

Stakeholder Consultation on Indo-Bangla Trade 20 June, 2010, Pragya Bhawan, Agartala, Tripura

Backgrounder

Objectives

- To review recent developments in trade and investment involving India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan
- To elicit the views of stakeholders in North Eastern India, especially Tripura, and Bangladesh about potential for further cooperation in regard to enhancement of trade, connectivity and investment involving these two regions
- To generate concrete recommendations on the basis of the views expressed for furthering such regional cooperation

Background

North Eastern India and Bangladesh are not only neighbours but exhibit complementary geographical and economic characteristics. This is especially true of Tripura which shares a long border with Bangladesh on its western and southern side and exhibits many cultural similarities. These characteristics might be used for evolving developmental synergies between these regions.

CUTS International organised a Stakeholder Consultation on Indo-Bangla Trade in Agartala on August 09, 2009. The consultation was targeted at building the momentum generated by the Joint Tripura-Bangla Task Force on Trade set up earlier that year. The objective of meeting was to elicit the views of stakeholders in North Eastern India, especially Tripura, and Bangladesh about potential for trade, connectivity and investment involving these two regions and also involve business representatives, civil society representatives, and government in creating awareness and momentum towards economic cooperation between North Eastern India, especially Tripura, and Bangladesh.

As an outcome of the consultation, a memorandum of recommendations was formulated. The submission of this memorandum to the Prime Minister of India was followed by a joint foreign ministers' meeting in New Delhi where some of the recommendations emerging from the Agartala meeting were agreed on for implementation, especially in regard to enhancing of connectivity in the region. The meeting of the Prime Ministers of India and Bangladesh that followed saw a further deepening of bilateral cooperation.

In view of the huge success of the mentioned consultation, CUTS International in association with Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) India is organising another consultation on Indo-Bangla Trade to further enhance cooperation in trade and investment that generates benefits for both India and Bangladesh.

The Event

- Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tripura, Manik Sarkar will inaugurate the consultation. There will also be other dignitaries from Government of Tripura in the introductory session, namely, Jitendra Chowdhury, Hon'ble Commerce Minister, SK Panda, Chief Secretary and LK Gupta, Principal Secretary, Industry and Commerce & IT. The introductory session will be followed by thematic presentations on the basis of which discussions among all those assembled will take place. To conclude, a panel discussion will be organised to review recent developments in trade and investment involving India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan.