New Chapter in Dhaka-Washington ties: Biden and Yunus to hold talks in NY Sept 24

Prof Yunus to arrive in New York Monday with a series of high-profile meetings lined up

UNB- Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus is scheduled to hold a meeting with US President Joseph R. Biden on Tuesday here on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) which reflects growing relations between the two countries.

This is going to be a one-to-one meeting, a senior official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs told UNB confirming the meeting in New York.

It is very significant as no US president held a bilateral meeting with any Bangladesh head of government in the past decades, the official added.

Biden will travel to New York City to participate in the 79th session of the UNGA on September 23-25.

In addition to addressing the General Assembly on September 24, President Biden will meet with world leaders to discuss cooperation in tackling threats to international peace and security, advancing global prosperity, and protecting human rights, said Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre on President Biden’s travel to New York City.

Chief Adviser Prof Yunus is scheduled to arrive here on Monday night (NY Time) to attend the 79th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) with a packed pre-scheduled meetings with global leaders on the sidelines.

Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UN Ambassador Muhammad Abdul Muhith and CDA of The Embassy of Bangladesh in Washington, D.C. Salahuddin Mahmud will receive him at JFK International Airport upon his arrival by a commercial flight at 22:30pm (local time).

The chief adviser will address the General Debate of the UNGA on September 27.

The 2006 Nobel Peace Prize laureate already described the challenges facing the interim government to the US delegation in Dhaka recently, saying his administration has moved quickly to "reset, reform, and restart" the economy, initiate reforms in financial sectors, and fix institutions such as the judiciary and police.

The chief adviser sought the assistance when a high-powered US delegation met him at the state guesthouse Jamuna.

The US delegation affirmed their dedication to fostering inclusive economic growth, institution building, and development to benefit the people of Bangladesh.

"As Bangladesh looks to chart a more equitable and inclusive future, the US stands ready to support those efforts," said the US side, after a meeting held at state guesthouse Jamuna.

Prof Yunus has a series of high-profile meetings lined up on the sidelines of the UNGA.

According to Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain the chief adviser will meet with leaders including the prime ministers of the Netherlands, Pakistan, and Nepal, as well as the President of the European Union, the US Secretary of State, the UN Secretary-General, the UN Human Rights chief, the World Bank President, and the USAID Administrator.

The foreign adviser said many meeting decisions are made at the last minute during this time.

“New meetings may be added to that consideration; again, due to lack of time, any meeting may be omitted.”

Prof Yunus is also likely to have meetings with the President of Italy and the Crown Prince of Kuwait.

On September 24, Prof Yunus will attend a welcome reception to be hosted by UN Secretary General António Guterres for the Heads of Delegation.

He will attend the inaugural session of the 79th UNGA. Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain, Energy Adviser Muhammad Fouzul Kabir Khan, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UN Ambassador Muhammad Abdul Muhith, Principal Coordinator (SDGs Affairs) Lamiya Morshed, Additional Foreign Secretary Riaz Hamidullah will accompany the chief adviser.

Yunus will also attend a high-level side event on the Rohingya crisis.

Foreign Minister of China Wang Yi is scheduled to call on the chief adviser.

The chief adviser will also attend a high-level side event – ‘Meet the Friends of Bangladesh’.

There will be a reception on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Bangladesh’s membership in the United Nations which will be hosted by Professor Muhammad Yunus.

The foreign adviser, however, said he will have a bilateral meeting with Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on the sidelines.