

## Message from Secretary's Desk

Dear Friends,

Institute of Social and Cultural Studies (ISCS), India which commenced its journey in 2010 with an imperative of speaking about socio-cultural legacies through forms of art, literature, intellectual achievements and cross cultural linkages with its subcontinents. Through interfaces, discussions, diversified mammoth of research and vista of stupendous publications, now would more frequently intends to reciprocate on contemporary issues through its "Coeval Discourse". A platform to analyse the coherence of the current happenings, and build bridge

between the thought leaders while communicating their findings with ISCS's compassionate audience. In order to transcend the voice of Institute's interdisciplinary approach towards long-term strategic deliberations and research it also chooses to communicate through Bi-Monthly Bulletin, where the writings of the academicians, policy makers and civil society actors would appraise its readers with the useful ideas, comparative experiences that can be realistically applied and creatively adopted by disparate forums and development leaders to build country's sustainable social and economic vibrancy. The first volume would talk about differential angles and Institute's deliberations through plural platform "Coeval Discourse" on the Memorandums between India and its neighbouring Bangladesh that had been signed during Honourable Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina's visit to India in October 2019.

— Arindam Mukherjee



## Hasina's Latest India Visit Takes : Greater Pledge For North East

**Manash Ghosh★**



Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina demonstrated once again during her recent visit to Delhi that her country under her rule is India's most trusted and steadfast neighbour which will always work for promoting peace, harmony, good neighbourliness between the two countries. In fact her four day visit was a significant milestone in bringing the two countries closer and making their ties stronger. She and Prime Minister Narendra Modi agreed to work on mutually beneficial partnerships. As many as 15 agreements and MOUs were signed which clearly signified that both the countries wanted to live as good neighbours in peace and harmony. The Prime Ministers of both the countries showed a high level of appreciation of each other's sensitivities and needs and went out of their way to address them.

For instance Sheikh Hasina's humanitarian gesture of allowing India to draw 1.82 cusec of water from Feni river, which belongs entirely to Bangladesh, for meeting the drinking water needs of Tripura's border town of Sabroom, much against the wishes of her officials and the country's mainstream opposition, speaks volumes of her positive mind-set towards India. In fact she

justified her gesture by saying”If a thirsty man asks for drinking water, shall we be so mean as not give it to him? Except Feni river Sabroom has no other drinking water source. How could I refuse? Moreover, how can we forget the tremendous sacrifices made by the people of Tripura during our liberation war? Bangladesh is not an ungrateful nation that it can not part with such little help to the people of Sabroom who bore the brunt of miseries of our liberation war. Giving Feni water to India should not be mixed up with the Teesta water sharing agreement.”

Most of the agreements signed were those which addressed India’s long standing concerns regarding its Eastern and North Eastern States and their economic betterment which would be mutually beneficial for both the countries. Also she gave a big push to India’s “look east policy” by offering three SEZs in Bangladesh where Indian entrepreneurs may start operations to extend their supply and value chains and make it easier to send finished goods to the NE region by road, river and rail as well as to ASEAN market by road and sea routes. It was to boost connectivity on land and water routes between the two countries that an agreement on standard operating procedures for the use of Chittagong and Mongla ports for the two way movement of goods to and from India to the NE and Eastern states was signed. This will facilitate Indian logistical companies to develop partnerships with their Bangladeshi counterparts to maximise the use of the two Bangladeshi ports for the movement of Indian goods to and from Eastern and NE states. By signing this agreement Hasina made India’s long standing wish of utilising her country’s two major sea ports for the economic betterment of land locked NE states come true. Bangladesh also stands to gain significantly as it will earn revenue in millions in hard currency.

Another agreement that will benefit Tripura tremendously and whose ambit will be extended to the entire north east in course of time, was that Bangladesh will supply bottled LPG from its plant at a rate which will be almost half of what it costs to get supplies from Assam or North Bihar. While it takes almost two weeks for transporting gas cylinders from the Indian bottling plants in the mainland to Tripura, the Bangladeshi gas will reach Tripura in a jiffy. Apart from cross border energy co-operation the two Prime Ministers decided also to increasingly engage in intra-regional electricity trade. The border haat experiment has proved to be such a great success that 12 more such haats are to come up along the international border where the local businesses will develop supply chains and warehousing facility. All these bilateral initiatives are going to provide win win economic and business partnership spin offs to both the countries.

