

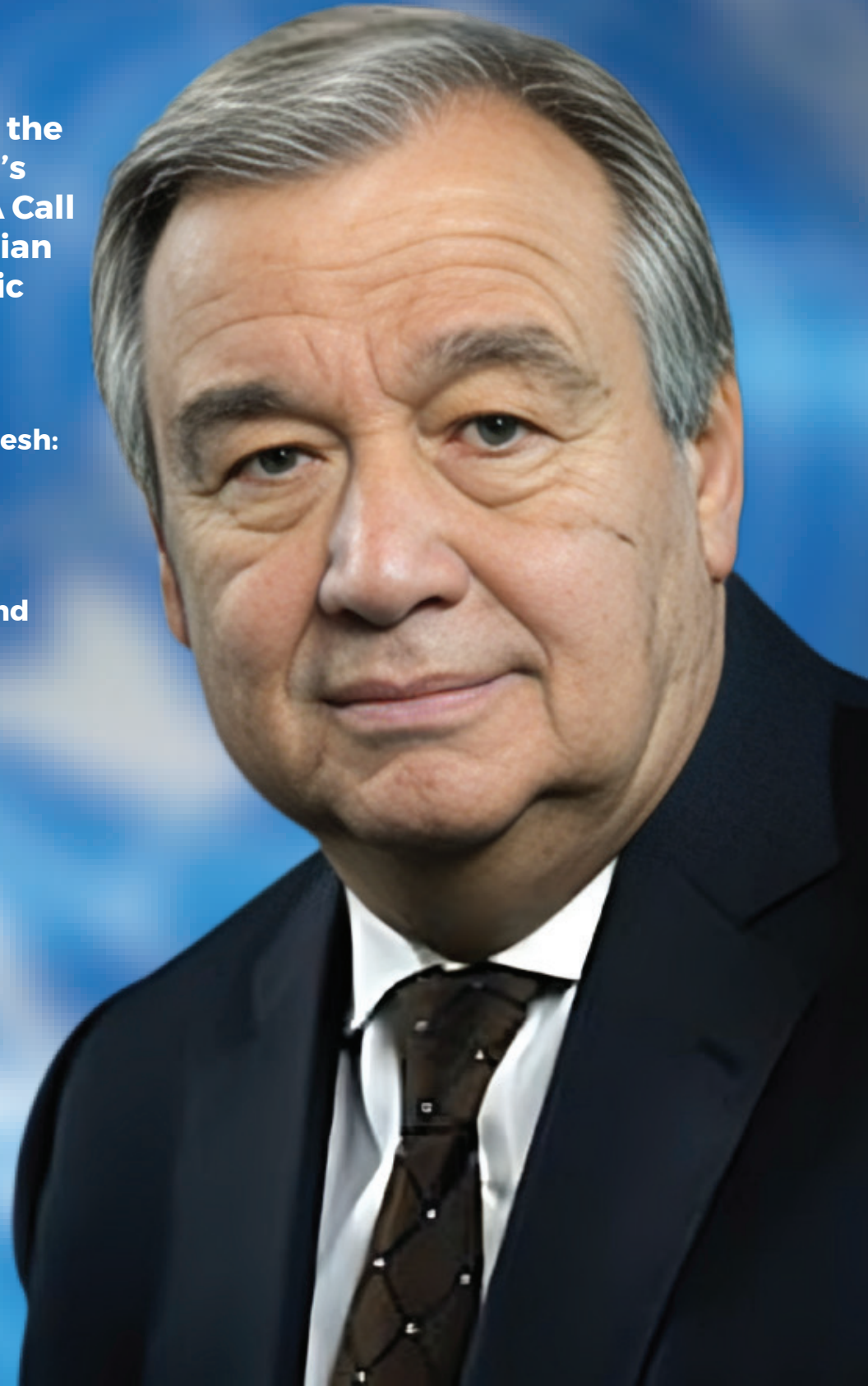
The AMBASSADOR

April 2025

**Diplomatic Report on the
UN Secretary-General's
Visit to Bangladesh: A Call
for Urgent Humanitarian
Action and Democratic
Transition**

**Post-Revolution Bangladesh:
Challenges Ahead**

**Rohingya Repatriation and
Current Realities**



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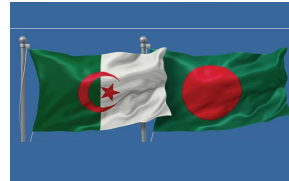
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Express Bulletin

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Mahbub Saber



DIPLOMATIC REPORT ON THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL'S VISIT TO BANGLADESH: A CALL FOR URGENT HUMANITARIAN ACTION AND DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION

MD. Nazmul Hassan

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres embarked on a four-day visit to Bangladesh, marking his second official trip to the country. His visit was primarily aimed at assessing the humanitarian situation of over one million Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar, addressing the severe funding shortfall affecting relief efforts, and reaffirming support for Bangladesh's ongoing democratic

transition. Guterres' engagement with the country's interim government, led by Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus, signified a pivotal moment for Bangladesh's governance and its role in the global humanitarian landscape.

1. Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis: An Urgent Call for Global Action

During his visit to the Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar,

Secretary-General Guterres issued a dire warning regarding the impending humanitarian disaster due to severe aid cuts. Following the shutdown of USAID operations and potential reductions in World Food Program (WFP) funding, the UN chief emphasized that immediate international action is needed to prevent further deterioration of living conditions in the refugee camps.



international donors to bridge the \$81 million funding gap required to sustain operations through the end of the year. He highlighted that the Rohingya crisis is not just Bangladesh's responsibility but a global humanitarian concern.

“We are on the verge of a deep humanitarian crisis. People will suffer. People will die. The international community has a moral duty to act.” – António Guterres

2. Diplomatic Engagement and Bangladesh's Democratic Transition

The UN chief's visit coincided with Bangladesh's ongoing political transition under the interim government. In meetings with Chief Adviser Prof. Muhammad Yunus and Foreign Affairs Adviser Touhid Hossain, Guterres expressed support for the country's democratic aspirations and governance reforms.

Key Diplomatic Engagements: Dialogue on Democratic Reforms: Guterres participated

Key Observations in Cox's Bazar:

Food Insecurity: The WFP estimates that without additional funding, food rations for Rohingya refugees may be reduced to \$6 per month, down from the current \$12.50, exacerbating malnutrition and health risks.

Strain on Host Communities:

The Bangladeshi government and local communities have demonstrated exceptional generosity in hosting Rohingya refugees. However, the

increasing financial burden is creating economic and social challenges.

Security and Migration Risks:

The funding shortfall could lead to increased crime, violence, and irregular migration, as desperate refugees seek alternative means of survival.

