

# Mapping the Dynamics of Sustainable Relationships between India and Bangladesh in Modi's Era

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## KEYWORDS

India, Bangladesh,  
Bilateral ties,  
Friendship,  
Dependency cult

## ABSTRACT

The acquaintanceship between India and Bangladesh started in 1971 during the liberation war in Bangladesh, and is evolving satisfyingly well. India follows neighborhood first policy in helping Bangladesh and always tries to maintain a good rapport with Bangladesh and Bangladesh also reciprocates the same. India initiated different government and non-government projects to solidify the bond of friendship with Bangladesh, specifically during Modi's era. From supplying humanitarian kits to Bangladesh during covid to building pipeline for transport of fuel to Bangladesh. Not only this, India is also supplying electricity to Bangladesh to meet its power crisis. Every year India is receiving the highest number of medical tourists from Bangladesh, who visit India to get better healthcare facilities. India has also signed many of bilateral ties with Bangladesh for which loan facilities are also given to Bangladesh from India. But this sustainable nature of India is creating a dependency culture for Bangladesh. The aim of this current paper is to find the ups and downs between these two countries and why India is helping only Bangladesh more, compared to other neighbors. Methodology used in writing this paper is mainly descriptive and qualitative in nature.

## Introduction

There are many shared cultural, linguistic, historical and other characteristics between Bangladesh and India. Additionally, they are a member of Commonwealth, IORA, BIMSTEC, and SAARC. Bangladesh has India's unwavering support whenever it needs assistance. A unique distinct position in the neighborhood -first policy is also reserved for Bangladesh. Indian support for Bangladesh has never wavered. Although the two nations' relationship began well - India supported Bangladesh in its struggle for independence from Pakistan - it did not endure long because of the frequent disputes over shared territory, water, migration, and transnational crime. Even with all of these disagreements, both nations are making every effort to maintain friendly relations. As a result, both nations launched numerous government and non-governmental projects to support one another's development. India's extraordinary efforts to assist Bangladesh during the COVID-19 pandemic have further cemented their relationship (Siddique, 2020). India was the first country to send humanitarian kits to

Bangladesh followed by China. India Bangladesh has created a friendship pipeline that will expedite the delivery of high-speed diesel to the country at a reasonable cost. This pipeline connects 16 districts in Rajshahi and Rangpur, northern Bangladesh, to the Numaligarh Refinery Limited in Assam, India. India has also built power plants to supply electricity to Bangladesh; the Tripura-comilla gird interconnection project imports 150-160MW of power, while the Baharampur-Bheramara transmission line imports 500MW.

Strong infrastructure and connectivity are prerequisites for sustainable development. A rail connectivity project from the northeastern state of Tripura, has been started namely the Agartala-Akhaura rail project to fulfill the motive of a strong connectivity between this two countries. This scheme aims to benefit the trade and industry in both countries in several ways. Bangladeshi medical tourist visit India on a yearly basis in search of a better and more affordable medical care which they lack in any other country. This is the current state of affairs between Bangladesh and India, and this helping nature of India is creating a dependency culture in Bangladesh. There are several areas where both countries face challenges that need to be addressed, such as the murder of Bangladeshis by Indian border guards, the sporadic influx of illegal immigrants, and the reports of armed dacoity in India's rural areas. The most important issue that needs to be addressed in this context is the problem of drug trafficking by individuals from Bangladesh and India.

When Narendra Modi became the Indian Prime Minister, he has set in motion several steps to support Bangladesh, our neighbor, in developing more swiftly, the sustainable relationship between India and Bangladesh developed even more in the reign of Narendra Modi. The eagerly-anticipated Land Boundary Agreement, which remained pending for almost four decades, was referenced by him as soon as he took office in June 2015. India furnished three loans to Bangladesh for improving infrastructure such as airports, ports, roads and setting up power transmission lines. The pace at which the loans were being sanctioned to Bangladesh increased during Modi's era. Both the countries are showing endeavor to maintain cordial relationship with each other.

