

Qatar PM expresses keenness to strengthen ties with Bangladesh

May 24, 2023

Online Desk: Qatar Prime Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani on Wednesday said his country is keen to strengthen its friendly relations with Bangladesh. He said this during a bilateral meeting with Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina held at the bilateral meeting room of Raffles Tower in Doha, reports BSS.

During the meeting, the Qatar Premier told the Bangladesh's Prime Minister that they (Qatar) are true friends of Bangladesh and they want to take the relation with Bangladesh forward further, said Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen while briefing reporters. The Qatar Premier praised Sheikh Hasina for bringing stability to Bangladesh.

Mentioning that Bangladesh procures a huge amount of energy from Qatar, the Prime Minister of Bangladesh said, "We want you (Saudi Arabia) to assist us with energy."

In reply, Mohammed bin Abdulrahman said that Qatar would do as much as possible for Bangladesh. About the fear of losing jobs among Bangladeshi workers in Qatar after the FIFA World Cup 2023, the Qatar Premier said Bangladeshi workers are their assets and friends and Qatar will keep them as much as possible in their country. Later, Qatar Minister of State for Energy Affairs Saad bin Sherida Al Kaabi called on the Bangladesh Prime Minister at the latter's place of residence.

In the meeting, the issue of signing of a fresh contract over the supply of additional liquefied natural gas (LNG) to Bangladesh in future came up for discussion. Sheikh Hasina has urged to sign the new contract as soon as possible to procure a larger amount of energy from Qatar, said Dr Momen at the press briefing. The existing 15-year agreement signed in 2017 to import LNG from Qatar will be effective till 2032, but it needs to sign a new contract to get the larger amount of energy after 2025, he said. Momen said the Bangladesh Premier urged to sign the contract immediately, fixing the pricing related problems.

Describing Bangladesh as a friendly country that stood with Qatar in their tough days, they (Qatar) promised that they would consider all sorts of concessions whatever possible for Qatar during signing of the contract. Besides, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina held a meeting with President of Rwanda Paul Kagame on the sidelines of Qatar Economic Forum at Raffles Tower.

During the meeting, Kagame told Sheikh Hasina that he always hears the development story of Bangladesh and he wants to visit Bangladesh. "We are very proud of Bangladesh," he was quoted as saying by Dr Momen. "Bangladesh is a very densely populated country and you (Sheikh Hasina) are governing the country very well. I want to see it," the President of Rwanda said during the meeting.

In reply, the Premier invited Kagame to visit Bangladesh. Paul Kagame said he wants to create a bridge between Bangladesh and Rwanda, particularly setting air connectivity between the two countries. Referring to the recent opening of a pharmaceutical factory by a Bangladeshi company in Rwanda, the President invited more Bangladeshi investment in different sectors in his country.

Sheikh Hasina praised Paul Kagame, saying that Rwanda is in a very good position in Africa due to his good leadership. She told Kagame that the Ukraine-Russia war has created difficulties and sent warnings to countries like Bangladesh, Rwanda. "We can overcome such a situation if we cooperate with each other," she was quoted as saying.

Kagame appreciated Sheikh Hasina's remark saying that it is high time to strengthen the cooperation between the two countries. PM's Speechwriter M Nazrul Islam was present at the briefing.