



**High Commission of India  
Dhaka**

**Inauguration of India-Bangladesh EXIM Conclave, November 15, 201  
Remarks by High Commissioner of India Mr. Harsh Vardhan Shringla**

**Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh, H.E. Mr. Shariar Alam**

**President of Bangladesh Agro Processors Association, Mr. AFM Fakhru Islam Munshi**

**Executive Director, North Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Corporation (NERAMAC), Shri Subhas Bhattacharjee**

**Managing Director, North Eastern Region Community Resource Management Project (NERCoRMP), Shri Shailendra Choudhury**

**Secretary and CEO, India Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Mr. Jahangir Bin Alam**

**CEO, North East Foundation, Mr. Bhanu Pratap Singh**

**Participants from India and Bangladesh**

It is a great pleasure to be here at the inauguration of the second edition of the Northeast India-Bangladesh EXIM Conclave.

2. The first edition of the conclave, organized in February earlier this year, was successful in bringing together officials and traders from North East India and Bangladesh to explore opportunities for cooperation in the agro products & horticulture

sectors and to also showcase the tourism potential of the Northeastern states of India. I understand that this has resulted in the promotion of actual trade between Northeastern India and Bangladesh. We were very happy to witness this morning, contracts for the supply of 100 MT fresh Ginger from Mizoram; GI product gift hampers; and 10 MT organic spices.

3. Historically, Bangladesh and the neighboring Indian states have been part of a sub-regional economy. Governments of both India and Bangladesh have been working to reinvigorate this sub-regional economy by promoting greater economic integration and improving physical connectivity and trade infrastructure. To this end, several measures have been taken in the last few years, particularly during the visits of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Bangladesh in June 2015 and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to India in April 2017. These include:

- Improvement of infrastructure of Land Customs Stations/Land Ports on the Northeast India-Bangladesh border – Govt of India is constructing an Integrated Check Post which will have state of the art infrastructure for goods and passenger movement at Dawki in Meghalaya and just last month (October 27, 2017), Bangladesh inaugurated its new **Land Port at Tamabil** which borders Dawki.
- Dhaka-Shillong-Guwahati and Kolkata-Dhaka-Agartala bus services
- Supply of 160 MW of power from Tripura to Bangladesh and supply of 10 GBPS internet bandwidth from Bangladesh to India through Akhaura

- Signing of the MoU on Border Haats – construction of two Border Haats on the Tripura-Bangladesh and four Border Haats on the Meghalaya-Bangladesh border is underway. The Haats will serve the areas which are not covered by other formal channels of trade.
- Increased diplomatic/consular presence by both Bangladesh and India to serve the Northeastern states and neighbouring regions of Bangladesh –A **new Assistant High Commission of India will open in Sylhet shortly** and Bangladesh has opened a Deputy High Commission in Guwahati earlier this year with consular jurisdiction over six northeastern states of India. This is in addition to the Bangladesh Assistant High Commission in Agartala.
- The bridge over River Feni (to connect Tripura to Bangladesh through Sabroom (Tripura) – Ramgarh (Bangladesh) and the Agartala-Akhaura rail link will also improve connectivity between Bangladesh and Northeast India.

4. I also look forward to commencement of flights shortly from Guwahati to Dhaka linking the North East to Bangladesh in terms of passenger and cargo movements. All these initiatives, put together, will have a substantial impact on increasing cross-border trade and commerce as well as on facilitating people-to-people contact.

5. Given the geographical proximity of Bangladesh and the improving connectivity in the region, Bangladesh is in the best position to tap the abundant natural resources

and the economic potential of the Northeast. Bangladesh companies can also consider investing in the Northeastern states. Some Bangladesh companies such as Pran Foods Ltd are already active in the production and marketing of their products in North East India

6. In this context, events like the Northeast India Bangladesh Exim Conclave have great utility. I am told that approximately 60 importers of agricultural/horticultural items from Bangladesh are participating in this event to see what is being offered by our Northeastern states. I am also very happy to note that, along with the Governments of Meghalaya and Nagaland, organizations such as the **North Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Corporation Limited (NERAMAC)**, the **North East Rural Livelihood Project (NERLP)**, **North Eastern Region Community Resource Management Project (NERCoRMP)**, **Nagaland Horticulture Department** and the **Cane and Bamboo Technology Center (CBTC)** are participating in the event today. I am certain that the interactions during the event will result in generation of new opportunities for business community in the both the countries.

7. Let me also take this opportunity to bring to your notice an important event entitled the **North East Development Summit** being organized by the India Foundation in association with the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India in Imphal from November 21-22, 2016. The Summit is focussed on trade & investment, regional connectivity and tourism development, Skill development, capacity building and entrepreneurship in the Northeast. India's North East Region is at the forefront of

becoming the growth engine of India's development and is an important destination for trade and investment because of its export potential. This sub-regional market centre thus acts as a land bridge connecting India to the South East Asian Market. We are confident that Bangladesh will be represented at the Summit by both business and Government at high levels.

8. I congratulate the North Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Corporation (NERAMAC) and Northeast Foundation for organizing the conclave. I would like to thank their Bangladesh partners – the Bangladesh Organic Products Manufacturers' Association, the India Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Allied Foods Industries, and Sindhiya Enterprise, for supporting the organization of the conclave. I would also like to thank the Hon'ble Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh H.E. Mr. Shariar Alam for taking time out to attend the inauguration today.

Thank You...