



PRESIDENT  
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH  
BANGABHABAN, DHAKA

09 Falgun 1425  
21 February 2019

## Message

On the occasion of great 'Shaheed Day (Language Martyrs Day) and the International Mother Language Day' (IMLD) 2019, I extend my warm congratulations and sincere felicitations to all multilingual people of the world along with Bangla-speaking people.

The great Language Movement is a memorable happening in our national history. Today, I pay my deep homage to the language martyrs namely Salam, Barkat, Rafiq, Jabbar, Shafiur and so many unknown and unsung language heroes who laid down their lives for the cause of mother tongue Bangla. I also remember with profound respect, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who led *Sarbadolio Rashtrobhasa Sangram Parishad* (All Party State Language Action Committee), formed in 1948 and was arrested for his active role in favour of the language movement. I also remember language heroes for their bravery, farsightedness, unmatched valour, organizing capacity and taking instantaneous steps in this regard that facilitated the Language Movement to reach its ultimate culmination on February 21, 1952. Consequently, the Bangalee achieved their right to mother tongue.

The aim of the language movement was to establish the right of our mother tongue as well as to protect self-identity, culture and heritage. Being a source of ceaseless inspiration, *Amar Ekushey* (Immortal Shaheed Day) inspired and encouraged us to a great extent to achieve the right to self-determination and struggle for freedom and war of liberation. With the bloodshed passages of Language Movement, we achieved the recognition of Bangla as our mother tongue and consequently we attained our long cherished independence under the charismatic leadership of the greatest Bangalee of all time, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1971.

In fact, to embrace martyrdom for the cause of mother tongue is rare incident in the world history. February 21 has now been recognized by the UNESCO as the 'International Mother Language Day' in 1999 with the spontaneous willingness and sincere endeavour of Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina along with the primary efforts of some Bangla-loving expatriate Bangladeshis. As a nation, it is our great achievement. Today many languages and culture around the globe are becoming extinct due to lack of proper practice, preservation and patronization. Observing the International Mother Language Day, I firmly believe, will play a positive role in attaining the sustainable future through using multilingual education.

With the sincere endeavour and keenness of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the International Mother Language Institute was established in Dhaka in 2001 for the research and preservation of the flourishing and nearly extinct languages of the world. Besides, text books and teaching methods have also been introduced for the tribes, minor races, ethnic sects and communities in our country with a view to protecting and developing their own languages and culture. Giving special emphasis on indigenous language, UNESCO has declared 2019 as the International Year of Indigenous Languages with the IMLD theme "Indigenous languages matter for development, peace building and reconciliation". I believe that it is a far-reaching step towards protecting the own languages and culture of multilingual races of Indigenous people.

On the International Mother Language Day, it is my expectation that the spirit of *Amar Ekushey* would be the source of incessant inspiration for the protection of own languages and culture of people. On the occasion, let the bond of friendship among multilingual people be strengthened, world's almost defunct languages be revived and the globe be diversified in respective societies.

Khoda Hafez, May Bangladesh Live Forever.

Md. Abdul Hamid