Global Appeal for Humanitarian Assistance:

Guterres underscored the need for urgent financial commitments, calling on





inclusive, and prosperous future.” – António Guterres

3. The Rohingya Repatriation Challenge and Myanmar’s Role

While addressing the Rohingya crisis, Guterres reiterated that the ultimate solution lies in the safe, voluntary, and dignified repatriation of refugees to Myanmar. However, ongoing conflicts in Myanmar’s Rakhine State, particularly the rise of the Arakan Army and the military junta’s continued aggression, have made repatriation prospects uncertain.

in a roundtable discussion with political leaders, civil society representatives, and governance experts. The dialogue aimed at fostering national reconciliation and strengthening democratic institutions.

Commitment to National Stability: The UN pledged technical and diplomatic support for Bangladesh’s governance reforms, ensuring inclusivity and stability during the transition period.

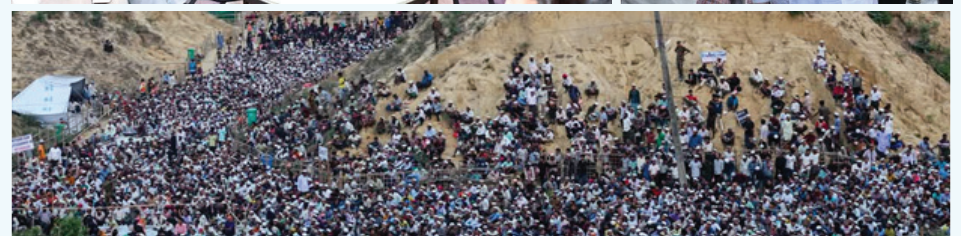
Support for Economic Resilience: The Secretary-General commended Bangladesh’s economic progress and assured UN support for sustainable development initiatives, particularly in the wake of global funding uncertainties.

“This is a pivotal moment for Bangladesh. The international community must support its journey toward a just,

UN’s Position on Repatriation:

The Secretary-General urged Myanmar’s leadership to uphold international human rights standards and create a safe environment for Rohingya returnees.

He emphasized the need for a political resolution in Myanmar, which would ensure the protection of Rohingya rights and prevent further displacement.





Guterres confirmed that the UN is facilitating a High-Level Conference to address the plight of Rohingya refugees and coordinate international efforts.

“The Rohingya people want to go home. But they can only return when it is safe, voluntary, and dignified.” – António Guterres

4. Strengthening Bangladesh-UN Relations and Future Cooperation

As part of his visit, Guterres

inaugurated the ‘UN House in Bangladesh,’ symbolizing the deepening collaboration between the UN and Bangladesh in humanitarian, development, and governance initiatives. He also met with youth leaders and civil society representatives, reaffirming the UN’s commitment to empowering Bangladesh’s next generation in democratic and social progress.

Conclusion: A Call to Action
Guterres’ visit to Bangladesh

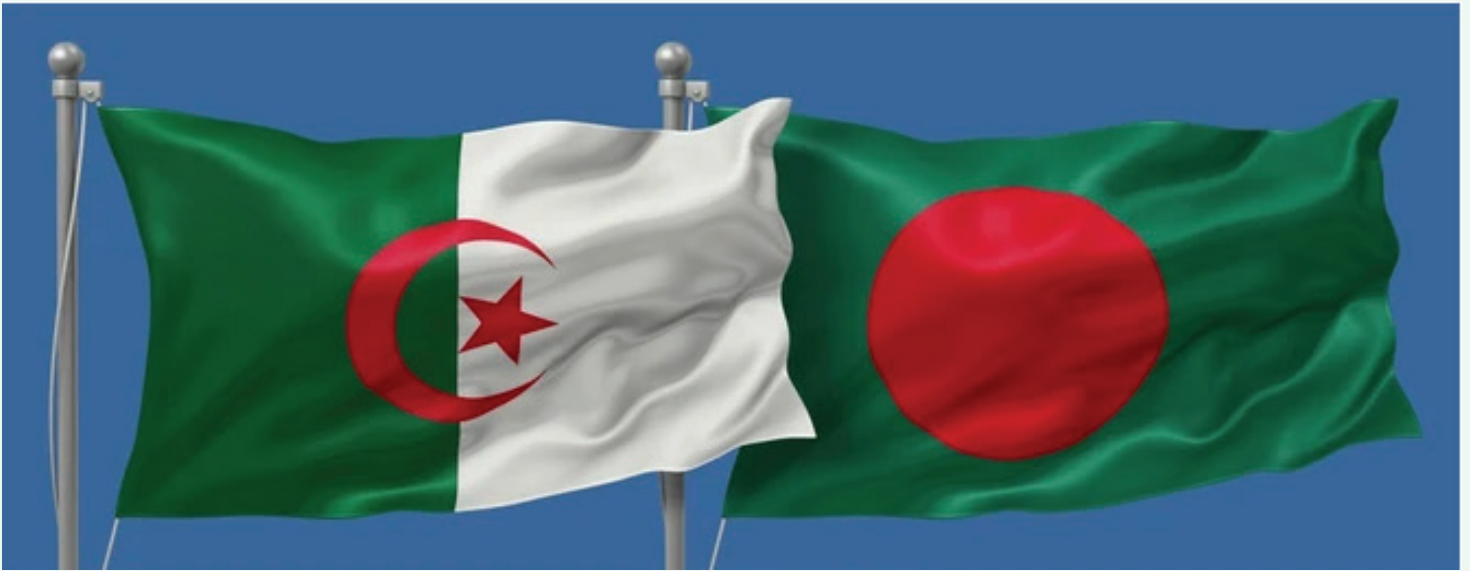
underscored the urgency of global intervention to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe among Rohingya refugees. He lauded Bangladesh’s commitment to hosting the displaced population but warned that the country cannot bear this responsibility alone.

The Secretary-General made an unequivocal appeal to world leaders, donors, and humanitarian organizations to increase funding, support Bangladesh’s transition, and work toward a sustainable solution for the Rohingya crisis. As Bangladesh navigates a critical period in its governance, the UN remains a steadfast partner in ensuring peace, stability, and humanitarian justice.

“The world must not forget the Rohingya people. They deserve dignity, security, and a future.” – António Guterres

MD. Nazmul Hassan
Director

International Institute of Global Studies (IIGS)



ALGERIA-BANGLADESH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS: A COMPREHENSIVE AND ENLARGED ANALYSIS

H.E. Abdelouahab Saidani

The diplomatic relationship between Algeria and Bangladesh, established on September 18, 1973, is a testament to the enduring bonds of solidarity, mutual respect, and shared aspirations that unite the two nations. Over the past five decades, this relationship has evolved into a multifaceted partnership, encompassing political, economic, cultural, and technical dimensions. However, the full potential of this relationship remains untapped. As the Ambassador of Algeria to Bangladesh, I aim to provide a comprehensive and enlarged analysis of the historical foundations, current

state, and future prospects of Algeria-Bangladesh relations, highlighting the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

Historical Foundations: A Shared Legacy of Struggle and Solidarity

The diplomatic ties between

Algeria and Bangladesh are deeply rooted in their shared historical experiences of struggle, resilience, and the pursuit of self-determination. Both nations emerged from protracted wars of independence—Algeria in 1962 after a brutal eight-year war against French colonial rule, and Bangladesh in 1971 following a nine-month liberation war against Pakistan. These struggles were not merely fights for territorial sovereignty but also battles for the preservation of cultural identity, linguistic heritage, and the right to self-determination.

