

Touhid: South Asia, China must work together to ensure region's stability, development

Agencies

Amid growing geopolitical tensions, Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain yesterday urged China and South Asian nations to work together to ensure peace, stability and development in the region as responsible neighbours.

"While we celebrate our historical ties and envision a future of shared prosperity, we must address contemporary challenges in a designed manner," he said, adding that geopolitical tensions, climate change and economic disparities demand collective action.

Touhid was speaking as the chief guest at an international conference titled "China-South Asia Civilization and Connectivity: History and Contemporary Issues" at North South University (NSU) in Dhaka, reported UNB.

Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Yao Wen, speakers from Yunnan, Minzu and other Universities and NSU Vice Chancellor Prof Abdul Hannan Chowdhury also spoke.

Touhid hoped for the return of a peaceful and stable Myanmar including the return of Rohingya refugees to Rakhine State with rights and security so that this connectivity can be established to the mutual benefit of our people.



Adviser Touhid at North South University yesterday

UNB

"This would go a long way in driving economic growth, reducing poverty and enhancing cultural exchanges," he said.

"Bangladesh, as one of the fastest-growing economies and a nation at the forefront of climate resilience, stands ready to contribute to these efforts", Touhid added.

He said that their commitment to sustainable development, as exemplified by the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), underscores their determination to build a future that is inclusive and equitable.

Touhid claimed they strongly believe that cultural diplomacy is an enduring pillar of cooperation.

He added: "The exchanges of art, literature, and traditions fos-

ter a deeper understanding of the shared heritage."

"It is through such endeavours that we can build bridges of trust and solidarity, ensuring that future generations continue to uphold the values of peace and cooperation," said the adviser.

Touhid further added that the relationship between China and South Asia is deeply rooted in history, enriched by centuries of cultural exchanges, trade and cooperation.

From the ancient Silk Road to maritime trade routes, this region has been a confluence of civilizations, fostering mutual respect, understanding and progress.

"Bangladesh, situated at the crossroads of South Asia, has long served as a bridge connecting di-

verse cultures and traditions," he said.

The Buddhist monk Xuanzang's journey to the South Asian subcontinent and the exchanges facilitated by the Nalanda and Taxila universities are testaments to the historical links that bind China and South Asia.

Touhid said: "Atish Dipankar hailed from Bikrampur and travelled to Tibet in the 11th Century. These shared experiences have laid the foundation for a relationship that transcends borders and time."

He also said that Bangladesh and China have centuries-old records of sharing ideas, knowledge, art and literature.

"The official visit of President Xi Jinping to Bangladesh in 2016 added further momentum to our excellent bilateral relationship", The adviser said.

"It elevated the bilateral relations between our two countries to the level of strategic partnership of cooperation. This year, our bilateral relation has been elevated to a comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership", he said, adding that this new partnership between Bangladesh and China has been built on the very foundations of trust, mutual respect and a shared vision of a brighter future. ●

