

Executive Summary of Yunnan-Bangladesh Forum 2015

BIPSS organized the Yunnan-Bangladesh Forum 2015 in Dhaka on 27th-28th December. This track 1.5 level Dialogue is held every year in alternate capitals in Bangladesh and Yunnan. Some key areas of bi-lateral cooperation issues like Trade Cooperation, Counter Terrorism Cooperation, New Maritime Silk Route etc. were discussed in the forum. It was attended by senior officials from China and invited delegates by BIPSS in Bangladesh.

Dialogue of the forum was divided between 3 working sessions. The theme of 1st session was 'Belt and Road: New Horizons for Trade and Cooperation'. Speakers of this session were M. Shahidul Islam (Research Fellow, PRI and PPRC) and Mr. Hou Feng (Vice Division, Yunnan Development Research Center). According to the speakers of this session, Belt & road is the most effective potential to enhance economic relations between Bangladesh & China, specially Yunnan-Bangladesh relations.

Yunnan is the closest province to Bangladesh. To improve trade relation of Yunnan-Bangladesh, some key points were suggested by the speakers. Such as-

- Trade potentials are huge but challenges such as trade imbalances, emerging trading blocs are some of the downside risks. These risks should be minimized.
- To materialize trade potential, there is a need for financial cooperation. Financial coop is also required to draw large investment for infrastructure and maritime economy development.
- The interconnection and construction of Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor should be based on the transportation infrastructure conditions of the countries along the route and the development of the layout of the Asian Highway Network and the Trans-Asian Railway Network. We need to build the transport channel of the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor south-line, mid-line and north-line based on the main highway, railway, waterway and airlines, the support of the central cities along the route, the

platform of the key economy and trade industrial parks and the nodes of the port towns.

- On connectivity, besides the K2K Route of BCIM, Yunnan and Bangladesh should work closely to open-up alternative route through Myanmar.
- Sister city cooperation between Chittagong and Kunming should be conducted.
- To improve economic connectedness one common currency for BCIM can be introduced.

The theme of 2nd session was 'Facing The Challenge: Building Cooperation for Counter Radicalization and Counter Terrorism Strategies'. It was presented by

Mr. Shafqat Munir (Associate Research Fellow, BIPSS) and Ms. Zhushan (Division Chief, Yunnan Development Research Center). Both talked about why cooperation is needed to develop counter radicalization and counter terrorism strategies.

Radicalisation is a process by which an individual or group comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social, or religious ideals and aspirations that reject or undermine the contemporary ideas and expressions of freedom of choice. Cooperation is needed as radical groups has no boundary and can move through any national boundary easily. Cooperation is needed as radical groups has no boundary and can move through any national boundary easily. No country can seal its own borders or rely on self-defense, and participate in today's global economy. More important issue to consider, Cyber radicalisation and cyber crime also can not be reduced without cooperation.

The establishment of anti-radical and anti-terrorist strategic cooperation can be started from the following five aspects-

- Strengthen anti-radical and anti-terrorist propaganda cooperation.
- Hold a regular high-level security anti-radical and anti-terrorist summit between Yunnan and Bangladesh.
- Enhance anti-radical and anti-terrorist information cooperation.
- Strengthen the anti-radical and anti-terrorist capacity cooperation.
- Enhance the anti-radical and anti-terrorist cooperation in law enforcement.

The theme of 3rd session was 'Building a Platform for Peaceful and Harmonious Growth: People to People Contact and Cooperation'. This session was presented Dillara Choudhury (Professor, NSU) and Ms. He Congrong (Vice Division Chief, Yunnan Development Research Center). It contains many influencing areas, which subscribe both of Yunnan and Bangladesh not only economically but also can make us competent

in diversified ways. Tourism & educational cooperation between Yunnan –Bangladesh was magnified in this chapter. Yunnan provincial tourism development committee & Bangladesh national tourism administration signed “MOU” to nourish a concord for the future, this should be taken further.

In 2014 , 111 students from Bangladesh studied there, winning scholarship & Yunnan national university as well as north south university of Bangladesh set up Confucius Institute jointly to generate educational exchanges.

There are also some propositions to increase tourism flow between us, such as jointly developing plans, building tourism talents, training them etc. To strengthen educational concord there are plans for exchange programs, setting up cultural centre etc. All these can result in a very advantageous way.