#### Literature Review

1. **Komal Kaushik Baral** in her study "*Locating Soft Power in India-Bangladesh Relations*" (2018) examines the dynamics of soft power in the relationship between India and Bangladesh. Soft power refers to a country's ability to influence others through cultural, economic, and ideological means rather than through coercion or force. Baral explores how soft power manifests in various aspects of the bilateral relationship, such as cultural exchanges, economic cooperation, and people-to-people contacts. The book delves into the historical context of the relationship between the two countries and analyzes how soft power has played a role in shaping their interactions over time. Through case studies and empirical analysis, Baral demonstrates how soft power resources, such as Bollywood films, Indian cuisine, and religious ties, have influenced perceptions and attitudes in Bangladesh towards India. The book also examines the role of institutions and government policies in leveraging soft power to enhance cooperation and mitigate conflicts between the two nations. Overall, "*Locating Soft Power in India-Bangladesh Relations*" provides valuable insights into the complexities of soft power diplomacy and its significance in the context of South Asian geopolitics. It offers a nuanced understanding of the ways in which India and Bangladesh navigate their relationship through cultural affinity and shared heritage, ultimately contributing to a deeper comprehension of regional dynamics in South Asia.
2. **Lt. Gen. Y.M. Bammi (Retd)** in his book "*India-Bangladesh Relations: The Way Ahead*" (2010), explores the complex dynamics between India and Bangladesh, two neighboring countries with intertwined histories, cultural ties, and strategic interests. The book delves into various aspects of the bilateral relationship, including political, Economic, social, and security dimensions. Lt. Gen. Bammi provides insights into the historical context of India-Bangladesh relations, tracing back to the partition of British India in 1947 and the subsequent emergence of Bangladesh as an independent nation in 1971. The author

analyzes key events and milestones in the relationship, highlighting both cooperation and challenges faced by the two countries over the years. Moreover, the book examines contemporary issues and opportunities for enhancing cooperation between India and Bangladesh in areas such as trade, connectivity, energy, and security. Lt. Gen. Bammi offers policy recommendations and strategic insights for fostering closer ties and addressing common challenges. Overall, "India-Bangladesh Relations: The Way Ahead" provides a comprehensive overview of the bilateral relationship and offers valuable perspectives on the future trajectory of ties between the two nations.

3. **Mamta Kumari Panda** in her study *"Indo-Bangladesh Relation: A Study of Emerging Opportunities"* (2017), delves into the bilateral relationship between India and Bangladesh, focusing on the evolving opportunities for collaboration between the two nations. The author examines various aspects of the relationship, including political, economic, and cultural ties, and analyzes how these factors contribute to the overall dynamics between India and Bangladesh. Additionally, the article explores potential areas for further cooperation and outlines strategies to strengthen the partnership between the two countries. Through a comprehensive study, the author sheds light on the significant opportunities for growth and mutual benefit in the Indo- Bangladesh relationship.
4. **Md. Ershadul Huq** in his study *"Recent Issues and Trends in Bangladesh-India Relation: A Bangladeshi Perspective,"* (2023), explores the complex dynamics between Bangladesh and India, two neighboring South Asian countries with intertwined histories and evolving diplomatic ties. Huq begins by acknowledging the historically close relationship between the two nations, marked by cultural, economic, and geographical connections. However, he delves into recent issues and trends that have influenced this relationship, offering a nuanced perspective from a Bangladeshi viewpoint. One significant aspect Huq addresses is the bilateral trade and economic cooperation between Bangladesh and India. He discusses how both countries have made efforts to enhance trade relations, yet challenges such as trade imbalances and non-tariff barriers persist, impacting the economic partnership. Furthermore, Huq examines the issue of water sharing, particularly concerning the Teesta River. He highlights the importance of water resources for both countries and the implications of unresolved disputes on bilateral relations, emphasizing the need for equitable solutions that benefit all stakeholders. Huq also touches upon security concerns, including cross-border terrorism and border management. He analyzes how these issues have influenced the security dynamics between Bangladesh and India, underscoring the importance of mutual cooperation and trust-building measures to address common challenges effectively. Additionally, the article discusses cultural exchanges and people-to-people connections, which play a vital role in fostering goodwill and understanding between the two nations. Huq emphasizes the significance of cultural diplomacy in strengthening bilateral ties and promoting harmony among diverse communities.
5. **M.Krishna Naik (2015)** "Trends in India Bangladesh relation" deals with genesis of birth of Bangladesh India - Bangladesh political and economic relation, recent trends in India Bangladesh relation. The author has given a brief insight in to the birth of India and Bangladesh, with giving detailed information about the political and economic relations between these two countries.
6. **Md.Shariful Islam** in his book *"Fifty Years of India-Bangladesh Relations"* (2021), offers a captivating journey through the intertwined histories of two nations, bound by geography, shared heritage, and a commitment to fostering mutual prosperity. Since the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent nation in 1971, the relationship between India and Bangladesh has traversed a complex landscape, marked by moments of solidarity, cooperation, and occasional challenges. This book delves into the evolution of this multifaceted bond over five decades, tracing its trajectory from the tumultuous days of the

