

**Business Delegation to Bangladesh
15th February 2017 to 18th February 2017**

The Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industry took a business delegation to Bangladesh from 15th February to 18th February 2017. The delegation, led by Immediate Past President Mr. Ambarish Dasgupta, visited Dhaka and Chittagong. The delegation comprised of industry representatives from Bengal and Delhi.



Members of BCC&I Delegation with Janab Tofail Ahmed, Hon'ble Commerce Minister, People's Republic of Bangladesh at Bangladesh Secretariat.

The delegation was represented by:

Name	Designation	Organization
Mr. Ambarish Dasgupta	Immediate Past President	The Bengal Chamber of Commerce & Industry
Mr. R.N. Lahiri	Director	Techno India Group
Capt. S B Mazumder	Executive Director	Seahorse Ship Agencies Pvt Ltd
Mr. Arup Bandhu Guha	Vice President	Marine Container Services (India) Pvt. Ltd.
Mr. K K Mahapatra	Associate Vice President, IT Infrastructure (Business) & Infocom	ABP Pvt. Ltd.
Mr. Dhruv Bhalla	Vice President and Head - International Business, Corporate Strategy and Planning	SREI Infrastructure Finance Limited
Mr. Owaiz Hossain	Chief Manager - International Business	SREI Infrastructure Finance Limited
Mr. Ashok Kr Goswami	Wholetime Director	India Power Corporation Limited
Mr. Dibya Sankar Das	Managing Partner	Dellstar Overseas
Mr. Nihar Chakraborty	Senior Vice President & COO – EAST & SAARC Countries	Sify Technologies Limited
Mr. Puneet Malik	Regional Marketing Head : SAARC Countries	Sify Technologies Limited
Mr. Rajat Upadhyay	Head Solution Architect	Sify Technologies Limited
Mr. Rafiqul Hasan	Chairman and Managing Director	M/s Techno Industry

Mr. Syed A Nabi	Director	M/s Techno Industry
Mr. Shubhabrata Som	Director	NrXen IT Technologies Private Limited
Mr. Vikash Sharma	Director	NrXen IT Technologies Private Limited
Mr. Arup Dutta	Technical Director	KPMG Advisory Services Private Ltd
Mr. Smarajit Purkayastha	Assistant Director General	The Bengal Chamber of Commerce & Industry
Mr. Sambit Dasgupta	Sr. Manager- Market, Research and Development	The Bengal Chamber of Commerce & Industry
Ms. Sankalpita Aich	Junior Programme Executive	The Bengal Chamber of Commerce & Industry

Day 1: 15th February 2017: Dhaka

1. Discussion and B2B Meeting with FBCCI

On 15th February 2017, the delegate members had B2B interaction with the members of The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) at Nitol Centre, Dhaka. The delegation was received by Mr. Abdul Matlub Ahmad, President, FBCCI and Chairman, Nitol-Niloy Group. Before the formal meeting, the delegate members had an informal induction with the President of FBCCI, briefing their sector of interests and Business purpose in Bangladesh. The Formal B2B meeting was also presided by Mr. Ahmad. The Bengal Chamber Delegation Co-lead Mr. R. N. Lahiri, delivered the opening remarks. In his remarks, he mentioned about the close cultural and demographic similarities that the two countries share and requested the delegate members for their self introduction and also highlight their objective for the trip.



Discussion Meeting in Progress

President FBCCI also spoke in details about the opportunities available in the Sectors that the BCC&I Delegates represented, and also arranged for B2B connects for some of the delegates for the next day.

The summary of interactions of the delegate members with Mr. Abdul Matlub Ahmad is penned below:

Company/Sector	Agenda	Recommendations by FBCCI President
Techno India Group	Business Opportunities in Education and Skill Development; Joint Venture with Bangladeshi Counterparts to develop these sectors and introducing hour based training programmes to make students more employable in Bangladesh.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As on date, there are 2 million graduates in Bangladesh, out of which only 10-20% is employed. 80% employment is not good for the nation. This goes to show that the countries education system create managers but for technical skillset and immediate manufacturing level recruitment, there is a scarcity of skilled employable resources and the country ends up paying 6 billion \$ in salary for migrant employees. With 100 of SEZ's and 1000's of industries coming up in next 10 years this spending corpus can go up to 50-70 billion \$ for technical persons salary. IT, Education and Skill Development are presently the focus areas for Bangladesh. For the first time in Bangladesh, a special budget has been allocated for skill development. Hon'ble PM of Bangladesh herself heads the Skill Development Committee. Mr. Ahmad is also a member of that committee. There is also a Skill development centre in Chittagong. So, there is money, there is venue and it is the opportune time to guide the next generation of Bangladesh for employable opportunities. President FBCCI will help make necessary connections with AK Khan Group for possible matchmaking.
ABP Pvt Ltd.	Since ABP's magazines and books are already having reader base in Bangladesh, the main motto is to reach out to people for INFOCOM. The idea is to replicate this part of Bengal's successful brand "INFOCOM" to the other part of "Bangla" for setting the pace of development in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector, by bringing potential partners together and helping the industry connect with associates and customers. Appointment with IT	<p>Information Technology and its enabled solutions (IT&ES) is one of the emerging areas for Bangladesh. Hon'ble PM is absolutely for "Digital Bangladesh". The country is going through a theme of digital transformation.</p> <p>Mr. President will help introducing Mr. Mahapatra of ABP Pvt Ltd. with the IT minister.</p> <p>Mr. Ahmad assured that the Chamber will provide necessary assistance in making INFOCOM a reality in Bangladesh.</p>