Algeria was among the first countries to



Abdelouahab Saidani, the Ambassador of Algeria, with the Chief Advisor of the Interim Government of Bangladesh, Professor Yunus, at the State Guest House Jamuna in Dhaka



President of the Republic Abdelmadjid TEBBOUNE

recognize Bangladesh's independence, and this early support laid the groundwork for a relationship built on mutual respect and shared values. Both countries have consistently advocated for the rights of oppressed peoples, championed decolonization, and played active roles in multilateral forums such as the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Their alignment on global issues, including the Palestinian cause, climate justice, and the reform of international institutions, has further strengthened their diplomatic ties.

The historical parallels between Algeria and Bangladesh extend beyond their struggles for independence. Both nations have faced the challenges of post-independence nation-building, including economic development, social cohesion, and political stability. These shared experiences have fostered a profound sense of solidarity and mutual understanding, which continues

to underpin their bilateral relations.

Current State of Bilateral Relations: Achievements and Challenges

Political and Diplomatic Cooperation

Algeria and Bangladesh have maintained a strong political dialogue over the years, characterized by high-level

visits, diplomatic consultations, and mutual support in international forums. Both countries have consistently supported each other's candidacies for various UN bodies and other international organizations. For instance, Algeria has supported Bangladesh's initiatives on climate change and migration, while Bangladesh has backed Algeria's efforts in promoting peace and security in Africa.

However, despite the strong political rapport, there is a need to institutionalize this cooperation further. Regular high-level visits, the establishment of joint commissions, and the signing of new agreements could provide a structured framework for deepening political engagement. Additionally, both countries should explore the possibility of establishing strategic partnerships in areas of mutual interest, such as



Minister of Foreign Affairs and National Community Abroad Ahmed ATTAFF

climate change, counterterrorism, and sustainable development.

Economic and Trade Relations

Economic cooperation between Algeria and Bangladesh remains underdeveloped, with bilateral trade volumes far below their potential. Algeria's primary exports to Bangladesh include petroleum products and fertilizers, while Bangladesh exports ready-made garments, pharmaceuticals, and jute products to Algeria. The trade imbalance, skewed in favor of Algeria, highlights the need for diversification and increased Bangladeshi exports to Algeria.

Several factors contribute to the limited trade volume, including a lack of direct shipping routes, limited awareness of each other's markets, and bureaucratic hurdles. To address these challenges, both countries should consider the following measures:

Establishing Direct Air and Maritime Links: Direct air and maritime links would reduce transportation costs and facilitate trade. This could be achieved through bilateral agreements between the national airlines and

shipping companies of both countries.

Organizing Trade Fairs and Business Delegations: Trade fairs and business delegations could promote bilateral trade and investment by showcasing the products and services of each country to potential buyers and investors.

Signing Preferential Trade Agreements: Preferential trade agreements could reduce tariffs and non-tariff barriers, making it easier for businesses to access each other's markets.

Technical and Development Cooperation

Algeria and Bangladesh have collaborated in various technical fields, including education, healthcare, and agriculture. Algerian students have pursued higher education in Bangladesh, particularly in medicine and engineering, while Bangladeshi professionals have contributed to Algeria's development in sectors such as IT and healthcare. However, these collaborations remain limited in scope and scale.

There is significant potential for expanding technical

cooperation, particularly in areas such as renewable energy, water resource management, and food security. Algeria's expertise in hydrocarbon exploration and renewable energy could benefit Bangladesh, while Bangladesh's advancements in microfinance, disaster management, and agricultural innovation could offer valuable lessons for Algeria. Joint research initiatives, knowledge-sharing programs, and capacity-building workshops could further enhance technical cooperation between the two countries.

Cultural and People-to-People Ties

Cultural exchanges between Algeria and Bangladesh have been sporadic, with limited awareness of each other's rich cultural heritage. While both countries have vibrant traditions of music, literature, and art, there has been little effort to promote cultural diplomacy. Initiatives such as cultural festivals, art exhibitions, and film screenings could help bridge this gap and foster greater mutual understanding.

People-to-people ties could also be strengthened through tourism



Jijel, a hidden gem located in the beautiful country of Algeria

and educational exchanges. Simplifying visa procedures and promoting Algeria as a tourist destination for Bangladeshis, and vice versa, could enhance cultural connectivity and economic benefits.

Additionally, establishing cultural centers in each other's capitals could serve as hubs for cultural diplomacy, promoting the exchange of ideas, art, and traditions.



Roman ruins, territories, and monuments of the ancient Cuicul in Djemila, located in the province of Sétif in Algeria

Future Prospects: A Roadmap for Enhanced Cooperation

The future of Algeria-Bangladesh relations is brimming with potential. By leveraging their complementary strengths and addressing existing challenges, both countries can elevate their partnership to new heights. Below is a comprehensive roadmap for enhancing bilateral cooperation across key areas:

1. Economic Partnership and Trade Diversification

Trade and Investment: Both countries should prioritize the expansion of trade and

investment ties. Establishing joint ventures in sectors such as textiles, pharmaceuticals, and renewable energy could create win-win opportunities. Algeria's strategic location as a gateway to Africa and Europe could facilitate Bangladeshi exports to these regions.

Energy Cooperation: Algeria, as a leading producer of oil and natural gas, could collaborate

with Bangladesh in energy exploration and development. Additionally, both countries could partner in renewable energy projects, particularly solar and wind energy, to address their growing energy needs and combat climate change.

Agricultural Collaboration: Bangladesh's expertise in agricultural innovation and food security could benefit Algeria, particularly in areas such as crop diversification, irrigation, and pest control. Joint research initiatives and

knowledge-sharing programs could enhance agricultural productivity in both countries.

2. Defense and Security Cooperation

Peacekeeping and

Counterterrorism: Both Algeria and Bangladesh have a strong track record of contributing to UN peacekeeping missions. Sharing expertise in peacekeeping, disaster response, and counterterrorism could strengthen their roles as global peacekeepers.

Defense Training and

Technology: Algeria's advanced defense capabilities could be leveraged to provide training and technology transfer to Bangladesh, particularly in areas such as border security and maritime defense.

3. Climate Change and Sustainable Development

Climate Resilience: As climate-vulnerable nations, Algeria and Bangladesh share a common interest in addressing the challenges of climate change. Collaborative efforts in renewable energy, disaster management, and sustainable agriculture could contribute to global climate resilience.

Environmental Protection: Joint initiatives in environmental protection, such as afforestation, waste management, and water conservation, could help both countries achieve their sustainable development goals.

4. Cultural and Educational Exchanges

Cultural Diplomacy: Promoting cultural exchanges through art,



The Martyrs' Memorial a concrete monument commemorating the Algerian War

music, film, and literature could enhance mutual understanding and appreciation of each other's rich heritage. Establishing cultural centers in each other's capitals could serve as hubs for cultural diplomacy.