The other crucial accord signed was the installation of coastal surveillance radar system along the Bangladesh coast to ensure maritime security system in the Bay of Bengal which of late has become a happy hunting ground for foreign navies and plunderers of sea wealth and pirates. The system will be jointly manned by both the countries who will periodically review the collected data and evolve and adopt joint maritime security strategies in the Bay.

Thus it can safely be said that Sheikh Hasina’s latest India visit has provided, in terms of substantive sub-regional co-operation, more rewards to both countries and far greater depth to their existing cordial ties than any of her previous visits. EOM

★ *Former Editor, Dainik Statesman*

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# India, Bangladesh and Pakistan : A Statistical Comparison on Socio Economic Performancet

Prof. Rajagopal Dhar Chakraborti ★



The set of statistical comparison on socio-economic scenario would reveal the status of neighboring countries India, Bangladesh and Pakistan over the growth prospects and sustainable issues.

TABLE 1 : POPUALTION, AREA, DENSITY

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
POPULATION, IN MILLIONS					
PAKISTAN	108	142	179	199	212
INDIA	873	1060	1230	1310	1350
BANGLADESH	103	128	148	156	161
POPULATION GROWTH (ANNUAL %)					
PAKISTAN	2.96	2.65	2.20	2.09	2.06
INDIA	2.08	1.77	1.35	1.12	1.04
BANGLADESH	2.43	1.95	1.12	1.12	1.05
SURFACE AREA (THOUSAND SQ. KM)					
PAKISTAN	7961.0	7961.0	7961.0	7961.0	7961.0
INDIA	32872.6	32872.6	32872.6	32872.5	32872.6
BANGLADESH	148460	148460	148460	147630	147630
POPULATION DENSITY (PEOPLE PER SQ. KM OF LAND AREA)					
PAKISTAN	139.64	184.65	232.75	258.70	275.29
INDIA	293.72	355.37	415.14	440.66	454.94
BANGLADESH	792.594	980.701	1133.713	1200.402	1239.579

TABLE 2 : POVERTY

2A : POVERTY HEAD COUNT RATIO AT NATIONAL POVERTY LINES (% OF POPULATION)

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	..	..	36.8	24.3	..
INDIA	..	..	29.8^	21.9*	..
BANGLADESH	..	48.9	31.5	..	..

NOTES : ^ 2019 \* 2011

2B: POVERTY HEAD COUNT RATIO AT \$1.90 A DAY (2011 PPP) (% OF POPULATION)

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	58.9	..	8.3	3.9	..
INDIA	..	..	31.1 ^	21.2*	..
BANGLADESH	..	34.8	19.6	..	..

NOTES : ^ 2019 \* 2011

3A : GNI, ATLAS METHOD (CURRENT US\$)

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	45.5 BILLION	67.7 BILLION	184 BILLION	272 BILLION	336 BILLION
INDIA	3.35 BILLION	4.67 BILLION	1.5 TRILLION	2.1 TRILLION	2.73 TRILLION
BANGLADESH	32.6 BILLION	55.7 BILLION	11.8 BILLION	19.1 BILLION	282 BILLION

TABLE 3B: GNI PER CAPITA, ATLAS METHOD (CURRENT US\$)

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	420	480	1030	1360	1580
INDIA	380	440	1220	1600	2020
BANGLADESH	320	440	800	1220	1750

TABLE 3C; GNI, PPP (CURRENT INTERNATIONAL \$)

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	223 BILLION	380 BILLION	743 BILLION	1.01 TRILLION	1.24 TRILLION
INDIA	1.07 TRILLION	2.25 TRILLION	5.3 TRILLION	7.9 TRILLION	10.4 TRILLION
BANGLADESH	90.5 BILLION	178 BILLION	394 BILLION	574 BILLION	736 BILLION

TABLE 3D; GNI PER CAPITA, PPP (CURRENT INTERNATIONAL \$)

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	2070	2670	4140	5050	5840
INDIA	1220	2130	4310	6060	7680
BANGLADESH	880	1390	2670	3680	4560

TABLE 4 : INCOME SHARE HELD BY LOWEST 20%

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	8.1	..	9.6	8.9	..
INDIA	8.7 (1987)	8.5(2004)	8.3 (2009)	8.1 (2011)	..
BANGLADESH	..	8.6	8.9	8.6(2016)	..