	Minister and potential tie up with FBCCI sought for the same.	
Sify Technologies Limited	<p>Business opportunities in IT Services: Digital transformation, big data, smart city projects, end to end ICT solutions for sectors such as education, financial, banking, etc.</p> <p>Looking for Network Integration between Bangladesh and India, to create a large data centre in Bangladesh</p> <p>To offer affordable cloud services and would like to bring not only technology but also affordable solutions to this part of the world.</p>	<p>IT Emerging and Focus Sector for Bangladesh, hence companies like Sify are very important for Bangladesh, and since they are looking for partners they will get ample of them.</p> <p>He mentioned that Bangladesh Govt has allocated good budget to banks for data safety and hence Bank IT heads will be potential customers for cloud services. Bangladesh has enough engineers to execute the operations, only technology collaboration and machine to machine speaking needs to be strengthened.</p> <p>Mr. Ahmad has taken a note of Sify's agenda in Bangladesh and shall be personally looking after the same.</p>
Sea Horse Ship Agencies Pvt Ltd. and Marine Container Services (India) Pvt. Ltd/ Shipping	<p>While introducing their companies Capt Mazumder mentioned that they are the 6th largest Shipping Agency Group in India and have wide range of business in Shipping Agency, International Container Leasing Agency, Owning and Operating Empty Container Depots in all Ports in India, Sale and Purchase of Marine Containers, Vessel Management, Port Captaincy, Ship Crewing, Freight Forwarding & Logistics, Handling of Project Cargoes and Preparation of Maritime Projects for customers. Seahorse represents Le Havre Port of France in promoting their services in attracting the Exim Trade and Shipping Lines to use their Port Services.</p> <p>Objective of their visit in Bangladesh is to find out prospects in shipping Business Ventures, and visiting Major Ports of Bangladesh including Chittagong Port.</p>	<p>Mr. Ahmad understood the requirement and immediately made an on spot connect with Secretary Shipping, who has subsequently spoken and invited Capt Mazumder and Mr. Guha to Pangaon port on 17th Feb on the occasion of the arrival of the first voyage of a Coastal Vessel from Kolkata.</p> <p>President FBCCI, acknowledged the transportational hazards in Petrapole and Benapole border check posts and mentioned that the only other alternative to that is riverine transportation, which is perhaps the order of the day. He added that there are Ashuganj, Narayanganj ports and in last 3 years Pangaon port has also come up but nobody is using them to their potential. Unless, dutiable products come the ports how will they make money.</p> <p>Goods do come from Haldia to Pangaon, but some efforts needs to be made made to get some goods back to Indian ports, instead of sending empty vessel back. The export-import imbalance will always create a trade balance mismatch, however, there is a need to try and find a way out. If need be, Pangaon can reduce the port charges by 60% for next 3 years. Bangladeshi Government will be happy to listen to offers on this.</p>
NrXen IT Technologies Private Limited	<p>During the self introduction process, they mentioned that their focus is on offering cutting edge technology, Safety and security services, they also offer a wide range of technology solutions-both hardware and software components using</p>	<p>As the services offered by them are also IT based innovative solutions, Mr. Ahmad mentioned that there are fantastic opportunities for them in Bangladesh.</p> <p>Mr. Abdul Matlub Ahmad spontaneously offered them to visit the control center of</p>

