

Bangladesh Consul General meets the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario



Consul General of Bangladesh in Toronto Mr. Nayem Uddin Ahmed met the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario Her Honour Elizabeth Dowdeswell on 23 January 2019 at her Suite in Queen's Park, Toronto.

At the outset of the meeting, Consul General Nayem Uddin Ahmed conveyed the greetings and best wishes of the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and new Foreign Minister Dr. A. K. Abdul Momen, M.P. to the Lieutenant Governor Her Honour Elizabeth Dowdeswell.

Bangladesh Consul General said that Bangladesh and Canada enjoy a time-tested robust relationship and the present government led by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina attaches special importance to its' relations with Canada. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visited Canada in 2016 and 2018 on the invitations of the Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Besides, both the governments are closely engaged through regular Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) and look forward to holding the 5th FOC in Ottawa at a mutually convenient time.

Responding to a question of the Lieutenant Governor Bangladesh Consul General informed that Bangladesh Consulate General in Toronto has started full operations since mid December 2018. Opening of the new Consulate General of Bangladesh in Toronto was a commitment of the present government to the Bangladesh diaspora living in Greater Toronto Area (GTA), he added.

Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth Dowdeswell thanked the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for letting the forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals to stay in Bangladesh and the humanitarian support extended to them. Consul General also thanked the government of Canada for their support and assistance extended in the wake of the crisis and informed that Bangladesh wants a safe, dignified voluntary and sustainable repatriation of all forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals to their home in Myanmar.

Consul General highlighted the tremendous economic growth under the present government in Bangladesh. He informed that according to the GDP based on current price, Bangladesh ranks 43rd in the world economy, where as it was 58th in 2013. In a span of 5 years Bangladesh crossed 15 other national GDPs in the world. He also mentioned that in the last 10 years per capita (ppp) increased from US\$598 to US\$1751 and life expectancy increased from 66.5 years to 72.7 years. After exemplary and highly acclaimed achievements in Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), present government is committed to pursue the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the given timeline, he added.

The Lieutenant Governor keenly listened to the success story of Bangladesh and asked, 'What is the main cause of such great development in Bangladesh?'. Consul General replied that it is only 'Leadership'; Bangladesh is most fortunate to have the daughter of the Father of the Nation as the Head of the Government for the third time in a row and in total 4 terms in Office. He added that the dedication of the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to make Bangladesh a middle-income country by 2021 and developed by 2041 has profusely inspired and united the people of Bangladesh. Due to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's high human quality and her strong commitment to the development, the people of Bangladesh once again chose her party to be in power in the last parliamentary elections held in December 2018, Consul General added.

Lieutenant Governor of Ontario Elizabeth Dowdeswell said that the people of Bangladesh are fortunate to have a lady Prime Minister, that too, the daughter of the Father of the Nation of the country. In this connection, the Consul General stated that the political journey of the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was not smooth as consecutive military juntas and un-elected entities made their ways to the state power many times.

Consul General informed that the founding father and architect of the independent Bangladesh Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, while in office as President was brutally

killed along with nearly all family members including his ten-year-old son. The present Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her sister Sheikh Rehana were out of the country during the massacre and luckily escaped the carnage. It was a regret in the history of Bangladesh that military rulers also promulgated Indemnity Act to protect the killers of the Father of the Nation. Consul General mentioned that Bangladesh government has definite information that Nur Chowdhury, a self declared killer of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family members, is living in greater Toronto. The Consul General urged for the cooperation of the present Government of Canada to deport Nur Chowdhury to Bangladesh.

Besides the above, the Lieutenant Governor and the Bangladesh Consul General discussed on further enhancement of trade and investment, Bangladesh diaspora and their contribution to the main stream economy, prospect of more Bangladesh students in Canada and other issues of mutual interests.

Canada is a constitutional monarchy with The Queen as Sovereign and Head of State. The Lieutenant Governor is The Queen's representative while the Premier is the Head of Government in the province.

At the end of the meeting Bangladesh Consul General handed over the books on Bangabandhu- 'The Unfinished Memoires" and 'Prison Dairies' to the Lieutenant Governor and signed the Guest Book in her presence.