TABLE 5 : INCOME SHARE HELD BY HIGHEST 10%

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2016
PAKISTAN	27.1	26.2( 2001)	25.8	28.9	28.9 ( 2015)
INDIA	27.4 (1987)	29.1 ( 2004)	30 (2009)	31.1 ( 2011)	..
BANGLADESH	23.3 ( 1991)	27.9	26.9	--	26.8

TABLE 6: LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH, TOTAL (YEARS)

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2017
PAKISTAN	60.1	62.82	65.264	66.577	66.9
INDIA	57.865	62.505	66.693	68.607	69.2
BANGLADESH	58.21	65.447	69.881	71.514	72.0

TABLE 7 : FERTILITY RATE, TOTAL (BIRTHS PER WOMAN)

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2017
PAKISTAN	6.164	5.037	3.951	3.66	3.56
INDIA	4.045	3.311	2.581	2.295	2.24.
BANGLADESH	4.495	3.169	2.324	2.12	2.06

TABLE 8 : ADOLESCENT FERTILITY RATE (BIRTHS PER 1,000 WOMEN AGES 15-19)

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2017
PAKISTAN	86.0878	56.3922	42.3362	39.8832	38.80
INDIA	98.7892	66.837	34.6548	19.127	13.18
BANGLADESH	153.9614	112.2538	90.8034	85.2192	82.96

TABLE 9: CONTRACEPTIVE PREVALENCE, ANY METHODS (% OF WOMEN AGES 15-49)

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	14.5	17(1999)	27(2008)	32( 2014)	34.2
INDIA	44.9 (1988)	46.9	54.8(2008)	..	53.5(2016)
BANGLADESH	31.4(1989)	54.3	..	62.3(2014)	..

TABLE 10: BIRTHS ATTENDED BY SKILLED HEALTH STAFF (% OF TOTAL)

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	18.8 (1991)	23(2002)	41(2009)	52.1(2013)	69.3
INDIA	34.2(1993)	42.5	52.3 (2008)	81.1 (2014)	81.4(2016)
BANGLADESH	9.5 (1994)	12.1	26.5	43.5 (2013)	49.8(2016)

TABLE 11: MORTALITY RATE, UNDER-5 (PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS)

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	138.9	112.4	87.5	76	69.3
INDIA	126.2	91.6	58.2	43.6	36.6
BANGLADESH	143.7	87.3	49.1	36.1	30.2



**TABLE 12 : PREVALENCE OF UNDERWEIGHT, WEIGHT FOR AGE (% OF CHILDREN UNDER 5)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	..	..	..	31.6 (2012)	..
INDIA	..	..	..	35.7	..
BANGLADESH	61.5	42.3	..	32.6 (2014)	..

**TABLE 13: IMMUNIZATION, MEASLES (% OF CHILDREN AGES 12-23 MONTHS)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	50	57	57	75	76
INDIA	56	56	82	87	90
BANGLADESH	65	74	88	97	97

**TABLE 14: PRIMARY COMPLETION RATE, TOTAL (% OF RELEVANT AGE GROUP)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	..	..	62.30639	..	70.91311
INDIA	..	71.48611	..	97.71132	..
BANGLADESH	..	..	67.83219	..	..

