



Abdul Matlub Ahmad

From the President's Desk

I am pleased to know that The Newsletter of India-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IBCCI) is going to be published after a short break-even amid the pandemic COVID situation. I strongly believe that this kind of publication will significantly cater to the news documentation of activities of IBCCI by and large.

The severe outbreak of COVID-19 virus has put the world in an awkward situation resulting in the unprecedented challenges with the total economic activities have almost come to a halt across the globe disrupting all activities involving production, export and import.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an enormous impact on the lives and livelihoods of people across the globe. Developing economies, such as India and Bangladesh, are among the most significantly affected. With the economic and geopolitical terrain transforming and several challenges facing the South Asian and Southeast Asian regions, the shared culture and heritage of the people of India and Bangladesh, coupled with the rapport between the countries' highest leadership, could be beneficial in the post-pandemic scenario.

As we have all needed to quickly transmission to online, virtual and remote instruction, I have instructed my office accordingly. It can be recalled that we have arranged several webinars amid severe CORONA titled "IBCCI Digital Get-Together" on 27th June 2020; "Doing Business with Bangladesh Opportunities and Challenges" on 29 June 2020; "India-Bangladesh Partnership—Economic revival in a post-Covid-19 world" on 11 August 2020; "Connectivity for Growth; Prosperity and Development" on 20 August 2020; "India-Bangladesh MSME Startup Ecosystem—Coming of Age", 25th September 2020; "India-Bangladesh Virtual Conference on Textiles and Apparel Sector" on 30 September 2020; "Tripura Spices and BSM" on 16th October 2020 to discuss how leveraging bilateral partnership, multilateral forums and potential domestic policies could help India and Bangladesh mitigate the economic fallout of COVID-19.

IBCCI underline the need for more integration, cohesion, capacity building and knowledge sharing in the expedition for life against coronavirus pandemic that would be proved most effective in curving the aggregated benefits. Bangladesh and India could climb up the global and regional value chains by further integrating their economies. India and Bangladesh have an opportunity to capitalize on the changing global order, uncertainty in the market and the unfavourable global sentiment towards China. The pandemic has led to serious discussion on the changing global order and has hinted towards a breakaway from China and its manufacturing sector. With several countries shifting their productions out of China and into other Southeast and South Asian countries, India-Bangladesh can benefit from this situation.

Bangladesh, India Extend Inland Water Transit and Trade Protocol

The second addendum on Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade between Bangladesh and India was signed on Wednesday morning at the Secretariat. Five more ports of call and two Indo Bangladesh Protocol (IBP) water routes were added in the protocol.

Riva Ganguly Das, High Commissioner of India in Bangladesh on behalf of the Republic of India, and Mohammed Mezbah Uddin Chowdhury, Secretary of Ministry of Shipping, on behalf of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, signed the addendum.

The Protocol was first signed in 1972, immediately after the independence of Bangladesh. It was last renewed in 2015 for five years, with a provision of automatic renewal for a further period of five years, providing long term assurance to various stakeholders.

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Two new routes

The number of Indo Bangladesh Protocol (IBP) routes has been increased from 8 to 10. New locations have also been added to existing routes.

Inclusion of the Sonamura- Daudkandi stretch of Gumti river (93 km) as IBP route numbers 9 and 10 in the Protocol will improve the connectivity of Tripura and adjoining states with the economic centers of Bangladesh and India, and will help the hinterland of both the countries.

Five more ports of call

Under the current protocol, there are six ports of call in each of India and Bangladesh. They are Kolkata, Haldia, Karimganj, Pandu, Shilghat, and Dhubri on the Indian side; Narayanganj, Khulna, Mongla, Sirajganj, Ashuganj, and Pangaon on the Bangladeshi side.

The five newly added ports of call on the Indian side are: Dhulian, Maia, Kolaghat, Sonamura, and

Jogigopha; on Bangladesh side are the new ports are Rajshahi, Sultanganj, Chilmari, Daudkandi, and Bahadurabad.

A further two additional ports of call – Tribeli (Bandel) and Badarpur on the Indian side, and Ghorasal and Muktarpur on the Bangladeshi side – have been added through this addendum, increasing the total number of ports of call to eleven and extended ports of call to two in both the countries.

Inclusion of Jogigopha in India and Bahadurabad in Bangladesh as new ports of call will provide connectivity to Meghalaya, Assam, and Bhutan.

Regarding the Protocol, on a separate press release, the High Commission of India said, "It is expected that these additions to the protocol will greatly facilitate the bilateral trade, with improved reliability and cost-effectiveness for the business community and the people of both the countries." (Courtesy: The Dhaka Tribune 20th May 2020)

"IBCCI Digital Get-Together" held on 27th June 2020 through webex.com. Hosted by IBCCI President, Mr Abdul Matlub Ahmad.

