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## **Bangla**

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After the Muslim conquest beginning in 1200 C.E. (Common Era), the land tract comprising the states of West Bengal, part of Assam (both in India) and East Bengal (now Bangladesh) came to be called *Bangaalah*, an extension of the term for the people of East Bengal or the Sanskrit term, *vaṅga*. This Persianized form became the name of the language as well and later modified to *Bangaalii* in Hindustani (High Hindi and Urdu, the vernacular adopted by the Muslim nobility of Northern India and popularized as the lingua franca). The Bangla form of this word, *Baṅgla*, became the name of the language, consequently adopted as the Hindi term for the language. The Colonial English designation for the language is Bengali, however, the use of the term Bangla is becoming increasingly common in linguistic English.

### **Location**

Bangla is the language of the Eastern Indian state of West Bengal and the national language of Bangladesh. It is also spoken in the states neighbouring West Bengal, namely, Assam to the North East, Bihar to the West and Orissa to the South West.

### **Family**

Bangla is a part of the Indic group of the Indo-Aryan (IA) branch of the Indo-European family of languages.

### **Related Languages**

The bordering languages are Asamiya in the North East, Nepali in the North, Maithili and Magahi in the West and Oriya in the South West. Several aboriginal languages and dialects also form part of its border. These are the Austro-Asiatic languages Santhali, Ho and Mundari, and two Dravidian dialects Malto and Oraon (or Kurukh) to the West; a number of dialects belonging to six different groups of the Tibeto-Burman branch of the Tibeto-Chinese family to the North and East like Lepcha, Limbu, Banjong-ka (Sikkim), Lho-ke (Bhutan), Bodo, Garo, Maitei, Lushai, etc. Another Austro-Asiatic language, this time of the Mon-Khmer group, Khasi, is spoken to the East.

## Dialects

*Regional Variety:* Horizontally, Bangla is divided first into two main branches, Western and Eastern (or *Vañga* or Eastern Bangla EB). The Western branch is further divided into (i) *Raḍha* (South) (ii) *Varendra* (North Central or NCB) (iii) *Kamrupa* (North Bengal or NB). *Raḍha* is divided into South Western Bangla (SWB) and Western Bangla, the standard colloquial form of Bangla (SCB) spoken around Calcutta. Some of the features of these dialects are:

### Phonological:

(i) *Vocalic:* Vowel Harmony is maintained in the Western varieties more commonly than in the East but the epenthetic /i/, a middle eastern IA feature, is consistently maintained in the latter (e.g. SCB: *kore, rekhe, biliti* ‘having done, having kept, foreign’ EB: *koira, raikha, biliti*); SCB /e/ --> EB /æ/ (e.g. SCB: *tel, deṣ* ‘oil, country’ EB: *tæɫ, dæṣ*); EB does not have nasalized vowels (e.g. SCB: *ba~ṣi* ‘flute’ EB: *baṣi*).

(ii) *Consonantal:* Western /gh dh bh/ is consistently /g d b/ in EB; initial and intervocalic /ḍh/ and initial /ṛh/ are /ḍ/ and /ṛ/ respectively; /c ch j jh/ are /ts s dz z/ in EB and /ts z dz z/ in NB (e.g. SCB: */cabi, chobi, jḍp, jha~p/* ‘key, picture, prayer, jump’ EB: */tsabi, sobi, dzḍp, zap/*); /n/ and /l/ can be used interchangeably in both SWB and SCB, initial /r/ is dropped in NB (as in *am* for *ram* ‘Ram’); intervocalic /h/ is maintained in SWB but is very weak in the rest, initial /h-/ is maintained in SCB and NCB but is weak in NB and EB, replacing it with a glottal stop in the latter (e.g. SCB: *hḍbe* ‘will become’, SWB: *hḍbbek*, EB: *oibḍ* or *?oibḍ*); initial /ṣ/ is /h/ or /x/ in NB and /h/ in EB (SCB: *ṣḍytan* ‘Satan’ EB: *hḍytan*).

### Morphological:

(i) *Declension:* In common with Oriya, the SWB has *mana* as the plural suffix absent in other dialects which have *-er* for the genitive plural; the dative is *-ke* in all the western varieties but is *-re* in the East; the locative is *-te* in the west and *-t* in the east; the form of the 1<sup>st</sup> person possessive pronoun is *mohḍrḍ* in SWB, *amar* in SCB, *ham* in NCB and NB, and *mor-go* in EB; 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular is *ṣe* in the west and, uniquely, *hi-te* in the South Eastern variety within EB.

(ii) *Conjugation:* For 2<sup>nd</sup> person, a *-u* conjugation is obtained in SWB, NCB and NB whereas it

is -ʃ in SCB and EB (e.g. SWB, N(C)B: *tui cɔlu* ‘you walk’ SCB: *tui colɪʃ* EB: *tui tsɔloʃ*); 1<sup>st</sup> person past affix in SWB is *-i* but *-ilum* in SCB and NB and *-ilam* in EB (e.g. SWB: *mui dili* ‘I gave’, SCB/NB: *ami dilum*, EB: *ami dilam*); for the progressive, EB retains the Middle Bangla *-ite* + auxiliary (SWB: *col-ṭhe* ‘walking’ SCB: *colche* NCB: *colti-t-echi* NB: *cɔl-se* EB: *tsoil-teche*); for the conjunctive both the extreme west variety and the extreme east dialects show a peculiar similarity in using a *-r(e)* affix (e.g. SWB: *ja~iar* ‘having gone’, SCB: *giye*, EB: *jaiyare*), in EB (specifically in Sylheti) this affix is also used for the progressive: *jaitram/ jairam* ‘I am going’.

*Social Variety*: Bangla is divided vertically, into codes, classifiable in terms of a High vs Low dichotomy called a diglossia. The H(igh) and L(ow) codes are differentiated in terms of the way the inflectional and pronominal systems in the *Sadhu* or H code of standard written Bangla contrast with those in the *colit* or L code. For example, the *Sadhu* and *Colit* versions of the sentence ‘They (distal)<sup>1</sup> (are) going<sup>2</sup>’ are *tahara jaiteche* and *tara jacche* respectively [here and elsewhere, superscripts represent the sequence in the original]. The use of the H form for written prose became the norm for Bangla in the early nineteenth century as a result of that period’s process of Sanskritization. It is rarely in use now. The L written norm uses the South Western morphology.