**TABLE 15 : SCHOOL ENROLMENT, PRIMARY (% GROSS)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	58.62931	70.88539	84.59361	85.08992	94.14165
INDIA	91.44031	94.27112	109.1014	108.4852	..
BANGLADESH	83.79701	..	105.9745	..	116.4663

**TABLE 16: SCHOOL ENROLMENT, SECONDARY (% GROSS)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	22.00757	..	33.17973	39.60365	42.78196
INDIA	..	44.87198	63.1162	73.86563	..
BANGLADESH	20.90838	49.76399	51.6377	65.62919	72.6906

**TABLE 17: SCHOOL ENROLMENT, PRIMARY AND SECONDARY (GROSS), GENDER PARITY INDEX (GPI)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	0.49721	..	0.82162	0.8325	0.84828
INDIA	..	0.80224	0.98905	1.07018	..
BANGLADESH	0.75364	..	1.08595	..	1.11591

**TABLE 18: PREVALENCE OF HIV, TOTAL (% OF POPULATION AGES 15-49)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
INDIA	..	..	..	..	..
BANGLADESH	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1

**TABLE 19: FOREST AREA (SQ. KM)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	25270	21160	16870	14720	..
INDIA	639390	653900	697900	706820	..
BANGLADESH	14940	14680	14420	14290	..

**TABLE 20: TERRESTRIAL AND MARINE PROTECTED AREAS (% OF TOTAL TERRITORIAL AREA)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	..	..	..	..	9.794954
INDIA	..	..	..	..	3.479307
BANGLADESH	..	..	..	..	4.888649

**TABLE 21: URBAN POPULATION GROWTH (ANNUAL %)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	3.773257	3.252585	2.781647	2.663871	2.668674
INDIA	3.027878	2.544617	2.46549	2.322891	2.308965
BANGLADESH	4.8875	3.610829	3.6278	3.396173	3.185593

**TABLE 22: ENERGY USE (KG OF OIL EQUIVALENT PER CAPITA)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	398.5191	450.0579	473.8497	..	..
INDIA	350.0757	417.2876	561.6534	..	..
BANGLADESH	123.462	143.0538	206.7612	..	..

**TABLE 23 : CO2 EMISSIONS (METRIC TONS PER CAPITA)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	0.636943	0.747834	0.899518	..	..
INDIA	0.709001	0.976602	1.393273	..	..
BANGLADESH	0.150558	0.218312	0.406146	..	..

**TABLE 24: ELECTRIC POWER CONSUMPTION (KWH PER CAPITA)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	277.4322	362.4048	442.1801	..	..
INDIA	272.0635	393.6462	640.3946	..	..
BANGLADESH	49.78097	104.6077	247.2634	..	..

**TABLE 25: GDP GROWTH (ANNUAL %)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	4.458587	4.260088	1.606692	4.731147	5.430011
INDIA	5.533455	3.840991	8.497587	7.996254	6.982334
BANGLADESH	5.622258	5.293295	5.571802	6.552653	7.863709

**TABLE 26: INFLATION, GDP DEFLATOR (ANNUAL %)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	6.451998	24.89115	10.85024	4.110247	2.072242
INDIA	10.6683	3.64497	10.52602	2.279588	4.184739
BANGLADESH	6.532735	3.446659	7.144649	5.872764	5.597431

**TABLE 27: AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, AND FISHING, VALUE ADDED (% OF GDP)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	23.06228	24.13963	23.28159	23.81706	22.5727
INDIA	26.89647	21.60898	17.02651	16.17451	14.46414
BANGLADESH	30.48983	22.71815	17.00118	14.783	13.07432

**TABLE 28: INDUSTRY (INCLUDING CONSTRUCTION), VALUE ADDED (% OF GDP)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	22.3613	21.71565	19.71948	19.091	18.17437
INDIA	27.43997	27.27503	30.72508	27.34739	27.00761
BANGLADESH	20.14563	22.27938	24.95648	26.83139	28.53699

**TABLE 29: EXPORTS OF GOODS AND SERVICES (% OF GDP)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	15.53831	13.44132	13.51627	10.60441	8.529736
INDIA	7.05335	12.99724	22.40093	19.81319	19.69558
BANGLADESH	5.908316	12.3442	16.02411	17.33667	14.80096

**TABLE 30: IMPORTS OF GOODS AND SERVICES (% OF GDP)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	23.37119	14.68828	19.35266	17.05026	19.43989
INDIA	8.452911	13.90369	26.85427	22.10972	23.43016
BANGLADESH	13.05819	16.97751	21.77873	24.74932	23.44393