Welcoming the members onboard President said the government of Bangladesh and India, both are trying to use the railway as much as possible. We

have started the Benapole-Petrapole route for the rail to lessen the pressure of Petrapole and try to at least make both sides agreed and go up to Benapole. That is only starting but you may also know that the multi-modal transport system near the western part of Bangabandhu bridge is very much on the cards and it is working towards. As for the charges are concerned of shipping lines is raised in some other big conferences and the government is also working for this line with shipping ministry.

As we have decided we will talk on sectoral issues in the future agro-industries is very much in forth front. Now COVID-19 has shown the country that agriculture is very important this budget is supporting agriculture in many ways so, in any case, keep your points ready soon we are going to make the sectorial approach to the government let us know which part of the government suits you for the discussion.

In the end, the President apprised all the members that IBCCI is resetting itself and it's getting a very good secretary general soon and how best to make IBCCI useful to the members a chamber must be useful to the members of every aspect like one of our members if he becomes sick or faces a problem we will have to guide him and help, somebody needs any support or banking or any other sector the chamber

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Photo of a cross-section of the participants of the "IBCCI Digital Get-Together"



IBCCI President Mr Abdul Matlub Ahmad is seen addressing at the "IBCCI Digital Get-Together" on 27th June 2020

Vice President of IBCCI Mr M. Shoeb Chowdhury meets Indian High Commissioner

Vice President of India-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IBCCI) Mr M. Shoeb Chowdhury paid a courtesy call on newly appointed Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh H.E. Mr Vikram Kumar Doraiswami at Indian High Commission, Dhaka on Tuesday.

Mr M. Shoeb Chowdhury and H.E. Mr Vikram Kumar Doraiswami talked about different issues related to the bilateral interest between Bangladesh and India. They exchanged views about the further development of business affiliations between the two countries, upholding the spirit of the Liberation War of 1971 and the role of the Allied Force in Bangladesh's independence.

Both of them discussed the economic recovery of India and Bangladesh in the post coronavirus period. During the meeting, Mr M. Shoeb Chowdhury presented a copy of his edited anthropological book "Titas Parer Itikatha" to the Indian High Commissioner.

H.E. Mr Vikram Kumar Doraiswami sought everyone's cooperation to carry out his responsibilities smoothly.



Mr M. Shoeb Chowdhury handed over a flower bouquet to Indian High Commissioner H.E. Mr Vikram Kumar Doraiswami during a courtesy call on 20th October 2020.



IBCCI Vice President Mr M. Shoeb Chowdhury is seen with the newly appointed Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh H.E. Mr Vikram Kumar Doraiswami at a reception on 9th October 2020 at the Hotel Westin in the Capital.

is supposed to help him if there is any member or any sector having trouble with government from both the side the chamber must come up forward. This get-together of IBCCI is made under very difficult situation COVID-19, I would have loved to see you all upfront but since the pandemic, it's not possible for now. But we still try to look forward to the day we meet together, hug together and then move forward by holding hands for better days ahead with better business ahead and better relationship between Bangladesh and India.

He expressed hope that the deep-rooted alliance between Bangladesh and India would become more and more consolidated in days to come. He assured that he would extend all necessary assistance for the rise of trade and commerce and cultural exchange between India and Bangladesh.

Mr M. Shoeb Chowdhury remarked that the appointment of H.E. Mr Vikram Kumar Doraiswami as the Indian envoy to Bangladesh will elevate the relationship between the two countries to new heights.

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CII organize Digital Conference on "Doing Business with Bangladesh Opportunities and Challenges" on 29 June 2020.

FBCCI and CII to sign MoU for targeted and focused cooperation to maximize on bilateral trade [Dhaka, 29 June 2020]- To provide a platform to discuss the emerging business and investment opportunities and the underlying challenges of bilateral trade between Bangladesh and India in the new paradigm shift cause of an ongoing pandemic; the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has recently organized a digital conference, titled 'Digital Conference on Doing Business with Bangladesh: Opportunities and Challenges'.

Sheikh Fazle Fahim, the President of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce & Industries (FBCCI), delivered an inauguration speech at the webinar, presided over by Shri V. Muraleedharan, the Hon'ble Union Minister of State for External Affairs & Parliamentary Affairs of the Government of India and Mr Abdul Matlub Ahmad, the President of India Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IBCCI).

