

CA seeks Canadian support to boost economic growth

August 28, 2024

Online Desk : Recalling his long relationship with Canada including its top politicians and development agencies, interim government's Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus on Wednesday said his government needs Canadian support to boost economic growth.

The Chief Adviser urged Canada to invest in Bangladesh in an effort to help rebuild the country from an economic mess when Canadian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Lilly Nicholls met him at the state guesthouse Jamuna. "We need big investment," he said, adding that the interim government inherited an economy, which was in total mess with a huge amount of debt being accumulated.

Prof Yunus said his story has been included in the Canadian school textbooks, according to Chief Adviser's press wing. He said the government was also restoring vital institutions broken by the previous regime and was bringing order and clarity in governance. "Our first priority is to fix the economy," he said. The Canadian High Commissioner said her government was ready to support the Chief Adviser and the interim government.

She said Canada would be keen to boost food security in Bangladesh by supplying fertilisers and essential commodities. The envoy said Bangladesh must ensure labour rights in factories in an effort to continue to enjoy trade preferences from the North American country.

Prof Yunus said his government would uphold labour rights "at par with the ILO (International Labour Organisation) standards" in order to address concerns of the brands who purchase clothing from Bangladesh and international investors. High Commissioner Nicholls said Canada was also interested in supporting the UN fact-finding mission on its move to establish justice and accountability on the massacre committed in July and August.

Prof Yunus said the students-led revolution has ushered in a new era of hope for the country. "These are historical opportunities. These chances may never come back," he said. Prof Yunus said important electoral reforms will be carried out before the country goes to vote. Under the previous government, "the election commission was turned into an election manipulation commission," he said.

The Canadian High Commissioner expressed her "deep concern" over the security situation in the Rohingya camps in Bangladesh's southeast and escalating violence affecting Rohingyas living in Myanmar's Rakhine state.

She said Canada has contributed more than 600 million dollars for Rohingya humanitarian responses and called for livelihood opportunities for the Rohingya people.

The Chief Adviser called for easing overcrowding in the Rohingya camps by relocating some Rohingya from the Cox's Bazar camps. He said his government would do its best to provide hope to the Rohingya young people.