

Pabna school still named after ex-Pak premier

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The name of a Pabna school, named after the then Pakistani premier and built in 1952 right before the historic Language Movement, has not been changed even after 43 years since the independence.

Bangladesh Railway Government Nazimuddin High School was established to teach Urdu.

At a public meeting at the capital's Paltan on January 27, 1952, Nazimuddin repeatedly announced, "Urdu will be the state language of Pakistan".

That announcement led to the Language Movement in which many Bangalee students -- including Salam, Barkat, Rafiq and Zabbar -- had to sacrifice their lives on February 21.

During the 1971 Liberation War, the school remained closed and, later, it was reopened as a Bangla medium one under the supervision of Bangladesh Railway, said acting headmaster Md Abdus Siddique of the school located in Ishwardi. The government, however, is yet to take any step to change its name, he said.

"It is a matter of shame..." Language Movement hero Ramesh Maitra told The Daily Star.

Freedom fighter Fazlur Rahman echoed him.

Visiting the school premises, this correspondent even found no Shaheed Minar on the campus to show respect to the language martyrs although there is enough space.

A teacher said they had requested the railway authorities to erect a Shaheed Minar, but to no avail.

The decision to change the school's name should be taken by the higher authorities of the government, said Md Afzal Hossain, divisional railway manager of BR (Pakshay Division). About Shaheed Minar, he said the school authorities could take steps in this regard.