### **Number of Speakers**

At the 1991 census, Bangla had 58,541,519 speakers in West Bengal (88,752 sq km) plus 11,054,219 other Indian speakers, and an estimated 107 million in Bangladesh (143,998 sq km), a total of 177 million subcontinental speakers in 1991, plus diasporic speakers for whom systematic figures are unavailable. The ethnolinguistic survey of LSA puts the total number of Bangla speakers as 189 million. For comparison, consider the West Bengal plus residual India figures for 1961 (29,435,928 + 4,453,011), 1971 (37,805,905 + 6,986,407), and 1981 (46,347,935 + 4,950,384); and the Bangladesh census figures for 1974 (76,398,000), 1981 (89,912,000), and 1991 (111,455,185).

### **Origin and History**

Around 600 BC outposts of the Aryan colonialization were being set up in the East inhabited by pre-Aryan tribes like *Rad̥has* and *Var̥gas* – ancestors of the people of Bengal. These were considered to be barbarous lands not suitable for high-caste Brahmins of the North and the Midland to settle. Bengali toponymy suggests that these earlier tribes were speakers of Dravidian or some Austro-Asiatic language(s). However, by 700 BC, a distinct Eastern branch (*Pracya*) of the Old IA was in existence and by the 4<sup>th</sup> century, Bengal was part of the well-established Aryan kingdom *Magadh*. The language spoken in these areas had certain distinct characteristics all of which are traceable in its current descendents. For example, the Old IA vowel [ʌ] became the default vowel [ɔ], epenthesis with /i/, /j/ for IA /s, ʃ, ʂ/, interchangeability of /l/ and /r/, IA /kʂ / became /(k)khy/, using the affix *-rɔ* for the genitive, *-e*, *-e~* for the instrumental, *-e* for the locative, *-l-* for the passive participle of the verbal noun and *-b-* for the future, and the roots for the auxiliary being *ho*, *ah*, *rah*, *ach*. This mother-dialect of the current Eastern IA languages was called the *Maagadhii Apabhraṅśaa* (MA), the second word meaning ‘speech fallen from the norm’. This characterization is consistent with the depiction by the Sanskrit dramatists prior to 100 BC of lower caste characters speaking a /j/ dialect. However, by the 6<sup>th</sup> century, MA was well-established and this is probably the language that the 7<sup>th</sup> century Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang described when he said that the whole East India spoke a similar tongue. The following is a rough chronology of the different periods of Bangla:

1. Pracya (‘Eastern’) 700 BC
2. Middle IA
  - (i) Early Middle IA 300 BC
  - (ii) Transitional Middle IA
  - (iii) 2<sup>nd</sup> Middle IA 300 CE
  - (iv) Late Middle IA 800 CE (*Maagadhii Apabhraṅśaa*)
3. Old Bangla 1100 CE
4. Early Middle Bangla 1400 CE
5. Late Middle Bangla 1600 CE
6. New Bangla 1800 CE

Politically, the Bengali dynasties of Pal (750-1162), Sen/ Barman (1096-1228) and Dev (1170-

1260) (years sometime overlapping due to separate independent kingdoms) ruled before the foreign invasion began with the Turkish (1204-1338) and continued with the independent Muslim Sultans (1338-1538), Moghuls (1575-1757) and the British (1757-1947).

The earliest specimen of Bangla is found in a set of 47 songs called *Caryas* written by the teachers of a Mahayana Buddhist sect around the first millennium (950 - 1200 CE). The manuscript was discovered in Nepal in 1907 (and later published in 1916), where some of the scholars possessing older manuscripts escaped after the Turkish invasion of Bengal in 1200 -- a period marked by destruction of manuscripts and persecution of their authors or possessors.

Fortunately, there is a copious Middle Bangla literature of which the earliest and most important is *Sri-Krishna Kirtan* of Chandi-dasa belonging to the latter half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Late Middle Bangla witnessed the development of the *Vaisnava* literature through the influence of the saint Chaitanya (1483-1533). This period also saw the development of an artificial literary language *Braja-Buli* (The speech of the Vraja, the birthplace of Krishna) which was a curious mix of Maithili, Bangla and Western Hindi.

New or Modern Bangla evolved a prose style due to western influence. Its greatest exponent was Rabindranath Tagore (the English spelling for the surname Thakur) who won the nobel prize in literature in 1913.

## Basic Phonology

### (a) Inventory

#### Vowels

	Back	Front
Close	u , u~	i, i~
Half-Close	o, o~	e, e~
Half-Open	ɔ, ɔ~	æ, æ~
Open	a, a~	

#### Consonants

	Glottal	Velar	Retroflex	Palatal	Palato	Alveolar	Dental	Bilabial
					-Alveolar			
Stop		k g	t̪ d̪				t d	p b

Aspirated	kh gh	ʈh ɖh		th dh	ph bh
Affricate			c j		
Aspirated			ch jh		
Nasal	ŋ			n	m
Lateral				l	
Flapped		ɽ		r	
Fricative	h		ʃ	s z	
Semi-vowel			y		w

(b) Description of the sounds listed in (a):

The low round /ɔ/ is treated as a default vowel. Thus, a graphic *kh* is to be pronounced as /khɔ/. The symbol ~ (tilde) after the vowel indicates a nasalized vowel in the vowel chart above and elsewhere. The half-open back vowel /ɔ̃/ and is pronounced as the English word *awe*. The half-open front *æ* is pronounced as the vowel sound in the English word *bat*. In the consonant /ʈ, ɖ, ʈh, ɖh, ɽ/ are retroflex sounds.

(c) Some basic phonological rules:

(i) Vowel length is not phonologically significant. In monosyllabic contexts vowels can be phonetically long as the vowel /a/ in *ma*: ‘mother’ as opposed to *manuʃ* ‘(hu)man’.

(ii) No phonologically nasalized vowel occurs before or after a nasal consonant:

*nacon* ‘dance’ *bondhu* ‘friend’

(iii) Vowel Lowering applies to a monosyllabic verb stem whose nuclear vowel is /i u e/ and lowers it to /e o æ/: *cin* --> *cena* ‘to recongnize’ *bujh* ---> *bojha* ‘to understand’ *dekh* ---> *dæ kha* ‘to see’

(iv) Vowel Raising raises /æ/ to /e/ and /ɔ/ to /o/ in non root-initial position:

*æ khon* ‘now’ vs *ɔnekkhon* ‘a long time’ *pɔrajito* ‘defeated’ vs *ɔ-porajito* ‘un- defeated’

(v) Regressive Vowel Harmony(RVH) raises a low/ mid vowel by one if the first vowel after it is high with matching roundedness value: *æk* ‘one’ ---> *ekuʃ* ‘twenty one’.

