two organizations, Sangskritik Boithak (Cultural Meeting) and Prantik Naba Natya Sangha (New Drama group for the Marginal), organized the inaugural cultural conference at the port city's Harikhola site on March 16-19 in 1951.

Begum Sufia Kamal, the strongest woman cultural activist visited Chattogram to mark the beginning of the conference at Harikhola field along with other leaders from Dhaka and Kolkata. Musician Kalim Sharafi was residing in Chattogram at the time. The memoirs of Saidul Hasan and Mahbub Hasan show that Farida Hasan, wife of Saidul Hasan, participated in the cultural events. During this time, the four-days cultural gathering that took place at the field (Harikhola field is now known as the Hindu Foundation building area at Momin Road) from March 16–19, 1951. The Simanta magazine, Sanksririk Baithak, Prantik Nabanatya Sangha, and other organizations arranged this programs, which had a long-lasting effect on the language movement across the country. It is notable that, this was the nation's first Cultural Convention held after Pakistan was founded. Along with Begum Sufia Kamal, key roles in the meeting were played by prominent individuals such as Mahbub-ul-Alam Chowdhury, Chowdhury Harunur Rashid, Professor Abul Fazal, and Abdul Karim Sahitya Bisharad. This significant cultural conference at Harikhola field brought together artists, writers, and activists, shaping the path of the language movement. The conference, attended by renowned personalities and organizations, served as a platform to amplify the voices advocating for Bangla as a state language. Through various creative expressions, including folk songs and literary works, the movement gathered momentum and drew widespread public participation.

Pratibha Mutsuddi from Raujan (Raujan is a sub district in Chittagong) was one of the political followers of Mahbub-ul-Alam Chowdhury. She was actively involved in the movement while she was a class eight student. In 1952 while she was a second-year student of Chattogram College, participated in the parade as an activists in the protest rally. All of Chattogram's students went on strike and boycotted school on February 24, 1952. On February 28, about a thousand students took part in a barefoot procession honoring the Dhaka student martyrs. She stated in her own testimony, "In 1952, I was a second-year Chattogram College student. The brutal attack in Dhaka was revealed to us on February 21 in the afternoon. The following day, Chattogram College students staged a protest march in response to the Dhaka tragedy. For approximately a week, the demonstration

persisted.” ---“There weren't many female pupils at all at that time. In Chattogram, just three or four female students took part in the processions[13].” Pratibha Mutsuddi, a Buddhist language activist from Chattogram, was awarded Ekushey Padak (is the second highest civilian National award in for the Language Activists in Bangladesh) in 2002 for her contribution in the Language movement and later contributing in education. She served as the director and principal of Kumudini Welfare Trustⁱⁱ. In reality, there is barely anything being done to preserve the history of the Language movement for future generations and very little reference of the role done by women in books, media, and the internet. Few people in Bangladesh are aware of the significance made by these women, who were among the boldest of their day, breaking through social barriers and coming forth to get involved in the language movement on the street.

Language Movement and the Birth of a Revolutionary Poem

The Tamaddun Majlish, formerly Pakistan Tamaddun Majlish, as an Islamic cultural organization in Bangladesh, which was established in 1947 by Principal Abul Kashem (Abul Kashem was an young lecturer of Physics during the movement) in the former East Pakistan. It was one of the founding organizations of the Language movement. On September 15, 1947, a booklet published in Bangla by this organization ‘Rastro Bhasha Bangla Na Urdu’? (What is the State Language, Bangla or Urdu?) This was the first booklet containing the demand for Bangla (Bengali) as a state language. By the mid 1950s, Tamaddun Majlish was able to expand its vista throughout East Bengal with its branches at the district and sub-divisional levels and somewhere at thana level. The weekly Sainik (Soldiers), a Bangla organ of Tamaddun Majlish, was launched on 14 November 1948. Initially, Shahed Ali was the chairman of the Board of Editors of the paper, and later Abdul Gafur was made the chairman. The Paper used to be published from 19 Azimpur Road in Dhaka and continued to be published till 1961. This first published ‘Booklet’ created a strong public opinion. There was a branch of Tamaddun Majlish in Chattogram and a delegate from Ctg went to Rangpur (Northern district in Bangladesh) for the publicity. A single poem in Chattogram aroused an influential public opinion in support of Pskistan's state language, which the government at the time thought was going to be threatened throughout the movement.