Educational Collaboration:

Strengthening academic partnerships, joint research initiatives, and student exchange programs could foster greater people-to-people ties and contribute to human resource development in both countries.

5. Multilateral Collaboration

Global Advocacy: Algeria and Bangladesh should continue to support each other in international forums, advocating for a more equitable global order and addressing issues such as poverty, inequality, and conflict resolution.

South-South Cooperation: Both countries should actively promote South-South cooperation, leveraging their shared experiences and expertise to support other developing nations.

Conclusion: A Partnership for the Future

The diplomatic relations between Algeria and Bangladesh are built on a solid foundation of shared history, mutual respect, and common aspirations. While significant progress has been made, there is still much to be achieved. By addressing existing challenges and leveraging their complementary strengths, both countries can unlock the full potential of their bilateral relationship.

As Ambassador of Algeria to Bangladesh, I am committed to working tirelessly to strengthen the bonds of friendship and cooperation between our two nations. Together, Algeria and Bangladesh can pave the way for a brighter, more prosperous future, not only for our peoples but also for the broader global community. Let us seize the opportunities before us and continue to build a partnership that stands the test of time. Through sustained efforts and a shared vision, Algeria and Bangladesh can emerge as exemplars of South-South cooperation, contributing to peace, development, and prosperity on a global scale.

H.E. Abdelouahab Saidani
Ambassador
Algeria to Bangladesh



POST-REVOLUTION BANGLADESH: CHALLENGES AHEAD

Colonel (Rtd.) Dr. Arifur Rahman

The student-led revolution of August 5, 2024, stands as a defining moment in the political history of Bangladesh. It was a unique case of success in contemporary world history, where the collective voice of the people, spearheaded by students, led to the ousting of an autocratic government. However, while the revolution marked the beginning of a new chapter, it also introduced a host of challenges that the newly formed administration must now navigate.

The New Government: A Paradox of Democracy

The formation of a new government, albeit undemocratic in structure, reflects the will of the people. Unlike traditional democratic



A Government Grappling with Unintended Responsibilities

Despite its core mission being electoral reform, the government finds itself burdened with an array of administrative and policy challenges. Issues such as salary adjustments, job qualifications, and transport regulations (e.g., allowing or banning easy-bikes) were never meant to be part of its mandate. Yet, they have become unavoidable distractions, pulling the administration away from its principal objective.

transitions, where electoral processes determine leadership, this government emerged from a popular uprising. While it lacks conventional legitimacy, its foundation rests on public support, which in essence, embodies the core principle of democracy: the representation of

the people's choice. The primary objective of this administration is to implement necessary reforms that will pave the way for a free, fair, and inclusive election. Until that goal is achieved, it must maintain a functioning governance structure.

Additionally, the government faces an orchestrated resistance campaign by the ousted political party, which has mobilized social media to spread disinformation. The movement is further reinforced by the Indian media, which remains hostile to the new leadership. This dual-fronted challenge—domestic unrest and



external propaganda—adds complexity to the government's struggle for stability.

Strikes, Protests, and Government Paralysis

Since its inception, the government has encountered over 130 strikes and protests, each with different demands, creating an atmosphere of unrest. Simultaneously, key government institutions are in disarray. Many ministry officials remain inactive or non-cooperative, creating an administrative vacuum. The police force, which suffered heavy casualties and psychological trauma under the previous regime, has yet to recover fully, leading to a surge in lawlessness and mob violence. To outside observers, this chaotic landscape may paint a bleak picture of Bangladesh's future.

Signs of Progress Amidst Uncertainty

Despite the disorder, positive indicators suggest that Bangladesh is gradually stabilizing. Monthly remittances are rising, the export sector is showing resilience, and foreign currency reserves are improving. Law and order, though fragile, are being restored at a measured

pace. Daily life is slowly resuming its normal rhythm, demonstrating the people's determination to move forward. Unlike other nations that have suffered from prolonged instability after a revolution, Bangladesh has managed to avoid a descent into absolute chaos.

The Stabilizing Role of the Bangladesh Armed Forces

A key factor preventing the country from spiraling into anarchy has been the intervention of the Bangladesh Armed Forces. At a crucial juncture, the military took responsibility for stabilizing the nation. The decision by the Army Chief on August 3, 2024, to issue a "Not to Shoot" order to his officers was an extraordinary moment in military history. This command, defying the Prime Minister's unlawful orders, prevented bloodshed and upheld the people's mandate. It was a rare display of democratic consciousness within a military institution.

Had the revolution failed, the Army Chief and his officers would have faced dire

consequences, including court-martial and execution. However, by choosing to side with the people, the military leadership secured its place in history as a force that prioritizes national stability over blind obedience.

Purging the System: Cleaning the Rot from Within

The armed forces are undergoing an internal cleansing process, systematically removing officers who were complicit in the previous government's misdeeds. However, unlike many institutions that collapse under the weight of internal purges, the Bangladesh Armed Forces have demonstrated resilience. Its professional structure ensures that individual actors do not determine its integrity. The removal of a few corrupt elements will not disrupt the institution's functionality; rather, it will reinforce its commitment to national service.

The Road Ahead: Balancing Stability and Transition

As Bangladesh transitions towards a democratic election, several challenges must be addressed. The government





must remain focused on its primary objective—establishing a framework for free and fair elections—without getting entangled in bureaucratic distractions. Simultaneously, it must work towards rebuilding public trust in government institutions, restoring law and order, and neutralizing disinformation campaigns. The military, having played a

pivotal role in stabilizing the country, must ensure a smooth transfer of power while upholding democratic principles. The international community, too, must recognize the unique circumstances of this transition and provide the necessary diplomatic and economic support to facilitate Bangladesh's journey toward sustainable democracy.

In the end, Bangladesh stands at a critical crossroads. The revolution has given birth to a new hope, but the path forward remains fraught with challenges. With resilience, reform, and strategic governance, the nation has the potential to emerge stronger than ever before.

Colonel (Rtd.) Dr. Arifur Rahman
Soudi National Guard



STRENGTHENING ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE: FRANCE AND BANGLADESH UNITE TO COMBAT LEAD CONTAMINATION

H.E. Mrs. Marie MASDUPUY

The launch of the Capacity Building for the Reduction of Lead Contamination in Bangladesh project marked a significant milestone in the ongoing collaboration between France and Bangladesh. This initiative underscores the deep-rooted partnership between the two nations, founded on shared values, mutual respect, and a commitment to a sustainable future. The event brought

together government officials, environmental experts, international partners, and key stakeholders, all united in their mission to tackle one of the most pressing environmental and public health crises in Bangladesh.

A Strong Commitment to Environmental Resilience

Environmental resilience is a central pillar of France's global development strategy.

As a nation committed to combating climate change and promoting sustainable development, France has continuously supported Bangladesh in its efforts to address environmental challenges. Over the years, this collaboration has extended across multiple sectors, including climate change adaptation, renewable energy, sustainable urban development, and pollution control.