	<p>technologies like GPS, RFID and Video Surveillance. In this age of mobility, facilitating the clients to access their smart mobility solutions from anywhere anytime. Few of the solutions they offer include Advanced Tracking Solution, Vehicle Video Surveillance, Smartcard based Vehicle Onboarding/Deboarding, Contactless Attendance Solution. Working closely with their clients in consultative mode, to help them mitigate risks and grasp opportunities.</p> <p>They are looking for Partnership and JV with Bangladesh.</p>	<p>Niloy-Nitol Group on the 14th Floor of the same building and asked them to explore whether they can offer any improved solutions for them.</p> <p>This apart, he also suggested to meet Grameenphone (who are the competitors of Niloy Nitol group) in offering central security based systems mapped with Police control center, he shall help facilitating the same.</p> <p>Suggestions were given for offering/developing similar solutions for riverine transportation facilities in collaboration with NITS or Grameenphone.</p> <p>Mr. Ahmad has also assured of other linkages and relevant meetings for them during their stay in Dhaka.</p>
<p>India Power Corporation Limited</p>	<p>Self Introduction and stating of objective: i) Power Generation in Bangladesh ii) opportunities of modernization and distribution of power in Bangladesh iii) Renewable energy: solar and wind power iv) Development of Thermal Power.</p>	<p>Although, they were having a meeting lined up with Hon'ble State Minister, Power Division Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources on 16th Feb, Mr. Ahmad came up with few inputs.</p> <p>Bangladesh has major focus in Power. 60% FDI in Bangladesh are in power sector. He has requested the Hon'ble PM to allow private sectors for power distribution in the country. He is hopeful that within the next one year Bangladesh power sector will be much more dynamic and robust. He specifically mentioned that if anyone is looking for power generation this is the country to invest in.</p> <p>He has also given a disclaimer not to look for only Government tenders, but to make collaborative arrangements with Pvt Sector power producers for doing business in Bangladesh.</p>
<p>M/s Techno Industry</p>	<p>During the process of their Self Introduction, they have mentioned about their sector of interest in Bangladesh which are Engineering items Design, Manufacturing, Service and Consultancy Support, Spring of various items (Helical Tension, Compression, Disc, Bevelled, Hydraulic Springs and others, Elbow, Flanges, Fasteners and Pipe Fittings with Auxilliary Items, Forgings items, Boiler equipments, Turnkey Project Job, Mechanical Job, pipe Fabrication and Structural job.</p> <p>They were looking for Partnership</p>	<p>Mr. Ahmad mentioned that Bangladesh does not have quality nut bolt industry. Meanwhile, there is a tariff wall for imported goods, but no such embargo for finished products produced domestically. Additionally, Engineering industry exports to North East is earmarked for 20% cash incentives.</p> <p>He suggested them to take a small plot in the upcoming SEZ's or get along with a partner through Small Industries Corporation. He urged them to think on small scale investments in Bangladesh and/or look for partners.</p>

	and JV and also if specific technical courses can be offered to enhance skillset of Bangladeshi resources.	Additionally, he separately tried arranging few other meetings for them during their stay in Dhaka.
Dellstar Overseas	<p>Mr. D S Das's company Dellstar Overseas is into supply of Process Control and Measuring Instruments in the Field of Steel-----etc, they also supply all kinds of Instruments in the field of pressure, temperature, flow, level, vibration, analysers, gas decorators, controllers, recorders etc. They represent 5 German companies/2 Swiss/1 French/1 Uk company.</p> <p>They are also into instrumentation engineering courses (graduation and diploma course) to train people to get better employable opportunities in Industry.</p> <p>He is looking for business opportunities to develop Instrumentation sector in Bangladesh and offer instrumentation degrees courses in Bangladesh.</p>	<p>Mr. Abdul Matlub Ahmad is a member of Bangladesh Accreditation Board. He for one assured Mr. Das that Bangladesh Government as well as private sector is looking for quality training.</p> <p>He said that he will introduce Mr. Das to their accreditation Board and has made arrangements for Mr. Das's meeting with a representative of Dafodill University the very next day on 16th Feb.</p> <p>He has suggested Mr. Das to find some agent to execute his plans in Bangladesh. FBCCI will help him in this regard. Alternatively, he can also penetrate through tendering process to avoid huge taxation in Bangladesh.</p>

In his closing remarks, FBCCI President, thanked the Bengal Chamber secretariat for bringing such a dynamic and scholarly delegation to Bangladesh which has resulted in an erudite discussion. He has invited the Bengal Chamber to join the BBIN forum and SME fair (both to be held in April) for which formal invitations will follow. The Bengal Chamber has also requested to FBCCI to take a formal delegation to West Bengal anytime soon.



The members of BCC&i Delegation with the President and other members of FBCCI. — at Nitol Centre, Dhaka, Bangladesh .



Mr. Abdul Matlub Ahmad, President, FBCCI during his closing speech and the discussion session.

Mr. Sishir Kothari, Second Secretary Commercial also attended the sessions at the later stages, which was followed by dinner.

Day 2: 16th February 2017: Dhaka

1. Participation in the Inauguration session of Indo-Bangla Trade fair



Inaugural Ceremony of The Indo Bangla Trade Fair.