**TABLE 31: GROSS CAPITAL FORMATION (% OF GDP)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	18.93537	17.22663	15.80456	15.70703	16.4245
INDIA	27.83923	25.9469	39.78562	32.11673	30.98272
BANGLADESH	16.45868	23.80856	26.24666	28.88669	31.23492

**TABLE 32: REVENUE, EXCLUDING GRANTS (% OF GDP)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	..	..	..	..	..
INDIA	12.42594	11.70343	13.1836	12.41521	..
BANGLADESH	..	..	9.743829	9.844484	..

**TABLE 33: TIME REQUIRED TO START A BUSINESS (DAYS)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	..	..	..	20	16.5
INDIA	..	..	..	30	16.5
BANGLADESH	..	..	..	19.5	19.5

**TABLE 34: DOMESTIC CREDIT PROVIDED BY FINANCIAL SECTOR (% OF GDP)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	50.87117	41.60121	46.18674	48.76295	58.27717
INDIA	50.84927	52.08465	73.41483	75.61106	..
BANGLADESH	21.63122	30.17772	57.40804	60.16356	64.0615

**TABLE 35: TAX REVENUE (% OF GDP)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	..	..	..	..	..
INDIA	9.993591	8.810143	10.38804	10.56971	..
BANGLADESH	..	..	7.834685	8.498349	..

**TABLE 36: MILITARY EXPENDITURE (% OF GDP)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	6.52232	4.168723	3.423691	3.551387	4.025736
INDIA	3.146215	2.94893	2.707464	2.405127	2.419034
BANGLADESH	..	..	7.834685	8.498349	..

**TABLE 37: MOBILE CELLULAR SUBSCRIPTIONS (PER 100 PEOPLE)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	0.001858	0.215319	55.27995	63.1307	72.55706
INDIA	0	0.338556	60.94154	76.4076	86.94256
BANGLADESH	0	0.218553	46.02656	84.07709	97.28119

**TABLE 38: HIGH-TECHNOLOGY EXPORTS (% OF MANUFACTURED EXPORTS)**

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	..	..	1.725186	1.606568	2.198504
INDIA	..	..	7.673246	7.990802	9.007949
BANGLADESH	..	..	0.213043	0.307888	..

TABLE 39: STATISTICAL CAPACITY SCORE (OVERALL AVERAGE)

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	..	..	76.66667	75.55557	78.8889
INDIA	..	..	81.11111	77.7778	91.11113
BANGLADESH	..	..	68.88889	76.6667	72.22223

TABLE 40: MERCHANDISE TRADE (% OF GDP)

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	32.40405	26.89839	33.37921	24.35132	26.86022
INDIA	12.94446	20.04761	34.41028	31.3897	30.67234
BANGLADESH	16.73822	28.61544	40.78364	38.15179	36.76745

TABLE 41: NET BARTER TERMS OF TRADE INDEX (2000 = 100)

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2018
PAKISTAN	108.6957	100	64.68504	60.2392	54.91776
INDIA	85.8156	100	93.4719	105.854	98.17033
BANGLADESH	117.3913	100	61.22419	67.8985	62.21348

★ Prof. & HoD, Department of South and South-East Asian Studies, CU

# Modi and Hasina Making the Bilateral Work

Dr. Sreeradha Datta ★

Undoubtedly, India’s ‘Neighbourhood First’ and ‘Act East Policy’ find its greatest success in its immediate neighbour Bangladesh. The effort of the two leaders, Modi and Hasina in strengthening this bilateral trajectory is unmistakable. Importantly, the two neighbours have transcended beyond their state to state ties, setting a mood to regional dynamics that is enabling convergence on a promise of goodwill and prosperity through shared collaboration. The latest visit of Bangladeshi PM Sheikh Hasina to Delhi as participant to the India Economic Forum,(3-4 October2019) and the subsequent Modi-Hasina bilateral meetings leading to the 53 paragraphs joint statement are the testimony to the depth of the India-Bangladeshi growing cooperation. The latest bilateral meeting has reflected the widening of the large scope of the bilateral journey that was undertaken for the past decade.