Mahbub ul Alam Chowdhury, a prominent political and cultural activist from Chattogram played a vital role in the language movement. He organized a protest meeting in Chattogram against the ‘Fundamental Policies of Pakistan’ (1950) by the Pakistani Government which failed to include Bangla as the state language of Pakistan. In the report he missed to mention about the autonomy of East Pakistan and recognition of Bangla to be one of the state languages. In the same year (1950) the 'Bishwa Shanti Porishad' (World Peace Council) of East Pakistan was formed in Chattogram. Mahbub-ul-Alam was the Secretary of the Council. Also, he formed a committee called 'Shanti Fauj (Peace Force) and the Anti-riot Peace Committee with the aim of combating communal riots in Chattogram. In 1951, he joined the Youth Conference held at Dhaka with five representatives from Chattogram. The East Pakistan Jubo (Youth) League was set up there. He became the Convener of the Chattogram District Rastrabhasha Sangram Parishad (State Language Movement Council) in 1952[14]. The first non-communal political party called Ganotontri Dal (Democrat Party) was formed in 1953. Mahbul-ul-Alam Chowdhury was a member of its central committee as well as the Secretary of the Chattogram District Committee of the party[15].

The protest and mass killing that took place in Dhaka (21, February, 1952), symbolize a unique event in Bengali national history that has been captured in an abundance of literary works throughout the past seven decades, covering dramas, novels, poetry, and short tales. It has given rise to a unique genre known as ‘Ekushey Shahitya’ (Literature of 21 February of the Language Movement) in the tradition of Bangla literature. Mahbul-ul-Alam Chowdhury's poem "Kandte Ashini, Fanshir Dabi Niye Eshecchi" (I have not come here to cry; I have come with a demand for execution) is the first poem in Bengali, the great 21 February Literature (Ekushey Shahitya) that symbolized the struggle of historic language movement. As the convener of the State Language Struggle Council, Chattogram, and secretary of the All-Party Struggle Council of Mahbul-ul-Alam Chowdhury, was moved to express his profound disapproval of the horrific assassination that took place in Dhaka on February 21. He penned the poem that is regarded as the first poetry of the day with the assistance of an activist, even though he was suffering from high fever with chicken pox.

The poem's impact troubled the government of Pakistan. In Chattogram, student protest was being observed peacefully from the very beginning of the language movement, it became more intense when word got out about the police shooting of students in Dhaka. On February 22, a spontaneous hartal (Strike) was declared, and it was also noted in Chattogram's rural districts. On February 23, the hartal persisted, and the following day, a considerable huge public gathering was arranged at Laldighi Maidan. The first poem on 21st February "Kandte Ashini Fanshir Dabi Niye Eshechi" was recited by Harunur Rashid (an activist) as a protest against the police brutality during the meeting after MA Aziz delivered his speech at a rally of millions of people at Laldighi Maidan on 24 February. It was where the first poem related to the Movement - "I have not come here to cry; I have come with a demand for execution", was recited. It was consequently outlawed, and poet Mahbub-ul-Alam Chowdhury, Chowdhury Harunur Rashid, publisher Kamaluddin Ahmed, and printer Dabir Ahmad Chowdhury were all named as suspects in an arrest warrant. Dabir Ahmad Chowdhury and Chowdhury Harunur Rashid had been put under arrest. Chowdhury Harunur Rashid was arrested on March 5[16].

For a considerable amount of time, the poem was entirely removed from public view due to the ban. A portion of the poem was reproduced in the 1982 book 'Amor Ekushey O Shaheed Minar,' (unforgettable 21 February and a Martyr Monument) written by Professor Rafiqul Islamⁱⁱⁱ, who extracted a few words from the poet's memory. Finally, the entire poem was recovered from a relative of a police officer, named Ashraful Haque. The officer was in duty of raiding Salimullah Muslim Hall of Dhaka University in 1952 and he found a copy of this poem. He preserved the copy to his relative and then in 1988, the full poem was recovered and reprinted in the poet's book of the same title "Kandte Ashini Fanshir Dabi Niye Eshechi" (I have not come here to cry; I have come with a demand for execution)"[16].