RVH for the verbal paradigm is absolute: *ken-* --> *kini* 'I buy' *lekh-* --> *likhi* 'I write'

(vi) Progressive Vowel Harmony (PVH) turns /a/ into /o/ in a verb stem if the first preceding vocoid is high:

*bila* ---> *bilo* 'distribute-PRES.2' *douṛa* ---> *douṛo* 'run-PRES.2'

PVH for the non-verbal cases turns /a/ to /e/ as well:

*pujo* ---> *puja* 'worship' *mula* ---> *mulo* 'radish' *iccha* --> *icche* 'desire,

(vii) Regressive Assimilation: takes place for stop voicing, /r/ assimilation, either across word boundaries or within a single word:

*jak ge* --> *jagge* 'let it go!' *ḍak ghṛ* --> *ḍagghṛ* 'post office' *rag kṛa* --> *rakkora* 'to be angry' *tar jonno* --> *tajjono* 'for him/ that' *murcha* --> *muccha* 'faint' *karjo* --> *kajjo* 'work'

(viii) Deaspiration as assimilation:

*rṛth rṛla* --> *rṛttṛla* 'festival place where decorated carts are drawn'

*mukh khani* --> *mukkhani* 'that face' *kaṭh phaṭa* --> *kaṭphaṭa* 'wood-splitting (spoken of strong sunshine)'

(ix) Assimilation across different consonant groups: *pa~c ʃo* --> *pa~ʃʃo* 'five hundred'

(x) Semantic Doubling (in order to emphasize):

*ækebare* 'at once, for good' ---> *ækkebare* 'for all time, entirely (beyond repair)'

*thapoṛ* 'slap' ---> *thappoṛ* 'series of slaps'

## Basic Morphology

(a) Noun Morphology:

### Case

Nominative: *baṛi* 'house'; Accusative-Dative (Objective): *baṛi-ke*; Genitive: *baṛi-r*; Locative:

*baṛi-te*. The genitive suffix is *-er* when the noun ends in a consonant as in *bon-er* 'sister's', the Locative suffix is *-e* when the noun ends in a consonant and can be either *-e* or *-te* when the noun ends in a non-high vowel as in *ṭebil-e* 'on/ in the table' and *alo-e* or *alo-te* 'in the light' respectively.

Non-human nouns, and non-honorific human nouns generally take a Nominative (zero), Objective *-ke*, Genitive *-(e)r*, or Locative *-(t)e* suffix after the enclitic counting expression (or

pluralizer *gulo*), if any; *tak-gulo-te* ‘on the shelves’. But human nouns even here, resist the Locative plural; *chele-gulo-te* for ‘among the boys’, is not possible.

### Number

Nominative *-ra* and objective/genitive *-der* constitute a human plural marker whose use is possible only when the noun is not counted, and is obligatory with personal pronouns; while *chele* means ‘boy(s)’, *o* means ‘this person’, never ‘these persons’. Its absence signifies singularity also in the case of possessed or pointed-at nouns: *amar bhai* ‘my<sup>1</sup> brother<sup>2</sup>’, *ei karmocari* ‘this<sup>1</sup> employee<sup>2</sup>’.

Other human nouns can have a plural meaning without the plural marker: *mee a[be na, [udhu chele* ‘girls<sup>1</sup> won’t<sup>3</sup> come<sup>2</sup>, only<sup>4</sup> boys<sup>5</sup>’. The plural marker *ra-der* carries an overtone of definiteness, though less consistently than *gulo*. These facts indicate that plurality is less distinct for indefinite nouns.

As a special case of the process of definiteness *gulo* may be used as a definitive plural “general” (not specifically human) suffix, as in *chele-gulo* ‘the boys’. But *gulo* is also a classifier, as in : *onek-gulo boi* ‘many<sup>1</sup> books<sup>2</sup>’, *kotok-gulo kolom* ‘so many<sup>1</sup> pens<sup>2</sup>’.

### Classifiers:

Barring exceptions like *dui de[er moittri* ‘Two<sup>1</sup> countries’<sup>2</sup> friendship<sup>3</sup>’, the relation of a number word (or other quantity) to the noun it counts is mediated by a classifier enclitic like the human classifier *jon* in *du-jon montri* ‘Two<sup>1</sup> ministers<sup>2</sup>’. A counted noun never has a plural ending. The other two important classifiers are the general classifier *ta* and the piece-classifier *khana* which signals single objects. Compare *æk-ta mach* and *æk-khana mach* for ‘a<sup>1</sup> fish<sup>2</sup>’. Only the former can refer to a living fish. *ti*, a slightly literary version of *ta*, carries diminutive and feminine overtones. *to* and *te* are conditioned variants of *ta*.

### Definiteness/ Specificity:

Definiteness/ Specificity is expressed by (from Bhattacharya 1999):

(i) using a Num(eral)/Q(uantifier)-Cla(ssifier):

*du-to thala* ‘two<sup>1</sup> plates<sup>2</sup>’ (Indefinite) vs *thala du-to* ‘the two<sup>2</sup> plates<sup>1</sup>’. When the sequence is *æk-ta* or *æk-khana*, *æk* ‘one’ is understood: *æk-ta thala* ‘one/a<sup>1</sup> plate<sup>2</sup>’, *thala-ta* ‘the (one) plate’. A noun followed by an inanimate (animacy-neutral) classifier conveys definiteness: *gramta*

‘the village’, *ciṭhikhana* ‘the letter’. The nonhuman classifier *gulo* combines this positional definiteness with plurality: *khamgulo* ‘the envelopes’

(ii) using Dem(onstrative) *thala* ‘plate’ vs *oi thala* ‘that<sup>1</sup> plate<sup>2</sup>’ and a Q as in *boi* ‘book’ *kono boi* ‘some<sup>1</sup> book<sup>2</sup>’. However, this definiteness is a matter of true or insinuated prior familiarity, not of the demonstrative type. Thus *oi duṭo thala* ‘those<sup>1</sup> two<sup>2</sup> plates<sup>3</sup>’ and its near paraphrase, *oi thala duṭo* both use demonstratives but only the latter expresses knownness.

(iii) Case marking: *beṛal* ‘cat’ (nonspecific/ generic) vs *beṛal-ke* ‘cat-DAT’ (definitie/ specific).

