

## Bangladesh happy at improving trade ties with India

Bangladesh is happy at its improving trade relations with India and wants its entrepreneurs to grab opportunities that were not available to them earlier.

Commerce Adviser Hossain Zillur Rahman Saturday noted that Bangladesh and India have reduced the huge barrier to bilateral trade, hoping that the remaining obstacles would be removed shortly, New Nation newspaper reported Sunday.

Opening a two-day 'Buyer-Seller Meet cum Exhibition' of Indian footwear component and accessories here, Rahman said Bangladesh had ample opportunities to export its quality products to India. The opportunities could not be availed in the past mainly due to non-tariff barriers.

'Some barriers have already gone. Bangladeshi battery is already being exported to India. The country can also export quality leather products to India,' he said.

Mentioning the poor infrastructure conditions in the seven bordering provinces of northeast India, he said bilateral trade could get a boost if easy transportation to those provinces was arranged.

The trade show was organised by the Indian Footwear Component Manufacturers Association (IFCOMA) with the support of Council of Leather Export (CLE) of India, Leather goods and Footwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association of Bangladesh (LFMEAB) and the Indian high commission in Dhaka.

Commerce Secretary Feroze Ahmed, acting Indian High Commissioner Mukta D. Tomar, leading businessman Monjur Elahi, IFCOMA president B.D. Bhaiya and LFMEAB president Saiful Islam were also present at the inaugural function.

The commerce advisor said the trade show was a concrete effort that would create 'a culture of realistic initiatives in place of organising recurrent policy-making seminars'.

Thirty Indian firms are showcasing their products and services at the trade event.

India-Bangladesh balance of trade has been traditionally weighed against Dhaka. However, India announced duty free goods trade with the least developed countries (LDCs) of South Asia, including Bangladesh, at the Non-Aligned Movement Summit in April last year.

India also permitted duty free import of eight million pieces of Bangladeshi garments annually.

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