

Bangladesh would request US to reconsider sanctions on Rab: Momen

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The Daily Morning Voice Online Desk: Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen on Saturday said Bangladesh would request the United States to reconsider the sanctions imposed on elite force Rab and withdraw the sanctions considering its positive role in the country. “Rab is now much more mature. We will have a request that they (US) should reconsider the decision,” he told reporters after attending a discussion at Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhaban Auditorium, University of Dhaka.

Donald Lu, who became Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs on September 15, 2021, is scheduled to arrive here tonight (January 14), wrapping up his India tour. “We will raise our issues. They will raise their issues. But others don’t need to teach us democracy. Democracy, human rights and justice are rooted in each of our hearts,” said the Foreign Minister. Donald Lu will have meetings on a range of priorities including energy, trade, security cooperation, religious freedom, labour, and human rights.

Assistant Secretary Lu will meet with senior Bangladeshi officials and civil society leaders to discuss strengthening their bilateral relationship, expanding economic engagement and hear their perspectives on labour and human rights, according to the US Department of State. On Friday, Momen said Bangladesh and the US believe in the same values and promote democracy and human rights.

Bangladesh has set an example in the world by sacrificing 30 lakh lives to establish democracy, ensure justice and human rights, Momen said, adding that “Our principles and values are almost the same.” As the US wants Bangladesh to be part of its Indo-Pacific Strategy, Momen said Bangladesh stands ready to do whatever is needed for the people’s interests, noting that the government is still studying the issues related to US’ Indo-Pacific Strategy. “It’s not that transparent. It’s not mentioned there how it will bring benefits. We are studying it,” he told reporters on Friday.

Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen said he sees the visit of Assistant Secretary Lu as part of regular engagements between the two sides. He said there are many areas where Bangladesh has some expectations while the US side might have some expectations from Bangladesh. “We will discuss frankly.” The Foreign Secretary said there are strategies on Indo-Pacific from the US, Canada, Japan and the European Union. “It’s not that we are joining any particular group or not. We are preparing some elements on how we want to see the Bay of Bengal and beyond,” Masud said.

During her recent visit to Bangladesh, US Senior Director for South Asia, National Security Council Eileen Laubacher said as a large part of the Indo-Pacific region, the Bay of Bengal contains vital shipping lanes and undersea cables that power the economies by moving food, fuel, goods, and data. Ensuring these lanes remain free and open is imperative for the economic health and national security of the United States, Bangladesh, and all countries in the region, she told the media.