Various Cla and Q/ Nums interact as follows:

Q	Classifiers			
	-Ta	gulo	khana/ khani	jOn
		[+count]	[+count/mass]	[+human]
SOb ‘all’	✓	✓	✓	✗
kOtok ‘somewhat’	✓	✓	✗	✗
kichu ‘some’	✓	✗	✗	✗
khanik ‘a bit’	✓	✗	✗	✗
Olpek- ‘a little’	✓	✗	✗	✗
prottek ‘every other’	✓	✗	✗	✗
Onek ‘a lot’	✓	✓	✓	✓
kOto ‘how/so much’	✓	✓	✓	✓
Oto ‘so much’	✓	✓	✓	✓
kOek ‘a few’	✓	✗	✓	✓
numerals	✓	✗	✓	✓
num+Ek ‘num or so’	✗	✗	✓	✓

Determiners:

The *e o* *je* elements of the third person paradigm serve as Determiners: *e boi* ‘This<sup>1</sup> book<sup>2</sup>’, *o kaj* ‘That<sup>1</sup> job<sup>2</sup>’, *je jini* ‘That<sup>1</sup> thing<sup>2</sup>’. These Determiners optionally add an augment /i/: *ei boi*, *oi kaj*, *jei jini*. The Interrogative Determiners are: *ki* ‘What’, *kon* ‘Which’, *je* ‘Which’ etc.

Determiners are invariables.

Agreement

Bangla exhibits no case or number agreement, and no grammatical gender phenomena at all. Thus, dependents like demonstratives and adjectives do not agree with the head noun on any grammatical dimension; they carry no inflectional features:

*ei/oi lɔmba chele* ‘this/that<sup>1</sup> tall<sup>2</sup> boy<sup>3</sup>’    *ei/oi lɔmba meye* ‘this/that tall girl’

*ei/oi lɔmba gach* ‘this/that tall tree’

Personal pronouns agree in formality, but there is no Noun-Determiner agreement for this. The agreement that the verb exhibits with its subject for Person and Formality conflates 2F(ormal) with 3F (see below).

### Pronouns

The first person paradigm is as follows:

	Singular	Plural
Nom	<i>ami</i>	<i>amra</i>
Acc/Dat	<i>amake/amay</i>	<i>amader</i>
Gen	<i>amar</i>	<i>amader</i>

The second person paradigm in terms of formality is as follows:

	Formal	Neutral	Intimate
	sg/ pl	sg/pl	sg/ pl
Nom	<i>apni/ apnara</i>	<i>tumi/ tomra</i>	<i>tui/ tora</i>
Acc/Dat	<i>apnake/ apnader</i>	<i>tomake/ tomader</i>	<i>toke/ toder</i>
Gen	<i>apnar/ apnader</i>	<i>tomar/ tomader</i>	<i>tor/ toder</i>

To define the third person pronoun in Bangla is difficult. If it is a semantic notion based on the properties of expressions like ‘Ram<sup>1</sup> and<sup>2</sup> his<sup>3</sup> brother<sup>4</sup>’ and ‘Sudha<sup>1</sup> won’t<sup>3</sup> come<sup>2</sup>, she<sup>4</sup> is<sup>7</sup> very<sup>5</sup> busy<sup>6</sup>’, then Bangla has two systems. The *Correlative* system for the first (and as a marked option also the second) case and the *Distal* system just for the second case:

*ram ar tar bhay*

*ʃudha aʃbe na, o khub bæ sto ache*

Each system has Neutral and Honorific sets.

### Correlative:

Formal	Neutral
sg/ pl	sg/pl

Nom	tini/ta~ra	ʃe/ tara
Acc/Dat	ta~ke/ta~der	take/tader
Gen	ta~r/ta~der	tar/ tader

Distal:

Nom	uni/o~ra	o/ ora
Acc/Dat	o~ke/o~der	oke/oder
Gen	o~r/o~der	or/ oder

If Third person pronouns are just pronouns taking third person verbs, then there is yet another system:

Proximal

Nom	ini/ e~ra	e/ era
Acc/Dat	e~ke/ e~der	eke/ eder
Gen	e~r/ e~der	er/ eder

These words have an emphatic *this*-function, one of pointing at people at *my* (our) orbit as opposed to *yours*. Distals point at people in your orbit. Correlatives refer to absent people.

(b) Verb Morphology

Finite verbs agree with the nominative subject for person and formality. Thus ‘you came’ has singular /*apni elen, tumi ele, tui eli*/, plural /*apnara elen, tomra ele, tora eli*/. (see below for verb inflection).

Negative: The negative particle *na* is derived from the old Bangla and the High form but the original sense ‘existed not’ is now lost. The negative of all verb roots excepting *ach-* ‘be’ in simple present, past and future is formed by using *na* postpositionally to the fully inflected verbal forms. The verb *ach-* ‘be’ forms its Negative root as *nei* and is not inflected for person and number.

<i>achi</i>	‘be.1’	
<i>acho</i>	‘be.2’	
<i>achiʃ</i>	‘be.2.I’	+ <i>na</i> =====> <i>nei</i>
<i>achen</i>	‘be.2.F’	
<i>ache</i>	‘be.3’	

The past of ‘be’ is formed by adding *na* to the past root *chil* which is inflected for person /*chilam* ‘be.PST.1’, *chile* ‘be.PST.2’, *chilo* ‘be.PST.3’ + *na*/. The future root is *thakb* + *na*. The formation

of the negative of the imperative and simple future are the same.

*tui jabi na* 'you<sup>1</sup> do not<sup>3</sup> go.2I<sup>2</sup>,

*tumi jabe na* 'you do not go.2N'

*apni jaben na* 'you do not go.2F'

In the perfect aspect the Neg is formed by suffixing /ni/ in all the tenses, while in the future /na/ is used as a separate word postverbally. In the formation of the negative of conjunctives /na/ is prefixed in the first and not the second clause:

*je na a]le ami jabo na* 'I<sup>4</sup> shall not<sup>6</sup> go<sup>5</sup> if he<sup>1</sup> does not<sup>2</sup> come<sup>3</sup>,

Passive: Bangla does not have an inflected passive. The analytical or periphrastic passive is usually formed by the passive participle affix –a and the auxiliary verb *ja* 'to go' although a proper passive voice with a nominative object is not natural in the language. The *ja*-passive form an impersonal construction, e.g., with the verb 'to see': *dekha jay* 'it is seen'. If a promoted object is used, it is in the Dative:

*ama-ke dækha jay* 'I am seen' (= to me is seen)

A few cases of idiomatic passive formation take place with the verb root *pɔɽ* 'to fall', *gælo* 'went' *cal* 'to go', *hɔy* 'to happen' etc instead of *ja*:

*mara pɔɽe* 'gets killed'; *mara gælo* 'got killed', *khawa cɔle* 'can be eaten' *amake dækha hɔy* 'I am seen' (=They see me)

The oldest form of Bangla used the -ɔn suffix (instead of the –a) which is lost in Bangla but is preserved in some East Bangla dialects. A recent passive form with the auxiliary *ach* is also available for inanimate nouns: *e boi amar pɔra ache* 'this<sup>1</sup> book<sup>2</sup> has<sup>5</sup> been read<sup>4</sup> by me<sup>3</sup>'. Sometimes the impersonal passive is employed for politeness when the use of a particular pronominal form can be avoided: *ki kɔra hɔy* 'What<sup>1</sup> is<sup>3</sup> done<sup>2</sup> (by you) = What do you do?'