France strongly believes in the principles of green growth and circular economy, which emphasize reducing environmental impact through innovation, responsible governance, and international cooperation. This approach has been a driving force behind many successful projects worldwide, and Bangladesh stands as a key partner in implementing sustainable environmental solutions.

The French Facility for Global Environment (FFEM) has long been at the forefront of supporting innovative projects

aimed at tackling major environmental issues. The FFEM's latest project in Bangladesh is a direct response to the severe threats posed by lead contamination, a critical yet often overlooked environmental crisis.

The Urgency to Address Lead Pollution

Lead contamination has emerged as a silent but deadly environmental hazard, particularly affecting communities involved in informal and poorly regulated industries such as lead-acid battery recycling. These

activities contribute significantly to environmental degradation and pose severe health risks, especially to vulnerable groups like children and pregnant women.

Scientific research has consistently shown that lead poisoning can cause lifelong developmental and neurological damage, particularly in children. The toxic effects of lead exposure impair cognitive functions, leading to a reduction in IQ levels and overall productivity. Pregnant women exposed to high levels of lead face increased risks of complications, including miscarriage and premature births.

According to global studies, the cost of inaction on lead contamination in Bangladesh is alarming. The economic toll of lead pollution in the country amounts to a staggering \$28 billion annually. This includes:

- The loss of 20 million IQ points among children each year.
- 140,000 adult deaths annually due to cardiac diseases linked to lead poisoning.
- Severe pregnancy complications, increasing health risks for expectant mothers and their babies.
- A total economic impact of \$28,633 million, equivalent to 6 to 9% of Bangladesh's GDP, due to the loss of health, productivity, and workforce potential.

These statistics highlight the urgency of immediate intervention. Without proactive measures, lead contamination will continue to undermine Bangladesh's economic growth,



Lead Contamination Impact – An image showing polluted industrial areas, lead battery recycling sites, or contaminated water sources in Bangladesh



human capital, and overall development potential.

Implementing Sustainable Solutions

The FFEM Project in Bangladesh, implemented by Pure Earth, is designed to directly tackle the challenges posed by lead pollution. The initiative aims to strengthen institutional capacity, enhance governance frameworks, and introduce effective solutions to reduce lead exposure across the country. By leveraging scientific research, public awareness campaigns, and regulatory improvements, the project seeks to create long-lasting environmental and

public health benefits.

Key objectives of the FFEM Project include:

- Enhancing institutional capacity: Providing training and resources to government agencies, industries, and local authorities to strengthen lead contamination regulations.
- Improving governance and policy enforcement: Establishing stricter environmental laws and ensuring their effective implementation.
- Developing sustainable solutions: Promoting cleaner alternatives and safer waste management practices to



minimize lead pollution.

- Raising public awareness: Educating communities about the dangers of lead exposure and empowering them to take preventive measures.

Bangladesh has made significant progress in environmental protection, climate adaptation, and pollution control. This project is another step forward in ensuring the health and well-being of communities most affected by toxic contamination.

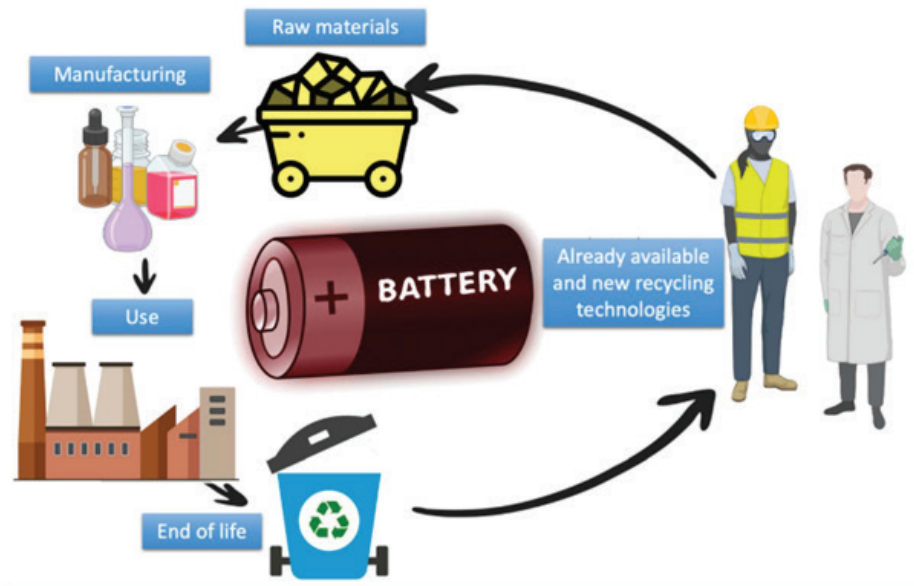
France is honored to be a committed partner in this journey, working alongside the Government of Bangladesh, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, and Pure Earth to drive sustainable solutions and build a cleaner future.

France's Broader Commitment to Environmental Protection

France's commitment to environmental sustainability in Bangladesh extends beyond lead contamination. Through the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), France actively supports multiple initiatives that align with Bangladesh's long-term vision for sustainable urban and industrial development.

One of the most notable projects is the BEST Project, co-financed with the World Bank. This initiative aims to:

- Operationalize a Green Credit Guarantee Scheme, providing financial incentives for industries to invest in cleaner technologies.
- Encourage industrial pollution control measures, reducing



private enterprises, civil society, and international partners. By joining forces, we can develop and implement solutions that protect public health, preserve natural resources, and ensure economic sustainability.

The Road Ahead: A Cleaner, Healthier, and More Resilient Bangladesh

Today, France and Bangladesh reaffirm their shared mission for a cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable future. By combining economic growth with environmental responsibility, Bangladesh is paving the way for a new era of sustainable development.

Together, we have the ability to eliminate lead pollution, safeguard future generations, and build a nation where progress and sustainability go hand in hand. Through continued collaboration, investment in innovation, and unwavering commitment to environmental protection, we can create a brighter, healthier, and more prosperous Bangladesh.

By working together, we can turn this vision into reality.

H.E. Mrs. Marie MASDUPUY
 Ambassador
 France to Bangladesh

emissions and environmental degradation.

- Support businesses in transitioning to sustainable production methods, minimizing their ecological footprint.

These efforts reflect France’s unwavering support for Bangladesh’s transition towards an environmentally responsible and economically resilient future. The combination of policy interventions, technological innovations, and international collaboration ensures that Bangladesh can continue to grow while maintaining its commitment to sustainability.

A Call for Collective Action

The success of the Capacity

Building for the Reduction of Lead Contamination in Bangladesh project highlights the power of partnership and collaboration in addressing environmental challenges. France extends its sincere appreciation to the Government of Bangladesh, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Pure Earth, and all stakeholders who have played a crucial role in bringing this initiative to fruition.