Speaking at the webinar the President of FBCCI said, "The bond of heritage, culture, and humanity between India and Bangladesh have lead by examples. May all those who contributed to our highest level bilateral shared values receive their deserving acknowledgement as a symbol of humane contribution spearheaded by HPM Sheikh Hasina and HPM Narendra Modi. Since 2008, we are experiencing shining examples of a positive trend for greater engagements and cooperation. In 2019, we yielded US\$9bn in bilateral trade."

"A Mou between FBCCI and CII is an initiation of targeted and focused cooperation to maximize on bilateral value chain initiative (BVCI) beyond our nations", he added.

Thanking the ally nation for their support in providing medical supplies and equipment to Bangladesh FBCCI's president stated, "Fbcci symbolic goodwill gesture to our friends in India will reach shortly."

Ms Riva Ganguly Das, Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh attending the webinar said, "Both the nations have expanded infrastructure between both lands to ensure smooth import and export. We now have more options to empower bilateral trade by capitalizing on that developed infrastructure. For instance, the vast rail network between the two-nations can be a good example. The export and import of goods through the rail network can be beneficial for both the nation.

Mr Abdul Matlub Ahmad, the President of

India Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IBCCI) expressing his remarks on the issue stated, "The trade and business community has been thriving on the friendship between the two countries—a relationship that has led to the development of the two nations both politically and economically. We can do even more."

Md. Sirazul Islam, Executive Chairman, Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) said, "India and Bangladesh are countries that share common roots. It is our closest neighbour and the greatest of allies whose contribution in our Liberation War in 1971 is simply unparalleled in the history of Nations. We want to further cement our alliance for our shared economic interest and the good of our people."

Delivering the keynote speech, the State Minister of External Affairs of India said, "Bangladesh has been the biggest South-Asian ally. The leaders of both the nation have undertaken several infrastructural transformational projects that have incurred business growth in terms of import and export between the countries. We have seen a fruitful relation within the power and energy sector and both the nation can capitalize on so much more."

Mr Muhammad Imran, the Bangladesh High Commissioner to India; Mr Chandrajit Banerjee, Director General, CII; Mr David Rasquinha, Managing Director, Exim Bank of India; also delivered key justifications of bilateral trade between the two nations in their speech.

Burimari land port to resume activities from Wednesday

The decision was taken on Monday at a meeting held between Bangladeshi and Indian businessmen

Import and export activities through the Burimari land port in Patgram Upazila of Lalmonirhat will resume from June 10 ensuring compliance with all government directives and health rules.

The decision was taken on Monday at the meeting held between Bangladeshi and Indian businessmen in the presence of BGB, BSF, customs, police and port officials concerned of both countries at the zero lines in the port check post area.

The meeting decided to resume import-export activities from Wednesday the Burimari land port after more than two and a half months since the suspension of normal activities there in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, reports BSS.

President of Burimari Land Port Importers-Exporters Association and Patgram Upazila Chairman Md Ruhul Amin Babul led the 10-member Bangladeshi business team while General Secretary of Changrabandha Export Association Bimal Saha led the 10-member Indian business delegation.

Among others, customs officials, deputy directors of the land ports, officers-in-charge of the respective police stations and land port immigration check posts, leaders of the Customs Clearing and Forwarding Agents' Associations were also present in the meeting.

After emerging from the meeting at 4 pm, President of Burimari Land Port Importers-Exporters Association Ruhul Amin Babul told reporters that the discussions between Bangladeshi and Indian traders were held in a very cordial atmosphere.

"The meeting took unanimous decision to start import-export activities through the Burumari land port daily from 8 am to 3 pm from Wednesday

ensuring 100% compliance of the health directives of the government and hygiene rules.

"With the resumption of import-export activities through the land port, the international business trade of Bangladesh with India, Bhutan and Nepal through the land port will commence," Babul added. (Courtesy: The Dhaka Tribune 8th June 2020)



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Bangladesh receives 10 locomotives from India

Bangladesh has received 10 locomotives from India as grant to facilitate its broad gauge passenger carriage and cargo movement in line with growing demand of the services.



India hands over the locomotives as grants through Darshana-Gede Interchange

Railway Minister Nurul Islam Sujon, Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Monem and Indian Minister for External Affairs S Jaishankar and India Railway Minister PirushGoyal joined the handing over ceremony through video conference, representing respective

countries.

Indian and Bangladesh High Commissioners also witnessed the handing over ceremony virtually.

Bangladesh Railway (BR) officials from Pakshi received the locomotives which were commissioned from 2012 to 2015 at the Darsana-Gede interchange point around 3pm.