The latest visit by Hasina this October 2019, has complemented the past initiatives and resulted in signing of seven Memorandums of Understanding (MOU). These included, coastal surveillance system, implementation of defence Lines of Credit, transport and connectivity, education, youth welfare, capacity building, culture and water supply of 1.82 cusec from

Feni River to Sabroom town in Tripura as a part of drinking water scheme. The new component in the bilateral tie has been the defense cooperation. This has been strengthened further in this MOU and both sides will expedite work towards utilizing the US\$ 500 mn Defense Line of Credit.

The security component that infact underlined the bilateral relations has been a core issue between the two neighbours with Sheikh Hasina addressing Indian concerns post her electoral win in 2008 open up a panorama of cooperation. The earlier defence agreement has strengthened the underlying security cooperation. The decision to set up a coastal surveillance radar system in Bangladesh will strengthen the maritime security partnership between the two countries. Given the issues arising out of terrorism and other security gaps at the sea, the coastal surveillance system can enable a bilateral white shipping agreement in the days ahead too.

Amidst the political dialogue and enlisted MOUs, India’s poised attribute in drawing solution over the impinging Rohingya issue and intransigently increasing of UNHCR camps remain to be a matter of concern for the Bangladesh in present times.





Following the latest border incident resulting in loss of a Indian security personnel that infact took place in the immediate days, post the Hasina visit, has regenerated the Indian concern over this cross border security issue. To recall briefly, border killings for long has been a contentious bilateral issue. While India and Bangladesh engage across a wide spectrum the cross border irritants can upset the environment. The security apparatus on both sides of the border should have better interaction and understanding of the ground to not only avoid such unfortunate incidents but also provide scope for deeper cooperation for people to people connect. The two sides need to deepen the cross border cooperation through greater people to people and community driven activities. Given the deepening engagement between the two sides, a broad based security architecture that

allows for greater bilateral security cooperation through a more structured transparent mechanism will address such outstanding conflicts.

While India understands, the present Awami government’s attempt to balance their perceived proximity with India by moving closer to China, at the same time, India’s concern regarding China is not unknown to Dhaka. China has been a close developmental partner of Bangladesh for long and their growing engagement is visible. But given the close bilateral ties all these Asian states enjoy the scope for greater understanding and mutual assurances to address concerns that arise out of some threat perception. India Bangladesh are close neighbours and stability in bilateral ties will also reflect in stronger regional engagement.

★ Centre Head & Senior Fellow, Neighbourhood Studies, VIF, New Delhi

Report

Round table Meet on  
“New Paradigm on India-Bangladesh Economic Cooperation”

Chair of the session: Prof.Dr.Raja Gopal Dhar Chakroborti , Prof and Head of the Department of South and South East Asian Studies, Calcutta University

Speakers

- 1 Mr. Manash Ghosh, Former Editor, Dainik Statesman
- 2 Ms.Shamima Yeasmin Smriti, First Secretary (Political), Bangladesh Deputy high commission,Kolkata
- 3 Dr.Bimal Shankar Nanda, Prof .Political Science , university of Calcutta
- 4 Dr.Ranajoy Bhattacharya, Head of the Dept , Economic , Indian Institute of Foreign Trade
- 5.Mr.Gautam De, Regional Director-Indian Council for cultural Relations,Kolkata
- 6. Mr.Samir Mitra- Ex DIG,BSF



Institute of Social and Cultural Studies (ISCS), India as a part of its first coeval Discourse – a platform to assess the act and impact of the current happenings did prompt a Round Table meet on “New Paradigm of India-Bangladesh Economic Cooperation” in partnership with Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ISCS), Kolkata on 21st of October 2019.The Round

table acted as an initiative to engage expertise from disparate columns to assess the aftermath of the Memorandums and Agreements contrived between India and Bangladesh as a part of Hon’ble PM of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina’s visit to India, October 2019.



