

Commonwealth offers support in Bangladesh reform process

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Online Desk : Commonwealth Secretary-General Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey on Tuesday said the organisation was keen to support Bangladesh in political reforms ahead of the planned general election next year. “We will be happy to provide the support if Bangladesh requires it, especially the support for constitutional reforms,” Botchwey said as she called on Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus at his hotel in London. Botchwey said supporting member states in harnessing democracy and good governance is one of the key priorities for the organisation in the next five years. The other priorities are boosting trade and investment and supporting members fighting climate change, she said.

Noting that the Commonwealth is a platform of 2.7 billion people, the Ghanaian national said that currently, the annual trade among the member states stood around 850 billion USD and that they had a plan to raise it to at least 1 trillion dollars in the coming years. She said that many of the Commonwealth members are affected by climate change, and many of these member countries are small in size. “We will be trying to help them get access to climate finance,” she said. Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus urged the Commonwealth Secretary General to explore the potential of sports and increase youth engagement among the member states.

“Sports are not just a form of entertainment but a kind of social orientation. We are encouraging sportspeople to become entrepreneurs. “Sports can be a good way for the Commonwealth to be remembered,” said the Chief Adviser. The Commonwealth Secretary General said that they were going to hold a youth programme in Dhaka this month. She said that 1.5 billion people of the Commonwealth population are young, and they were trying to engage them in different activities.

She said that they were also planning to revamp Commonwealth scholarships for students, an area that the Chief Adviser said should get priority. National Security Adviser Khalilur Rahman, Chief Adviser’s Special Envoy Lutfi Siddiqi, senior secretary for SDG affairs Lamiya Morshed, and Bangladesh High Commissioner to the UK Abida Islam were , among others, present on the occasion. Source: BSS