

## India Confirms Rice Export to Bangladesh

Tuesday, 08 February 2011

Indian external affairs minister SM Krishna has informed his Bangladesh counterpart Dipu Moni that 300,000 metric tonnes of rice would soon be ready for export to Bangladesh.

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The Indian minister informed Dipu Moni that the rice price would be cheaper than that in the international market and that New Delhi was also ready to export 12,000 tonnes of sugar to Dhaka.

Krishna also assured the minister that necessary steps were being taken to stop the killing of innocent Bangladeshis along the border.

The ministers expressed their satisfaction over the recommendations of the Standing Committee of foreign secretaries regarding endorsement of the draft SAARC Charter of Democracy.

They also endorsed the standing committee recommendations to fully make operational the South Asia University and for establishment of the South Asia Forum.

During the meeting, the Bangladeshi foreign minister raised the issue of augmentation of Ganges water during the dry season, and expressed interest in setting up joint venture projects to tap Bhutan's hydro-power.

"She also sought Delhi's support in the sale of 200 megawatt electricity, from Palatana power project in Tripura to Bangladesh," the release added.

In the meeting, Dhaka had requested Delhi to issue notification to allow Nepal and Bhutan transit through India, which would give the two countries access to the Mongla and Chittagong ports.

Moni requested operationalisation of Rohanpur-Shinghabad rail link to provide access to Nepal, and for reestablishing rail links between Chilahati-Haldibari and Kulaura-Mahishashan.

The matter is expected to be looked into by the railway officials of the two countries soon.

Both the ministers discussed early operationalisation of the secretariat of BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) in Dhaka.

### TRANSIT TO BHUTAN

At a meeting with Bhutanese economic affairs minister Lyonpo Khandu Wangchuk, Dipu Moni discussed transit to Bhutan through India, hydropower generation, use of Mongla and Chittagong ports and the possibilities of Bhutan to use airports in Bangladesh.

The foreign minister informed that Bangladesh would be happy to welcome the king of Bhutan in Dhaka on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of Bangladesh's independence.

### BANGLADESH-SRI LANKA

Dipu Moni, in her meeting with her Sri Lankan counterpart Dr. G.L. Peiris, discussed the long-awaited visit of the president of Sri Lanka to Bangladesh.

They expressed happiness over resumption of direct air connectivity between the two countries and hoped that more private sector airlines would be there on the route.

Moni requested the Sri Lankan foreign minister for the early finalisation of the nomination for the post of the first secretary

general of BIMSTEC.

Foreign secretary Mijarul Quayes, Bangladesh ambassador to Bhutan and other senior officials of the foreign ministry were present during the meetings.

Source: bdnews24.com