**Press Release**

**Chief of Army Staff holds bilateral meetings with senior UN officials**

**UN officials applauded the professionalism of Bangladeshi peacekeepers and expressed interest in deploying more peacekeepers from Bangladesh**

**New York, 26 April 2022:**

Bangladesh Army Chief General SM Shafiuddin Ahmed held bilateral meetings with several senior officials of the UN Headquarters (UNHQs) on various issues of mutual interest, including peacekeeping operations. During his visit to the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 25 and 26 April 2022, he met with Gilles Michaud, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Department of Security and Safety; Major General Maureen O'Brien, Acting Military Adviser; Mohammed Khaled Khiari, Assistant Secretary-General (ASG), Department of Political and Peace Building Affairs; Christian Saunders, ASG, Department of Operational Support and Police Adviser Luis Ribeiro Carrilho. The discussions were very fruitful and highlighted various aspects of the significant contribution of Bangladeshi peacekeepers in the UN peacekeeping operations.

During the meetings, the Chief of Army Staff highlighted Bangladesh's constitutional commitment to world peace and raised issues of Bangladesh’s interest in the UN peacekeeping operations, such as recruitment of more Bangladeshi peacekeepers, including women peacekeepers in the UN peacekeeping missions, appointment of high-level military officials in various peacekeeping operations, participation in peacekeeping missions co-pledging with other countries, deployment of armed personnel carriers from Bangladesh, recruitment of Bangladeshi peacekeepers to the political missions and guard units, recruitment of skilled and experienced officers of Bangladesh Army in the Security and Safety, and the Operational Support Department of UNHQs,and deployment of more Police Contingents and Individual Police Officers (IPOs).The Army Chief mentioned that Bangladeshi peacekeepers are selected through a rigorous selection process and sent to the mission with advanced pre-deployment training.

The Acting Military Adviser highly praised the Bangladeshi peacekeepers' professionalism, ethics, and discipline and said that Bangladesh is at the forefront of UN peacekeeping operations for all these reasons. He expressed interest in recruiting more peacekeepers from Bangladesh in the future.

ASG Khaled Khiari also lauded Bangladesh's leadership in the Peacebuilding Commission and UN Peacekeeping missions. He also praised the government and the people of Bangladesh for its graduation from the LDC category and for providing humanitarian shelter to the forcibly displaced Rohingyas.

During the talks, the Acting Military Adviser and the ASG of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs requested the Army Chief to deploy an aviation contingent to the UN peacekeeping mission as soon as possible. The Army Chief agreed in principle to the request.

The Army Chief proposed to replace the long-used weapons and equipment in the Bangladeshi contingents of the peacekeeping mission with new weapons and equipment sourced from Bangladesh, to which the concerned officials readily agreed. As a result, the long-awaited issue was resolved which would eventually play a significant role in enhancing Bangladeshi peacekeepers' capability, security, and morale.

ASG Christian Sounders also praised the professionalism and logistical capabilities of Bangladeshi peacekeepers. He also expressed interest in recruiting more Bangladeshi peacekeepers for different missions.

Police Adviser Luis Riberio Carrilho praised the Bangladeshi police personnel engaged in peacekeeping operations and expressed interest in recruiting more Bangladeshi police personnel.

The Chief of Army Staff visited the bench set up in the name of Bangabandhu and the tree -Honey Locust, at the UN Headquarters premises on the occasion of the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

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