

New Dutch Envoy Calls on Chief Adviser

The newly appointed Ambassador of the Netherlands, Boris van Bommel, paid a courtesy call on Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus at the Guest House Jamuna on Thursday.

During the meeting, they discussed a range of issues of mutual interest, including strengthening bilateral relations, upcoming general elections, trade and agriculture, and the ongoing Rohingya humanitarian crisis.

Chief Adviser Yunus briefed the ambassador on the Interim Government's preparations to hold a general election in the first half of February, emphasizing steps taken to ensure the polls are free, fair, and peaceful.

Ambassador van Bommel reaffirmed his country's support for Bangladesh's democratic transition. He noted that a European Union pre-election observation team is scheduled to arrive in Bangladesh this week, with the Netherlands actively supporting the mission.

The discussion also touched on bilateral cooperation in water management. Professor Yunus recalled how Bangladesh has benefitted from Dutch expertise in managing floods and protecting low-lying coastal areas.

"We have a lot in common. There is much we can build together and learn from one another's experiences," the Chief Adviser said.

Ambassador van Bommel expressed interest in Bangladesh's recent development achievements, including its innovations in social business and microcredit.

Professor Yunus appealed for increased Dutch aid to support

more than one million Rohingya refugees currently residing in Cox's Bazar, citing a significant funding shortfall that threatens ongoing humanitarian efforts.

He informed the ambassador of an upcoming high-level international conference on the Rohingya crisis, scheduled for September 30 at the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

The Chief Adviser expressed hope that the event would galvanize international support and help mobilize critical funding for the humanitarian response in the camps.

Ambassador van Bommel acknowledged the urgency of the crisis, stating that the Rohingya issue deserves greater international attention. However, he noted that global focus has been diverted by other ongoing geopolitical conflicts.

Lamiya Morshed, Senior Secretary and SDG Coordinator of the government, was also present at the meeting.