



CENTRE FOR AMBITION
(An Institute for Civil Services)

India-Bangladesh Relations

India was the first country to recognize Bangladesh as a separate and independent state and established diplomatic relations with the country immediately after its independence in December 1971. India's links with Bangladesh are civilisational, cultural, social and economic. There is much that unites the two countries - a shared history and common heritage, linguistic and cultural ties, passion for music, literature and the arts. This commonality is reflected in our multi-dimensional and expanding relations. In the last more than four decades, the two countries have continued to consolidate their relations and have built a comprehensive institutional framework to promote bilateral cooperation in all areas.

High Level Visits and Exchanges

The bilateral relations between the two countries are on a high trajectory with regular high-level visits and exchanges. Smt. Sushma Swaraj and General (Retd.) V. K. Singh paid their first stand-alone visits abroad to Bangladesh after assuming charge as Hon'ble Minister and Minister of State of External Affairs in June and August 2014, respectively.

Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi paid a State visit to Bangladesh on June 6-7, 2015. During the visit, 22 bilateral documents were concluded, including the exchange of instrument of ratification for India-Bangladesh Land Boundary Agreement (LBA). H. E. Sheikh Hasina, Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bangladesh visited New Delhi on 19 August 2015 to attend funeral of late Smt. Suvra Mukherjee, spouse of Hon'ble President Shri Pranab Mukherjee. Both Prime Ministers met in New York on 24 September 2015 on the sidelines of UNGA.

Hon'ble President Pranab Mukherjee visited Bangladesh in March 2013, which was his first trip abroad since assuming the office. Hon'ble President of Bangladesh Mr. Md. Abdul Hamid visited India in December 2014, which was the first visit by Bangladesh's ceremonial Head of State after a gap of 42 years.

There are frequent high level visits at Ministerial level as well as between Armed Forces of both countries on regular basis.

Bilateral Mechanisms

There are more than 50 bilateral institutional mechanisms between India and Bangladesh. A Joint Consultative Commission (JCC) led by the Ministers of External/Foreign Affairs coordinates and oversees implementation of initiatives taken between the two countries as well as explores newer avenues for cooperation. The 3rd JCC was held in New Delhi on September 20, 2014. .

Security & Border Management

The ties between our two countries in the areas of security cooperation are unparalleled. Bangladesh leadership at the highest level has assured that its territory would not be allowed for use by anyone to harm India. All umbrella agreements required for security cooperation have been signed and ratified. A Coordinated Border Management Plan (CBMP) signed in 2011 aims to synergize the efforts of both the Border Guarding Forces for more effective control over cross border illegal activities and crimes as well as for maintenance of peace and harmony along the India-Bangladesh border.

India and Bangladesh share 4096.7 km. of border, which is the largest land border that India shares with any of its neighbouring countries, out of which 1116.2 km is riverine. India- Bangladesh Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) came into force following the exchange of instrument of ratification during PM's visit in June 2015. On 31 July,

2015 the enclaves of India and Bangladesh in each other's countries were exchanged and strip maps were signed. Persons from these erstwhile enclaves, who opted to retain their Indian citizenship made a final movement to India by 30 November 2015.

The settlement of the maritime boundary arbitration between Bangladesh and India, as per UNCLOS award on July 7, 2014, has paved the way for the economic development of this part of the Bay of Bengal, which will be beneficial to both countries.

Sharing of River Waters

India and Bangladesh share 54 common rivers. A bilateral Joint Rivers Commission (JRC) is working since June 1972 to maintain liaison between the two countries to maximize benefits from common river systems. The Ganga Waters Treaty signed in 1996 for sharing of waters of river Ganga during lean season (January 1-May 31) continues to work satisfactorily.

Bilateral Trade

India's exports to Bangladesh in 2015-15 (July-June) were US\$ 5816.90 million and the imports from Bangladesh during the same period were US\$ 527.16 million. India's exports to Bangladesh in the H1 of 2015- 16 (July-December 2015) are US\$ 2684.10 million and the imports from Bangladesh during the same period were US\$ 321.09 million. Over the last five years (since FY 2010-11), total trade between the two countries have risen by 24.3%.

Substantial duty concessions have been extended to Bangladesh under SAFTA, SAPTA and APTA. Furthermore, with a view to, inter-alia, addressing trade imbalance, all tariff lines, except 25 items, have also been removed from negative list since 2011. From July 2014, as a goodwill gesture, the Bangladesh Government has allowed tax-free food transport to the Indian state of Tripura. Two Border Haats each in Tripura and Meghalaya have been established for the convenience of bordering communities. Tripura and Meghalaya are each constructing two more Border Haats and few more are under process elsewhere.

Cooperation in power sector has been progressing satisfactorily. Bangladesh is importing about 600 MW of power from India. A few private Indian companies are also investing in Bangladesh in power sector.

India's Economic Assistance to Bangladesh

During the visit of H. E. Sheikh Hasina, Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bangladesh to India in January 2010, India announced a US\$1 billion Line of Credit (LOC) for Bangladesh. Most of these projects under 1st LoC

have been completed and the remaining are under various stages of completion.

Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi announced a new LOC of US \$ 2 billion during his visit to Bangladesh in June 2015. The new LoC will cover projects in areas of Roads, Railways, Power, Shipping, SEZs, Health & Medical Care and Technical Education.

Connectivity

The movement of goods by road is conducted through more than 20 Land Customs Stations (LCSs) along the border and more than 20 are notified for operationalisation. The Protocol on Inland Water Trade and Transit (PIWTT) has been operational since 1972. It permits movement of goods over barges/vessels through the river systems of Bangladesh on eight specific routes. Connectivity through the Coastal Waterways enabled by the signing of the Coastal Shipping Agreement is also of priority to both India and Bangladesh. There are bus services between Dhaka-Kolkata, Dhaka-Agartala, Dhaka-Shillong-Guwahati and Kolkata-Agartala via Dhaka. Commencement of Khulna-Kolkata bus service is also at an advanced stage of preparation. Three Broad Gauge inter-country rail links between the two countries are operational out of the 6 rail links that exist while work on the Shahbazpur-Kulaura rail link is in progress. There is regular Passenger train service 'Moitree Express' between Kolkata and Dhaka, which now operates 4 days a week. National airlines of both countries and few private airlines operate between Dhaka, Chittagong and New Delhi, Kolkata & Mumbai.

Capacity Building and Training

Bangladesh is an important ITEC partner country, and a number of participants from Bangladesh have availed of training courses under the ITEC programme. In addition, special courses are underway for personnel of administration, police, border guarding forces and military.

Cultural Exchanges

The Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre (IGCC) in Dhaka regularly organizes programmes covering the entire gamut of cultural activities since 2010. Scholarships are being granted by ICCR every year to students from Bangladesh for pursuing general courses in arts, sciences, engineering and also specialized courses for culture, drama, music, fine arts and sports, etc. A 100-member Youth Delegation is visiting India annually since 2012. The High Commission of India has been publishing a print and electronic edition of Bengali literary monthly magazine 'Bharat Bichitra' for the last 42 years. The magazine is considered as one of the best of its kind in Bangladesh and has a wide readership among all sections of society.

Indian community in Bangladesh

About 10,000 strong Indian community is estimated to be living in Bangladesh. Indians in Bangladesh are well respected for their hard work and managerial skills, and as a community doing very well socially and economically. Most of the Indians are engaged in Ready Made Garment (RMG) sector or as top professionals in MNCs. Indian community in Bangladesh through India Association, Dhaka Association etc. organize events and cultural programs from time to time.