



১৯৬০-৬১ এর ভাষা আন্দোলন ছিল ভাষিক আগ্রাসনের বিরুদ্ধে আসামে প্রথম গন অভ্যুত্থান।

কিন্তু তার ঠিক দশবছর পর ১৯৭২ সালে আবার ভাষিক আগ্রাসনের কুচক্রান্ত রচিত হয়েছিল এই রাজ্যে।

এবারে ঘুটি সাজানো হয়েছিল উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক ও স্নাতক স্তরে শিক্ষার মাধ্যম কে কেন্দ্র করে।

গোহাটি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের একাডেমিক কাউন্সিল হটাৎ করে সিদ্ধান্ত নেয় যে পি ইউনিভার্সিটি এবং স্নাতক স্তরে একমাত্র অসমীয়া অথবা ইংরেজি এই দুটোই শিক্ষার মাধ্যম হিসেবে বিবেচিত হবে।

ফলে আবার প্রতিবাদের ঝড় আছড়ে পড়ে বরাকে।

আর এমনই এক প্রতিবাদমুখর দিন ১৬ আগষ্ট, ১৯৭২ এ ছুরিকাঘাতে ঝরে যায় আরেক তাজা প্রাণ।

বিজন(বাম্বু) চক্রবর্তী - বরাকের দ্বাদশ ভাষা শহীদ।

তারই স্মরণে ঈশানকথায় ডঃ স্বরূপা ভট্টাচার্যের কলমে ১৯৭২ এর ভাষা আন্দোলনকে ফিরে দেখার প্রয়াস
রইলো।

দুটি পর্বে প্রকাশিতব্য এই লেখার প্রথম এবং দ্বিতীয় পর্ব একসাথে এই সংখ্যায়।

ছাঁড়ের কোন শিল্প সত্তাবনা নেই

ছাঁড় পুস্তক আনন্দ

JUGA SANKHA REGD NO. A 88

যুগশঙ্খ

১২৪৪ ২৭শ সংখ্যা ১ শিল্পের শুভবার ১১-আগস্ট ১৯৩২খ্রীঃ
১-স্বাম ২০ পৃষ্ঠা

সংসার জনা যত বছর জিনিসের মাগে
সংসারে জল তরকার নিকটে যে
নে কো কোন মিল স্থাপন হবেই
পারছেন না। ভিত্তি স্থাপন
কানা করেছে এবং আবার কবে
নর আয়োজন করা হবে তা

সংসার দিনক এখানেই অনেক ছোট
কবেও বার হয়েছিলেন।
স্বামীজীর রক্তচক্র
উপলক্ষ্যে রাজা বাণীর উদ্দেশ্যে
মুখামুখি ভাষণে আসামের
অগ্রদূতের যে ভিত্তি আছে
স্বাস্থ্যকাজে স্থাপন মিলেরও
উদ্দেশ্যে। স্বামীজী কোন
কোন মহল মুখামুখী প্রশংসার
নিকটে কাজে স্থাপন
পরিদর্শনের জন্ম আনন্দের
কথা ভাবছেন।

আদের উপর দমন আসছে

১ যুগশঙ্খ রিপোর্ট ১।
কাজেই কোন কোন
সংসার পদস্থান করার জন্ম
দন মহল থেকে নির্দেশ
সে পারে বলে যুগশঙ্খের
সংখ্যায় যে সংসার বেহিমে
সে সম্পর্কে আরও বিস্তারিত
নির্ভরযোগ্য সূত্রে আমাদের
এসে পৌঁছেছে।
উপর এ নির্দেশ নানা
সত্তাবনা তাদের মধ্যে
সরলী মুক্তাদির
আব্দুল হামিদ মজুমদার
জিলি চৌধুরী ও মুকল
দৌ। খুব অল্পদিনের
এবাপারে সিদ্ধান্ত
বে বলে জানা গেছে।

