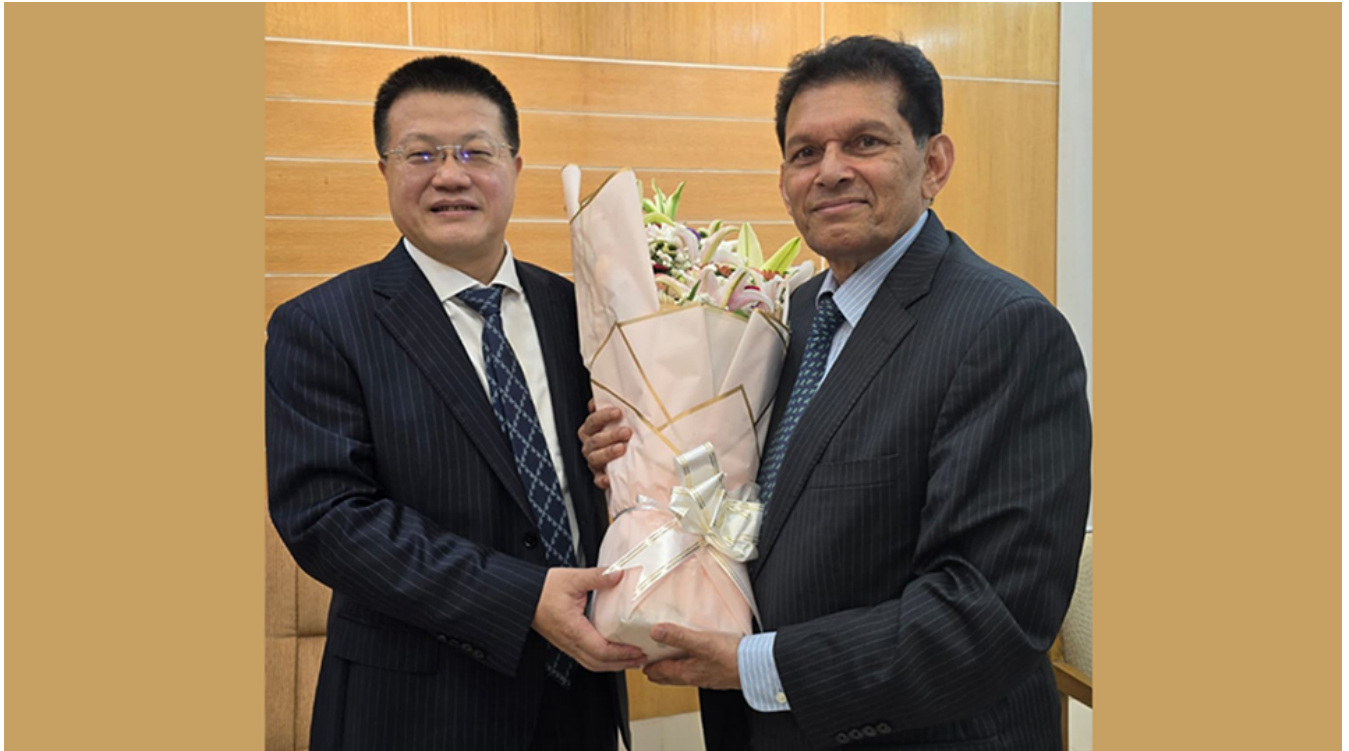


Medical tourism set to get boost as Bangladesh, China review progress of Friendship Hospital

- A Monitor Desk Report

Date: 18 January, 2026



Dhaka: Prospects of boosting medical tourism and expanding access to advanced healthcare featured prominently as Bangladesh and China discussed progress on the proposed Bangladesh-China Friendship General Hospital during a high-level meeting in Dhaka on Sunday, January 18, read a press release from the press wing of the Chief Adviser.

Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Yao Wen paid a courtesy call on National Security Adviser Dr. Khalilur Rahman at the Chief Adviser's Office, where the two sides exchanged views on issues of mutual interest and reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening bilateral cooperation.

During the meeting, discussions focused on the proposed Bangladesh-China Friendship Hospital, a flagship healthcare project

expected to significantly enhance medical services in northern Bangladesh. Officials noted that once operational, the modern facility could reduce the need for patients to seek treatment abroad or travel to major cities, while also opening new opportunities for regional medical tourism.

The ambassador reiterated China's continued support for Bangladesh's development priorities and expressed optimism about advancing cooperation in the health sector. Both sides underscored the importance of timely implementation of the hospital project, which is seen as a symbol of the longstanding friendship between the two countries.

The Bangladesh-China Friendship General Hospital will be a 1,000-bed state-of-the-art facility to be built in Nilphamari. Designed to offer advanced and specialized medical services, the hospital is expected to serve not only local residents but also patients from surrounding districts, reducing pressure on hospitals in Dhaka and Rangpur. Officials believe the availability of high-quality and affordable treatment could also attract patients from neighboring regions, strengthening Bangladesh's potential as a medical tourism destination.

The Ministry of Health has already instructed relevant authorities to prepare a master plan and detailed cost estimates for the project. On October 30, the Health Services Division issued an "urgent" notice to the Public Works Ministry, calling for immediate steps to move the project forward.

Officials from the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), the Planning Commission, and the Economic Relations Division (ERD) said the project is estimated to cost Tk1,480 crore and is expected to be fully funded through grants. Construction is planned on a 25-acre plot adjacent to the Darwani Textile Mill in Charaikhola Union under Nilphamari Sadar upazila, along the Saidpur-Nilphamari road. The hospital is targeted for completion by 2028.

In addition to healthcare cooperation, the meeting also covered the Teesta River Comprehensive Management and Restoration Project. Ambassador Yao Wen informed that he plans to visit the Teesta project area and reiterated China's commitment to completing the ongoing technical assessment expeditiously.

The Chinese envoy also reaffirmed Beijing's support for Bangladesh's

ongoing democratic transition and conveyed best wishes for the successful conduct of the upcoming national elections.

Both sides expressed satisfaction over the positive momentum in Bangladesh-China relations and reiterated their shared commitment to deepening cooperation in healthcare, infrastructure, and other development sectors for mutual benefit.

K