



22 February 2020

Press Release

Artists representing 12 languages join celebration of “International Mother Language Day” at the Bangladesh High Commission in Nigeria

Bangladesh High Commission in Abuja, Nigeria observed “Martyrs’ Day” and “International Mother Language Day” in a befitting manner. A discussion cum colourful multi-lingual cultural event was organized at the auditorium at 7 pm on 21 February 2020 at the auditorium of the High Commission. At the outset of the discussion meeting, one minute silence was observed as a respect to the martyrs. A documentary on the “International Mother Language Day” was screened. At the discussion segment, while paying rich tribute to the language martyrs, Mr. Md. Shameem Ahsan, High Commissioner of Bangladesh to Nigeria said that International Mother Language Day (IMLD) has now become a day of celebration of linguistic diversity around the world. In this context, he recalled the leadership role of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as well as the language martyrs in the historic language movement. He also underlined the significance of the language movement in the evolution of the national history culminating into the independence of Bangladesh.

Mr. Yao Ydo, Regional Director and Representative of the UNESCO Regional Office, Abuja was present as a Special Guest. While discussing on the IMLD, he highlighted the sacrifices of the Bangladeshis during the language movement in 1952 and also mentioned the global significance of UNESCO’s Declaration of the day as International Mother Language Day. H.E. Mr. Abhay Thakur, High Commissioner of India warmly congratulated Bangladesh for the recognition of the day by the UNESCO following rare sacrifices made by the sons of the country. Mr. Otunba Olesgun Runsewe, Director General of National Council for Arts and Culture, Nigeria also took part in the discussion. While highlighting on the importance of the day, Mr. Runsewe touched on the potential role it can play in bringing peace and harmony among various language groups and creating better understanding.

The discussion segment was rounded off with a colorful multi-lingual cultural programme. The stellar performances by the artists from Bangladesh, China, Colombia, India (Hindi & Tamil), Indonesia, South Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Nigeria (representing African Yoruba), Sri Lanka, Ukraine, High Commission family along with Bangladesh and West Bengal community enthralled the audience and manifested a unique harmony of the nations for the protection of linguistic diversity. Nigerian Government Officials, Ambassador/High Commissioners of India, Iran, Philippines, Syria, Malaysia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Syria, Venezuela, Charge d’Affaires of Ukraine & UAE, diplomats, Honorary Consul General of Colombia, civil society members, journalists, representatives from social and cultural organizations, a large number of the expatriate members of West Bengal and Bangladesh Diaspora attended along with their families. Performance by the Indonesia Ambassador and other diplomats added colour to the event. The guests were served with traditional Bangladeshi cuisine.

Earlier, the programme of the day commenced by placing of floral wreath at the newly-built Shahid Minar (Martyrs’ Monument) at the High Commission by the High Commissioner, Officials & community members & their families. The national flag was hoisted at a half-mast in the morning of February 21, 2020 in the premises of the High Commission. Messages from the Hon’ble President, Hon’ble Prime Minister, Hon’ble Foreign Minister and Hon’ble State Minister for Foreign Affairs were read out. A documentary on the first ever Pavilion of the Foreign Ministry at the Bangla Academy Book Fair was screened. A special prayer was offered for the salvation of the departed souls of those who laid down their lives during the language movement in 1952 and War of liberation in 1971 and also seeking divine blessings for the continued peace, progress and prosperity of the country.

