

Bangladesh Needs Real Climate Support, Not Just Loans

Bangladesh, one of the worst victims of climate change, requires genuine support instead of debt burdens, said Syeda Rizwana Hasan, Advisor to the Ministry of Environment, Forests, Climate Change, and Water Resources. She emphasized the need for clear definitions of climate finance to prevent Bangladesh from being overburdened with loans.

She made these remarks on Sunday during a meeting with a high-level Swedish delegation led by Dr. Jakob Granit, Director-General of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), at the Bangladesh Secretariat. Nicolas Linus Ragnar Weeks, Ambassador of Sweden to Bangladesh, was also present.

The discussions centered on enhancing bilateral cooperation in sustainable development, climate finance, renewable energy, and water resource management. Dr. Granit reaffirmed Sweden's commitment to supporting Bangladesh's transition to a greener economy, highlighting the importance of innovation and investment in sustainable sectors, including the ready-made garment (RMG) industry.

We have a shared interest in accelerating Bangladesh's sustainability agenda, Dr. Granit noted. Sweden is eager to collaborate with Bangladesh and European partners to promote job creation, trade, and climate-resilient investments. He also stressed the urgent need for climate finance and addressed challenges such as water resource depletion, pollution, and rising sea levels.

The meeting also explored the RMG sector's potential for sustainable growth, emphasizing shared responsibility between buyers and producers to uphold fair labor practices and

environmental sustainability. Additionally, discussions included cooperation in plastic waste management, water resource mapping, and biodiversity conservation.

Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening collaboration and developing innovative financing mechanisms to support Bangladesh's development goals.

Md. Khayrul Hasan, Additional Secretary (Development); Lubna Yasmine, Joint Secretary (Planning) of the Ministry ; Anders Frankenberg, Head of Department Asia, MENA and Latin America (LAMENA), Sida, Sweden; Kjell Forsberg, Head of Department Trade, Private Sector and Financial Instruments, Sida, Sweden; Samer Al Fayadh, Senior Program Manager, Specialist, Energy and Infrastructure, SORA, Sida; Peter Hallbom, Deputy Head and Lead Transaction Manager, Guarantee Origination Unit, Sida; Maria Stridsman, Head of Cooperation, Embassy of Sweden in Bangladesh; Nayoka Martinez-Bäckström, First Secretary and Deputy Head of Cooperation, Embassy of Sweden in Bangladesh were also in the meeting.

The meeting concluded on a positive note, with optimism for impactful partnerships in the years ahead.

Later, a Japanese delegation led by MATSUDA Emiko, Deputy Director of the Climate Change Science and Adaptation Office at Japan's Ministry of the Environment, met with the Environment Advisor at her office to discuss areas of collaborate