

PM leaves New York for home after attending UNGA session

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman today left New York for home after winding up a five-day visit packed with high-level engagements, including his maiden address to the General Debate of the 81st United Nations General Assembly where he placed Bangladesh's aspirations and priorities before the global community.

"An Emirates flight carrying the Prime Minister, his wife Dr Zubaida Rahman and members of his entourage departed John F Kennedy International Airport at 11:30pm (New York time) for Dhaka via Dubai," Prime Minister's Press Secretary Saleh Shibly told BSS.

The flight is scheduled to reach Dubai at 8:00pm on September 26 and depart for Dhaka at 2:00am on September 27. The Prime Minister is scheduled to arrive at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport at 8:40am the same day.

During the visit, he presented Bangladesh's positions on global peace and security, climate change, sustainable development, humanitarian issues, economic cooperation and the Rohingya crisis.

In his UNGA address on September 24, the Prime Minister reaffirmed Bangladesh's support for UN initiatives aimed at establishing global humanity and world peace, calling for conflicts to be resolved through dialogue, diplomacy and mutual cooperation.

He also pledged to establish a prosperous, self-reliant and welfare-oriented democratic Bangladesh by ensuring political and economic empowerment of the people and equal opportunities for all, while outlining the government's 3-R strategy of Recovery, Restoration and Reconstruction.

On the Rohingya crisis, he said safe and dignified repatriation to their homeland is the only solution to the prolonged crisis and sought stronger international support for creating conditions conducive to their voluntary return.

During the visit, the Prime Minister discussed the crisis separately with UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Myanmar Julie Bishop and UN High Commissioner for Refugees Barham Salih.

The Prime Minister also met Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, with the two leaders discussing ways to expand Bangladesh-Türkiye trade and investment and diversify cooperation in economic sectors, while underscoring the importance of coordination on regional and international issues.

In separate meetings with Bhutanese Prime Minister Dasho Tshering Tobgay and Maldives Vice-President Uz Hussain Mohamed Latheef, Tarique Rahman discussed strengthening existing friendly relations and exploring new areas of bilateral, regional and international cooperation.

At a meeting with World Bank Group President Ajay Banga, they discussed Bangladesh's development priorities, economic progress, strengthening World Bank cooperation and exploring new areas of partnership.

The Prime Minister also held a meeting with Haitian Prime Minister Alix Didier Fils-Aimé, discussing bilateral relations, mutual interests and regional and international cooperation.

On September 22, Tarique Rahman and his wife joined a welcome breakfast hosted by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres for world leaders and their spouses before attending the opening of the 81st UNGA General Debate.

In the evening, they attended a reception hosted by the US

President for leaders joining the General Assembly.

On September 23, the Prime Minister held a breakfast meeting with representatives of the Gates Foundation, Visa Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, International Rescue Committee and Rotary International, where Bangladesh's perspectives on humanitarian challenges, international cooperation, climate change, sustainable development and economic partnership were highlighted.

He also met Gates Foundation CEO Mark Suzman and discussed public health, child healthcare, vaccination, affordable vaccines, preventive healthcare and health-system modernisation.

The Prime Minister also addressed the high-level meeting on "Climate Action and the Just Transition", calling for collective global action to build a safer and more sustainable future for the next generation, including deeper emission cuts and predictable climate finance for climate-vulnerable countries.

A bilateral meeting with Croatian Prime Minister Andrej Plenkovic focused on expanding trade and investment, economic partnership, skilled manpower, education and technology, as well as greater coordination at multilateral forums.

The visit also featured economic diplomacy, including the signing of an agreement by Biman Bangladesh Airlines with Boeing to purchase 11 aircraft as Bangladesh seeks to expand its aviation sector and open new international routes.

On September 24, before his UNGA address, the Prime Minister delivered opening remarks at a high-level meeting on the existential threat posed by sea-level rise, calling for faster and deeper global emission cuts, predictable and accessible adaptation finance, wider access to climate-smart technologies and stronger international cooperation.

He also held a bilateral meeting with Pakistani Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, with the two premiers discussing bilateral relations, regional and international situations and potential areas of cooperation.

At a Bangladesh-Sweden-UNFPA high-level event on midwifery, Tarique Rahman outlined his vision of a “Healthy Bangladesh”, placing primary healthcare at the centre of health reform.

He said the government plans to recruit 100,000 additional health workers, including 80,000 women, and 25,000 professional midwives, while developing an integrated digital health system.

The Prime Minister also held a bilateral meeting with UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, who expressed gratitude for Bangladesh’s role in sheltering the Rohingyas and contributing troops to UN peacekeeping operations, while praising Bangladesh’s role in climate resilience and multilateral affairs.

Tarique Rahman also met Thai Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul before delivering his UNGA address and later attended a dinner hosted in his honour by Bangladesh’s Permanent Representative to the UN.

On the final day of his New York visit, the Prime Minister attended a breakfast meeting with Wall Street representatives hosted by JPMorgan at its Manhattan Headquarters and held a bilateral meeting with Kuwait’s Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.