Bangladesh Liberation War to the present-day landscape of strategic partnership and economic collaboration. Through meticulous research and insightful analysis, the narrative explores the pivotal milestones that have shaped India-Bangladesh relations, from the signing of the historic Mujib-Indira Accord to the landmark Teesta River water-sharing agreement. It delves into the intricacies of bilateral cooperation across various domains, including trade, security, cultural exchange, and people-to-people ties, illuminating the synergies and complexities inherent in this enduring alliance. As India and Bangladesh stand poised at the threshold of a new era, this book offers valuable insights into the shared aspirations, challenges, and opportunities that define their relationship. It serves as a testament to the enduring bonds of friendship, trust, and collaboration that continue to bind these neighboring nations, shaping the contours of South Asian diplomacy in the twenty-first century.

7. **Nilanjana Nayak** in his work *"India Bangladesh bilateral relation since 1990s"* (2020), deals with the history of indo-Bangladesh relationship with respect to political, economic and cultural perspectives and trends in India – Bangladesh relationship under Modi's Era. The author has examined the history of both the countries in detail, with that the author also studied about recent political, economic and cultural perspectives.
8. **Smruti S Pattanaik** in her book *"Four Decades of India-Bangladesh Relations"* (2012), writes about a poignant chronicle of the enduring friendship and complex dynamics between two neighboring nations. Spanning from the birth of Bangladesh in 1971 to the contemporary landscape of diplomatic intricacies, this book navigates through the highs and lows, triumphs and challenges that have characterized the relationship between India and Bangladesh. Through meticulous research and insightful analysis, it unveils the historical milestones that have shaped their intertwined destinies, from the tumultuous days of the Bangladesh Liberation War to the signing of pivotal agreements fostering bilateral cooperation. Delving into the realms of politics, economics, culture, and security, this narrative captures the essence of a partnership built on shared aspirations and mutual respect. As India and Bangladesh evolve as key players in the regional and global arenas, this book provides a compelling exploration of their journey towards deeper understanding, collaboration, and the pursuit of common goals. It stands as a testament to the enduring bonds that unite these nations, transcending borders and enriching the tapestry of South Asian diplomacy.

### Research Gap

The research gap that has been found while doing this research is that all the current sustainable development ties that has took place between India and Bangladesh like the creation of friendship pipeline to transfer high speed diesel from India to Bangladesh, spur in medical tourism in India as Bangladeshi's prefer India over other countries for health check-ups and many private hospitals has opened up their units in the neighbouring country, many private Indian companies has started investing in Bangladesh and coming up with future plans of investment.

Similarly the challenges faced by India and Bangladesh are new in this evolving world like the problem of sharing Teesta River is not yet resolved, drug trafficking is on the rise due to cross border activities. Growing influence of china over Bangladesh is also an issue of concern for India.