Indo-Bangla Trade Fair On 16th February, The delegate members of BCC&I participated in the inauguration session of Indo-Bangla Trade Fair, organized by India-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Indian High Commission at 10 a.m. at Pan Pacific SonarGaon Hotel, Dhaka. This was the fourth Indo-Bangla Trade Fair and was inaugurated by the Chief Guest Janab Tofail Ahmed, Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Commerce, Government of Bangladesh. More than 60 companies related to automobile, processed food, banking, insurance, home appliances, consumer goods, power, paints, electronics and electrical, textiles, cement manufacturing, and lubricants manufacturing sector exhibited their product lines in the fair. Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla , High Commissioner of India, Dhaka; Mr. Abdul Matlub Ahmad, President, FBCCI and Chairman, Nitoli-Niloy Group and Mr. Taskeen Ahmed, President, India-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry were the special guests of this prestigious programme. Mr. Jahangir Bin Alam, Secretary and CEO, India-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry commenced the session. He said that this fair is

“a landmark event” for the bilateral business relationship between Bangladesh, India and other neighbouring countries. Mr. Taskeen Ahmed, President, India-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry delivered the opening remarks. Mr. Pankaj Tandon, leader of CII Delegation and Mr. R.N. Lahiri, leader of BCC&I Delegation delivered their respective speeches. Subsequently, The Hon’ble Chief Guest Janab Tofail Ahmed addressed the audience. He said that the objective of this fair is to bring Bangladesh and India together and to strengthen the bilateral business relationship between these two neighbouring countries. Bangladesh has imported many things from India for domestic industries. Bangladesh and India’s two-way trade was \$6.14 billion in 2015-16, though heavily tilted towards India. But in the last two years, Bangladesh’s exports to India have seen a huge increase after India allowed duty-free market access in 2015-16. Bangladesh exports to India surged 30.8 percent to \$689.62 million and Indian exports declined by 6.3 percent. Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla, High Commissioner of India, Dhaka said that this trade fair has opened a new era of corporate relationship between Bangladesh and India, looking forward to having more interactions and exchange. He also said that companies from both India and Bangladesh are exploring “new opportunities” for investing and setting up joint ventures in each other’s country. It is a multiproduct fair to develop business activities between the two neighbouring countries. Mr. Abhijit Chakravorty, Country Head Bangladesh, State Bank of India addressed the audience. SBI, the largest bank of India, was the sponsor of this trade fair. Mr. Abdul Matlub Ahmad, President, FBCCI and Chairman, Nitol-Niloy Group delivered the formal vote of thanks. **The trade fair was well covered in Bangladeshi media and The BCC&I delegation found a mention there.**



BCC&I Delegation members attending the Inaugural Ceremony of Indo Bangla Trade Fair — at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Dhaka.

2. Meeting with Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla , High Commissioner of India, Dhaka:



Meeting of The Bengal Chamber Delegation with Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla, High Commissioner of India to the People's Republic of Bangladesh, High Commission of India-Dhaka Bangladesh. — at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Dhaka.

The delegate members of BCC&I, had an interaction with Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla, High Commissioner of India, Dhaka at Pan Pacific SonarGaon Hotel at 10:30 a.m in the sidelines of the fair. At the outset, the delegates introduced themselves, briefing their sector of interest and purpose of visit in Bangladesh. The highlights of Shri Shringla's discourse are as follows:

- The marketing field in Bangladesh should be focused seriously.
- More investment to be done to develop the Chittagong port.
- There will be railway connectivity between Mongla and Khulna Sea port to enrich the opportunity of export and import of both the countries.
- Funding entirely for the development of Ashuganj port.
- Speaking on the occasion, Shri Shringla stressed upon the fact that more and more bilateral interaction and cooperation is needed between Bangladesh and India to strengthen the bilateral business relationships between the two neighbouring nations.

3. Meeting with Dr. A F M Manzur Kadir, Director General, Bangladesh Export Promotion Bureau:

The members of BCC&I Delegation split in two groups- one group stayed back in Hotel Pan Pacific Sonargaon for an audience with the High Commissioner and the other group went to meet **Dr. A F M Manzur Kadir, Director General, and other members of Bangladesh Export Promotion Bureau** at 11 a.m. The members of the delegation introduced themselves which was followed by an interactive presentation between the members of the delegation and the Export Promotion Bureau officials.



Meeting of The Bengal Chamber Delegation with Dr. A F M Manzur Kadir, Director General, Export Promotion Bureau.

Bangladesh Export Promotion Bureau, Dhaka, is a National export Promotion Agency under the Ministry of Commerce, which was recognized by the promulgation of a Presidential Ordinance in 1977 as a semi autonomous body. The ordinance has been converted into an ACT on 14th July, 2015. **EPB** promotes export and contributes to plan & policies helpful for the private sector; Administrated by a Board of Management (BOM) comprising of 15 (fifteen) members from both public and private sectors. Hon'ble Minister of Commerce is the ex-officio chairman of the Board of Management, and Vice-Chairman is the Chief Executive of the Export Promotion Bureau. EPB is functioning with its head office in Dhaka while three regional offices are located in Chittagong. Rajshahi and Khulna and three branch offices are in Comilla, Sylet and Narayangonj.