কো জন পোল না কিরে-

১ যুগশঙ্খ রিপোর্ট ১।

ভাষা আন্দোলনের অসং-
সৈনিক করিমগঞ্জের ছাত্র ৭
যুগশঙ্খ বাচ্চু চক্রবর্তী আর
করিমগঞ্জ মিঠে থেকে পারলেন
না, তার শত সংগ্রাম সফরমী,
অকল্য শুভাশুভার্থী আর আর্দ্র
পরিজনদের মীমারীন আকৃতি,
ত্রিভঙ্গনদের আশ্রয় ছোট
কিছুই থাকে আটকিয়ে রাখতে
পারলো না। ১৬ই আগস্ট রাত
১২টা ৩০ মিঃ ৩০ মিনিট শিল্পের
মেডিকেল কলেজ হাসপাতালে
শেষ নিশ্বাস ত্যাগ করলেন।
যারা বাচ্চু চক্রবর্তীকে বেঁচে
থাকতে দেখনি, তারা বাচ্চুর
পতন করিমগঞ্জের সংসার প্রায়
সংগ্রামী মানুষের প্রবল ইচ্ছা এবং
ডেউ সবেও তাঁর মরণের দেখানে
নিচে যাওয়া বায়নি। কারণ
প্রতিপক্ষের চাপে প্রশাসন
কম্পনান, ওরা পে অসুস্থতি
বিলেন না।

১৭ই আগস্ট বাচ্চু চক্রবর্তীর
শরদের নিয়ে শিল্পের এক
শোক শোভযাত্রা বেরিয়েছিল,
ললমত নির্বিশেষে সমস্ত বামপন্থী
সংগ্রামী জনতা এমিছিলে শরিক
ছিলেন, সংগ্রাম পরিষদের
নেতৃবর্গ পুরোভাগে থেকে
শরীরের প্রতি শ্রদ্ধার্ণ জানিয়ে
ছেন। গাড়ীবাগে তরিক্ত
শবদ্বারাে বিভিন্ন দল ও সংগঠনের
পক্ষ থেকে পুষ্পাৰ্ণ অর্পিত হয়।
যারা এখানে উপস্থিত হয়ে
শ্রদ্ধার্ণ জানান তাদের মধ্যে
ছিলেন মার্কসবাদী কমিউনিট
পার্টির রাজ্য বংটির সম্পাদক
ক্রীষ্ণায়ে বুমার কট্টাচাঁদা,
হাইলাকান্দি পৌরসভার সভা-
পতি ও সংসদপতি যথাক্রমে
শ্রীকেশব চন্দ্র চক্রবর্তী ও হরিলাস

সেব, করিমগঞ্জের পৌরপতি
শ্রীপ্রমোদ চন্দ্র চৌধুরী, শিল্পের
পৌরপতি শ্রীজিতেন্দ্রনাথ সেনগুপ্ত
বিগৌী সমাজস্বামী সলের
শ্রীহারাণন ভট্টাচার্য ও অপর
দল, জনতা কংগ্রেসের ডাঃ
আরমেন্ডেল বক প্রমুখ। এছাড়াও
অনেক ছাত্র-যুবক দলগঠন,
নাগরিক সমিতি, ঐকিক কর্মচারী
লিক্ক সমিতির প্রতিনিধিরা
ছিলেন।

বাচ্চু চক্রবর্তী বয়স হয়ে
ছিল তেইশ বছর। মাত্র পাঁচ
মাস আগে তাঁর বিয়ে হয়েছিল
তিনমাস আগে মা মারা যান,
সংসারে একমাত্র উপার্জন মৌল
বাজি। সংসারের কাজকর্ম
করেও বাচ্চু চক্রবর্তী পড়াশোনা
চালিয়ে যাচ্ছিলেন, করিমগঞ্জ
কলেজের প্রথম বার্ষিক স্নাতক
তরীক ছাত্র। করিমগঞ্জের
প্রগতিশীল যুব আন্দোলনে
তাঁর বিশেষ ভূমিকা ছিল, তিনি
ছিলেন গণস্বাস্থিক যুবকোডা-
বেশনের করিমগঞ্জ শাখার সর্ব
সম্পাদক। প্রতি জিঃ সীঃ ল
কাচেরী পার্ব বাণী চক্র এ
সত্তাবনাময় স্তরগটিকে সজ
করতে পারেনি, তাই তাকে
সঠিক বেওয়ারি এজ্ঞাস্ত। কুচ-
জীচা সফল হয়েছে, বাচ্চু
চক্রবর্তী চিরদিনের জন্ম
শিল্পের মাজিতে মিলে
থাকলেন, করিমগঞ্জের প্রতি-
ক্রিয়ার শিবির হয়েতো পুণী, কিন্তু
আপর্শের জনা যে দুটা তাতো
অবিনশ্বর, মানুষের অধিকার
প্রতিষ্ঠার সংগ্রামের ইতিহাসে
আবেকটি নাম সংযুক্তিত
হলো।