Environmental challenges, particularly lead contamination, require collective action and sustained commitment from all sectors—government agencies,



ROHINGYA REPATRIATION AND CURRENT REALITIES

Lion Moshiur Ahmed

The Rohingya community is among the most persecuted in the world. The systematic, brutal, and inhumane treatment of the Rohingya by Myanmar's military and government has reached unprecedented levels of cruelty. Historical patterns show that Myanmar has forced the Rohingya to flee to Bangladesh multiple times, but the recent violence has pushed the situation into a dire crisis. Despite the demographic and socio-economic vulnerabilities that suggest otherwise,

Bangladesh is currently hosting over 2 million Rohingya refugees. This has introduced significant social, environmental, legal, and economic challenges for the country.

The Bangladesh government has demonstrated a humanitarian response by providing shelter, food, healthcare, and essential services to the displaced Rohingya, including special support for women subjected to violence. This exemplary act of

compassion has been praised by UN Secretary-General António Guterres as a model for world leaders. However, the burden on Bangladesh—a densely populated nation with limited resources—is immense. The necessity of repatriation becomes increasingly urgent when considering housing, food, medical supplies, social security, future workforce management, and environmental impacts.

Recent incidents along the Bangladesh-Myanmar border,



goal is the erasure of the Rohingya from Burmese society through ethnic cleansing. Gaining control over lands, farming areas, economic zones, and ports is an added benefit.

China

China's interests are deeply rooted in its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which involves significant investments in Myanmar's infrastructure, including ports and energy pipelines. This strategic focus drives China's indifference toward the Rohingya crisis. By maintaining close ties with Myanmar's military, China has vetoed anti-junta resolutions at the UN and continues to prioritize its geopolitical and economic agenda over human rights concerns.

United States

The U.S., aiming to counter

such as internal conflicts, gunfire, stray artillery shells, and repeated airspace violations, have compounded the crisis. The intertwining of Rohingya repatriation with the activities of the Arakan Army and potential new waves of refugees further complicates the matter. These

issues have both geopolitical and military dimensions.

Key Stakeholders and Their Interests

Myanmar Junta

By denying the Rohingya citizenship, the junta aims for their permanent expulsion. Their



UN Secretary General António Guterres at a classroom in Rohingya camp in Ukhiya, Cox's Bazar, as part of his visit to Bangladesh on Friday, 14 March, 2025



Systematic persecution—The Myanmar junta denies the Rohingya citizenship, fueling the ongoing crisis

China's influence in the Asia-Pacific, has been vocal about Rohingya repatriation. As the primary donor for refugee camp management, contributing nearly a billion dollars, the U.S. also advocates for accountability within Myanmar. However, its broader strategic focus—including the potential for a strategic presence in the Bay of Bengal—shapes its involvement in the crisis.

Japan

Japan's economic engagement

with Myanmar positions it as a key player. While Japan advocates for a political resolution to Myanmar's crisis, its minimal involvement in Rohingya repatriation reflects a cautious approach. Enhanced Japanese participation, informed by its economic leverage, could prove pivotal.

ASEAN

ASEAN's principle of non-interference hampers its collective response to the

Rohingya crisis. Despite this, the regional bloc remains crucial. Collaborative mechanisms within ASEAN, alongside frameworks such as BIMSTEC or SAARC, could foster diplomatic pressure on Myanmar. ASEAN's role could be expanded to include joint initiatives for humanitarian aid and repatriation.

India

As a regional power, India's interests span strategic, humanitarian, and security dimensions. Balancing relations with Myanmar while addressing cross-border security and humanitarian concerns remains a challenge. Greater collaboration with ASEAN and Bangladesh, along with utilizing





frameworks like BIMSTEC, could enable India to play a more effective role.

Opportunities for Regional Collaboration

While ASEAN and India are mentioned, broader regional collaboration through frameworks like BIMSTEC or SAARC has not been fully explored. These platforms could facilitate coordinated diplomatic pressure, joint humanitarian aid initiatives, and comprehensive plans for repatriation. Leveraging such mechanisms would enhance collective regional accountability and engagement.

International Legal Frameworks and Accountability

The article could benefit from

integrating international legal dimensions, such as the Genocide Convention and ongoing cases at the International Court of Justice (ICJ). Exploring the efficacy of international sanctions and the role of the UN in enforcing human rights would provide a robust foundation for accountability. These frameworks offer potential avenues for justice and enforcement against Myanmar's military junta.

Expanding the Conclusion: Multidimensional Solutions

While repatriation is critical, a multidimensional approach is necessary for sustainable solutions. Alternative strategies, such as

third-country resettlement, economic development programs for refugees, and enhanced support for host communities, must be considered. Strengthened collaboration between Bangladesh, regional actors, and international organizations is vital for addressing the crisis comprehensively. By synthesizing key arguments and proposing actionable steps, the conclusion underscores the need for innovation, cooperation, and sustained advocacy.

Conclusion

In summary, comprehensive diplomacy involving regional and international players is essential for addressing the Rohingya crisis. Strategic alliances, continuous advocacy, and multilateral cooperation are key to ensuring justice and sustainable repatriation. By integrating regional frameworks, leveraging international legal mechanisms, and adopting a multidimensional approach, the international community can foster long-term stability and improved well-being for the Rohingya population.

Lion Moshiur Ahmed
Advisor
The Ambassador

Express Bulletin

Gambian Foreign Minister Dr. Mamadou Tangara Visits Bangladesh to Strengthen Bilateral Ties and Enhance Diplomatic Cooperation



Dhaka, March 13, 2025 – The Gambian Foreign Minister, H.E. Dr. Mamadou Tangara, has embarked on a three-day official visit to Bangladesh, arriving in Dhaka on March 12, 2025. He was warmly received by H.E. Dr. Md. Nazrul Islam, Secretary (East) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

On the first day of his visit, Minister Tangara held a meeting with H.E. Mr. Md. Touhid Hossain, Hon'ble Foreign Adviser of Bangladesh, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Discussions focused on strengthening bilateral relations, expanding trade in key sectors such as agriculture, textiles, and pharmaceuticals, and deepening diplomatic engagement between the two nations. Both leaders emphasized their commitment to enhancing diplomatic cooperation and exploring new avenues for mutual benefit.



During the meeting, the Foreign Adviser praised The Gambia's initiative in filing the case against Myanmar at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to ensure justice for the persecuted Rohingya Muslims. The two sides reaffirmed their dedication to multilateral cooperation within the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the United Nations.

Later in the day, Minister Tangara participated in a high-level roundtable discussion on **“International Response to the Rohingya Crisis: In Quest of Justice for Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect (R2P)”** at the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS). Dr. Khalilur Rahman, High Representative of the Hon'ble Chief Adviser on Rohingya Problem and Priority Issues, attended the event as the Guest of Honour.

As part of his visit, Minister Tangara is set to sign a **“Visa Waiver Agreement”** between Bangladesh and The Gambia for diplomatic and official passport holders at the Ministry of Home Affairs today. The agreement aims to facilitate closer diplomatic exchanges and strengthen bilateral relations.

Minister Tangara's visit underscores the growing ties between Bangladesh and The Gambia, with both nations looking forward to enhanced cooperation in diplomacy, trade, and multilateral initiatives.