Sujon said the government has taken initiative to increase the number of locomotives for BR considering increasing demand for passenger trains and cargo services following increase of trade and business activities.

He said as the BR has already purchased coaches and took initiatives to ensure supply of locomotives from India to meet the demand. The issue was also discussed during his official visit to Indian in August last year.

Member of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Railway AsaduzzamanNur, Rail Secretary Mohammad Selim Reza, BR Director General Mohammad Shamsuzzaman and other railway senior officials were present. (Courtesy: The Dhaka Tribune 27th, July 2020)

Road widening project for trade with India okayed

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecne) on Tuesday cleared seven projects, including a Tk 846-crore one to widen Baraiyarhat-Heyanko-Ramgarh road under Chittagong and Khagrachhari districts, aiming to boost export-import between Bangladesh and India.

The approval came from the 5th Ecne meeting of the current fiscal year held virtually with Ecne Chairperson and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

Sheikh Hasina chaired the meeting from her official Ganobhaban residence while Planning Minister MA Mannan also attended the meeting from there. Ministers, state ministers and secretaries concerned joined the meeting from the NEC Conference Room in the city's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar area.

Of the total project cost, Tk 2,619.79 crore will be borne from the government exchequer, while the remaining Tk 862.18 crore from foreign sources either

as loan or grant as the World Bank will provide Tk 260.98 crore as grant. Briefing the reporters after the meeting, Planning Minister MA Mannan said, "A total of 7 projects were approved today (Tuesday). Of the approved seven projects, six are new while another is a revised project.

He said the Roads and Highways Department under the Road Transport and Highways Division will implement the road widening project at Ramgarhupazila in Khagrachhari by June 2022. Of the total project cost of Taka 845.53 crore, Taka 581.20 crore will come from the Indian Line of Credit. He said once this road with Tripura of India is developed and improved, the trade and commerce alongside export and import between Bangladesh and India especially between Tripura and Chattogram and Cox's Bazar would get a boost.

"It will be a win-win situation for both India and Bangladesh," he added. Mannan said the Prime Minister during the meeting directed the authorities



H.E. Sheikh Hasina, Honorable PM of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh chaired the meeting from her official residence Ganobhaban.

concerned not to include the component of building a duckbunglo (rest house) under the project, rather to come up with an integrated project to build duckbunglos and rest houses where those are deemed to be needed. There is a possibility to develop a border-haat in Ramgarh as the project is expected to help develop the possible border market as well, he added.

At the Ecne meeting, the Prime Minister dropped the proposal for the construction of a rest house spending Tk 2.79 crore from the project. She rather suggested that there could be a separate project for the construction of rest houses across the country

where these are essential across, Mannan said.

The other projects approved in the meeting are replacing the narrow and risky and old concrete bridges and bailey bridges with new concrete bridges on the highways under Khulna Roads Zone with Taka 526.42 crore, Protecting Dhulia Lunchghat under BaufalUpazila in Patuakhali and Durgapasha under BakerganjUpazila in Barishal from the river erosion of Tentulia with Taka 712.21 crore, Removing water logging at Kapotakshya River, 2nd phase with Taka 531.07 crore and Emergency multi-sector Rohingya crisis response project, 1st revised, with Taka 261.31 crore. (Courtesy: Daily Asian Age, 19th August, 2020)

India: Container train service with Bangladesh to boost trade ties

The first container train arrived from India via Benapole-Petrapole rail link carrying FMCG cargo and fabrics loaded in 50 containers, and those were handed over to Bangladesh on Sunday

India has said the newly-introduced container train service will substantially boost business and trade between Bangladesh and India.

The first container train arrived from India via Benapole-Petrapole rail link carrying FMCG cargo and fabrics loaded in 50 containers, and those were handed over to Bangladesh on Sunday.

With this newly-introduced container train service, a "huge opportunity" has opened up for bilateral trade via rail, said the High Commission.

The first container train was flagged off from the Container Corporation of India Ltd's (CONCOR) terminal at Majerhat, Kolkata, India and it was received at Benapole station.

The container train service will be a permanent service connecting the nominated Inland Container Depots and Terminals of Container Corporation of India Ltd in India and various stations in Bangladesh Railway's system.

Container train service is an additional service which is going to transport cargo by rail other than the traditional freight trains service and the recently-introduced parcel train service.

To start the container train service, Container Corporation of India and the Bangladesh Container Company Ltd signed an MoU during the visit of Prime

Minister Sheikh Hasina to India in April 2017.

A trial run of the first container train from Kolkata to Bangabandhu Bridge West station (BBW) was successfully conducted on April 3, 2018.

With the emergence of Covid-19 pandemic, now there has been a disruption in the supply chain.

