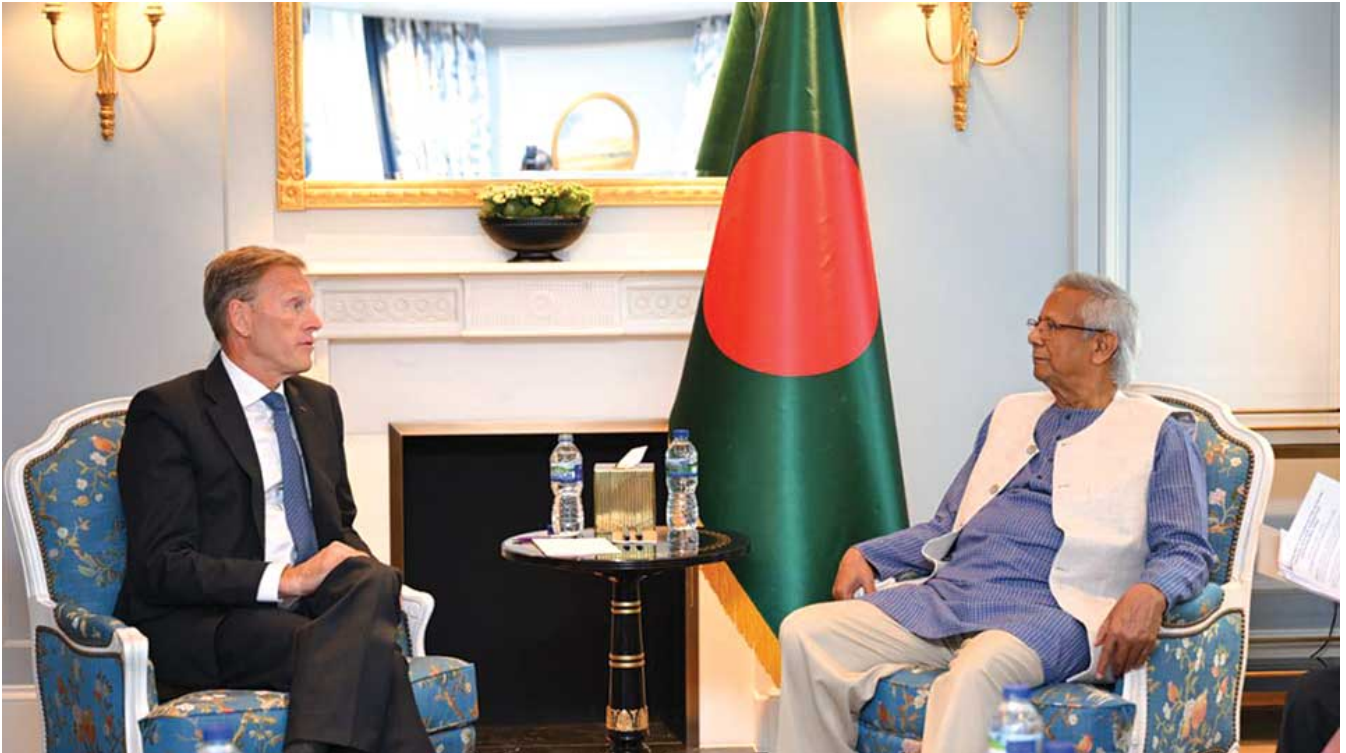


Airbus, Menzies seek long-time partnership with Bangladesh

- A Monitor Report

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London: European aircraft manufacturing company Airbus and British aviation giant Menzies Aviation, on June 10, expressed their eagerness to build a long-term partnership with Bangladesh.

The two companies placed their offers as Airbus Executive Vice President Wouter van Wersch and Menzies Aviation Executive Vice President Charles Wyley called on Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus successively at his hotel in London.

"We have identified Bangladesh as a key priority country," van Wersch told the Chief Adviser, adding that the company was keen to build a partnership with Bangla-desh's national carrier, Biman Bangladesh Airlines, and make it profitable.

Van Wersch said Airbus, which supplies 800 aircraft annually, also has

expertise in manufacturing helicopters and fighter jets.

The Chief Adviser said Bangladesh was willing to listen to all offers to modernize the Biman fleet but could not rush a decision.

"I am very eager to understand what can be done, what should be done. So, we will listen to you. But do not expect any decision soon. We have to look at everything in a very fresh way," said the Chief Adviser.

Van Wersch said if Bangladesh decides to add Airbus to the Biman fleet, 85 percent of the funding could be arranged through Export Credit Agency (ECA) financing.

London-based Menzies Aviation said, it was willing to join the competition with others to provide ground handling and air cargo services to the third terminal of Dhaka's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, using its experience of providing similar services to more than 300 airports in at least 65 countries.

"We would like to support Bangladeshi airports besides your national carrier," Menzies Executive Vice President Wyley told the Chief Adviser.

Wyley said, the company would make Dhaka a training hub for part of its 65,000 employees across the globe if it were handed the task of ground handling.