➤ **EPB is mainly responsible for:**

- Adoption of appropriate policy and programme measures for active promotion of export.
- Co-ordination of export development activities at various levels.
- Co-ordination and monitoring of national export performance.
- Carrying out of promotional activities in product & supply development.
- Exploration of markets abroad.
- Collection and dissemination of trade information.
- Organizing Bangladesh participation in the International trade fairs abroad.
- Imparting training for HRD on export related issues.
- Conducting study, surveys, research etc on product development.
- Issuance of various certificates against export of goods.
- EPB also assists Ministry of Commerce in formulating export policy of the country.

➤ **Export Policy (2015-2018) has identified three categories of products for product diversification:**

- Highest priority sector
- Special development sector
- Special Development Service Sector

➤ **Highest Priority Sector:**

- High and readymade garments and garments accessories.
- Software & IT enable Services, ICT products.
- Pharmaceutical products.
- Ocean going Ship 7 fishing trawlers building.
- Shoes and Leather products.
- Jute goods.
- Plastic products. Agro-products and Agro-processing products.
- Furniture industry.
- Home textiles and Terry Towel.
- Terry towel and luggage.

➤ **Investment Opportunities in Bangladesh:**

🇬🇧 Bangladesh offers the most lucrative incentives both in the form of fiscal and non-fiscal. These are:

- Availability of very competitive, adaptive 7 peaceful labour force.
- Access to credit facility.
- Availability of utility and power.
- Availability of special economic zone.
- Low cost based production.

➤ **Fiscal Incentives:**

- Remittance of royalty.
- Repatriation facilities of dividend and capital.
- Tax Holidays.
- Depreciation allowances.
- Cash and added incentives to exporting industries.
- Investment is protected by law.

➤ **Incentives offered in Export Promotion Zones:**

- 10 years tax holiday for the industries to be established before 1st January 2012 and industries to set up after 31st December 2011 tax holiday period will be, Duty free import of construction materials.
- Duty free import of machineries, office equipment & spare parts etc.
- Duty free import and export of raw materials and finished goods.
- Relief from double taxation 6. Exemption from dividend tax.
- GSP facility available.
- Accelerated depreciation on machinery or plant allowed.
- Remittance of royalty, technical and consultancy fees allowed.
- Duty and quota free access to EU, Canada, Norway, Australia etc.

4. Meeting with Janab Tofail Ahmed, Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Commerce, and Government of Bangladesh

BCC&I Delegation had a meeting with the Hon'ble commerce Minister at 12:30 p.m. at his office in the Bangladesh Secretariat. At the outset, he mentioned about his past visit to Bengal and The Bengal Chamber few years back on the occasion of a Trade fair and subsequently spoke about Bilateral trade related figures which is deep and is growing each day. He mentioned that over the years Bangladesh have been importing Cotton and threads from India in their need. The Hon'ble Minister highlighted Government of India's anti-dumping duty and Minimum Input Price (MIP) on jute products imported from Bangladesh and Nepal. Janab Ahmed has also apprised the delegates about the Tariff barrier removal request to Indian Government that they have placed. He assured the Delegation members who are looking for business opportunities in Bangladesh that 100 SEZ's are coming up in Bangladesh out of which 3 are dedicated for Indian businesses with a stable government and investment friendly policies.



Mr. Ambarish Dasgupta, Immediate Past President of BCC&I and Leader of The Bengal Chamber Delegation with Janab Tofail Ahmed, Hon'ble Commerce Minister, Bangladesh.

The leader of the delegation Mr. Ambarish Dasgupta mentioned that West Bengal has all kinds of similarities with Bangladesh and the objective of bringing such a delegation is to strengthen the existing bilateral relationship between the two countries. Mr. Dasgupta requested the delegate members for their respective self introductions, which they did and alongside also mentioned about the rationale of their visit.

While providing response to the Multi Sectoral Delegation, The Hon'ble Minister mentioned the Priority Areas for Bangladesh, of which Information Technology is one and the country is striving for "Digital Bangladesh". Lots of IT parks are coming up and a realistic target of 1 billion by 2018 and 5 billion by 2021 has been set. The other priority areas mentioned by him are shipping (which provides 10% cash incentive) Leather; for which the target earning is 3-4 billion by 2021. Food processing (which offers 20% cash incentive) Jute; which has been a traditional and major exporting item to India (recent anti dumping has acted as a dampener), plastics, Agro Product etc. They are the 4th largest fish producing country in the world and has specific focus on **Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal (BBIN)** Initiative.

5. Meeting with Janab Nasrul Hamid, Hon'ble State Minister, Power Division Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources

Some of the members of BCC&I Delegation had a meeting with the Hon'ble Power Minister and key officials of the Power Department at 2:00 p.m. in Bangladesh Secretariat. The delegation members discussed possibilities of Indian Pvt Sector companies making penetration into the Power sector of Bangladesh – be it in generation or distribution of Power in Bangladesh. Hon'ble Minister also pointed out that Bangladesh currently is sourcing some of its Power requirements from some Indian States.