The government agencies of both countries have taken measures to utilize the railway as a viable option for bilateral trade and minimizing disruption in that. (Courtesy: The Dhaka Tribune 10th July 2020)



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Bangladesh-India inland waterways can become vital, cost-effective connectivity: experts

The two cross-border intercity express trains between Bangladesh and India will run a day more in a week as the services start from February. Well-developed waterways, as part of a larger multimodal connectivity setup, can ensure good water resource management,

which is also a prerequisite for agricultural growth, they said at the inaugural webinar of Asian Confluence NADI conversations organised by Asian Confluence, a premier Indian think tank based in Shillong on Wednesday.



Inland waterways development between Bangladesh and India can become a vital and cost-effective way of multimodal connectivity that can improve the economic wellbeing of people from both countries, policymakers and experts have said.

"When we talk of the 54 transboundary rivers of Bangladesh and India, we talk of an opulent harvest of fusing culture, crafts and trade developed over generations," said State Minister for Foreign Affairs M Shahriar Alam.

"Rivers are part of our common heritage which we must cherish for our nourishment," he said, stressing on the importance of water security and the livelihood of the communities living along the rivers as the two countries talk of improved water resources management and inland waterways.

Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Riva Ganguly Das said the agreement on the use of Mongla and Chattogram ports and the recent second addendum in the India-Bangladesh protocol route will rejuvenate livelihood and economy in the region. (Courtesy: The Daily Star 16th July 2020)

Webinar on "India-Bangladesh Partnership– Economic revival in a post-Covid-19 world" 11 August 2020

High Commission of India (HCI), Dhaka in collaboration with India-Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce & Industry (IBCCI) jointly organized a webinar to discuss "India-Bangladesh Partnership– Economic revival in a post-Covid-19 world" on 11 August 2020. More than 100 industry leaders attended the webinar.

Speaking on the occasion, High Commissioner Smt. Riva Ganguly Das highlighted the "Atmanirbhar Bharat" scheme rolled out under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi. She informed that Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan is based on five pillars – Economy, Infrastructure, Technology-driven system, vibrant demography, and Demand. A stimulus package of 21 trillion rupees under this scheme will accelerate infrastructure development, support the rural economy and cottage industries, boost Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, improve opportunities for foreign traders and investors, accelerate agriculture mechanization, etc in India. Atma-Nirbhar Bharat or self-reliance will allow India to identify and promote industries and sectors where it has the potential and capability to scale up and become globally competitive. This will help India to become part of global value chains in collaboration with partner countries. She said this

opens huge opportunities for Indian and Bangladesh businesses to look at the sector where they can collaborate.

Mr Abdul Matlub Ahmed, President, India-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce spoke on the need to capitalize on the new opportunity given to both our nations through mutual trust and cooperation. The change in the world economic scenario is pushing India and Bangladesh as the land of great investment opportunities. Further, he emphasized the need for more investments, integration, cohesion, capacity building and knowledge sharing in the South Asian region to build robust trade network.

Industry leaders from the Iffad Group, Tata Motors, SBI Bangladesh, Indofil, and Shorthi Enterprises amongst others deliberated on the new opportunities in global trade and the regional scenario across different sectors of the economy.

High Commissioner expressed hope that the excellent state of India-Bangladesh bilateral relations and the recent connectivity initiatives taken by both the countries in railways and inland waterways will help to reduce the cost of a trade. She added that with their resilient economies and robust business environment, both the countries will not only be able



to deal with present challenges but also make use of new opportunities.

She urged the Indian business leaders that given the excellent manufacturing environment, vibrant

demography and favourable investment atmosphere, opportunities for collaboration and joint ventures should be explored including for exports to third countries.

Indian foreign secretary meets PM; discusses post-coronavirus economic recovery and cooperation

Indian Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today and discussed the post-Covid-19 economic recovery and cooperation, Indian High Commission officials said.

Speaking at a media briefing at Hotel Sonargaon in the capital, Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Riva Das Ganguly said Shringla came to Dhaka to convey the message that India and Bangladesh have deep relations and that Delhi will continue to be a development partner of Dhaka.



Indian Foreign Secretary
Harsh Vardhan Shringla.

"India has special and close relations with Bangladesh. Therefore, the foreign secretary has come to meet the prime minister with this message in an unofficial type of visit even during this pandemic," Riva Das Ganguly said, adding that PM Hasina appreciated the visit.