### Research Questions

1. What are the current trends in India Bangladesh bilateral relation under Prime Minister Modi?
2. What are the current areas of conflict between these two countries?



### 3. How well India and Bangladesh is sustaining their friendship?

#### Objectives of the study

1. To examine out the emerging trends in the bilateral relationship between India and Bangladesh.
2. To examine out the recent areas of conflicts between Bangladesh and India.
3. To examine the sustainability of their friendship.

#### Methodology of the study

The current paper depends on only secondary data gathered from published articles, books, journals, newspapers and government data. E- Sources also provided major contribution for the study. An amalgamation of qualitative and historical methods is being used in executing the study.

#### Development of Inland and coastal connectivity between India and Bangladesh

Strong infrastructure is the key to development of any nation state, in order to have strong infrastructure connectivity of places are most important, keeping that in mind India and Bangladesh has come forward in developing and renovating the inland and coastal connectivity between India and Bangladesh.

The proposal for inland water transport was given at the Bangladesh seminar on “Bangladesh-India protocol on inland water transit and trade: Challenges and Opportunities” held in Dhaka, Bangladesh on 13<sup>th</sup> may 2015. All the policy and economic experts present at the seminar advised both the government to solve navigation problems, advance ports, develop customs and inculcate more high quality infrastructure facilities and loosen the strict policies that are acting like hindrance in way of development. Doing so both the countries could tap into the potential of inland water transit.

For developing coastal connectivity between the two countries, a federal union cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, ratified a coastal shipping deal between India and Bangladesh because of which both the countries can now carry out coastal movements of goods between them. This consensus between two countries will not only benefit import- export trade between these countries but also will decrease the freight charges, more creative use of Indian ports capacities, opening new gateways for Indian coastal vessels, and clean out roads at land custom stations and integrated check points at Indo- Bangladesh border (SASEC, 2015).

In south Asia India is the largest partner of Bangladesh for trade and the development of this costal route will boost import- export of cargo between these two countries. This deal will particularly act as a catalyst in increasing the bi-lateral trade between these two countries by decreasing the transportation costs and decreasing shipping time from average -30-40 days, to 7-10 days by enabling moving of ships directly between India and Bangladesh (SASEC, 2015).

But as of now there is no significant cargo movement between the two ports of these countries as it is not worthy for big ocean vessels to operate between seaports of these two countries. For the purpose of Indo- Bangladesh shipping small sea vessels are prescribed which will not only lower the construction and operational cost without sacrificing the safety Standards that is prerequisite for shipping (SASEC, 2015).

Indian railways is connected to Bangladesh railway network at five operational interchange points – Petra pole (India) to beanpole (Bangladesh), Gede (India) to Darshana (Bangladesh), Singhabad (India) to Rohanpur (Bangladesh), Radhikapur (India) to Birol (Bangladesh) and Haldibari (India) to Chilahati (Bangladesh). Maitri Express is the first international train that runs every week between the Indian city of Kolkata and Dhaka since 2008, followed by Bandhan Express that runs between Kolkata, India and Khulna, Bangladesh since 2017, and the last one in the list is Mitali Express that operates between New Jalpaiguri and Dhaka, Bangladesh.

BBIN (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal) are emerging as potential areas for economic development. With this scenario India- Bangladesh rail connectivity is evidently the most crucial one. A region's ability to flourish sustainably hugely depends on intraregional economic activities and a robust transport infrastructure. For that connectivity between regions is utmost important and paramount. Well-established transport connectivity not only has the capacity to significantly reduce logistics costs as a percentage of national GDP but also transfers direct benefits to end users. The advantage of reduced transit via shorter corridors is enormous due to enhanced transportation. With the development of Agartala (India)-Akhaurya (Bangladesh) rail link which is freight train from Kolkata to Agartala is rerouted on Bangladesh railway will possibly cut the cost of transportation costs and transit time by two third resulting in a win win situation for both India and Bangladesh.