Meeting of The Bengal Chamber Delegation with Janab Nasrul Hamid, Hon'ble State Minister , Power Division- Ministry of Power Energy & Mineral Resources.

Delegate members representing the power sector had a very fruitful meeting with the Power Minister for 3 key initiatives: **Long term power supply agreement from their Haldia Power Plant, smart metering at Bangladeshi distribution companies** and **investment in solar or wind power business**. For Long term PPA, the Bangladesh Power Ministry has requested to check on the Indian side as there are some regulatory clearances that are required prior to any project that maybe undertaken on that front.

6. B2B Meetings at the sidelines of the Indo-Bangla Trade Fair

- **Meeting with Mr. Sabur Khan, Chairman, Daffodil University:** Mr. Dibya Sankar Das, Managing Partner, Delstar Overseas, Mr. Rafiqul Hasan, Chairman-cum-Managing Director, Mr. Syed A Nabi, Director, Techno Industry and Mr. Rabindranath Lahiri, Director and Vice Chairman, Techno India Batanagar and The Bengal Chamber Secretariat had a meeting with **Mr. Sabur Khan, Chairman of Daffodil University** at 4 p.m. at Pan Pacific SonarGaon Hotel. The focus sectors of this meeting were IT, Skill Development, Engineering, Instrumentation and Automation. Mr. Sabur Khan said that now a-days, the education system in Bangladesh is vulnerable. The students, after completing their

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education, do not get better job opportunities due to the lack of skillsets. The Skill Development scheme must be included in the education system to enable the students getting better opportunities in life. In Bangladesh, the engineering streams are: Computer Science, Electrical, Civil, Mechanical, Textile and Telecommunication engineering. But instrumentation and Automation engineering are needed now a days to give proper training of instrumentation to the students and to enable them getting better employable opportunities in Industries. Mr. Khan said that the Bangladesh Government has decided to include the Employability skills or soft skills course in the education system, as soft skills is considered as the key to workplace success. An IT show will be held in Dhaka from 23rd to 25th March 2017. Mr. Khan requested Mr R N Lahiri and Mr Dibya Sankar Das to give a Power Point Presentation on Education & Skill Development and Instrumentation Course (Graduation and Diploma Course) respectively in that IT Show. Mr. Khan also requested Mr. Lahiri and Mr. Das to exchange their documents with him through email before the IT Show.

7. Meeting with Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry

The members of The Bengal Chamber Delegation had a meeting with Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) at 6 p.m. at BRAC EPL Stock Brokerage Office, Symphony, 3rd Floor, Road 142, Gulshan Avenue, Dhaka. The meeting was presided by Ms. Nihad kabir, President of MCCI. The delegates introduced themselves briefing their sector of interest and business purpose in Bangladesh. While responding to the Delegates Ms Kabir apprised that Metropolitan chamber of commerce is one of the oldest Chambers of Commerce in Bangladesh. It is an organisation of manufacturers and service sectors (banking and NBFC's). 90% of their members are big players/big investors. They are mostly into policy formulation, policy analysis, lobbying etc. It was also informed that Dr. APJ Adul Kalam visited the Chambers 110th anniversary. MCCI



Secretary General mentioned that the countries macro economy is stable, macro indicators healthy with a GDP growth of 6.5% alongside a very vibrant private sector. The social indicators are also healthy. They also informed that the countries manufacturing standard is going through an upgradation with a booming IT sector. Skill developments have a very bright opportunity. The alternative to the traffic situation in Petrapole and Benapole are barge services which needs a face lift. Pangaon port is at present one way traffic and this needs to be looked upon, for economic feasibility of ocean going vessels to and fro Pangaon port. Bengal is a good gateway for Bangladesh and hence talking a good talk is also to be followed by walking a good walk by the two countries. Ms. Kabir requested the delegates to share their business sectors through email for proper B2B facilitation going forward. Delegation Leader Mr. Ambarish Dasgupta has invited the Metropolitan Chamber to The Bengal Chamber at their earliest convenience.