ধবেন

The Medium of Instruction Issue: Revisiting Language Movement of 1972 in Barak Valley

Part I & II (Together), 29 August 2020

Dr. Swarupa Bhattacharjee, Head, Department of Political Science, Gurucharan College, Silchar

Part I

The official language movement of 1960-61 may be described as the first open outburst of the age-long ethno-linguistic dichotomy which was spearheaded by a group of educated middle class of the two valleys of Assam since the pre-independence period. The period following ten years since 1961 apparently may be termed as an undisturbed period so far as the linguistic struggle of Assam is concerned. Although throughout this decade (1961-1971) the ethnic and linguistic issues did not come in the limelight of politics in Assam; a decade is not sufficient time to wipe out the age-long dichotomy forever. After ten years gap, the language problem again came to the fore in 1972 centering round the 'Medium of Instruction' issue in Assam. In the Academic Council meeting of the Gauhati University on 26-08-1967, its Vice-Chancellor while discussing the Education Commission's Report with regard to Medium of Instruction(1), stressed on the bilingual method of Radhakrishnan Commission(2). Accordingly, the Gauhati University Academic Council resolved to continue English in the Post Graduation level as it required the use of books and journals written by foreign writers, mostly written in English and in the Under Graduate level, it retained English with adequate arrangements(3). This decision was modified by the Academic Council on 16th May 1970 where it recommended that the medium of instruction at the Pre University level would be either English or Assamese with a provision to answer in the examination either in Assamese, English, Bengali or Hindi(4). This decision was again revised on 19th February 1972 where it was resolved that Assamese would be introduced as the only medium of instruction and English would be permitted as an alternative temporarily for ten years in the Pre University and Degree level study and that the matter of Bengali was kept aside till the next general election(5). This decision of the Academic Council of Gauhati University was again revised on 6th June, 1972 when it resolved to go back to its earlier decision of 16th May 1970. Such resolution resulted in a vehement protest and violent outburst in the Brahmaputra Valley. As a result, an emergent meeting of the Academic Council of Gauhati University was convened on 12th June 1972 to take note of the aggressive representations from the various sections of population and the views of the media in the Brahmaputra Valley regarding the earlier decision of the Academic Council and it, thus, resolved that “

- (a) Assamese shall be the medium of instruction in all colleges under Gauhati University
- (b) English shall continue as an alternative medium of instruction for a period not exceeding ten years or as may be considered necessary by the Academic Council
- (c) student shall have the option to answer either in Assamese or in English in the University examinations
- (d) the above decision shall come into force with effect from the session 1972-73 in respect of two-year Pre University course and from the session 1974-75, in respect of two-year Degree course(6)”.

The Dibrugarh University also followed suit by adopting the similar decision of the Gauhati University(7).

This decision of the Academic Council of Gauhati University sparked off widespread resentment in Barak Valley because it was clear that the Gauhati University had intended to introduce Assamese as the only medium of instruction in Assam after ten years or even earlier, thus violating the constitutional right of the citizens to receive education through one's mother tongue. Public in general and students in particular, political parties, media and the various socio- cultural organisations of the entire Barak Valley vehemently opposed this resolution of the Academic Council of Gauhati University(8).