Currently passengers traveling from Kolkata to Tripura by train take a long way, circuitous route via northern west Bengal to Guwahati in Assam. The path then turns heads southwards towards Tripura. The travel time is approximately 38 hours. With the commencement of the Akhaurya-Agartala cross border rail road, trains can run from Kolkata to Tripura via Bangladesh, as it is the neighboring country and located in the middle of the land mass between India's northeast and rest of the country, connected only by a small corridor in Bengal's Siliguri popularly known as the "chicken's neck". The passengers' travel time will be cut down from exhausting 38 hours to 12 hours; this will bring a boost in the passengers travelling through this rail route as the travel hours will be reduced, the passengers will find this new route much more feasible and practical. It will not only give a boost to passengers but also it will uplift business in the region as trains can carry much heavier and bulkier cargo in huge quantities. The length of this rail link is 12.24 km with 6.78 dual gauge rail line in Bangladesh and 5.64 km in Tripura. The first trial of a goods train was conducted between Northeast India and Bangladesh; a goods train started its journey from Gangasagar railway station at Bangladesh and reached Nischintapur in Tripura, after a decade of signing the memorandum of understanding to start the first Indo-Bangladesh International Railway. Nischintapur station has been declared as the first land customs station, which will connect Agartala with Akhaurya in Bangladesh by train.

#### Energy supplied to Bangladesh to stimulate the economy of the country

Energy in form of electricity or high speed diesel is being supplied to Bangladesh from India to strengthen the economy of our neighboring nation. India has developed pipeline to transfer fuel power to Bangladesh which in turn has elevated the friendship between Bangladesh and India to next level. Bangladesh actually holds a special position at India friendship list because of common history, culture and similarities in language. This is the first of pipeline of its kind in human civilization, nowhere else in world such a pipeline facility exists. This pipeline stretches from Siliguri in west Bengal, India to Dinajpur district in Bangladesh. A total area of 132 km is covered under this project out of which it is only 5 km in India and remaining 127 km in Bangladesh. So that Bangladesh is in a beneficial position under this project. The total capacity of this pipeline is transporting 1 million metric tons of diesel per year. But for the starting years the amount of diesel transported to Bangladesh will be 250,000 tons annually and then slowly and gradually it will be increased to 450,000 tons (Laskar, 2023). Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his speech told that this pipeline marks the era of friendship between India and Bangladesh and also a new chapter in the bilateral relation between both the countries. He also told that this would be reliable and cost-effective system of import of energy by Bangladesh which will be advantageous for the local industries and the agricultural sector as well. As the India Bangladesh friendship pipeline would bring down the cost of transportation of a single barrel of diesel from US\$8 TO US\$5. The cost of this entire project was 377 crore. Previously diesel was transported to Bangladesh through 512 km rail route which was not only time consuming but also left more carbon foot print (Jha, 2023).

But now after the construction of the pipe line it will not only reduce the time and cost of transportation but also the carbon foot prints which is more ecofriendly for the environment. In recent times Bangladesh has made a commendable progress and every Indian is proud of that and not only that we are extremely happy that we have been able to contribute a substantial amount of

contribution in development of Bangladesh said prime minister Narendra Modi in addressing the virtual inauguration event of the India Bangladesh friendship pipe line, he further added that he is highly confident that this pipe line will help Bangladesh to develop at a faster pace. Bangladesh has a scarcity of electricity and since September 2013 Bangladesh is procuring power supply from India. A total of 1,160 MW of electricity is being transported by Bangladesh from India out of which 1000 MW is imported from west Bengal and rest 160 MW from Tripura through Comilla border<sup>11</sup>. Bangladesh power shortage is due to bad weather conditions and difficulty in paying for fuel imports in the middle of a declining forex reserves and value of its currency. After China Bangladesh is the second largest exporter of textiles supplying global retails likes the Zara, Wal-Mart and H&M, which contributes to the country's GDP. But due to its shortage of electricity, there was a power cut for 114 days in the first half of 2023. With such huge rate of powers cuts it's very difficult to industries to operate. This in turn will affect the production of the industries in a negative way.

