

## **Press Release**

### **State Minister for Foreign Affairs Md. Shahriar Alam, MP Inaugurates Bangladesh Consulate General in Toronto and celebrates 49<sup>th</sup> Independence Day in presence of The Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario.**

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State Minister for Foreign Affairs Md. Shahriar Alam, MP Inaugurated the Consulate General of Bangladesh in Toronto and celebrated the 49<sup>th</sup> Independence and National Day on Tuesday (2 April 2019). The Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario graced the occasion as the Guest of Honour.



The Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario delivered speech on the event and expressed her congratulations on the opening of the Bangladesh Consulate General in Toronto, noting that Inauguration of a Consulate happens only once in a life time, therefore, she is glad to be present at the occasion. Her Honour expressed hope that the opening of the new Consulate General of Bangladesh in Toronto will work to connect the growing Bangladesh community in Ontario.

The Lieutenant Governor of Ontario recognized Bangladesh's strides in materialising the dream to be a developed country along with Bangladesh's achievement in SDGs and women empowerment. Her Honour also offered her appreciation for Bangladesh's humanitarian gesture of accommodating the Rohingya influx from Myanmar.

The event commenced with welcome speech by the Consul General of Bangladesh Mr. Nayem Uddin Ahmed followed by the Official Declaration of Inauguration of the Consulate General by the State Minister Md. Shahriar Alam, MP.

State Minister Md. Shahriar Alam, MP said that the opening of the new Consulate General was a commitment of the present government led by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to the Bangladesh diaspora living in Greater Toronto and south-western provinces of Canada. Opening of the new Consulate General symbolizes strong bilateral relations that exists between the two countries. He expressed his satisfaction for opening the Consulate General within a very short stint.



State Minister Md. Shahriar Alam said that the relations between Bangladesh and Canada is historic and time tested. He mentioned that the Prime Minister of Bangladesh is honoured to confer the 'Bangladesh Liberation War Honour' to the former Prime Minister of Canada Pierre Elliott Trudeau in 2016. He lauded the Ontario Government for declaring the month of March as 'Bangladesh Heritage Month' in Ontario.



State Minister Md. Shahriar Alam said that Bangladesh is becoming one of the major sources of students and skilled migrants to Canada. He hopes that the new Consulate General will play a key role to connect the Bangladesh diaspora especially the new generation to their root.

High Commissioner of Bangladesh to Canada Mizanur Rahman also spoke on the occasion. The formal segment ended with toasts between the Honourable Lieutenant Governor and State Minister for Foreign Affairs wishing everlasting friendship between Bangladesh and Canada.



The event also displayed a documentary on the development of Bangladesh, cultural programme and cut the Independence Day cake. Members of the Ontario Legislative Assembly, huge number of Diplomats, Intellectuals, high officials of the Ontario government, top executives from the private sector, businessmen, eminent persons from Bangladesh community and students attended the event.



Prior to the inaugural ceremony The Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell and the State Minister Md. Shahriar Alam, MP had a separate meeting where they discussed on the long-standing friendship between the two countries, Rohingya influx, socio-economic development in Bangladesh and other issues of mutual interests.



Canada is a constitutional Monarchy with The Queen as the sovereign and Head of State, Lieutenant Governor is Queen's representative while Premier is the Head of Government in the province. The presence of the Lieutenant Governor, the highest dignitary of Ontario in the Inaugural ceremony of the Bangladesh Consulate General and Independence Day celebration is a rare most pride for a Consulate in Toronto.

Earlier on the day State Minister Md. Shahriar Alam unveiled the inaugural plaque at the Bangladesh Consulate General office located in Sheppard Avenue East, Toronto.