Day 3: 17th February 2017: Dhaka

8. Visit to Inauguration of ICT Pangaon

Although a holiday in Bangladesh being Friday, Capt. S B Mazumder and Mr. Arup Bandhu Guha went to Pangaon Port upon invitation from the ministry of shipping, to be a part of the Inauguration of the International Container Terminal at Pangaon accompanied by Ms. Binti Jahan, an official from the BBIN desk of FBCCI. The following are the details of the visit:

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➤ **Important Officials Present:**

- ✓ Minister of Shipping, Govt. of Bangladesh
- ✓ Minister of Commerce, Govt. of Bangladesh
- ✓ Secretary, Ministry of Shipping, Govt. of Bangladesh
- ✓ Indian Ambassador to Bangladesh.
- ✓ Chairman, Chittagong Port Authority
- ✓ Terminal Manager, Chittagong Port Authority
- ✓ Commissioner of Customs, ICT Pangaon
- ✓ Terminal Manager, ICT Pangaon
- ✓ Abdul Matlub Ahmad, President, FBCCI
- ✓ Mehboob Alam, Owner of the Coastal Vessel on berth m.v.Nou Kolan
- ✓ Several Shipping Agents
- ✓ Freight Forwarders & Clearing Agents
- ✓ Exim Trade Representatives
- ✓ Vizag Container Terminal, Business Dev. Manager
- ✓ Haldia Container Terminal, Business Dev. Manager



Capt. S B Mazumder and Mr. Arup Bandhu Guha at the Pangaon Port upon invitation from the ministry of shipping accompanied by Ms. Binti Jahan, an official from the BBIN desk of FBCCI.

The ICT Pangaon is owned and built by Chittagong Port Authority. The construction was completed in 2013 and formally inaugurated by the Prime Minister Ms. Sheikh Hasina on 7th November 2013. In order to encourage Container Traffic at the ICT both to / fro Chittagong Port as well as Coastal traffic to / fro Kolkata / Haldia, the Tariff of the ICT has been reduced by 70% of the Original Tariff. Due to this huge concession, some regular traffic has already started. The first voyage of the Coastal Vessel m.v. NOU KOLAN from Kolkata had arrived with 65 units of Import Cargo from Kolkata. After the Inaugural speeches of the The Ministers and other officials 'at the jetty front', the off loading of the Import loaded containers on the m.v. NOU KOLAN Vessel from Kolkata commenced.

All the Ministers and Government Officials spoke on similar lines that, government has spent a huge amount building the ICT Terminal and requested the Exim Trade to support the ICT by using the facilities by those Importers and Exporters situated in and around Dhaka area. They advised that purpose of the ICT was to reduce part of the road traffic between Chittagong Port and Dhaka, by IWT Barges serving regular service between Chittagong Port and ICT Pangaon. Thereafter several of those participants who were present had the opportunity to voice themselves on their support to the ICT. Some did stress on requirement of government subsidy for exports to use the terminal as they were

getting good rates from shipping Lines if they shipped direct via Chittagong Port. Some did express their views on lack of infrastructure in and around the ICT which was still being developed.

However, from the visitor's point of view, the ICT is well constructed and only requires the approach roads to be developed to a much better state. Broad details of the ICT are given below:

- Yard Area : 55,000 sq. mtrs
- Container Freight Station : 5,815 sq. mtrs
- Container storage : 3500 Teus at any given time.
- Length of jetty : 180 mtrs
- Reefer Plugs : 48 nos
- Jetty Crane : 1 Mobile Harbour Crane
- Yard Cranes : 2 Straddle Carriers.
- Cargo Cranes : 3 nos of 50, 20 & 10 MT capacity.

Day 4: 18th February 2017: Chittagong

1. Visit to Chittagong Port and meeting with Port key officials

Representatives of the shipping sector of the Bengal Chamber delegation visited Chittagong Port at 9.00 am on 18th February 2017. They had a drive through Chittagong port and then a detailed meeting with the Terminal Manager Mr. Golam Md. Sarwarul Islam and Assistant Terminal Manager. The following are the key highlights of the Port visit and subsequent discussions:



Capt. S B Mazumder, Executive Director, Seahorse Ship Agencies Pvt. Ltd. with the Terminal Manager Mr. Golam Md. Sarwarul Islam and Assistant Terminal Manager of Chittagong Port

- Chittagong is a Riverine Port on the Karnaphuli River and open to Tides.
- There are only 19 berths in the Port of which 13 are reserved for Container vessels.
- Only 2 of the 13 container berths have shore crane facilities and so most container vessels calling Chittagong have to be self geared vessels.
- The rise of tide is 1.5 – 2 mtrs and so ships at berth are subjected to the rise and fall of tides, in view of the Port not having Lock Gates.
- The through put of the containers is 2.35 million Teus per annum.
- The annual increase in container throughput is high at 15-16%.
- The port has a yard capacity of 36357 Teus at any given time.
- 40% of the Imports are destuffed in Port and balance 60% is moved out to the off dock CFS.
- Container shipping being the lifeline of the port, there is generally berth congestion of average 1-2 days and at times much higher.