To meet up with the power shortages of Bangladesh India has extended its hand towards Bangladesh. India being a developing country understands the need of how important it is for an underdeveloped country to have sufficient power supply. Because without power supply the machineries in the industries will not run and if the machineries do not run the industries will run in losses. The production from industries forms a major part of gross domestic product of any country. But if the industries run in losses, how will they contribute to gross domestic product of a country? Understanding this pain and suffering India supplies power to Bangladesh. So that Bangladesh can also develop and the industries in Bangladesh can also run successfully without much power scarcity. Bangladesh is also an agriculture-based country like India where agriculture plays a major role in accelerating the economic growth of Bangladesh. But irrigation is not possible without electricity, as even in doing the agricultural activities like running the pump, harvesting of crops electricity is needed. So, India is trying to mitigate as much as possible the power shortage in Bangladesh.

Even the big corporates houses from India like the Reliance Group and the Adani's are coming forward and setting up power plants to solve the power shortage issues in Bangladesh. Reliance group is the first investor from India who invested in creating a power plant in Bangladesh – The Reliance Meghnaghat Power Plant Phase I, which is a 718MW gas fired power project. It is located in Dhaka. Currently the project is in under construction phase. It will be completed in a single phase. After the completion of the project the project is expected to get commissioned by 2024. This plant is owned by Reliance power and JERA having partnership of 51% and 49% respectively. Once this project kicks off much of the issues of the Bangladesh regarding power deficiency will decline.

India's first transnational power plant project was started by Adani group which supplies electricity to Bangladesh. The plant is located in Godda in Jharkhand. The Bangladesh power development board has signed a twenty-five years agreement of power purchase from Adani group. Power supplied from this plant will help Bangladesh in cutting the cost of procuring electricity from liquid fuel. It will reduce the average cost of power purchased by Bangladesh according to the statement of Adani. This will help Bangladesh to grow and develop at a faster pace.

president Draupadi Murmu. In south Asia Bangladesh is the largest trade partner of India. Bangladesh is an underdeveloped country with many humanitarian crisis and needs a lot foreign direct investment and credit from other countries to develop it. India always tries to help Bangladesh for its holistic development (Kamal, 2020).

So that even that country can come up from its vicious circle of poverty and underdevelopment. No country can develop on its own until and unless some other country comes to its rescue and for Bangladesh, India was such a friendly country which came forward every now and then to provide some sort of credit to Bangladesh. India decided to lend Bangladesh \$7.362 billion under the three Line of Credit agreements. On August 2020 the first line of agreement was signed between India and Bangladesh which included a sum of \$862 million out of which \$747.52 million has already been released. On March 2016 the second line of credit agreement for \$2 billion was signed between the two countries, out of which \$336.8 million has been released so far for different development projects in Bangladesh. Soon after signing the second line of credit agreement in 2016, the next year itself India signed the third line of credit agreement with Bangladesh in March 2017. It included a sum of \$4.5 billion out of which \$405.14 million has been released so far (Jayanth Jacob, 2017).

Out of the forty development projects listed under the line of credit system, fourteen have been complete already; eight projects are underway waiting for approval and rest are also being implemented slowly. India is also a developing country, it itself needs credit from other countries, World Bank or international monetary fund for its developmental activities. Standing at such a position India is still thinking of its neighbors and trying to help them by providing loan and credit is really commendable. It shows that India always stands by its ethics and cites an example for the world and generations to come on how to follow the principle of oneness in true sense.