On 18th June 1972, a meeting of the representatives of all political parties, students and youth organisations was summoned by Dwijendralal Sen Gupta, the then Municipal Chairman of Silchar and Tarapada Bhattacharjee, ex-MLA at the Gandhi Bhawan Hall(9). However, it needs be mentioned here that prior to this scheduled meeting of 18th June, a preparatory meeting was convened at Cachar College immediately after the circulation of the decision of the Gauhati University Academic Council(10). The persons who attended the meeting were student union members of GC College and Cachar College and representatives of various political parties. All the members present were of the opinion to start movement against the decision of the Gauhati University Academic Council. The framework of the discussion to be held on the scheduled date of 18th June was chalked out in that preparatory meeting(11). As per this framework, the meeting of 18th June, 1972 was attended by the representatives of all the political parties, Gaon Panchayets, student organisations including the student union members of the important colleges of Cachar, women organisations, trade unions, Krishak Sabha and many others(12). It was resolved in the said meeting to start a movement immediately against the decision of the Gauhati University Academic Council and a Committee under the namestyle of 'Cachar Zilla Sangram Parishad' was constituted(13). Maulana Abdul Jalil Choudhury and Tarapada Bhattacharjee were nominated as President and Secretary of the organisation respectively(14).

The decision of the Academic Council of Gauhati University affected the students directly. As a result, the students could not remain silent. They formed a separate platform under the banner 'Chhatra Yuva Sangram Parishad' to organise students in the medium of instruction issue(15). It needs be mentioned here that 'Chhatra Yuva Sangram Parishad' was not directly under the banner of any political party. However, unofficially it included the members of the student wings of the major political parties of India, particularly those of 'Chhatra Parishad' along with the students inclined to leftist ideology(16). The students with independent outlook also joined the new organisation. The organisational set up of the Chhatra Yuva Sangram Parishad appeared to be stronger than the earlier movement and it formed units at the sub-divisional as well as at the village level. A co-ordination committee was set up to keep contact with the units of the Parishad at various places of Cachar(17). The Chhatra Yuva Sangram Parishad also extended its units at the school level wherever possible.

When the decision of the Academic Council of Gauhati University was circulated in the colleges of Assam in June 1972, three colleges of Assam including G.C. College, Silchar submitted a writ petition at the Supreme Court of India challenging the decision of the Academic Council of Gauhati University(18). On the other hand, in the Brahmaputra Valley there was a strong public opinion in favour of immediate implementation of the decision of both Gauhati University and Dibrugarh University regarding the medium of instruction issue in Assam. A mass movement was organised all over the Brahmaputra Valley with this demand primarily under the leadership of All Assam Students' Union(19). Continuous class-boycott programmes, strikes, picketing in front of educational institutions, government offices, frequent processions, meetings, bandhs etc. that were undertaken by the All Assam

Students' Union with the strong demand for the rapid implementation of the decision of the Gauhati University, paralysed the academic as well as civil life of the Brahmaputra Valley(20). Incidences of violence and rioting were also being reported from various places like Barpeta, Dhubri, Mangoldoi, Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Kharupetia, Golaghat and others(21). The Assam Legislative Assembly at the same time decided on 23rd September 1972 to introduce Assamese as the only medium of instruction(22) at the Under Graduate level both under Gauhati University and Dibrugarh University although English was retained for a temporary period as the alternative for the non-Assamese people of the State(23). They also took a resolution for the separate university in Cachar. The proposal was passed almost unopposed because the members from Cachar remained absent. Only a single opposition came from Charan Narzary, a representative from the 'Samatal Bhumi Khandjati Parishad'(24). But by the order of the Supreme Court, on the basis of the writ petition submitted by G.C. College, the implementation of the decision was suspended for the time being(25).

The students of the Brahmaputra Valley resented the decision of the Legislative Assembly because it retained a provision for English although for a temporary period and demanded immediate implementation of the decision of the Gauhati University regarding the medium of instruction issue throughout the State(26). They started agitating by violent riots throughout length and breadth of the Brahmaputra Valley and the situation came to such a pass that, as per press reports, army had to be called in to control the situation in some pockets of Nowgong (Nagaon), Mongoldoi, Sibsagar, Kharupetia and Golaghat(27). The State Government, however, took all possible measures to deal with the situation. Holiday was declared in schools and colleges of the State. Further, a restriction was also imposed on the circulation of newspapers from Calcutta (now Kolkata) and Delhi, which, according to the government, spread tension through their reports(28).

