



EU links development to good governance, HR, democracy

FE Report

The European Union (EU) attaches priority to the security of the people, good governance, human rights and democracy in maintaining its long-run development cooperation with Bangladesh.

"As security, democracy, rule of law and good governance are important for development, the EU would continuously attach priority to these

issues," said Ambassador of the Netherlands Sjef Ijermans while speaking at the 'Meet the Reporters' programme of the Dhaka Reporters' Unity Thursday.

He made this comment when he was asked whether they would raise issues like corruption, law and order and formation of an independent anti-cor

ruption commission during the Bangladesh Development Forum (BDF) meeting that begins in Dhaka tomorrow (Saturday).

As the Netherlands is currently holding the EU presidency, its Ambassador Sjef Ijermans is representing EU in Bangladesh.

"It is your internal affairs...but no body should stop people to participate in gathering and express their opinions. Parliament should be run properly," said Sjef Ijermans.

Echoing the similar views, head of Delegation of the European Commission (EC) Esko Kentrschynskyj said political violence and politics of confrontation is not a solution and it is the responsibility of politicians to maintain rule of law for the welfare of the country.

He said Bangladesh will face competition during the post Multi-Fibre Arrangement (MFA) situation and for this reason the EU is providing support to build up the trade negotiation capacity of the

country.

"We have discussed the issue with the Bangladesh government on several occasions and a centre has been established to look after the consequences of the post-MFA situation and take steps accordingly," Esko said.

Brushing aside the fears that EU's assistance to Least Developed Countries (LDCs) including Bangladesh would be affected with its enlargement, Esko said development assistance would not decline in future.

"The expansion of the EU from 15 member states to 25 would be positive for LDCs including Bangladesh because they would be able to enjoy similar trade facilities with these newly included EU countries as all members follow single tariff and trade rules," observed the EC head.

"The EU has become a bigger group.... a bigger market that has created a lot of chances....tremendous chances for LDCs including Bangladesh which would be able to export more goods under the same conditions," said German Ambassador Dietrich Andreas.

This bigger EU has created new possibilities of cooperation with LDCs, he observed.

Bangladesh exported goods worth about \$3.0 billion to the EU countries against its total import of \$700 million, he added.

Organised on the eve of the European Day, the programme was chaired by DRU president Alamgir Hossain.