

# Brazil President Lula Plans Visit to Bangladesh

Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva on Monday expressed his interest in visiting Bangladesh in the coming months, hoping the visit would strengthen ties between the two nations.

President Lula made the announcement during a meeting with Bangladesh's Chief Adviser, Professor Muhammad Yunus, on the sidelines of the FAO-organised World Food Forum (WFF) flagship event in Rome.

Both leaders served as keynote speakers at the forum and later held a bilateral meeting at the FAO headquarters to discuss matters of mutual interest, including social business, universal healthcare, social inclusion, and strategies to combat poverty.

During the meeting, the Chief Adviser formally invited President Lula to visit Bangladesh at a mutually convenient time. President Lula accepted the invitation, expressing his intention to make the trip by February.

"I will go to Bangladesh," he affirmed, adding that Brazil is keen to share its experience in providing universal healthcare for its citizens and to learn from Bangladesh's pioneering work in social business and microcredit.

"That would be fantastic," Professor Yunus responded.

The two leaders also explored opportunities for cooperation in areas such as deep-sea fishing, pharmaceuticals—including the push to make vaccines patent-free and affordable—climate change action ahead of the upcoming COP30 summit, and the recent youth-led uprising in Bangladesh in July 2024.

Professor Yunus recalled his earlier engagements in Brazil, including his 2008 meeting with the then-president and his October 2023 tour of major Brazilian cities.

President Lula extended an invitation to Professor Yunus to participate in COP30, which will be held in an Amazonian state to draw global attention to the fight to protect the world's largest tropical rainforest.

The Chief Adviser thanked President Lula for the invitation, but he noted that he might not attend the COP 30, citing his involvement in preparations for Bangladesh's upcoming general election, scheduled for the first half of February.

Professor Yunus described the forthcoming election as a "real and landmark" moment for Bangladesh, stating it would be the first fair election in 16 years. He emphasized that past elections under the previous autocratic regime were "fake and rigged" by the ruling party.

The Chief Adviser also underscored the need for deeper collaboration and increased trade between Bangladesh and Brazil.

In a lighter moment, the two leaders, who share warm connections, celebrated football as a unifying global force. Professor Yunus highlighted the passionate support for Brazilian football across his country.

"People in every village in Bangladesh support Brazil," he said.

Also present at the meeting were Food Adviser Ali Imam Majumder, Fisheries and Livestock Adviser Farida Akhter, SDG Coordinator Lamiya Morshed, and Foreign Secretary Asad Alam Siam. Several Brazilian ministers and senior officials were also in attendance.