In Cachar, the movement started in full swing by July-August, 1972. On 12th August 1972, protest demonstration by the picketers who were mostly students of various schools and colleges took place in front of all the government offices in all the urban and rural areas of Cachar(29). Police resorted to 'lathi charge' and used tear gas on the peaceful demonstrators at the court premises of Karimganj which evoked resentment among the public in the entire district(30). As a mark of protest against this incident, a bandh was called at Karimganj. While the bandh was being observed on 14th August 1972, a difference of opinion between the members of Chhatra Parishad and Democratic Youth Federation of India, a mass organisation of CPI (M), surfaced leading to a skirmish between them(31). The skirmish took a violent shape and Bijon Chakraborty (Bachchu), a student of Karimganj College belonging to the DYFI became the victim of the violent situation. He was brutally stabbed there(32). Immediately he was shifted to Silchar Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries on the midnight (12.30 am) of 16th August, 1972.(33)

Part II

After this violent incident, the CPI (M) resolved to secede from the Cachar Zilla Sangram Parishad(34) and undertook a parallel movement in Cachar. It is evident from the report published in Anandabazar Patrika dated 02-11-1972 that Congress leaders were blamed for the lack of sincerity towards the movement(35). The situation became adverse especially in Karimganj subdivision as Bijon Chakraborty was alleged to have been attacked by some Congress activists of Karimganj town area. However, it needs be mentioned here that although the situation at Silchar and Hailakandi subdivision was to some extent better than that of Karimganj as the leaders of both right and left groups were trying to control the damages done in Karimganj by maintaining congenial atmosphere among them for the greater cause of the movement, yet right from the beginning of the movement, according to the aforesaid newspaper report as also the activists of those days, the overall atmosphere was full of suspicion. Such dichotomy affected the movement adversely from the beginning to the end(36). Therefore, from 1972, the Cachar Zilla Sangram Parishad became less active and the movement was continued by the initiative of the students' organisations of the district. A bandh was observed on 3rd November, 1972 in Cachar at the joint call of Zilla Sangram Parishad and Chhatra Yuva Sangram Parishad on the occasion of the visit of Sankar Dayal Sarma, the then AICC President, Union Minister M. Medhi and the Chief Minister Sarat Chandra Sinha. While demonstrating at the entrance of the Silchar town at Sadarghat ferry area before the vehicles of the above mentioned personalities, the people became violent and police resorted to lathi charge to control the situation(37).

On 8th November, 1972, the Prime Minister of India met the leaders of the All Assam Students' Union to discuss the medium of instruction issue of Assam and advised them to call off their agitation in the Brahmaputra Valley(38). On 11th November, 1972 Sarat Chandra Sinha, the then Chief Minister of Assam made a press statement that the attitude of the State Government was in favour of accepting the decision of the Gauhati University on the medium of instruction issue dated 12th June 1972(39).

Expressing great dissatisfaction at the statement of the Chief Minister and demanding a judicial enquiry for the violence and rioting in Brahmaputra Valley, a big rally was taken out at Silchar by the Cachar Zilla Sangram Parishad and Chhatra Yuva Sangram Parishad on 16th November, 1972(40) where the main participants were, as reported in the press, students of schools and colleges of the district(41). Similar rallies were reported to have taken out in Hailakandi and Karimganj also(42). On 30th November, 1972, as reported by Ananda Bazar Patrika dated 01-12-1972, Mr. F.H. Mahsin, the then Deputy Home Minister, Government of India while giving answer in the floor of the Parliament to a question raised by Jyotsna Chanda, the MP from Silchar about a judicial enquiry for the violence and rioting in the Brahmaputra Valley, stated that the linguistic minorities should assimilate with the main stream in the State and as such, they should learn the regional language and adopt culture of the main stream of the State(43).

As a mark of protest against the statement of the then Chief Minister of the State, Sarat Chandra Sinha and the Deputy Home Minister, Government of India, F.H. Mahsin, the Chhatra Yuva Sangram Parishad decided to boycott all the educational institutions in Cachar from 1st December 1972(44). On 7th December, 1972, the Parishad held a convention and as per the resolution taken in the said convention, they started continuous strikes from 15th to 18th December, 1972 before all the government offices of the district(45). The school-wise and areawise collection of the students was done to act as the volunteers in the movement(46). The units of the Chhatra Yuva Sangram Parishad were set up in each

