

President praises IORA for promoting balanced dev in Indian Ocean region

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Online Desk : President Mohammed Shahabuddin on Wednesday appreciated the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) for promoting sustained growth and balanced development in the Indian Ocean region as its Secretary General Dr Salman Al Farisi called on him on the ASEAN summit's sidelines in Indonesia's Jakarta. "President Shahabuddin praised IORA secretary general's leadership for steering the association and commended his team's excellent efforts for IORA's cause," Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen said in a media briefing after the meeting, BSS reports. The Bangladesh President is now on a visit to Indonesia to attend the 43rd summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and 18th 'East Asia summit' at Jakarta Convention Center (JCC) here as Dr Momen is accompanying him. According to Momen, President Shahabuddin said it has been privileged to serve as the IORA Chair for November 2021-October 2023 tenure, adding Bangladesh attaches high importance to IORA's objectives and activities.

He also said Bangladesh will continue its efforts in enhancing cooperation in IORA's six priority areas and two cross-cutting areas. During IORA chairmanship, the President said Bangladesh played a significant role in resolving some long pending administrative issues and in finalizing IORA's Indo-Pacific Outlook, completing process to make Saudi Arabia a dialogue partner of IORA and also pushing forward the EU's dialogue partnership issue. The Bangladesh Head of State highly appreciated the recent signing of MoU between ASEAN Secretariat and IORA Secretariat, expressing hope that it would facilitate expanding collaboration in a number of areas and capacity building among the 23 member states. He also thanked Dr Salman Al Farisi for extending sincere cooperation and support during the period of Bangladesh's IORA chair and expressed hope that it would continue. The IORA secretary general apprised the Bangladesh President of the overall activities of the IORA, an inter-governmental organization promoting sustained growth and balanced development within the Indian Ocean region. He subsequently lauded the pioneer role of Bangladesh in ensuring the interest of IORA stakeholders and exploring the potentials of blue economy as well.

The IORA secretary general also commended the Bangladesh's tremendous development in recent time that has gained global acknowledgement.

Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen, Secretary (Maritime Affairs Unit) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Rear Admiral (retd) Md Khurshed Alam and secretaries concerned to the President were present at the meeting.