

ONE SMALL SHELF, ONE GIANT STEP FORWARD

A Twenty-first (Ekushey) Corner is a way to involve all libraries in the international Mother Languages Conservation (MLC) Movement. Designed by the MLC, the concept of a well-positioned collection in the library is a new way to help promote the importance of conservation of fast disappearing mother languages.

Ekush is Bangla for 21, and Ekushey means 21st. In Bangladesh, 'Ekushey' is synonymous with 'Ekushey February', the day when Bangladesh celebrates its Bangla Language Movement. UNESCO proclaimed 21 February as International Mother Language Day in 1999 to honour the Bangla speaking people killed during this protest to protect their mother language.

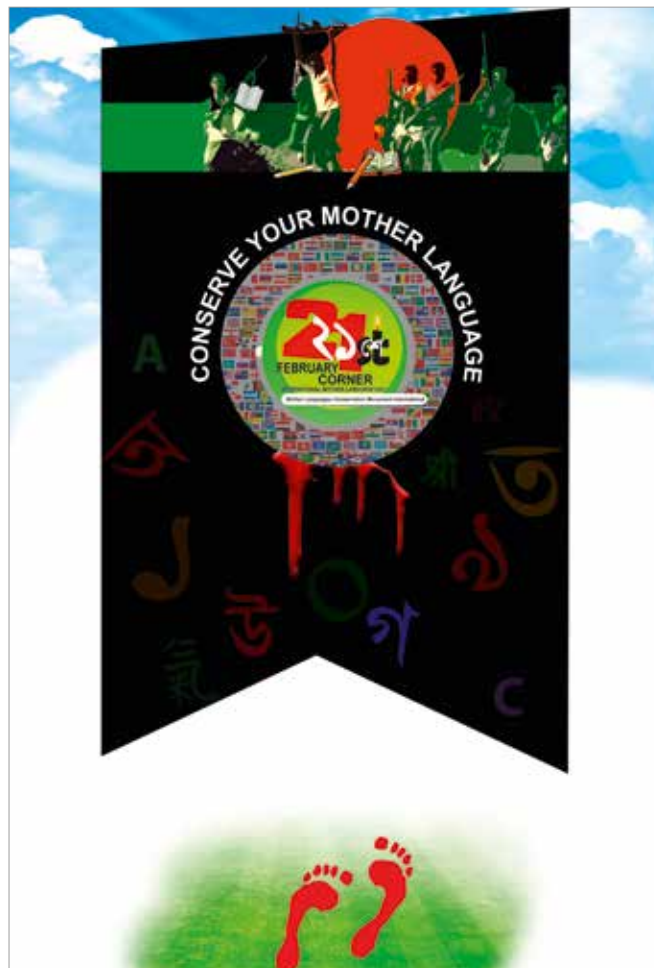
The 'Twenty-first (Ekushey) Corner at Library' is one of the strategies proposed by the MLC to enable member countries to participate in this global movement aiming to highlight the threat to mother languages. The concept simply involves display of a poster next to a bookshelf in a prime location in the library. Here, the library can collect and display UNESCO and other historical materials relevant to International Mother Language Day, publications in languages used in the respective library area or by its community, and highlight valuable literature and documents in, and about, threatened languages.

Establishing such a collection enables participating libraries to encourage the collection and conservation of locally used alphabets for future reference. It can also provide a focus for celebrating International Mother Language Day on 21 February each year.

It is believed by experts in the field that by the end of this century, only a few dozen languages will be used by 85% of the world's population. This puts future generations at significant risk of losing linguistic diversity and ethnicity, and we will also lose our knowledge of the beauty of ancient ethnic cultures and traditions.

The MLC Movement International Inc. appeals to all library authorities to consider establishing your own Twenty-first (Ekushey) Corner in the noble cause of participating in the protection of languages and cultural diversity globally.

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This poster has been designed for all libraries to use to promote their special Twenty-first (Ekushey) Corner.

Need to store your
collections offsite?

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caval.edu.au/storage