locality(47). Similar units were established in rural areas as well. At the same time, wide publicity was also being made by the students to involve the mass people in the agitation by staging rallies, meetings, street corner lectures, door to door campaign and so on(48). Successive bandhs were observed on 19th December(49), 28th December, 1972 and 2nd January, 1973(50). During the bandh on 2nd January, 1973 about six hundred students at Silchar and six hundred students at Karimganj joined the picketing programmes(51). By that time, on 4th January, 1973, five left activists and four student leaders of Chhatra Yuva Sangram Parishad were arrested under Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA)(52). The people of the valley, the students in particular, reacted strongly throughout the valley against this action of the government. A public meeting was called at Silchar on 5th January, 1973 under the president-ship of Dwijendralal Sengupta to protest against such arrests. In the meeting the students were particularly urged upon by the senior leaders to strengthen the agitation(53). In a separate meeting held at Silchar under the leadership of Lokman Ali Laskar and Arun Bhattacharjee of Chhatra Yuva Sangram Parishad, the arrest was condemned and people were urged to carry on the agitation(54). Students organised rallies in all the three towns of the district, i.e. Silchar, Hailakandi and Karimganj(55) condemning the arrest. On 5th January, 1973 a bandh was observed throughout the valley. It is on record that twelve hundred students in the district volunteered to make the bandh a successful one(56). On the same date, Cachar Zilla Sangram Parishad had a close-door meeting at the Silchar Mahakuma Parishad Hall in which an Action Committee was formed for the purpose of the ongoing agitation(57).

The sessions of the Assam Legislative Assembly was about to begin at that stage. The Zilla Sangram Parishad and the Chhatra Yuva Sangram Parishad instructed the 14 MLAs from Cachar to boycott the Assembly session and to seek permission from the High Command to resign(58). On the other hand, Congress leaders of Cachar were summoned by the Central Government at Delhi to have a discussion on the issue in question in the presence of Chief Minister of Assam(59). The Congress leaders accepted the invitation. A delegation of twelve Congress members went to Delhi where the discussion took place on 03-01-1973 in which K.C. Panth, the Union Home Minister represented the Central Government(60). But unfortunately no agreement could be reached even after a prolonged discussion. However, the representatives from Cachar agreed on a point to convince the agitators in Cachar to call off the movement temporarily to create a calm and cool atmosphere to find out a peaceful solution of the problem(61). Accordingly, the Cachar Congress leaders urged the people of Cachar to suspend the movement for the time being(62). But the people of Cachar did not respond to such appeal of the Congress leaders because both Cachar Zilla Sangram Parishad and Chhatra Yuva Sangram Parishad refused to suspend the agitation till the fulfilment of their demand. The movement continued in full swing. A continual picketing and bandh paralysed the life of the district. The villages were also touched with equal spirit. People from rural as well as sub-urban areas like Akal Bazar, Banchera, Katlichera, Badarpur, Ratabari, Patharkandi, Durlavchhera, Anipur, Ramkrishna Nagar, Batarashi, Udharbond, Barkhola and other joined the movement with full enthusiasm(63). The Deputy Commissioner of Cachar announced 144 Cr. P.C all over the district(64). Army was kept ready by the Government to be used in case of necessity(65). Some leading agitators were arrested at the beginning of the movement. During the period 8th to 12th January 1973 around 4,100 activists throughout the district embraced arrest, the majority of whom were students(66). According to the newspaper reports, this second phase of the movement was practically led by Chhatra Yuva Sangram Parishad of Cachar(67). All the religious groups joined the movement with whole hearted support. However, according to Assam Tribune report, a division was created on linguistic basis. A particular linguistic community of Cachar, viz., Manipuries (primarily) raised their voice in December 1972 against the cause of the movement in Cachar(68) where they stated that they opposed the separation of Cachar from Assam. However, such attempt to bring division among the people over the issue could

not exert any adverse impact on the movement as a whole because a group of student leaders of Chhatra Yuva Sangram Parishad could convince the Manipuri volunteers through a peaceful discussion that the movement was not for the separation of Cachar from Assam, but to get the Bengali as one of the medium of instructions in Assam(69).

