Quiz

1. What was the name of ‘Bangladesh’ in 1952?

2. When was the country ‘Bangladesh’ born?

3. When did UNESCO announce 21st February as International Mother Language Day?

4. Which section did the protestors violate on 21st February, 1952?

5. Name 5 martyrs of the language movement occurred at Dhaka, Bangladesh in 1952.

Send your answers via email by 11:59 pm on February 21st to ttu.abss@gmail.com with a subject of ‘Language Quiz’. Please include your name and R number. Among the people who give all correct answers, 5 persons will be picked by lottery. They will get $20 Amazon gift card!!!!

Any member of Association of Bangladeshi Students and Scholars is not allowed to participate on this quiz.

International Mother Language Day

February 21st

Association of Bangladeshi Students and Scholars at Texas Tech University
Introduction

International Mother Language Day has been observed every year since 2000 February to promote linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingualism. It was first announced by UNESCO on November 17th 1999. The date represents the day in 1952 when students demonstrating for recognition of their language, Bangla, as one of the two national languages of the then Pakistan, were shot and killed by police in Dhaka, the capital of what is now Bangladesh.

February 21st: Bangladesh’s History

Independent nation Bangladesh was born in 1971 after 9 month long liberation war against Pakistan. Before that, Bangladesh was known as East Pakistan.

The 21st of February has been a day of national mourning, pride, reflection and action for Bangladesh. It was also the Language Martyr’s Day. It is 61 years ago on this day that among others, Barkat, Rafiq, Jabbar, Shafiur and Salam sacrificed their young precious lives for honour and preservation of mother language, Bangla.

On February 23, 1948 in the Pakistan Constituent Assembly in Karachi, Dhirendranath Dutta, a member of the Pakistan Constituent Assembly proposed Bengali as one of the official language of Pakistan as it is the mother tongue of majority of the people in Pakistan (East and West Pakistan).

But on March 19th, 1948, Pakistan’s Governor General Mohammad Ali Jinnah announced at a gathering of students of Dhaka University that Urdu will be the only state language of Pakistan ignoring the fact that 56% of people in Pakistan speaks Bangla as their mother tongue.

In 1950, ‘Bangla State Language Action Committee’ was formed to work on making Bangla as one of the state language of Pakistan.

On 27th January, 1952, the then Prime Minister of Pakistan Khwaja Nazimuddin announced at a public meeting that Urdu alone should be the state language of Pakistan. After this day, series of procession were made by infuriated people led by students of Dhaka University. Government impose section 144 (prohibiting an assembly more than five persons) to control these processions and protests.

On 21st February, 1952, agitated unarmed students of Dhaka University, violated Section 144 in protest, to proceed to the elected members of the East Bengal Legislative Assembly (near SM Hall of Dhaka University) and present their demand to Nurul Amin, the Chief Minister.

On their way at the site of the Medical College students’ hostel number 12, at 3-30 PM, the police opened fire on the peaceful procession of students by an order of a Magistrate (a West Pakistani).

Jabbar and Rafiq died on the spot, while three others died later in hospital ( an impromptu monument had been set up by Medical College students on the site of the current Shaheed Minar). It is believed that many more were killed including a ten year old boy, but their bodies were taken away by the police and were secretly buried. The rest is history.

It has been a day of pride for all people of Bangladesh; the supreme sacrifice made on this day in 1952 has eventually led to the recognition of preservation of mother languages worldwide.

21st February is more than a language movement for people of Bangladesh. Many historians think 21st February laid the seed of the foundation of a separate country of Bangladesh.