



*Embassy of the People's Republic
of Bangladesh
Tokyo*

**Press Release
Tokyo, 21 February 2023**

Shaheed Dibash and International Mother Language Day celebrated in Tokyo.

The Embassy of Bangladesh, Tokyo celebrated the Shaheed Dibash and International Mother Language Day today (21 February 2023) with due respect, solemnity and enthusiasm. Events organized to mark the day was inaugurated in the early morning with offering of floral wreath at the altar of the temporary Shaheed Minar located at the Embassy premises. Expatriate Bangladeshis and invited Japanese friends of Bangladesh along with Embassy officials attended the program. Ambassador Shahabuddin Ahmed hoisted the national flag at half-mast along with rendition of national anthem at the Embassy premises. 01 (one) minute of silence was observed in memory of the Language Martyrs, who sacrificed their life to establish the right of our mother tongue, Bangla, in 1952. Later, the program resumed indoors with offering special prayer (munajat) for the salvation of the souls of the Language Martyrs and Martyrs of Liberation War. Prayer was also offered for the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, his family members, for the wellbeing of the expatriate Bangladeshi community and for the peace and prosperity of the country. The messages by the Hon'ble President, Hon'ble Prime Minister, Hon'ble Foreign Minister, Hon'ble State Minister for Foreign Affairs and Director-General of UNESCO issued on the occasion of "Shaheed Dibash" and the "International Mother Language Day" were read out by Embassy officials.

In his remarks, Ambassador Shahabuddin paid solemn tribute to the Language Martyrs Salam, Barkat, Rafique, Jabbar and many more unknown heroes for their supreme sacrifices for which we attained the right to use mother tongue. He paid profound respect and gratitude to the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who emerged as a leader through 1952 to 1971 and gave us an independent country where we can speak freely in Bangla. The Ambassador also remembered all his family members with deep respect, including Bangamata Fazilatunnesa Mujib, who embraced martyrdom on the fateful night of 15 August 1975. He also paid his profound respect to our four national leaders, thirty lakh martyrs and freedom fighters who sacrificed their lives and two lakh women who lost their honour and dignity during the liberation war of Bangladesh. H.E. the Ambassador said Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman played a vital role in shaping the "language movement" of 1952 as a young leader, which sowed the seed of the independence of Bangladesh. In his efforts to uphold our mother tongue Bangla, in his first appearance at the General Assembly of the United Nations, he delivered his speech in Bangla in 1974. The Ambassador discussed role of Sheikh Mujib during that time in the language movement. He mentioned that the sacrifices of the language martyrs turned into strength not only to achieve independence in 1971 but also till today as we put our efforts globally to protect, promote and preserve the right to speak in one's own language. He referred to the theme of UNESCO for the IMLD 2023 and stated that multilingual study is a need of the time.

A discussion session was then held with the participation of a significant number of Bangladesh community members and Japanese friends. The speakers paid their tribute to the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and sacrifices of the Language Martyrs, the need to uphold the spirit of Ekushey in every aspect of our lives and to take the country forward to build a "Sonar Bangla". Ambassador Masato Watanabe, President, Japan-Bangladesh Society (JBS) shared his experience in Bangladesh and expressed his commitment to strengthen the relationship between Bangladesh and Japan through cultural exchange. Professor Masaaki Ohashi, Mr. Osamu Hayakawa and other members of JBS were present. A documentary titled "Bangabandhu and the Language Movement" and a documentary titled "My Mother Tongue" outlining the history and significance of the day and cultural aspect of Bangladesh were screened.



Sheikh Farid
21/02/23
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Head of Chancery