Gradually, a solution was in sight to the parties- the agitators and the administrators. The Zilla Sangram Parishad and the Chhatra Yuva Sangram Parishad jointly declared suspension of the movement from 5th to 15th February, 1973 to give the government time for peaceful solution of the problem(70). On the other hand, to create a favourable atmosphere, the State Government on its part also ordered on 12-02-1973 the release of all the activists of Cachar arrested under MISA(71). However, a round table conference among the Cachar leaders and the representatives of the state government dated 22-02-1973 failed and it was made clear that the central interference was needed to settle the matter(72). On 16th March 1973, the session of Legislative Assembly started. Seven out of fifteen MLAs joined after seven days. Mahitosh Purkayastha, the then Supply Minister of the State remained absent and his portfolio was snatched away for his absence in the session without the permission from the Speaker. The Legislative Assembly amended the earlier resolution and cancelled the proposal for a separate university at Cachar and resolved to continue English with Assamese in the Gauhati University in the successive years (10)(73).

A meeting was arranged on 17th April 1973 at Shillong between the leaders of the movement in Cachar and representatives of Assam Government in the presence of K.C. Panth, the then Union Home Minister to have a discussion for the solution of the problem(74). On 18th April 1973, the Cachar leaders signed an agreement with K.C. Panth who represented the Central Government by which they accepted the decision of the Gauhati University and Dibrugarh University to continue English as an alternative for Assamese as the medium of instruction at the Under Graduate level(75). But instead of specific ten years, they laid stress on a long term period(76) (for the continuation of English). Regarding the secondary standard, the Cachar leaders represented by Cachar Zilla Sangram Parishad and Chhatra Yuva Sangram Parishad had to remain satisfied with the assurances from the state government that no immediate step would be taken to make the regional language (Assamese) compulsory in Assam(77).

The Panth Agreement could not satisfy the agitators. They raised voice against it at a conference(78). But after this conference, no further programmes were undertaken to hammer this issue anew. Thus, with the Panth Agreement, the language movement of 1972-73 in Cachar maybe said to have come to an end(79).

References:

1. Directorate of Information and Public Relations, Assam, Shillong, "On University Medium, Some Collection of Resolutions of Academic Council, Gauhati University", p-1
2. *ibid.*
3. *ibid.*
4. *ibid.*
5. *ibid.*
6. *ibid.*
7. *The Assam Tribune* dated 17th June, 1972
8. Arunima Bhattacharjee: "Student Activism in the Barak Valley 1947-73" in "Student Power in North-East India: Understanding Student Movements", A. K. Baruah (ed.) Regency Publications, New Delhi, 2002, p-124
9. *Jugasakti* dated 23rd June, 1972 corroborated by Arunima Bhattacharjee, "Student Movement in Barak Valley with special reference to Language Movement", *Sahitya*

Prakashani, Hailakandi, Assam, 2011, p-163

10. Swadesh Biswas: 'Eksattir Uttaran' in *Annual Raktim Diganta*, 19th May, 2016, p-24, ISSN 0976-609X

11. *ibid.*

12. *ibid.* corroborated by *Jugasakti* dated 23rd June, 1972

13. Resolution of the meeting at the Gandhi Bhawan dated 18th June, 1972 collected from the personal file of Swadesh Biswas corroborated by Arunima Bhattacharjee, *op. cit.*

14. *ibid.*

15. Resolution of Chhatra Yuva Sangram Parishad dated 18th June, 1972 collected from the personal file of Swadesh Biswas

16. Interview with Swadesh Biswas, an activist of Chhatra Yuva Sangram Parishad corroborated by *Jugasakti* dated 23-06-1972

17. Interview with Swadesh Biswas, an activist of Chhatra Yuva Sangram Parishad

18. *Ananda Bazar Patrika* dated 6th July, 1972

19. *The Assam Tribune* dated 15-09-1972 corroborated by *Ananda Bazar Patrika* dated 16-09-1972

20. *The Assam Tribune* dated 10-10-1972, dated 15-10-1972 corroborated by *Ananda Bazar Patrika* dated 10-10-1972, dated 16-10-1972

21. *The Assam Tribune* dated 08-10-1972 corroborated by *Ananda Bazar Patrika* dated 09-10-1972

22. *Assam Legislative Assembly Debate, Official Report, September Session, Vol. III No. 5*, dated 23-09-1972, p-118 collected from Assembly Library, Gauhati