Shringla met Hasina at the Gono Bhaban around 7:30 pm. The meeting, which was scheduled to begin at 3:30 pm, lasted for an hour. The briefing was also delayed by two hours and started around 9:30 pm. (Courtesy: The Daily Star 19th August 2020)

Webinar on "Connectivity for Growth, Prosperity and Development" 20 August 2020

High Commission of India (HCI), Dhaka in collaboration with India-Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce & Industry (IBCCI) jointly organized a webinar to discuss "Connectivity for Growth, Prosperity and Development" on 20 August 2020. More than 150 industry leaders attended the webinar.

Chief Guest for the Webinar, Hon'ble Minister of Commerce, Government of Bangladesh, H.E. Tipu Munshi, MP in his address, spoke on the special and very close relations between India and Bangladesh. He highlighted that enhanced connectivity will help Bangladesh achieve its SDG targets faster along with economic development. He fondly remembered his visit to Meghalaya and Assam last year and the interest of the business community of India to have more connectivity, especially through the waterways.

Speaking on the occasion, High Commissioner of India Smt. Riva Ganguly Das said, "Connectivity has been an important focus of our (India-Bangladesh) mutually beneficial bilateral relation". She added India has opened its huge markets to Bangladesh under SAFTA since 2011 wherein, Bangladesh exporters are provided Duty-Free and Quota Free market access for 100 % tariff lines except for alcohol and tobacco. Bangladesh exports registered a significant growth of 42.91 % in FY 2018-19. She highlighted that both the governments have commissioned a joint study for a bilateral Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement which is likely to be completed this year. The early green shoots of economic recovery are visible both in India and Bangladesh and having

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more consultative dialogue between the business community, Chambers and think tanks, will further facilitate quick recovery and allow them to explore new business opportunities.

Mr Sheikh Fazle Fahim, President, Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce & Industries said that enhanced multimodal connectivity in the region will complement the bilateral value chain initiative (BVCI). He put forward the idea of transshipment of Bangladesh EXIM cargo from Indian ports including the third country EXIM cargo could benefit in terms of cost and time savings. He added our bilateral connectivity should look beyond bilateral trade to include the global trade and value chains. He expressed hope that Air bubble arrangements between India and Bangladesh will help in restoring and further accelerating the B2B dialogue.

Mr Abdul Matlub Ahmed, President, India-Bangladesh

Chamber of Commerce moderated the Webinar and highlighted that world over connectivity has played an influential role in shaping regional development. The change in the world economic scenario and the shifting of global value chains has made Bangladesh and India as a great investment destination. President IBCCI also announced IBCCI Media awards starting from the year 2020 onwards, to be given for the best performance amongst IBCCI members.

Mr Nihad Kabir, President Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Mr Mahbubul Alam, President Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Dr Pramyesh Basall, Commercial Representative to High Commission of India and Mr Nurul Alam, Member Finance from BIWTA also participated as guest speakers in the Webinar. They highlighted that with the economy returning to normal these new arteries of trade will help in tapping the vast market potential for sustained economic growth.

Regional cooperation stressed to boost textiles and apparel sector in Bangladesh – India

The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FBCCI) in a collaboration with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), earlier on Wednesday hosted a virtual conference titled 'India-Bangladesh Virtual Conference on Textiles and Apparel Sector'.

In his inaugural speech, the Vice-president of FBCCI said, "Textiles and garments industry has been a part

of our century-old communal heritage. Bangladesh and India each have developed core competencies that can be channelled towards joint synergies tapping into the global value chain of the US\$1trillion apparel market.

Highlighting a collaboration to reduce the lead time Minister of Textile, Govt. of India said, "To facilitate reduced lead time between the trade of two nations





we will be engaging with our counterparts in Bangladesh involving the Ministry of Infrastructure and other relevant stakeholders. Additionally, any existing issues that have been highlighted by our counterparts through this platform will be identified and discussed in our future engagements.”

She also highlighted the Indian Government’s distinct provision for technical textiles and the diversification of jute products requesting her Bangladesh counterpart’s expert aid.

Textile and Jute Minister Golam Dastagir Gazi (Bir Protik), Rubana Huq, President of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA); spoke at the inaugural session of the virtual conference.

Additionally, manufacturers, exporters, importers,

IBCCI President Mr Abdul Matlub Ahmad felicitates Mr. Vikram Kumar Doraiswami, High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh:

India-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Tripura Chapter) and All Tripura Merchants Association felicitated Mr. Vikram Kumar Doraiswami, High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh in State Guest House, Agartala on 03 October 2020, at 7:30 pm.



