

US wants to boost ties with Bangladesh as Momen-Blinken meeting held

April 11, 2023

Online Desk: Foreign Minister Dr. A. K. Abdul Momen MP held a meeting with the US Secretary of State Antony Blinken at the US Department of State in Washington on Tuesday.

In their initial remarks in presence of the media, both leaders expressed satisfaction in the existing bilateral relations and echoed their desire to further strengthen bilateral relations for the next 50 years, building on the solid foundation of the past 50 years. Terming the Bangladesh-US relationship wide-ranging, dynamic and multifaceted, Dr. Momen hoped to develop, strengthen and solidify the relations. He thanked President Biden for his warm message to the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on the Independence Day of Bangladesh, which ended with “Joy Bangla”.

During the meeting, they discussed various bilateral and other issues of mutual interest, including strengthening and diversification of economic partnership, resolution of Rohingya crisis, climate change, labour rights, civil liberty, and elections.

Apprising Blinken of the ongoing and completed works in labour sector reforms in Bangladesh, the Foreign Minister hoped that these efforts would be duly acknowledged and appreciated through stronger economic partnership between the two countries. Blinken appreciated the ongoing US-Bangladesh consultative process in improving labour situation in Bangladesh. Foreign Minister called upon USA to take advantage of the generous investment regime of Bangladesh and encourage US private sector to invest in special economic zones and high-tech parks in Bangladesh.

Dr. Momen thanked the US government for their generous support in combating COVID-19 and continued humanitarian support for the Rohingyas sheltered in Bangladesh. He stressed the need for sustained international pressure on Myanmar for creating environment for voluntary repatriation of Rohingyas to Myanmar. Secretary Blinken highly appreciated Bangladesh for generously hosting over one million Rohingyas and assured to continue to work towards repatriation of the Rohingyas.

Foreign Minister echoed with the US Secretary of State on the importance of a free and fair elections and reaffirmed the commitment of Bangladesh government in this regard. He reiterated Bangladesh’s request to extradite Rashed Chowdhury, a self-confessed killer of Bangabandhu.

At the end of the meeting, Foreign Minister handed over a letter that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina wrote to US President Joe Biden to thank him for his warm message on the Independence Day of Bangladesh.

Ambassador of Bangladesh to the US Muhammad Imran, Deputy Head of Mission Ferdousi Shahriar, Director General (North America) Khandker Masudul Alam, and officials of the Bangladesh Embassy in Washington and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were present in the meeting. Counselor Derek Chollet, Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees and Migration Julieta Valls Noyes, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor Kara McDonald, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia Afreen Akhter accompanied Blinken in the meeting.