

**Bangladesh High Commission  
Canberra**

*Press Release*

**(01 March 2010)**

**Bangladesh High Commissioner Proposes to include “Bangla” in  
the School Curriculum of ACT**

Bangladesh High commissioner in Canberra proposes to celebrate International Mother Language Day officially by the ACT government as well as to include “Bangla” in the school curriculum of Australian Capital Territory while making a speech at the celebration programme on the occasion of the Shaheed Dibash and International Mother Language Day at the Bangladesh High Commission in Canberra on 21 February 2010. A discussion meeting on the significance of the Language Martyrs’ Day and International Mother Language Day was organized by the Mission where Hon. Ms. Joy Burch, MLA, Minister for Multicultural Affairs of the ACT Government was the Chief Guest and other guests were High Commissioner for Sri Lanka in Canberra, Charge d’Affaires of Royal Thi Embassy in Canberra, Deputy High Commissioner for India in Canberra, other dignitaries and members of Bangladesh community from Canberra. Mr. Mohammad Raquib Ud-Dowla, Bhasa Sainik (Language Veteran) was also present as a special guest during the discussion meeting. The meeting was presided over by H.E. the High Commissioner Lieutenant General Masud Uddin Chwodhury.

The Multicultural Minister in her speech highlighted the importance of preserving the mother tongue and showing respect to other languages and cultures. She also highly praised the contribution of language martyrs as well as language veterans in protecting their right to speak in mother tongues.

The programme began with hoisting the National Flag at half mast in the morning by the High Commissioner. The messages on the occasion from the Hon’ble President, Hon’ble Prime Minister and Hon’ble Minister for Foreign Affairs were read out after the flag hoisting ceremony. In the afternoon, a discussion meeting followed by cultural program was organized by the High Commission in collaboration with Bangladesh

Australia Association Canberra.

In the meeting, apart from the Minister, Mr. Mohammad Raquib Ud-Dowla (Bhasa Sainik), Ms. Nazneen K Chowdhury (daughter of a Bhasa Sainik Mr. Badiul Alam Chowdhury), Dr. Moyazur Rahman, President, Bangladesh Australia Association Canberra and a number of distinguished members from Bangladesh community also spoke on the importance and significance of the day. Mr. Dowla recalled his memories about the language movements for the young generations as he actively participated in the language movements while studying in Dhaka University. All the speakers recognized the unprecedented sacrifice made by Bangladesh to protect the right to speak in mother language. They also highlighted the importance of nourishment of mother tongue to promote the social cohesiveness in countries around the world.

While highlighting the sacrifice of the language martyrs' in his concluding remarks, the High Commissioner commented that "Bangla" is 5<sup>th</sup> largest spoken language in the world and about 230 million people speak in this language. He further mentioned that the usage of "Bangla" language is not only confined into the territorial boundary of Bangladesh but also different parts of the world. It is not only the official language of Bangladesh but also one of the official languages of Tripura and West Bengal States of India, and official language of Sierra Leone, co-official language of Asam State of India. The High Commissioner requested through the Hon'ble Minister to the ACT government to celebrate International Mother Language Day officially and also proposes to include "Bangla" in the school curriculum of Australian Capital Territory as the number of "Bangla" speaking people increasing. The High Commissioner further mentioned that though the mother tongue is essential but the knowledge of other languages especially English is imperative to remain competitive in the present world. The program was ended with a magnificent cultural presentation by the Bangladesh Community.

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