

FAO DG Assures Support for Bangladesh's Deep-Sea Fishing and Fruit Exports

FAO Director-General Dr. Qu Dongyu has assured continued support to Bangladesh in developing its deep-sea fishing industry and enhancing agricultural exports, particularly in fruits.

The commitment came during a bilateral meeting between Dr. Qu and Bangladesh Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus on the sidelines of the World Food Forum and the FAO's 80th Anniversary celebrations held at the FAO headquarters in Rome.

Dr. Qu warmly welcomed Professor Yunus, who visited the FAO headquarters to deliver a keynote address at the Forum's flagship events on Monday. During their meeting, the Director-General praised Professor Yunus's lifelong contributions to agricultural and rural development in Bangladesh.

Describing Bangladesh as a "high-performing country," Dr. Qu reaffirmed the FAO's continued support through technical assistance, innovation, and South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

"We will continue to support you," he said.

Professor Yunus expressed gratitude for the FAO's long-standing support and sought assistance in three emerging areas: developing deep-sea fisheries and fish processing expertise; scaling up fruit exports through improved preservation and processing; and strengthening post-harvest management, including affordable and portable cold storage facilities.

"We have a whole ocean, but we only fish in shallow waters.

We've never fully utilised our maritime resources. Foreign trawlers catch fish in our waters while we remain under-equipped," Professor Yunus said.

In response, Dr. Qu suggested Bangladesh consider inviting Chinese experts to help assess its deep-sea fish stocks and develop a sustainable strategy.

Highlighting Bangladesh's potential as a major fruit exporter, Professor Yunus noted that China has already shown interest in importing large amount of mangoes, jackfruit, and guavas from the country. He emphasized the urgent need for designing mobile cold storage solutions to reduce post-harvest losses, particularly among smallholder farmers.

Dr. Qu underscored the importance of developing high-value cash crop fruits and cited China's success in the 1980s, when its fruit exports to Japan significantly boosted its agricultural sector.

Looking ahead, Dr. Qu noted that 2026 will mark the 20th anniversary of Professor Yunus receiving the Nobel Peace Prize, the first awarded for combating poverty and empowering the poor. "We will celebrate," he said, recognizing Professor Yunus's leadership during his tenure as Head of Bangladesh's Interim Government.

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.

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