

2 US Congressmen arrive on four-day visit to Bangladesh

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Online Desk: Two US Congressmen — Richard McCormick of Georgia from the Republican Party and Ed Case of Hawaii from the Democratic Party arrived in Dhaka on Saturday (today) on a four-day official visit to Bangladesh. A number of US officials also accompanied them. “They have come mainly to visit the Rohingya camps and a courtesy meeting with me,” Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen said.

The US is the largest donor for the Rohingyas and they will see how their taxpayers’ money is being spent. “Recently, the funding for the Rohingya has declined. Monthly food bill has been cut from \$12 to \$8. If they recommend more funding after visiting the humanitarian situation of the Rohingya, it will be good,” Momen said.

On the second day (August 13) of the visit, the US officials will hold meeting with Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC) and concerned organisations of the United Nations.

On Monday (August 14), the two Congressmen will hold meeting with RRRC and concerned UN organisations. The following day, they will meet with Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen after returning Dhaka.

During the visit to Bangladesh, the two Congressmen will hold discussions with political parties after visiting the Rohingya camps. Among the political parties, they would hold meeting with the members of Awami League, BNP and Jatiya Party. The US took a few measures that put pressure on the ruling Awami League. In 2021, Washington imposed sanctions against Rab and seven of its officials, and it did not invite Bangladesh to the summits for democracy in 2021 and 2023.

On May 24, the US announced a visa policy for Bangladesh, saying it would not issue visas to those who undermine the democratic election process. US officials said democracy and human rights are two foreign policy priorities of the Biden Administration, and as corruption hurts democracy, Washington also has a global initiative to fight corruption globally.

As part of that, State Department’s Coordinator for Global Anti-Corruption Richard Nephew visited Dhaka from August 6-8. He communicated to the Bangladesh government that they use sanctions as a tool to fight corruption.