STUDENTNS AND MASS PROTEST: A STRONG HARMONIZATION IN THE LANGUAGE MOVEMENT

Students from rural areas actively participated in the historic language movement in Chattogram. On 27 February, two members as mentioned earlier of the Constituent Assembly in Chattogram expressed their support for declaring Bangla as a state language. They even pledged to resign if this demand was not met. The student strike and meeting continued the next day, with the inclusion of female students[17]. Workers subsequently organized a rally on March 1st to protest the violence against students in Dhaka. They also called for the resignation of the government. The largest public assembly of the movement took place on March 5 in Laldighi Maidan, under the direction of Sheikh Mozaffar Ahmed, President of the District Awami Muslim League. During the meeting, notable Chattogram leaders MA Aziz, Nabi Chowdhury, Zahur Ahmad Chowdhury, and Azizur Rahman delivered addresses[18]. Weekly Ittefaq (published from Dhaka), stated that, "A Sarbadaliya Rashtra Bhasha Sangram Committee (an All-party State Language Committee) is going to be formed at the initiative of Chittagong District Awami League Secretary MA Aziz. Activists of the Awami League, the Chhatra League and the Tamaddun Majlish are organizing a general strike and hartal on 21 February[19]."

Reaching out into rural areas such as Boalkhali, Fatikchhari, Nazirhat, Hathazari, Patia, Satkania, Raozan, Sitakunda, Mirershwari, and Cox's Bazar was a unique feature of the language movement in Chattogram division. The people in the area showed tremendous support for the campaign. People actively participated in rallies in towns and villages. During the time, Chattogram's political parties, cultural institutions, professional associations, and students showed incredible inventiveness[20].

Renowned artists who made significant contributions to the cultural discussion at the conference included Suchitra Mitra, Debabrata Biswas, Hena Barman, Salil Chowdhury, Satyendranath Majumder, Alauddin Al Azad, and others. The international peace movement featured performances like Kabial Ramesh Sheel and Phanibarua's kabigaan, which further emphasized Chattogram's rich cultural diversity. In addition to bringing people together, the combined efforts of writers, artists, and activists increased public awareness of the language movement and led to the regularization of cultural events at locations such as JM Sen Hall and Wajiuallah Institute [21].

The First Shaheed Minar Put up in Chattogram

After the occurrence in Dhaka on 21st February, protest rallies and processions were staged the whole day across the Chattogram city on the 23rd. It is noteworthy that the history of the martyrs' monument construction in Dhaka places the dedication date on February 23, one day following the incident. On the other side, Chattogram revolutionaries also constructed a Shaheed Minar and no news source reported on or featured this initiative. Mahbub ul Alam Chowdhury, the editor of Shimanto magazine, narrated the story of Chattogram's first Shaheed Minar in an interview, "To commemorate the martyrs of the language movement, our activists built a Shaheed Minar overnight at the Victoria Garden, in front of Laldighi's Khurshid Mohol. It was later demolished by the police. That is how the first Shaheed Minar was built in Chattogram in honor of the language movement martyrs [22]." Language movement hero Late AKM Emdadul Islam, a student of Chattogram College at the time, led a procession from Momin Road to Laldighi ground in the city, he wrote, "In the afternoon of 23rd February, a huge rally led by Awami League President Sheikh Mozaffar Ahmed was held at the Laldighi Maidan. Speakers at the rally strongly condemned the killings and demanded the execution of Nurul Amin. Later, a monument was erected at the Victoria Park (now a petrol pump) near Laldighi to honour the memory of the martyrs of the language movement." (In an interview given on 28 February 2008[23].