2. B2B Meeting with The Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry :

The members of The Bengal Chamber Delegation had a B2B Interaction with The Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry at 11 a.m. on 18th February 2017 at WTC Building, Chittagong. At the onset of the meeting, there was a self introduction of the delegates, followed by a video presentation by The Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry showcasing the strategic location of Chittagong and its natural fundamental advantages and its unique biodiversity. A similar video presentation of BCC&I showcasing West Bengal followed. Mr. Md. Nurun Newaz, Senior Vice President of CCI delivered the formal Welcome Address. He mentioned, India and Bangladesh have huge potentials in bilateral trade. Local markets called border hats have been opened to facilitate trade between small scale industries and farmers to generate market opportunities for them. Cost of doing trade is high between Bangladesh and India mainly due to lack of trade facilitation in both sides. Almost all border crossings lack in modern infrastructure. Other non-tariff barriers like regulatory measures and lack of trade services have affected the bilateral trade. The Chittagong Chamber through BCC&I would like to request Indian Government to accept our BSTI (Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution) certification in case of export. Joint measures should be taken to remove other barrier so that both the countries can be benefitted.



Mr. Md. Nurun Newaz , Sr. Vice President, CCI presenting a memento to Mr. R N Lahiri, Co-Leader of BCC&I Delegation



B2B Meeting with Chittagong Chamber of Commerce in progress.

He added that Bangladeshi exports to India were US\$ 689.62 million and import from India was US\$ 5452.90 million in 2015-2016. Bilateral trade in about 60 high potential commodities, which match export capacity and import demand in each other’s markets, could raise trade volume by about US\$ 1.2bn per annum, which is more than 20 percent of the current volume of bilateral trade.

The Chittagong Chamber has been contributing to the economic development of the country for more than a century. They have built the World Trade Centre for accelerating international trade and business. Port city Chittagong is the centre of export-import activities of the country. CCCI is playing very important role in developing India-Bangladesh economic relation. They are hopeful that the cooperation between the organizations will further enhance bilateral trade and economic relation between two friendly nations.

The delegation comprising consultancy, education, engineering, finance, health, IT, tourism, shipping, skilled development, logistics and transportation have exchanged views with their Bangladeshi counterparts to share knowledge and extend cooperation for mutual benefit.

Bangladesh Government is establishing 100 economic zones all over the country and the biggest one is in Mirersarai. It is just about 50 km from Chittagong port and very close to North Eastern States of India. So, that's a very good location for Indian investment. The Chittagong Chamber has requested the Indian businesses to invest in those economic zones.

Mr. Somnath Halder, Assistant High Commissioner of India, Dhaka was present and while addressing the audience, he mentioned that Bangladesh and India has historic relationship. Both the Governments need to work together closely to enhance the relationships and bilateral trade between these two countries. He also said that India can participate in the development of the Chittagong Port. Infrastructure development and more investment are needed to improve the tourism industry in Bangladesh. Now a days, development of Infrastructure sector has become a (primary necessity) rudimentary in Bangladesh. Bangladesh is also trying to develop the two economic zones Mongla and Anwara. There is a great opportunity to develop healthcare in Bangladesh. Mr R.N Lahiri, Co leader of the Delegation delivered his speech. He focused especially on Education and Skill Development and Media Sector. Dr. Alam, immediate Past President of CCCI, representing the Health Sector in Bangladesh, said that more investments are needed to develop the health sector in Bangladesh. Advance training to be given to the people of HR of Health Sector. Dr. Mahmud Hasan, representing the tourism sector in Bangladesh said that development of infrastructure and medical sector is needed to improve the tourism here.



Members of The Bengal Chamber Delegation at World Trade Centre, Chittagong.

Chittagong is naturally beautiful and has the potential of becoming an ideal trans-national trading hub for Bangladesh and also for the entire South East Asia. Chittagong is an attractive business destination and is also considered as the financial capital of Bangladesh. The place is strategically located which provides hinterland and is also the gateway to Bangladesh. Chittagong is the port city of country. It

has a natural port with all modern facilities. The upcoming projects will improve its capacity to manifold. The Chittagong Port will be able to serve for many parts of India. Chittagong is high in gas reserve, large and cheap easily trainable and intelligent work force, privileged market access, duty free access by many countries. In a nutshell this place has got manifold potential. Sectors which are thriving in Chittagong are:-

- Shipbuilding
- Tourism
- Power generation
- Pharmaceutical
- Food processing

There are ample opportunities in Health, Apparel and Real Estate sectors in Bangladesh. They have requested BCC&I to lobby for:

- i. Trade barriers to be removed for facilitating Bangladeshi exports
- ii. Policies to be made more business friendly discussing with both central and the state government in India.

India and Bangladesh enjoy a very deep-rooted bilateral relation based on mutual trust and cooperation. The two countries are closely cooperating in the fields of trade, investment, sharing of skill and transfer of technology, education, training and through people-to-people contact. There has been exchange of high-level visits between the two countries that have helped develop mutual understanding. The two countries have signed a number of agreements to institutionalize the bilateral relations. India is now investing more and more in Bangladesh in infrastructure development. This is very good news for the business community of both the countries. Both nations can become complementary to each other and be benefitted.



Members of BCC&I Delegation - on arrival at the Chittagong airport.