Pakistan's Additional Secretary (Asia Pacific) Meets Bangladesh Foreign Secretary to Strengthen Bilateral Ties



Dhaka, March 14, 2025 – Ambassador Imran Ahmed Siddiqui, Additional Secretary (Asia Pacific) at Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, met with Bangladesh's Foreign Secretary, H.E. Ambassador Md. Jashim Uddin, today at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Dhaka.

During the meeting, Ambassador Siddiqui handed over a message from H.E. Jalil Abbas Jilani, Hon'ble Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Pakistan, addressed to H.E. Mr. Md. Touhid Hossain, Hon'ble Foreign Adviser of Bangladesh.

Both sides recalled the substantial discussions held between the Hon'ble Chief Adviser of Bangladesh and the Hon'ble Prime Minister of Pakistan on the sidelines of the D-8 Summit and the 79th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2024. They also acknowledged the meeting between the Hon'ble Foreign Adviser of Bangladesh and the Hon'ble Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Pakistan during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

The discussions centered on strengthening bilateral cooperation in various areas, including trade, investment, and economic collaboration. Both countries stressed the need to resume the Joint Economic Commission (JEC) meeting, which was last

held in 2005, and to revive the Foreign Secretary-level consultations, which have been on hold since 2010. The two sides also emphasized the importance of bolstering trade ties, reducing barriers, and promoting product-specific trade delegations between Bangladesh and Pakistan.

In addition to trade and economic cooperation, both parties highlighted the need for greater collaboration in tourism, cultural exchanges, and fostering stronger people-to-people connections. The issue of forcibly displaced Rohingya Muslims was also discussed.

Moreover, the meeting underscored the significance of enhanced engagement within multilateral forums such as the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the Developing-8 (D-8), and the Commonwealth to address mutual concerns and strengthen regional cooperation.

Ambassador Siddiqui was accompanied by H.E. Mr. Syed Ahmed Maroof, High Commissioner of Pakistan to Bangladesh. The visit reflects a step forward in enhancing diplomatic and economic ties between the two nations, with both sides looking forward to increased high-level engagements and business exchanges in the near future.

Express Bulletin

EU Commissioner Meets Bangladesh Foreign Adviser, Announces €68M Support for Rohingyas



Dhaka, March 14, 2025 – The visiting European Union (EU) Foreign Affairs Commissioner for Equality and Crisis Management, H.E. Ms. Dr. Hadja Lahbib, met with the Hon'ble Foreign Adviser of Bangladesh, Mr. Md. Touhid Hossain, this afternoon at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Dhaka.

During the meeting, Commissioner Lahbib reaffirmed the EU's strong support for Bangladesh and commended the country's humanitarian efforts in hosting the forcibly displaced Rohingya population. She shared her first-hand experience from her visit to the Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar the previous day and announced the EU's continued commitment of €100 million (approximately €68 million) in 2025 to support the Rohingya refugees and their host



communities in Cox's Bazar. She also reiterated the EU's stance on imposing political and economic pressure on Myanmar to ensure a sustainable resolution to the Rohingya crisis.

The Hon'ble Foreign Adviser, H.E. Mr. Md. Touhid Hossain, expressed deep concern over the ongoing political turmoil in Myanmar and its impact on regional stability. He emphasized that the long-term solution to the crisis lies in the safe, voluntary, and dignified repatriation of the Rohingyas to their homeland. Both sides underscored their commitment to multilateral cooperation within the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the United Nations, and other international platforms to garner stronger global action on the Rohingya issue.

The two leaders also exchanged views on disaster preparedness, highlighting the increasing frequency of extreme natural disasters affecting both Bangladesh and Europe. They stressed the need for closer collaboration in disaster management and climate resilience, including knowledge sharing and enhanced cooperation between relevant institutions.

Earlier in the day, Commissioner Lahbib met with the Hon'ble Chief Adviser of Bangladesh before proceeding to Cox's Bazar to visit the Rohingya refugee camps. She is scheduled to depart from Dhaka later today, concluding her official visit.



Express Bulletin

Bangladesh Foreign Secretary Meets Russian Ambassador, Discusses Rooppur Nuclear Project



completion with the highest safety and technical standards. The two sides discussed ongoing cooperation in the energy and infrastructure sector, with Russia expressing its strong support for Bangladesh's energy security and development.

Foreign Secretary Jashim Uddin appreciated Russia's significant contributions to Bangladesh's energy sector and underscored the government's priority on the timely completion of the RNPP. He emphasized the importance of sustained collaboration between the two nations in global and multilateral platforms, as well as continued dialogue on pressing international challenges.

Both sides reiterated their commitment to strengthening bilateral relations and expanding areas of mutual cooperation. They also highlighted the need for continued coordination in international forums to address global economic and strategic challenges.



Dhaka, March 2, 2025 – H.E. Mr. Alexander G. Khozin, Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Bangladesh, called on Foreign Secretary Ambassador Md. Jashim Uddin today at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

During the meeting, Ambassador Khozin provided an update on the recent visit of H.E. Dr. Alexander Lokshin, the Director-General of ROSATOM, to Bangladesh. He highlighted the progress of the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant (RNPP) project, reaffirming Russia's commitment to ensuring its timely

Express Bulletin

UN Chief Visits Bangladesh to Assess Rohingya Refugee Crisis Amid Global Aid Cuts



Dhaka, Bangladesh – United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres has arrived in Bangladesh for a four-day visit to assess the conditions of over one million Rohingya refugees, as concerns mount over potential aid cuts following the U.S. decision to shut down USAID operations.

Guterres was welcomed at Dhaka's main airport on Thursday by Bangladesh's foreign affairs adviser, Touhid Hossain. His visit is seen as crucial, especially after warnings from the World Food Program (WFP) about a significant funding shortfall that could force



reductions in food rations for refugees in Cox's Bazar starting next month.

A recent WFP letter indicated that without securing \$81 million in funds—\$15 million of which is needed for April—rations could drop from \$12.50 to just \$6 per month per person.

Amnesty International has called on the international community to act swiftly, warning that the funding shortfall will exacerbate the already dire conditions in the camps. “The Rohingya community in Cox's Bazar has little alternative but to rely on WFP aid,” said Smriti Singh, Amnesty's regional director for South Asia, emphasizing that Bangladesh's government restricts refugees from working outside the camps.

Guterres is set to visit Cox's Bazar on Friday with Bangladesh's interim leader, Muhammad Yunus. On Saturday, they will hold talks in Dhaka, after which they will jointly address the media.

The U.S. has historically been the largest donor to Bangladesh's Rohingya humanitarian response, contributing nearly \$300 million in 2024 alone. However, with USAID operations now closed, concerns are growing over the sustainability of aid.

Bangladesh's interim government has assured that funding for Rohingya refugees will continue despite the end of USAID's payments. Officials maintain that repatriation to Myanmar remains the ultimate solution, but ongoing political and diplomatic challenges make the future of the Rohingya uncertain.