India and Bangladesh have also signed 22 agreements regarding defence cooperation, space, nuclear energy and cyber security on April 2017. With this India also signed a memorandum of understanding through which a sum of \$500 million would be extended to help Bangladesh's defence related procurements (Jayanth Jacob, 2017). A total number of three memorandums of understanding were signed between these two countries for defence cooperation. Two more memorandum of understanding was signed to enhance cooperation in national security and strategic and operational studies. One between the Defence services command and staff college, Bangladesh and the Defence services staff college, India. And the other between National Defence college, New Delhi and National Defence college, Bangladesh. For the purpose of cooperation in peaceful use of nuclear energy and cooperation in the regulation of nuclear safety two more agreements were signed. A cross - agency agreement was also signed between the Bangladesh atomic energy commission and global center for nuclear energy partnership of India regarding nuclear power plant projects in Bangladesh. A financing agreement pertaining to construction of thirty-six community health clinics was signed between the two countries. Few more memorandum of understanding like in the area of cyber security through Indian computer emergency response team and Government computer incident response team of Bangladesh, judicial training and capacity building, establishing border haats, development of fairway from Sirajganj to Daikhowa and Ashu Ganj to Zaki Ganj on the Indo- Bangladesh protocol route. Other than these a memorandum of understanding was also signed on having passenger and cruise services between these two countries. Few other agreements were also signed like the mass media, cooperation in earth sciences, space, information technology and peaceful use of outer space. These were some of the of the great initiatives signed between prime minister Narendra Modi of India and prime minister sheik Hasina of Bangladesh to strengthen the bilateral ties between this two countries.

Regarding investment also India is on front foot in Bangladesh. Many of the Indian business tycoons are keen to invest in Bangladesh looking at the natural prospects and friendly relation that India has with that country. Indian firms are keen to invest in the health, education and energy sectors in Bangladesh. Many big Indian company companies like the National hydroelectric power corporation limited and Indian Gas Exchange have interest in developing gas and electricity trade. Health care service provider like Desun has plans to build healthcare infrastructure in Dhaka, Chattogram, Sylhet and Khulna any one of the area in Bangladesh. while educational organization



like Guru Kashi University has plan to build a local educational institute in Bangladesh as many students needs to travel to far of land for better higher education.

The Adani group announced on July 15<sup>th</sup> 2023 of the first transnational project at Godda in Jharkhand, India to supply electricity to Bangladesh electricity grid. The chairman of Adani group called prime minister Sheik Hasina to inform the full load commencement of power supply will be done from the group's Ultra Super Critical Thermal Power Plant. They also said that 100 percent of electricity generated from this plant will be supplied to other nations. Getting electricity from this plant will be of great help for Bangladesh as it will be cost effective as compared to electricity developed by using liquid fuel which is more expensive.

The first major investment in Bangladesh's power sector was done by none other than Reliance Industries limited and their main focus was on natural gas and power generation particularly. The company signed a twenty-two years power purchase agreement with our neighbouring country Bangladesh. It will supply electricity from its Meghnaghat power plant to Bangladesh power development board. The company has also shared its interest of investing in Bangladesh's retail, petrochemicals and telecom.

All these investment by big companies belonging to India are seen as a positive investment in Bangladesh because they are solving the problems related to power supply as well as creating jobs for the youth and also boosting foreign direct investment in the country. They also paved the way for other countries to make investment in Bangladesh, which will in turn help the country to grow faster. Running the pump, harvesting of crops electricity is needed. So, India is trying to mitigate as much as possible the power shortage in Bangladesh.

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#### An upsurge in health sector of India, as Bangladeshis prefer India for health checkup

As Bangladesh is a developing country, the health care facilities in Bangladesh are not that much updated. So, every year India receives highest number of Bangladeshi nationals who come to India for better checkup. Bangladeshis prefer India over any other country because of the close proximity, common culture food and language. According to a report of the India's tourism ministry, every year 2.5million Bangladeshis visit India for better healthcare facilities and they spend around \$500 million for the same. And this number is rising every year. Even the high profile people in Bangladesh prefer India for healthcare and not Bangladesh because of multiple reasons. Like the unprofessional or rude behavior of the Doctors, prescriptions of unnecessary tests and medicines, bad condition of the hospitals with lack of necessary infrastructure and facilities.