23. *Assam Legislative Assembly Debate, Official Report, September Session, Vol. II No. 5*, 1972 collected from Assembly Library, Gauhati

24. *Assam Legislative Assembly Debate, Official Report, September Session, Vol. III No. 5*, dated 23-09-1972, p-118 collected from Assembly Library, Gauhati

25. *Ananda Bazar Patrika* dated 02-10-1972

26. *Ananda Bazar Patrika* dated 26-09-1972 corroborated by *The Assam Tribune* dated 24-09-1972

27. *The Assam Tribune* dated 09-10-1972, dated 10-10-1972

28. *Ananda Bazar Patrika* dated 20-10-1972, dated 04-11-1972

29. *Jugasakti*, dated 18-08-1972 corroborated by Arunima Bhattacharjee, *op. cit.* p-166

30. *ibid.*

31. *ibid.*

32. *ibid.*

33. *Jugasankha*, dated 18-08-1972, *Jugasakti* dated 18-08-1972 corroborated by Arunima Bhattacharjee, *op.cit.* p-167

34. Resolution of the CPI (M) Cachar District Committee dated 27-12-1972 collected from the personal file of Dulal Mitra

35. *Ananda Bazar Patrika* dated 02-11-1972

36. Interview with some activists of the Chhatra Yuva Sangram Parishad

37. Arunima Bhattacharjee, A.K. Baruah (ed.) *op. cit.* p-127

38. *Ananda Bazar Patrika* dated 09-11-1972

39. *ibid.*

40. *ibid.* dated 17-11-1972 corroborated by Arunima Bhattacharjee, "Student Movement in Barak Valley with special reference to Language Movement", *op. cit.* p-170

41. *ibid.*

42. *ibid.*

43. *ibid.* dated 01-12-1972

44. Resolution of the meeting of the Chhatra Yuva Sangram Parishad dated 01-12-1972 from the personal file of Swadesh Biswas

45. *Interview with Swadesh Biswas, the then Secretary, SFI, Cachar District Committee*
46. *Interview with Swadesh Biswas corroborated by Arunima Bhattacharjee, op. cit. p-171*
47. *ibid.*
48. *ibid.*
49. *Ananda Bazar Patrika dated 20-12-1972 corroborated by Arunima Bhattacharjee, op. cit. p-172*
50. *Arunima Bhattacharjee, ibid.*
51. *ibid.*
52. *ibid. p-173*
53. *ibid.*
54. *ibid. p-174*
55. *ibid.*
56. *ibid.*
57. *ibid.*
58. *Ananda Bazar Patrika dated 04-01-1973*
59. *The Assam Tribune dated 04-01-1973 corroborated by Ananda Bazar Patrika dated 04-01-1973*
60. *ibid.*
61. *Ananda Bazar Patrika dated 04-01-1973*
62. *ibid.*
63. *Arunima Bhattacharjee, ibid. p-175*
64. *ibid.*
65. *ibid. corroborated by Ananda Bazar Patrika dated 11-01-1973*
66. *ibid. corroborated by Ananda Bazar Patrika dated 13-01-1973*
67. *Ananda Bazar Patrika dated 12-01-1973*
68. *The Assam Tribune dated 28-12-1972*
69. *Interview with Swadesh Biswas, the then Secretary, SFI, Cachar District Committee*
70. *Resolution of Cachar Zilla Sangram Parishad and Chhatra Yuva Sangram Parishad dated 04-02-1973 corroborated by Arunima Bhattacharjee, A.K. Baruah (ed.) op. cit. p-128*
71. *The Assam Tribune dated 13-02-1973 corroborated by Ananda Bazar Patrika dated 13-02-1973*
72. *Ananda Bazar Patrika dated 23-02-1973*
73. *Ananda Bazar Patrika dated 24-03-1973*
74. *The Assam Tribune dated 17-04-1973*
75. *The Agreement signed by Cachar leaders with K.C. Panth corroborated by The Shillong Times dated 19-04-1973*
76. *ibid.*
77. *Statement of K.C. Panth, Minister, Home Affairs, India (Shillong, 18th April, 1973) corroborated by Arunima Bhattacharjee, A.K. Baruah (ed.) op. cit. p-129*
78. *ibid.*
79. *ibid.*