

# SEFTON MOSQUE: GENERAL MEETING AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

**Report By: Kamrul Hasan Khan [Sydney, Australia]**

Bangladesh Islamic Centre (BIC) was scheduled to have a general meeting (GM) for constitution amendment on 10th April 2005 at 10AM at Sefton Mosque. The existing constitution was written around 1989 when the mosque was established. The Executive Committee and also members of Bangladeshi Community in Sydney recognise a requirement for changing the existing constitution in order to make it more flexible to accommodate future members in BIC where one of the parents needs to be a Bangladeshi descendent (in light of anticipated social changes).

It is a matter of disgrace that the Executive Committee of BIC has received a Supreme Court Order in this regard (to prevent any such changes in the well-drafted constitution that states that the members of BIC shall be of Bangladeshi descendants). The order issued by the court based on a request from Maulana Raashed Rashid (who served as the president of BIC some years ago and no longer be a member of its Executive Committee).

A brief detail of the claim of Maulana Rashid is listed below:

1. Accept / decide 56 non-Bangladeshi (local Arabic people) as member of BIC immediately.
2. BIC membership must comprise with 50% Bangladeshi and 50% non-Bangladeshi members immediately.
3. Postpone the forthcoming GM for constitution amendment of 10 April 2005 etc.
4. Public consultation is required prior to discussing any special resolution.

Some weeks ago (March 2005), during Jumma prayer, Maulana Rashid delivered a speech in front of musullis that the mosque was operated by donations from local muslims, however, they were not allowed to run the office or committee, and did not have any say in management and decision making. He has requested local musullis to stop donation to mosque. Maulana Rashid asked the local Arabic Community to apply for membership of BIC and to get involved in management. He also assured them he would go to court if BIC did not include them as members in Executive Committee.

An independent survey, conducted recently, by BIC to local muslim community (mainly Arabic Background) indicates that the worshippers and regular musullis of Sefton Mosque are grateful and satisfied with the level of services (and also thankful to BIC). They do not have intention to get involved in BIC's management. Instead, they would happy to continue on-going support to activities of Sefton Mosque and its future projects. The survey also found that some local muslims possibly misguided by the deceptive moves and motivation of some specific person(s) or group on such matter.

It is a fervent request to everyone of Bangladeshi Community come forward in this critical circumstance to resist in such vindictive and counter-productive move. Please contact BIC Executive Committee Members for further details and pass your opinion in writing.

May Allah grant us strength to serve the community, in the best possible ways, in religious and social matters.

**Court Action (Dated: 7 April 2005)**

The court order is to adjourn the resolutions till such time the Court gives order again. **The Court has taken interest in this matter on the basis that Maulana Rashid presented information that the property was purchased using public money, and, therefore, it should be a trust property rather than a property owned by BIC.**

Maulana Rashid's interest in bringing non-Bangladeshi members in the management of the centre is to give them their share [which indicates if he wins, BIC may lose the ownership of the centre forever].

The formal general meeting will not be held as usual for the special resolution. But the BIC still would like to invite members of the Bangladeshi Community to gather at that time (10:00am on 10 April 2005) at Sefton Mosque to have informal discussion and information session about what is happening.

Comments and suggestions are requested to forward to the following members:

NAME	PHONE #	EMAIL ADDRESS
Dr. RAFIQUUL ISLAM	88050555, 0404827697	<a href="mailto:Rafiqul.Islam@australgroup.com">Rafiqul.Islam@australgroup.com</a>
FIROZ AHMED	0414 980 696	<a href="mailto:fahmed@parracity.nsw.gov.au">fahmed@parracity.nsw.gov.au</a>
FAKHRUDDIN A CHOWDHURY	9938-2529, 0414-427-891	<a href="mailto:fachow@hotmail.com">fachow@hotmail.com</a>
ABUL MINTU	0409-472-700	<a href="mailto:amimtu@rakavan.com.au">amimtu@rakavan.com.au</a> <a href="mailto:mintu@shophome.com.au">mintu@shophome.com.au</a>
SHAHID AHMED	9639-7584, 0412 144376	<a href="mailto:Shahid.Ahmed@au.pirelli.com">Shahid.Ahmed@au.pirelli.com</a>
LUTFUR RAHMAN	98960066 (H), 9843-0244 (O) 0412-496-336	<a href="mailto:Lrahman@bhsc.nsw.gov.au">Lrahman@bhsc.nsw.gov.au</a>
AZHAR HUSSAIN	9618-0356	<a href="mailto:dipusydney@yahoo.com.au">dipusydney@yahoo.com.au</a>

Alternatively, please post it to:

Secretary  
Bangladesh Islamic Centre of NSW  
11-13 Helen Street  
Sefton, NSW 2162