Causative: The causative can be formed in the following manner:

(i) by adding the affix –a to the root as in *kɔr* 'to do' *kɔra* 'to cause to do', *de* --> *dewa* 'to cause to give'.

(ii) –ano as the passive participle affix for causative and denominative roots: *janano* 'cause to be informed' from *jana* 'to know' (cf. dialectal –il- as in *kɔrailo* 'done, cause to be done').

(iii) Periphrastically with the verbal noun in *-a-* and the verb *kɔrano* ‘to cause to do’ is common in Raḍha: *rakh* to keep’ vs *rakh kɔrano* ‘to cause to keep’ and in standard Bangla: *snan kɔrano* ‘to cause to take bath’.

(iv) Morphological single causatives can syntactically function as double causatives but Bangla has no double causative morphology.

(c) General Rules (inflection, derivation, compound formation):

### Inflection

Verbs inflection is shown below for the vowel-final stem (*kha*) verb /*khawa*/ ‘to eat, to drink’. 1P, 2P, 3P stand for the three Persons and I(ntimate), N(eutral), F(ormal) formality levels. The Pres[ent], Past, Fut[ure] tenses interact with moods, namely the Imper[ative] and the unmarked Indicative, and with aspects, namely Simp[le], Prog[ressive], Perf[ect], Hab[itual].

	1P	2PI	2PN	2/3PF	3PN
Pres Simp	khai	khaʃ	khao	khan	khay
Pres Prog	khacchi	khacchiʃ	khaccho	khacchen	khacche
Pres Perf	kheyechi	kheyechiʃ	kheyecho	kheyechen	kheyechi
Imper Pres	--	kha	khao	khan	khak
Past Simp	khelam	kheli	khele	khelen	khelo
Past Prog	khacchilam	khacchili	khacchile	khacchilen	khacchilo
Past Perf	kheyechilam	kheyechili	kheyechile	kheyechilen	kheyechilo
Past Hab	khetam	kheti(ʃ)	khete	kheten	khete
Fut Simp	khabo	khabi	khabe	khaben	khabe
Imper Fut	--	khaʃ	kheyo	khaben	khabe

The non-finite forms of the stems *kena* ‘to buy’ *khawa* ‘to eat’ *kenano* ‘to cause to buy’:

Nonfinite: Stem Type	(ending in -C/-V)	Simple (-C)	Simple (-V)
Gerund-Participle	kena	khawa	kenano
Dependent Gerund	kinbar, kenbar	khabar	kenabar
Conjunctive Participle	kine	kheyi	kiniye
Infinitive-Participle	kinte	khete	kenate

Conditional Participle      kinle                      khele                      kenale

### Derivation

Productive affixation is rare in the language. Compounding is the only productive word formation process. Causative formation, as above, is one productive strategy:

*kena* ‘to buy’ ---> *kenano* ‘to make (someone)’

In nominals, masculine bases yield feminine nouns in *-i*, as in *mama*, *mami* ‘Maternal uncle, aunty’, *ṣiṅho*, *ṣiṅhi* ‘Lion, lioness’. Some bases use instead the strategy of *ni* or *ini* suffixation, as in *gowala*, *gowalini* ‘milk man, woman’ *bagh*, *baghini* ‘tiger, tigress’.

A second *-i* forms adjectives and inhabitant/language names from place names and nouns: *gujrat*, *gujrati* ‘Gujarat, Gujarati’, *begun*, *beguni* ‘purple, purplish’

A third *-i* nominalizes adjectives: *calak*, *calaaki* ‘clever, cleverness’; *bekar*, *bekari* ‘unemployed, unemployment’. Another nominalizing suffix, *-(t)to* <tb> from Sanskrit */tva/* is productive to form expressions like */paṇḍitto/* ‘erudition’, is used where no other affix is possible.

The *-amo/ami* forms abstract nouns or character/ profession from nouns: *boka*, *bokami* ‘fool, foolish’, *paka*, *pakami* ‘ripe, precocious’ *cor*, *corami* ‘thief, theivery’

The Perso-Arabic privative prefix */be/* of words such as */becal/* ‘waywardness’ and */beṣamal/* ‘not in control of one’s faculties’ is not productive; but many suffixes are:

*khana*: *ḍaktar-khana-khana* ‘dispensary’, *khor*: *ghuṣ-khor* ‘bribe-taker’, *giri*: *babu-giri* ‘way of a gentleman’, *dan*: *ator-dan* ‘attar-holder’, *ṣohi*: *cṣlon-ṣoi* ‘agreeable’

### Compounds

Compounds are formed by the addition of a verb root or an auxiliary to a noun in accusative or locative (nominal) or an unaffected verbal conjunctive or a participle (verbal). The verb root/ aux takes the agreement morphemes.

(I) Nominals: (i) With Accusative: *jṣl dewa* ‘to water (lit: water giving)’; (ii) With Locative: *ga-e makha* ‘to smear on the body’; (iii) Locative verbal noun in *-te*: *korte laga* ‘to start doing (lit: do-and attaching)’; (iv) With verbal noun in *-i/-a*: *muṛi dewa* ‘to wrap oneself up’, *hama dewa* ‘to crawl’

(II) Verbals: (i) With conjunctive in *-e*: *kheye phæla* ‘to eat up (Lit: eat-and drop)’; (ii) With present participle in *-ite*: *dite thaka* ‘to keep giving (Lit: give-and stay)’

The normal way to make new verbs is to add a light verb like /kɔra/ ‘to do’ or /hɔwa/ ‘to be’ to form a Composite Verb: *ziraks kɔra* ‘to xerox’, *mægnifai kɔraa* ‘to magnify’, etc.

(d) Other information on Morphology:

The Bangla genitive covers some uses of the dative in other Indic languages, as in the experiencer subject construction: *robiner probin-ke bhalo lage* ‘Robin likes Probin, lit. Robin-Gen<sup>1</sup> Probin-AccDat<sup>2</sup> good<sup>3</sup> feels<sup>4</sup>’.