According to a survey of India's ministry of tourism in July 2021 about 54% of the medical tourists were from Bangladesh in India. Which was only 23.6% back then in 2009. The number more drastically changed in the year 2019 which was 57.5%. Dr. Devi Shetty, who is a renowned doctor

from India who is also a member of the National Medical and wellness Tourism promotion said that majority of the patients that comes to India for health check-ups, comes for difficult cardiac procedures and cancer treatments. As they get better facilities in much cheaper price with high quality facilities and best doctors and best medical staff, who takes utmost care of their patients (Sunita Rao, 2021).

A country's strength and development depend on the quality of healthy citizens it has. If a country has more numbers of healthy and young citizens that country is bound to flourish with span of time. As the Bangladeshi citizens are not getting proper health facilities at cheaper price in their country they prefer to come to India? And this has been made possible by the government of India, as Indian government is giving the medical visa very easily. The Bangladeshi medical tourists are taking much benefit of this policy of Indian government and coming to India for better and cheap healthcare facilities. The list of five best hospitals that are preferred by Bangladeshis are Apollo Hospital Chennai because of its high profile technology and it also has some of the best doctors in India, then comes the Fortis Memorial research institute at Gurgaon which is also having some of the world class facilities with best medical staffs, Medanta- The Medicity, Gurgaon which is one of the biggest hospitals in India with top class facilities in budget, Max Super Specialty Hospital, New Delhi which is also known for its expertise doctors and facilities and the last one in the list is Manipal hospital, Bangalore which is also a Multi-specialty hospital with world class facilities. Other than this also there are many hospitals that are preferred by the Bangladeshis for their health care check-up in India.

#### Challenges that needs to be overcome by India and Bangladesh

The major areas of conflict between India and Bangladesh which are still going are Teesta River water sharing, illegal migrants, border killing and drug trade- which have become a serious issue for both the countries. India and Bangladesh had a very long history of dispute over Teesta river water sharing; the total length of the river is 414km, out of which, the river flows in Sikkim is about 151km, 142 km through west Bengal and 121 km in Bangladesh. A deal was put forward mentioning equal sharing of the river by both the countries in 1983, but the execution ran into difficulties. Bangladesh even went to United Nations in the year 1980s to resolve her water issues with India. India being an upper riparian country controls and diverts the flow of water by creating dams, due to which the agriculture and fisheries are suffering badly. Teesta has remained an unsolved issue for ages now (Kathuria, 2017). For long term consolidated relationship between India and Bangladesh the Teesta river issue needs to be resolved.

Cross border activities are also certain areas of conflict which needs to be addressed between India and Bangladesh to sustain relationship between India and Bangladesh. Cross borders activities can be categorized into few themes like Border Fencing, Border Trade, Border killings, Border Crossing/Migration, Border Enclaves.

This cross border activities like illegal migration provokes border killing and terrorism. Cross border activities are also increasing the drug trade between these two countries. Drug addiction has become a serious issue for the entire world. India has become a transit as well as hub of heroin and hashish produced in the golden triangle and golden crescent. In addition to these various psychotropic and pharmaceutical preparations and precursor chemical produced are also trafficked through Indian territory. The India – Bangladesh border is a porous one with highly densely population along these borders and trans-border ethnic ties contribute towards the drug trafficking along India- Bangladesh.

#### Conclusion

To conclude it can be said that this current paper aims to provide an overview of the recent sustainable development in the bi-lateral relationships between India –Bangladesh during Modi's Era and also the challenges faced by these countries to maintain these age old bi- lateral relationship.

The progress in the rail road connectivity will give a boost to both the regions' trade and economy, with reduced travel time, from one destination to another. By giving a huge line of credits India is

paving way for a good relationship between both the countries in future as well. The power and fuel supplied by India to Bangladesh is also a good initiative to sustain a healthy bilateral relationship between these two countries. And due to the medical tourists' visit from Bangladesh to India, there is hype in the medical sector in India. However, there are certain disagreements like teesta water sharing issue, cross –border activities, drug trafficking and terrorism issues that needs to be addressed carefully and sensitively to maintain sustainable relationship between these countries.

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