The newly appointed High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh H.E Mr. Vikram Kumar Doraiswami is being welcomed by IBCCI Tripura Chapter and all Tripura Merchants Association.

and business leaders highlighted existing issues on both sides in a session chaired by Mr Abdul Matlub Ahmed, the President of India Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Md. Munir Hossain, the Director FBCCI; Mohammad Ali Khokon, Director, FBCCI; Salahuddin Alamgir Director, FBCCI; Sultan Riaz Chowdhury, President of Bangladesh Cotton Association; Md. Moshikul Azam (Shajal), Vice President of BGMEA also spoke in a session following the inauguration of the virtual conference. (Courtesy: CII)

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Mr. Sujit Roy General Secretary, IBCCI Tripura Chapter is giving a crest to the newly appointed High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh H.E Mr. Vikram Kumar Doraiswami on behalf of IBCCI President Mr. Abdul Matlub Ahmad.

Mr Sujit Roy gave a crest to Mr. Vikram Kumar Doraiswami on behalf of the IBCCI President Mr Abdul Matlub Ahmad, his Board of Directors and Members. Delegates who attended the meeting was IAS Shri Kiran Gite (Secretary, Industry of Commerce), Government of Tripura, ATMA President Mr Tushar Chakraborty, IBCCI (Tripura Chapter) General Secretary Mr Sujit Roy, and ATMA Organising Secretary Mr Prangopal Saha, Joint Secretary Mr Abhijit Deb, Treasurer Mr Ashoke Saha and other dignitaries.

Bangladesh to export 1,475 tonnes of hilsa to India for Durga Puja

The government has decided to send 1,475 tonnes of hilsa fish to India as a gesture of goodwill on the occasion of Durga Puja, an annual Hindu festival, and has already given the go-ahead to nine exporters to begin shipments from the next week.

The commerce ministry shared the info via a circular issued on September 10.

"It's a Durga Puja gift for the people of India," said Nargis Murshida, deputy secretary (export-2) of the commerce ministry.

"Last year, we allowed the export of 500 tonnes of hilsa fish," she added.



Hilsa, the national fish of Bangladesh, is mainly exported from the Pathorghata, Bhola, Barishal, Kalapara districts of Barishal division and from Chandpur under Chattogram division.

Exporters from different parts of the country purchase the fish from these areas before shipping them abroad.

Around 200 people have applied for permission to export hilsa this year but only nine got the opportunity, said Nirab Hossain Tutul, president of the Barishal Matso Arotar Samity, a local committee of fish wholesalers.

Hilsa fish of 800 to 1,200 grams in size will be exported this year, said Tutul, who is the only local exporter to be included in the list of nine exporters.

However, the per kilogram price of the fish is yet to be fixed.

Export of these fishes to India's West Bengal through Benapole port will continue until October 10, according to the traders and exporters at Barishal.

At present, various preparations are ongoing. This year, the exporters have to operate under quarantine orders from the authorities concerned to ensure that the fishes are safe and do not spread Covid-19.

Meanwhile, the price of hilsa at local markets increased as soon as the news of the new export order was released, Tutul said. In local markets, each kilogramme of hilsa fish is now selling at Tk 850 to Tk 900 while it was Tk 750 a week ago, he added.

Over 80 per cent of the hilsa fish which will be exported to India this year will come from the Barishal


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belt, according to Ajit Kumar Das Manu, a local hilsa trader.

"Last year, 350 tonnes out of the 500 tonnes shipped to India came from Barishal," Manu said.

Hilsa production has increased in Barishal in recent

times thanks to strict supervision and widespread campaigns from the government to protect and allow the fishes to grow bigger, said Bimol Chandra Das, district fisheries officer (hilsa). (Courtesy: The Daily Star, 14th September 2020)

ICIB "India-Bangladesh MSME Startup Ecosystem- Coming of Age", 25th September 2020:



The Secretary General of India-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry S M Abul Kalam Azad is seen speaking on the "India-Bangladesh MSME Startup Ecosystem Coming of Age" (webinar) organized by Indian Chamber of International Business (ICIB) on 25th September 2020

He recalled the effective development of the startup



Mr Matiar Rahman, Director, India-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce, greeted the outgoing High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh, Mrs Riva Ganguly Das on her way to Delhi via Benapole at Jessore Airport on 12 October 2020.

The outgoing High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh Mrs Riva Ganguly Das was received at the Jessore Airport on 12 October 2020 with a bouquet by Mr Matiar Rahman, Director, India-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and discussed the prospect of India-Bangladesh's trade and commerce.

During the discussion, Assistant High Commissioner Mr Rajesh Kumar Raina and other high-level government officials were present. During her departure from Bangladesh to India via Benapole, Deputy Commissioner of Customs of Benapole Mr Shamimur Rahman, Upazila Nirbahi Officer, Shasha Mr Pulok Kumar Mondal and other senior government officials of the two countries were present at the Benapole check post.