### Basic Syntax

(a) The basic order of major constituents:

(i) Adjunct + Subject + Predicate Adjunct + Indirect Object + Direct Object + (Dependents of the complement verb) Complement Verb + Finite Main Verb + Negative

(ii) Noun Phrase: Possessive + Dem + Num/ Q + Classifier + Adjective + Noun

This also shows that modifying adjectives precede the modified noun.

(iii) Adpositions follow the noun (postposition): *bakʃer moddhe* ‘inside<sup>2</sup> the box<sup>1</sup>’

(iv) Question words (or K-words) are: *kɔkhon* ‘when’, *kothay* ‘where’, *kon* ‘which’, *ki* ‘what’, *ke/kara* ‘Who-Nom (sg/pl)’, *kake* ‘Who-Acc’, *kar* ‘Whose’. Questions are formed ‘in-situ’:

*tumi kal baɽi-te mɔdon-ke dekhechile* ‘yesterday<sup>2</sup> you<sup>1</sup> saw<sup>5</sup> Modon<sup>4</sup> at home<sup>3</sup>’

*ke kal baɽi-te mɔdon-ke dekhechilo* ‘yesterday<sup>2</sup> who<sup>1</sup> saw<sup>5</sup> Modon<sup>4</sup> at home<sup>3</sup>?’

*tumi kɔbe baɽi-te mɔdon-ke dekhechile* ‘when<sup>2</sup> did you<sup>1</sup> see<sup>5</sup> Modon<sup>4</sup> at home<sup>3</sup>?’

*tumi kal kothay mɔdon-ke dekhechile* ‘where<sup>3</sup> did you<sup>1</sup> see<sup>5</sup> Modon<sup>4</sup> yesterday<sup>2</sup>?’

*tumi kal baɽi-te ka-ke dekhechile* ‘whom<sup>4</sup> did you<sup>1</sup> see<sup>5</sup> at home<sup>3</sup> yesterday<sup>2</sup>?’

(b) Case marking of major constituents:

(i) Subject case can be Nom (zero) (*mɔdon aʃe* ‘Modon<sup>1</sup> comes<sup>2</sup>’), Genitive for experiencer subjects (*ama-r matha dhoreche* ‘my<sup>1</sup> head<sup>2</sup> is aching<sup>3</sup> (Lit: my head is-held)’, Locative (*lok-e bole* ‘people say’)

(ii) Objects are marked as Dative for animates (*robin chele-ke dekhlo* ‘Robin<sup>1</sup> saw<sup>3</sup> the boy<sup>2</sup>’), Accusative (zero) (*ami phɔl khacchi* ‘I<sup>1</sup> am eating<sup>3</sup> fruits<sup>2</sup>’)

(iii) Adpositions mark their complement

(a) Genitive (*ṭebil-er nice/upore/paṣe* ‘under/ on/ beside<sup>2</sup> the table<sup>1</sup>’)

(b) Objective (*-ke* or zero) (*bhai-ke/ boi nie/die* ‘With/ by<sup>2</sup> brother/ book<sup>1</sup>’)

(c) Locative (*hat-e kore* ‘with<sup>2</sup> hand<sup>1</sup>’)

(c) Head-initial or Head-final nature:

(i) The complementizers can be both initial (*je*) and final (*bole*) (the complements are marked within square brackets):

*ami dekhlam [je rṓma baṭi nei]* ‘I<sup>1</sup> saw<sup>2</sup> that<sup>3</sup> Roma<sup>4</sup> is not<sup>6</sup> at home<sup>5</sup>’

*ami [rṓma aṣbe bole] ṣunechi* ‘I<sup>1</sup> have heard<sup>5</sup> that<sup>4</sup> Roma<sup>2</sup> will come<sup>3</sup>’

(ii) Unmarked order inside the VP is head-final but since Bangla is a free word-order language, almost all possible orders may obtain.

(iii) Relative Clauses (RC) are formed with the Relative Pronoun (RP) *je* and a ‘Co-relative’ pronoun (CoP) *ṣe* both at the initial and the final position of their respective clauses. The following points may be noted in connection with the RCs in (1-7):

(a) RP before or inside the RC and CoP is initial in the matrix clause (1-7)

(b) Complete embedding where the identical NP (or the antecedent) is deleted from the RC and retained in the matrix clause (6)

(c) The identical NP is deleted from the matrix clause and is retained in the RC (1,4)

(d) RC without an antecedent (2a,b)

(e) The correlative clause is with (3,5,6) and without an antecedent (1,2,4,6)

(f) RC is embedded in the matrix clause, CoP is absent, the antecedent is within the correlative clause (7)

1. *je chele-ṭa amar bondhu, ṣe eṣechilo* ‘the boy<sup>2</sup> who<sup>1</sup> is my<sup>3</sup> friend<sup>4</sup>, he<sup>5</sup> had come<sup>6</sup>’

2a. *amar bondhu je, ṣe eṣechilo*    b. *je amar bondhu, ṣe eṣechilo*

3. *je amar bondhu, ṣe chele-ṭa eṣechilo*

4. *ṣe eṣechilo, je chele-ṣa amar bondhu*

5. *ṣe chele-ṣa amar bondhu, je eṣechilo*

6. *chele-ṭa, je amar bondhu, eʃechilo*

7. *amar æḳṭa chobi ache, ja dada dieche* ‘I<sup>1</sup> have<sup>4</sup> a<sup>2</sup> picture<sup>3</sup>, that<sup>5</sup> brother<sup>6</sup> gave<sup>7</sup> me’

(d) Negation: Postverbal in finite and preverbal in non-finites:

*robin aʃe na* ‘Robin<sup>1</sup> does not<sup>3</sup> come<sup>2</sup>’ (Finite) versus

*robin na ele* ‘If Robin<sup>1</sup> doesn’t<sup>2</sup> come<sup>3</sup>’ (Conditional)

*robin-er na aʃa* ‘Robin’s<sup>1</sup> not<sup>2</sup> coming<sup>3</sup>’ (Gerund)

*robin cay probin na aʃe* ‘Robin<sup>1</sup> wants<sup>2</sup> that Probin<sup>3</sup> doesn’t<sup>4</sup> come<sup>5</sup>’ (Subjunctive)

(e) Other information:

In addition, the particles *je*, *to*, *naki*, *ki* roughly corresponding to ‘topic/comment that’, ‘of course’, ‘apparently’, and ‘yes/no question marker’ when added to a phrase turns it into the given or the topic of the sentence. The rest of the sentence acts as the new information --- the peak of this information is marked by a ‘focalizer’ *-iI* or *-o* (see example 3 in Example section)

