

# UK expects Prof Yunus to lay out his vision: Catherine West

UNB- UK Minister for the Indo-Pacific Catherine West on Sunday said the United Kingdom expects Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus to layout his vision for how all things will unfold as the government is committed to promoting national reconciliation.

After her meeting with Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, she said the UK will seek to support the people of Bangladesh as they move forward in the next phase.

A journalist wanted to know whether there will be a level playing field for all political parties in the changed political scenario.

In reply she said, "Of course, and we expect Prof Yunus to lay out his vision for how all that will unfold."

West said they know that the interim government in Bangladesh has committed to restoring peace and order, ensuring accountability and promoting national reconciliation, and it has the full support of the UK government in these objectives.

Responding to a question on BNP acting chairperson Tarique Rahman's return, the British minister said they did not discuss individual cases but they want to support the government because it is in the period of transition.

"We want to support the interim government in all the works that it is doing," she said.

"We know that there are very strong people to people ties between Bangladesh and the UK," the UK minister said.

During her meeting with the foreign affairs adviser, she welcomed the interim government's determination to build a better democratic future for the people of Bangladesh.

"We have a very strong, steadfast friendship with the people of Bangladesh, we want to build the strong partnerships and build on that important building block of the strong ties and also with moving towards that democratic future," West said.

From economics and trade to security, migration and climate change, she said there is so much that they do together that they must continue to work on.

The UK minister, who arrived here on Saturday, said the people of Bangladesh deserve a pathway to a "peaceful future and accountability" after a turbulent few months.

"I am here to discuss how the UK can best support the work of the interim government to stabilise its economy and move towards a peaceful and democratic future," she said.

Regarding the Rohingya issue, she said they are pleased that they have been able to announce another 10 million pounds so that there can be more building of appropriate shelter for the refugees and ensure that there is proper food, medical supplies and education for the children.

Her visit marks the first UK ministerial visit to the country since the formation of the interim government in August.

She discussed her country's ongoing support for political and economic reforms, security, trade cooperation and UK-Bangladesh migration.

The British minister said Bangladesh and the UK share a unique and historic partnership, cemented by people-to-people ties and shared commonwealth values.

The visit also includes meetings with political and business leaders and civil society.

Catherine West said, "The UK supports the interim government's work to build a more prosperous and democratic future for the Bangladeshi people."

British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Sarah Cooke said, "I am delighted to welcome UK Minister for the Indo-Pacific Catherine West to Bangladesh."

This visit will deepen and broaden the UK's economic and security partnership with Bangladesh, said the high commissioner.

"Bangladesh is currently undergoing a transformation, and as a longstanding friend, the UK will assist in the economic and political reforms which will help Bangladesh to continue its social and economic growth as it moves towards an inclusive and democratic future."

The UK's support following this has included the deployment of a specialised medical team to care for some of those more critically wounded during protests over the summer.

Rohingya refugees and the communities which host them in Bangladesh will receive essential assistance and services through new UK funding.

Bangladeshis affected by natural disasters this year will also receive UK funded assistance.

Since the establishment of the interim government in August 2024, the UK has been clear in its support for interim government's work on accountability and creating a pathway to an inclusive democratic future for Bangladesh.

The UK minister will meet with student leaders and political

parties to discuss the UK's support for Bangladesh's democratic recovery, and with business leaders to discuss how the UK government can continue to create strong ties and boost mutually beneficial trade and investment.

The recently announced UK funding has already provided food to 200,000 Rohingya refugees for a three-month period.

It will now provide further support to Rohingya refugees with clean water, hygiene and sanitation services, primary healthcare, protection services and shelter materials.

It will also provide assistance to those impacted by natural disasters in Bangladesh earlier this year.