**Bangladesh ‘quickly becoming a regional leader’: Blinken**

US Secretary of State Antony J Blinken has said Bangladesh is "quickly becoming a regional leader" with a rapidly growing economy, an increasingly well-educated workforce, and a dynamic youth demographic.

Blinken said he looks forward to "deepening their partnership" with Bangladesh in the years ahead, reports UNB

"Americans and Bangladeshis are stronger together because of our cooperation on the defining issues of this era," he said in a press statement on behalf of the United States of America, conveying his best wishes to the people of Bangladesh on its Independence Day.

Blinken said the United States is proud of its partnership with Bangladesh and of the resulting achievements made over the last five decades.

"Most recently, we have made real strides together battling COVID-19, tackling climate change, and promoting a free and open Indo-Pacific region," he said.

"We commit to working with you in support of free and fair elections, open to all," Blinken said.

By committing to democratic norms, good governance, human rights, and media freedom - all of which are hallmarks of developing, stable, and prospering societies - Blinken said he believes Bangladesh will achieve its great potential.

"As you celebrate your Independence Day, Bangladesh has many reasons to be proud," Blinken said.

He said by generously welcoming Rohingya fleeing genocide, Bangladesh has demonstrated its humanitarian commitment to sheltering vulnerable refugees.

By developing adaptation strategies to the climate crisis, Blinken said, Bangladesh has shown leadership in protecting the environment and strengthening climate resilience.