### Basic Orthography

Spelling rules for Bangla are extremely unscientific due mainly to the vast gap between the script and the pronunciation, a result of the heavy Sanskritization of Bangla since the 12th century and carried on vigorously throughout the middle ages. For example, although Bangla does not distinguish between /s ʃ ʂ/ (which are phonemically /ʃ/), primary school, students are still taught the three different alphabets which in fact bear phonetically descriptive names, namely, *dantya* (‘dental’) ʃɔ for [s], *talbya* (‘palatal’) ʃɔ for [ʃ] and *muṛdhanya* (‘retroflex’) ʃɔ for [ʂ]. The script also marks contrasts now lost between short and long high vowels. That the orthography of particular words uses long vowel symbols has to be rote-learned, as in <*din*> ‘day’ and <*diin*> ‘poor’ (angled brackets indicating graphemes where the default vowel pronunciation associated with consonants is not shown), both phonologically /*din*/. Nasalization has a consistent written correlate, the *candrabindu*, distinguished from the *Anusvara* -- the dependent nasal alphabet which is treated as simply a silenced /n/.

Lacking a monographemic symbol of its own, /æ/ is written variously as <*e*>, <*y*>, or <*yɔ*>:

<khela, byaakarṇ, byst> for /khæla, bækoron, bæsto/ ‘selling, grammar, busy’.

Both /n/ and /l/ have allomorphic varieties depending on the context:

Alveolar:	nən	‘not him/ her’	lal	‘red’
Dental:	cɔlonto	‘current’	balti	‘bucket’
Retroflex:	ghɔnʈa	‘bell’	ulʈo	‘opposite’
Palatal:	benci	‘bench’	lalce	‘reddish’

The vocabulary in Bangla consists of *Tatsama* and *Tadbhava* words, Sanskrit and indigenous or derived from Sanskrit, respectively. Some of the ‘rules’ for the *Tatsama* words are:

(i) After the *Ref* (the accent mark on a consonant (C) to denote a syllable-ending /r/ in the previous syllable) a C cannot geminate: <ɔc’na> must be pronounced as [ɔrɔna] and not [ɔccɔna];

(ii) –m preceding /k, kh, g, gh/ must be spelt as *Anusvara* (shown here as <ᳵ>), e.g.

<ɔhᳵkar, sᳵkhya, sᳵgram> etc.

For *Tadbhava* words some of the rules are:

(i) Gemination not allowed with *Ref*: <kj’> for [kɔrjo] ‘credit’ (cf. (i) above)

(ii) The use of *Hasant* – an accent mark (marked here as an underline after the alphabet) underneath the letter to indicate that the default vowel [ɔ] must not be pronounced – is restricted as follows: terminal letters should not carry *Hasant* unless mispronunciation is possible; /h/ and CC clusters usually pronounce the default vowel (<dh, kand> as [dɔhɔ, kandɔ]), unless the *Hasant* is forced as in <[ah\_> for [ʃah]; it must be indicated if required for a medial C or if the previous V is extremely short as in <st\_ka> for [ʃɔʈka] and <jhp\_> for [jhɔp] respectively; some well-known words must be pronounced with the default vowel or [o]: <ghn> as [ghɔno] ‘dense/dark’, <driɔ> as [driɔo] ‘determined’, <chil> as [chilo] ‘was’, <es> as [eʃo] ‘come’ etc.; some words do not have the default vowel sounded but because they are ‘well-known’ words, the *Hasant* need not be used: <ɔcl> for [ɔcol] ‘unmoved’, <gbhi:r> for [gobhir] ‘deep’ etc.

(iii) The use of long or short vowels: If the original Sanskrit has long *i/u* then the *Tadbhava* has long *i/u* or short *i/u* optionally (<niil>, ‘blue’ <pakhii/ pakhi> ‘bird’); feminine, community,

individual, language as adjectives are with long *i* (<baghini> ‘Tigress’, <kabulii> ‘from/of Kabul’, <i<sup>h</sup>rajii> ‘English’ etc), however some can be with *i* (<didi> ‘sister’, <kbi> for [kobi] ‘poet’, <jhi> ‘maid’ etc) and some with both (<masii/ masi> for [maʃi] ‘mother’s sister’, <pisii/ pisi> for [piʃi] ‘father’s sister’ etc).

(iv) Use of *ṛ* and *n*: Normally follows the original Sanskrit spelling but foreign/ indigenous words have *n*: <kan> ‘ear’, <sona> for [ʃona] ‘gold’, <koran> ‘Koran’. C-clusters usually have *ṛ*: <ghṛṭi> for [ghoṛṭi] ‘bell’, <ḷṭhn> for [ḷoṛṭhon] ‘lantern’ etc.

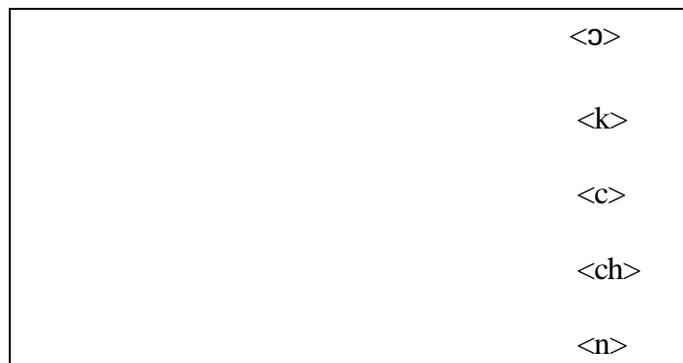
(v) /s ʃ ʒ/ maintain the original Sanskrit spelling: <a~ʃ> from /oṛʃo/ ‘part’, <amiʒ> from /aamiʃ/ ‘with meat’ etc.

(vi) Use of <ḷ> and <ṛ>: usually both spellings are allowed but if it is followed by a vowel then /ṛ/ is preferred: <baṅḷa/ ba<sup>h</sup>la> ‘Bangla’ but <baṅḷalii> for [baṅḷali] ‘Bengali’

(v) An <ṛ> followed by a syllable with a high vowel or a <Cy> cluster raises to /o/: <ṛti> for [oti] ‘very’, <gdy> for [goddo] ‘prose’.