Guterres' visit is expected to reinvigorate global attention on the crisis and push for renewed financial commitments to prevent worsening conditions in the refugee camps.

Chief Adviser Urges Labour Law Reforms to Meet Global Standards



Dhaka, March 5, 2025 – Chief Adviser Professor Yunus has directed the Labour and Employment Ministry to reform the country's labour laws in line with international standards, aiming to improve the living and working conditions of millions of workers across various sectors.

The directive came during a meeting with ministry officials ahead of the 353rd session of the International Labour Organization (ILO), set to take place in Geneva from March 10 to 20. Labour and Employment Ministry Adviser M. Sakhawat Hossain will lead Bangladesh's delegation at the session.

"We have to do everything positive and get things done. We are not here to make an excuse," the Chief Adviser emphasized, stressing the need for effective labour reforms. He also instructed officials to ensure insurance coverage and healthcare benefits for workers, further strengthening their social security.

Special Envoy to the Chief Adviser Lutfey Siddiqi, who joined the meeting virtually and is expected to attend the ILO session, noted that Bangladesh has made significant progress in labour rights and workplace safety. However, he acknowledged that further improvements are needed to fully meet global expectations.

The meeting was attended by Labour and Employment Ministry Adviser M. Sakhawat Hossain, Secretary AHM Shafiquzzaman, Law and Justice Division Secretary Sheikh Abu Taher, and ILO Country Representative Tuomo Poutiainen. Bangladesh's Ambassador and Permanent Representative in Geneva, Tareq Md. Ariful Islam, also joined the discussion virtually.

The upcoming ILO session is expected to focus on labour rights, fair wages, and safe working conditions, with Bangladesh aiming to demonstrate its commitment to international labour standards.



Express Bulletin

Bangladesh, Kuwait to Strengthen Ties and Explore Investment Prospects



Dhaka, March 9, 2025 – Bangladesh and Kuwait have reaffirmed their commitment to enhancing diplomatic, trade, and economic cooperation, with a strong focus on investment, energy, food security, and migrant welfare.

The new Kuwaiti Ambassador to Bangladesh, Ali Tunyan Abdul Wahab Hamadah, met with Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus at the State Guest House Jamuna on Sunday to discuss opportunities for deepening bilateral relations.

Welcoming the envoy, Professor Yunus underscored the historical ties between the two nations and urged greater collaboration in key sectors. He emphasized halal food production as a potential area for investment, given its booming global market, and

encouraged Kuwaiti stakeholders to engage young entrepreneurs in the initiative.

“Kuwait and Bangladesh are long-standing friends. There are many investment opportunities here, and halal food can be a great sector to explore. The global market for halal food is huge. I encourage you to include young people in this initiative,” he said.

The Chief Adviser invited Kuwaiti investors to explore Bangladesh’s Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and attend the Bangladesh Investment Summit in Dhaka on April 7-9, highlighting it as a significant opportunity for both nations.

Ambassador Hamadah expressed Kuwait’s full support for Bangladesh’s Interim Government, conveying warm regards from Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmed Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and the people of Kuwait.

“We are looking forward to working together,” he affirmed.

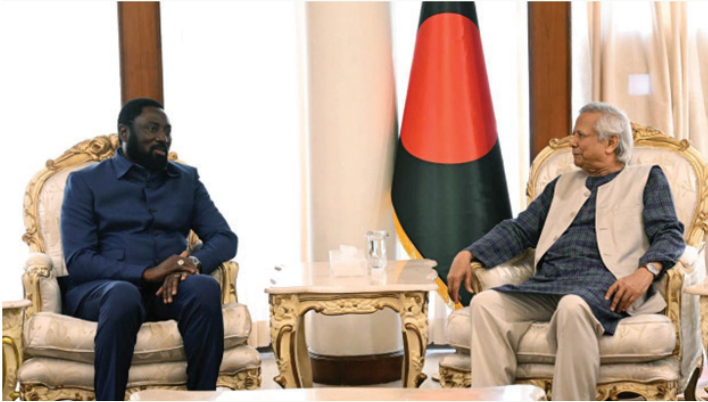
The discussion also covered expanding crude oil imports from Kuwait to meet Bangladesh’s growing energy demands. Professor Yunus proposed a joint venture crude oil refinery project and invited Kuwait to explore renewable energy cooperation.

On labour welfare, the Chief Adviser emphasized ensuring better working conditions for Bangladeshi workers in Kuwait, particularly female workers, while also praising the professionalism of Bangladeshi military personnel serving in Kuwait’s defence sector.

“Our partnership is built on mutual respect and cooperation. We are committed to expanding collaboration in trade, energy, and beyond,” Professor Yunus stated, reaffirming both nations’ dedication to deepening economic and diplomatic ties.



Gambian Foreign Minister Meets Chief Adviser, Discusses ICJ Case on Myanmar



DHAKA, March 12, 2025 – The Gambian Foreign Minister, Mamadou Tangara, called on Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus at the State Guest House Jamuna in Dhaka on Wednesday, where they discussed The Gambia’s ongoing genocide case against Myanmar at the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

During the meeting, Minister Tangara briefed the Chief Adviser on his country’s continued efforts to ensure justice for the persecuted Rohingya people. "The President of Gambia and the Gambian people are committed to this cause," he stated, emphasizing the need to keep the plight of the Rohingya on the international agenda.

In response, Professor Yunus expressed Bangladesh’s deep gratitude for The Gambia’s leadership in pursuing justice for the Rohingya at the ICJ.

“We want this case to succeed. We want your support. It is a big help for us,” the Chief Adviser said. He reaffirmed Bangladesh’s unwavering commitment to supporting Gambia’s legal battle to hold Myanmar accountable for the atrocities against the Rohingya people.

Minister Tangara lauded Professor Yunus’s global influence, stating that his leadership would continue to garner international support for the Rohingya cause.

“The international community will always stand by you. With your aura and reputation, you will be able to draw more attention to this humanitarian crisis,” Tangara said.

The meeting also covered Bangladesh’s ongoing efforts to mobilize humanitarian aid for Rohingya refugees in Cox’s Bazar and displaced communities in Rakhine, Myanmar. The Chief Adviser urged for increased global efforts in ensuring humanitarian aid, including food and medical assistance, for the displaced Rohingya population.

In a significant development, Bangladesh and Gambia agreed to enhance their cooperation in United Nations peacekeeping operations, expressing satisfaction over the signing of a new agreement to work together in the field.

The leaders also discussed the potential for deeper economic collaboration between Bangladesh and The Gambia, with Professor Yunus offering Bangladesh’s support for microcredit initiatives in Africa. Both sides recognized the role of financial inclusion in reducing poverty and strengthening socio-economic stability.

Attending the meeting were Dr. Khalilur Rahman, the High Representative of the Chief Adviser for Rohingya and other key issues, along with Lamiya Morshed, Senior Secretary, and other officials.

The visit reaffirmed the strong diplomatic ties between Bangladesh and The Gambia, with both nations committed to deepening cooperation on regional and global issues.

The
AMBASSADOR

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