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IBCCI Director Mr. Motiar Rahman is receiving the outgoing High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh Ms. Riva Ganguly Das at Jashore Airport.

India's first Covid-19 vaccine candidate approved for phase III trials

The alarming rise in the number of coronavirus cases in India has surely raised a lot of concern amongst people. Amidst all this chaos, Covaxin, the vaccine candidate developed by Bharat Biotech India Limited (BBIL) in collaboration with Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), has received approvals from India's drug control authority for the initiation of the final phase of trials, reports Times of India.

Almost three months back in July, BBIL was allowed to hold phase I and phase II of the human clinical trials. Since then, the number of coronavirus cases in India has risen up to 7.5 million, making India the second-highest affected country in the world.

With the approvals at hand, the phase III trials are likely to start next month. The committee reviewing the vaccine candidate met on Tuesday and gave the approvals suggesting minor changes to the process.

Covaxin is the first indigenous vaccine candidate by India to fight against the novel coronavirus, developed by Bharat Biotech India (BBIL), Hyderabad-based biotechnology firm working closely with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the National Institute of Virology (NIV).

Covaxin falls under the category of inactivated vaccines, which means the virus pathogen is 'deactivated' and has no possibility of infecting a person or multiplying in number, as it is already dead.

According to the firm, "The SARS-CoV-2 strain was isolated in NIV, Pune and transferred to Bharat Biotech. The indigenous inactivated vaccine was developed and manufactured in Bharat Biotech's BSL-3 (Bio-Safety Level 3) High Containmentment facility located in Genome Valley, Hyderabad, India."

Therefore, the vaccine just serves the immune system as a dead virus and mounts an antibody response towards the virus. (Courtesy: The Daily Asian Age 23th October 2020)

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Condolence Message



Late Pranab Mukherjee

India-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry mourns the death of former President of India, Mr Pranab Mukherjee:

Abdul Matlub Ahmad, President of India-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry, all board members and general members have expressed deep grief over the death of Pranab Mukherjee, former President of India and a true friend of Bangladesh.

In a condolence message today, Matlub Ahmad said that Pranab Mukherjee, a renowned politician of the subcontinent, was a tested friend of Bangladesh. The Bengali nation will forever remember his outstanding contribution to the Great War of liberation with deep respect and gratitude.

While in exile in India after the assassination of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on August 15, 1975, Pranab Mukherjee has always supported the present leaders of the people Sheikh

Hasina and Sheikh Rehana.

He said that with the death of Pranab Mukherjee, India lost a wise and patriotic leader, Bangladesh lost a loved one. He will live as a shining star in the politics of the subcontinent in the hearts of the people of the subcontinent. It has also played an outstanding role in boosting trade and commerce between the two countries.

He prayed for peace to the departed soul of the late Pranab Mukherjee and conveyed deep sympathy to the members of his bereaved family.



Late Sheikh Md. Farid

Sheikh Md. Farid, Member of IBCCI and Proprietor of FARCO Syndicate breathed his last on 12th September 2020 at 5:30 AM in the Combined Military Hospital (CMH), Dhaka. He was suffering from pandemic COVID-19. He was at the age of 68. He left behind his wife, two daughters, one son and numerous well-wishers to mourn his death.

We mourn his death and express our heartfelt condolence to the members of the bereaved family.

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Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) organized an e-Conclave on Tripura Spices and BSM on 16th October from 10:30 AM.



The President of India-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry Abdul Matlub Ahmad is seen speaking at the Tripura Spice E-Conference & BSM jointly organized by the Spices Board of India and Indian Chamber of Commerce on 16 October 2020.

Since the inception of IBCCI in 2005, We are working as a catalyst for the promotion of trade and commerce between India and Bangladesh. He said that there is ample scope of spice promotion as China factor is getting momentum. He emphasized on making easier procedure for the Bangladeshi Traders doing business in India because some restriction is there for Bangladeshi Traders in an opening bank account over there.

The Secretary General of India-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry S M Abul Kalam Azad spoke at the Tripura Spice E-Conference & BSM jointly organized by the Spices Board of India and Indian Chamber of Commerce on 16 October 2020.

In his speech, he said that spices promotion is getting momentum day by day. He underscored the need for proper processing measures to have quality spice product. He emphasized that a congenial business atmosphere is a must for Bangladeshi traders and entrepreneurs for doing business in India. Keeping in view the huge potential of spices he opted for relationship building and continuous interaction and constructive effort from both the countries.