#### (a) History of the writing system

The Bangla script is originally derived from the Brahmi script current from 400 BC to 300 CE, a derivative of the Semitic branch of Aramaic. But it was influenced reshaped by the dominant Devanagri of the Northern and Western India from the 7th century onwards. The following is a sample of 5 Bangla alphabets on the extreme right as derived from the original Brahmi on the extreme left:



From the Middle ages, the Indian notion of *Akṣaras* or the system of words being divided into

syllables not closed by a consonant was always treated somewhat mystically and was a result of the system of writing. The number of primary letters (or *maatṛakṣara*) in Sanskrit, and following that in the vernacular languages is, 50, with 16 vowels and 34 consonants. Vowels include the retroflex /ʃ/, the vocalic /ri/, the *Anusvara* or voiceless /n/ and the *Visarga* /h/ which are not phonemic (apart from the ones discussed above as part of the spelling system) in Bangla, the same holds for the consonant /kṣ/.

### **Borrowed Words & Loanwords**

Persian (mainly lexical from the beginning of 13th century till 1836 when English replaced Persian as the language of the courts): *tir* ‘arrow’, *kaman* ‘bow, gun’, *kṛtol* ‘execution’, *kella* ‘fort’, *lṛṣkor* ‘army’, *phṛte* ‘victory’, etc. Standard dictionaries usually list around 2,000 words of Persian origin.

Portuguese: *khana* ‘ditch’ (cf Portuguese *cano*), *janala* ‘window’, *almaṛi* ‘cupboard’

French: *kartuj* ‘cartridge’ (Fr. *cartouche*), *buruṣ* ‘brush’ (Fr. *barouche*), *kupon* ‘coupon’, *ollondaj* ‘Dutch’ (Fr. *Hollandais*)

Dutch: names of cards: *hṛoton* ‘hearts’ (Dutch *harten*), *ruitṛn* ‘diamonds’ (Dutch *ruiten*), *iskabṛn* ‘spades’ (Dutch *schopen*), *turup* ‘trump card’ (= *troef*)

English: Numerous borrowings, a process which continues. Some completely Bengalized English words are: *ha-ṣpatal* ‘hospital’, *laṭ* ‘lord’, *iskul* ‘school’, *ḍaktar* ‘doctor’, *gelaṣ* ‘glass’, *ṛphiṣ* ‘office’, *ṭebil* ‘table’, *benci* ‘bench’, *maṣṭar* ‘master’, *garod* ‘guard, prison’, *lṛnṭhon* ‘lantern’, *bhoṭ* ‘vote’ etc.

### **Common Words:**

Man: *manuṣ*, *lok*      Long: *lṛmba*

Woman: *mohila*      Small: *choṭo*

Water: *jṛl*      Yes: *hæ~*

Sun:	<i>ʃurjo</i>	No:	<i>na</i>
Three:	<i>tin</i>	Good:	<i>bhalo</i>
Fish:	<i>mach</i>	Bird:	<i>pakhi</i>
Big:	<i>bɔʃo</i>	Dog:	<i>kukur</i>
Tree:	<i>gach</i>		

**Example Sentences** (3 brief sentences with pronunciation and morpheme-by-morpheme glosses illustrative of the syntax):

- ɔthoco robin kal                      probin-ke      boi   dite              bolbe      na*

although Robin tommorow Probin-DAT book give.CONJ say.FUT.3 neg

‘Although tommorow Robin won’t tell Probin to give the book’
- 2. amar ei    du(koek)    jon    ghoniʃʈho bondhu    ʈebil-er    nice    boʃbe*

my    this two (some) CLA close      friends      Table-GEN under sit.FUT

‘Two/some of my close friends will sit under the table’
- 3. probin-to    ajkal              e    baʃi-te-i              thak-che*

Probin-TOP these days this house-LOC-EMP AUX-PROG.3

‘As for Probin, these days he is staying in this very house’

## Range

The Middle Bangla period was marked by devotional movements in Hinduism (*bhakti*) and mystical trends in Islam which encouraged the use of regional languages and public participation in religious life, translations of the Hindu epics Ramayana and Mahabharata into Bangla and breakthroughs in logic by Sanskrit-speaking Bengali scholars.

During the Muslim rule of Bengal (the Middle Bangla period), a large numbers of Bengalis converted to Islam. (About seventy per cent of the speakers of Bangla today are Muslims.) As the language grew, its lexicon drew heavily on Sanskrit and (Turko-)Perso-Arabic sources, as the administrative language of the region was Persian.

In 1971 the war to free Bangladesh from Pakistan cost the lives of an estimated 3 million speakers of Bangla. West Bengal and Bangladesh together constituted a continuous Bangla-

speaking region commonly called Bengal. The British departure in 1947 resulted in the partition of the subcontinent where West Bengal was left as part of India and East Bengal as the sole province of East Pakistan. The war of independence led by the *Mukti Bahini* (Freedom Army) against Pakistan in 1971 led to the creation of Bangladesh.

Within Bangladesh, Chakmas are a group of tribal people living in the hill tracts area of Chittagong (or *Chittagong*) who are Buddhists by religion and are facing persecution in Bangladesh. Many of them have since been staying in North-Eastern India as refugees. The 1935 Government of India Act defined the hills as a “totally protected area”. After the separation of India and East Pakistan in 1947, the successive regimes in the latter and later Bangladesh supported the influx of Bengali-speaking Muslim migrants into the hill tracts. Today the Hill Tract has 900, 000 people evenly divided between Muslim settlers and indigenous Buddhists. As a result of the aggressive settlement policy of the Bangladesh government, about 180,000 Chakmas are to be found in the North-Eastern states of India where they face hostile locals and the threat of eviction.

### **Contact with Other Languages**

In terms of number of speakers, Bangla is the world’s third largest language. Apart from the bordering IA languages there is constant emigration to Bengal from speakers of Tibeto-Burman, Austro-Asiatic and Dravidian language families. Needless to say, the contact with English continues.

### **Efforts to preserve, protect or promote the language**

Early Pakistani language policy (since 1947) favoured Urdu as a symbol of Muslim identity in Bangladesh. But a movement for giving Bangla equal status, culminating in a major 21 February 1952 demonstration in Dhaka, in which seven university students were killed, forced a settlement, making Bangla and Urdu the official languages of Pakistan. Ever since, 21 February has been *bha[a diba]* ‘language day’ in East Bengal.

The Bangla Academy in Bangladesh and the Bengal Sahitya Parishad of Calcutta, India have continued admirable work in the fields of historical research and folk studies. Current efforts to promote the language are much more serious in Bangladesh than in West Bengal, where most of the bureaucratic work is still in English. Even there, college level textbooks and educational

materials in various subjects are now available. Since the B.A. exam in 1973 candidates at the University of Calcutta have had the option of writing their answers in Bangla.

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