

PRESS RELEASE

Australian Forum for Minorities in Bangladesh observed World Human Rights Day on 13 December 2009 at Polish Club by organising a seminar on the Human Rights situation in Bangladesh. The event was followed by celebrating the 39th Victory day of Bangladesh. Dr Ashit Maitra delivered the keynote



speech on this occasion. He highlighted the importance of upholding the values of Universal Declaration of Human Rights in establishing true democracy in a country. He also focussed on how an individual can play a significant role in the society in implementing the values of the

Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Councilor Prabir Maitra described the importance of restoring the 1972 Constitution to establish the rights for every citizen of Bangladesh since Secularism was one of the main pillars of that constitution. He said that Bangladesh is a signatory of relevant international Covenants and Conventions but there is no implementation of such conventions in practice. Ms Kabita Chakma of CHT Jumma Peoples Network of the Asia Pacific described how the state machinery was used for transmigration in the same country to reduce the indigenous people to mere minority. She said that proper implementation of the CHT Peace Treaty will help to establish the rights of the indigenous people in that region. Messrs Nirjhar Dutta and Lakshmikanta Gupta also spoke on this occasion. They emphasised on more proactive stands for the protection of rights of the minorities in Bangladesh, and expressed their solidarity with Forum's activities towards eradicating the scourge of repression and atrocities against



the minorities in Bangladesh. Dr Samir Sarkar, President of the Forum, presided over the event and described how the legal system and constitutional loopholes are used to persecute the minorities. Assistant General Secretary Mr Nitish Barua conducted the function. The Forum paid respect to each and every human rights defender who played important role in protecting the rights of the minorities in Bangladesh.

Forum also celebrated 39th Victory Day of Bangladesh by holding a discussion and a cultural program. Mr Ranjit Das conducted and Dr Ashit Maitra presided over the discussion. The discussion was followed by a cultural function. Messrs Jyoti Biswas and Ranjit Das performed patriotic songs on this occasion.