The speakers surmised that the bilateral partnerships based on, sovereignty, peace, trust and equality would flatten colossal of advantages for both the country's conventional as well as non-conventional areas. The revered economists, diplomat, academicians and eminent journalist elucidated that how a Win-Win business partnership between the adjoining riveraine nations would boost connectivity over trade and commerce. Through enabling people of the North Eastern belt of India to have a better access to LPG's at reduced price, generating revenues over cross border energy trade. The economist view point focussed that the strategic economic partnership would help Bangladesh to make their economic growth sustainably fertile, enhancing country's per capita income rate which remains substantially low than India till date. The medium

of the growthspurt would be the export of textiles, jute, commercial goods, Pharmaceuticals, including the swell of a lucrative approach towards marketing and commercialization. In order to ascertain the growth matrix for the grass root people of Bangladesh through the establishments of 'Border Haats', youth education and skill training is promoted. The proposed MOU's also aims to rekindle the growth prospects of cargo hubs, inland water and motor route connectivity to accord efficient trade and connectivity corridors between India and Bangladesh in the future years.

The representative from the Bangladesh Deputy High Commission, Kolkata while illustrating the key impacts of the recent development between both the nations added that





the Feni water agreements would strengthen the relation between both the nations, while underscoring the fact that all these agreements would redeem a proactive approach in condemning impinging issues like migration, socio-economic issues, gender and health notably. The Memorandums on Zero Tolerance and the security surveillance was regarded as a resolute effort towards tranquil, stable and crime free border by all the speakers and the chair himself. He also attested that Memorandum on Zero tolerance, Coastal security surveillance and border security management including the installation of check post at Akhaura(Tripura) and Ghoadanga (West Bengal) are manifestation of the commitment towards anti- terrorism, extremism and other illegal acts.

The Round table on a concluding lines reaffirmed the fact that the avid multi-dimensional partnership would be rewarding for both the nation in terms of people to people connect, trade

and commerce, connectivity, security and development of land ports. The deliberation conceded the fact that the need of the hour for the country was to synthesize an empirical articulatory approach to meet the evolving market and commercial requisites. The Round table members and the participants of the meet recalled the shared bonds between India and Bangladesh over history, culture, language and other commonalities. They also paid their solemn tribute to the martyrs of the Liberation War of 1971, the Muktiyod has and the Indian soldiers who fought relentlessly to cherish the value of secular democracy, growth and development. The meet culminated with a hope that the recent multi dimensional bond, diplomatic channels, cultural linkages would construct a new a paradigm of growth and development between India and Bangladesh.



### E-connect over Pink Spin



Eden gardens of Kolkata ushered a Pink Revolution with full house for a power pack India-Bangladesh cricket match at Kolkata on 22nd November, where the cricket lovers enjoyed every bit of the spectacular match and the ambience blotched in pink. Others kept speculating on the outcome of 20 minutes one to one session out of 54 mins of togetherness the Chief Minister of West Bengal Mamata Banerjee and Honorable Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina. AK Abdul Momen the foreign minister of Bangladesh brief the media, that conversation apart from broaching the bilateral ties between two nations, also stressed upon the economic and business aspects between West Bengal and Bangladesh. As Mamata Banerjee prompts her interest in importing bicycles from Bangladesh it opened up the corridors of opportunities for the Bangladesh investors apart from health and education to invest in Bengal by setting up a bicycle unit in the offered land near border areas to curtail the transport expenses. Now , it is a matter of time to see how India and Bangladesh imbue and nourish the recently crafted economic ties.



## A Call of Remembrance



As the present volume of ISCS Newsreel have featured the contemporary dimensions in the India-Bangladesh multisectoral relations widely encompassing the ideas, write-ups and statistical tabulations of Researchers and policy makers. It also notes the significance of the month December for both the nation. On 16th December 1971 Indian arm force and Muktiyodhas through their supreme sacrifice won the Muktiyuddha (Libaration War) against Pakistan. During this month Bangladesh cherishes the completion of their 49 years of Independence through celebration and outlining a sustainable roadmap for their future. We too recall the contribution and pay our tribute to the martyrs, war wounded soldiers and Muktiyodhas. While we wish the country and its people prosperous future and desire for a stronger bond of solidarity among the two adjoining riparian nations in the coming years.