Few Reports in the Then News Papers

Attempts to communicate the principles of the language movement in Chattogram have been made more difficult by the dearth of references in local newspapers and the absence of coverage in publications based in Dhaka. Restoring this movement's history is essential because it will provide the foundation for future researchers to delve further into its legacy and improve upon it. We may easily recall the activities that were crucial to the Language movement from Chattogram if we look forward to the news paper bulletin and other printed information throughout the movement time. Meanwhile, the newspapers and weekly magazines that pressured the government through news and editorials were the Daily Azad and the Daily Insaaf, and three weeklies -- Sainik, Ittefaq and Sylhet's Naubelal.* (See Figure: 01)

The weekly 'Noubelal' reported on 21 February 1952 that the All-party Language Committee was formed in Chittagong at the initiative of MA Aziz of the district Awami Muslim League and Azizur Rahman of Tamaddun Majlish. However, news of the shooting of students in Dhaka reached Chattogram on 22 February through news papers. It was then that the flames of rebellion spread throughout the city.

Even though The Azad was a Muslim League based paper, they published week-long investigative reports on the incident. Eventually, The Azad became the main source of collecting the historical incidents of that time. "The Daily Azad tried to utilize the public vibe; it launched an 'Evening Telegram' edition centering on the movement, which surprised many of the protesters"- Stated Ahmed Rafiq [24]. From February 21, the newspaper published many reports on the movement and published the names of the deceased and injured persons.

Poet Mahbubul Alam Chowdhury wrote his legendary poem Kadte Ashini, Fashir Dabi Niye Eshechi,' On the very night of February 21, 1952, which was published by Engineer Mohammad Abdul Khalique from Kohinoor Electric Press as a Booklet the very next day. Eng. Mohammad Abdul Khaleque was the founder of Kohinoor Library, Kohinoor Electric Press, Shaptahik Kohinoor (Weekly Kohinoor) in 1950 and Dainik Azadi. "Kadte ashini, fanhasir dabi niye eshechi" was the first poem was published from Kohinoor Electric Press on 23rd February 1952, as planned, Abdul Khalek with his team worked in the press secretly all night and in the morning a 17-page booklet was printed. The printing and binding work for the sale and distribution of about 15,000 copies of the booklet was secretly completed through the untiring efforts of the Kohinoor Electric Press staff. The price of the booklet was two Aana (12.5 paisa)[25].



Images

*Figure: 01- Images of the Newspapers (In Bengali language) in 1952, published from Dhaka, Sylhet and Chattogram

CONCLUSION

The history of the language movement in Chattogram remains to a great extent untold and underappreciated. There has been a need of intrigued in documenting the significant events that took in this region. While the focus has mainly been on Dhaka, the narratives of language movements outside the capital are essential components of the national history of Bangladesh that deserve acknowledgment.

Political activists, cultural activists, the general public, and political parties all contributed to the Chattogram language movement. Political unity and widespread public backing were its defining features. The History of Bengal (East Pakistan) has been permanently impacted by the movement's bravery and togetherness of the people in Chattogram, which included the construction of the Shaheed Minar . It highlights the significance of maintaining linguistic legacy, fostering harmony, and protecting cultural variety. Recognizing the Chattogram language movement's little-known background, appreciating its scope of influence, and making sure it has a rightful place in the larger tale of our nation's history are all vital. The Pakistani National Assembly approved the constitution on 26 February in 1956, designating Bangla and Urdu as official state languages. However, it is still widely unknown that several patriotic Chattogram residents actively and vehemently worked to accomplish the goal in addition to the Dhaka movement. The achievement with relation to the state language was also greatly influenced by their actions, movements, and sacrifices, which are not duly recognize till the date. But the people of East Pakistan protested against this undemocratic decision and started movement to establish the mother language as one of the state language. It broke down boundaries based on politics and religion and helped to establish a feeling of national awareness and identity. The movement had a lasting impact on Bengali society, encouraging a progressive and democratic mindset. Bangladesh's cultural and historical narratives are still resonant with the language movement's legacy, highlighting the ongoing importance of maintaining linguistic heritage.

As part of the Protest Day events, the language movement in Chattogram got underway on March 11, 1948, signaling the beginning of a socio-cultural revolution. The people of East Bengal were given a sense of independence and self-determination by this movement, which was spearheaded by influential Chattogram personalities. Prominent intellectuals, writers, and political figures were instrumental in supporting Bangla's status as a state language and against Pakistan's attempt to impose Urdu. The movement began with protests and strikes and swiftly expanded to include women, workers, and students from all walks of life.

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