

Brief on Economic Wing - Brussels:

Bangladesh-European Union (EU) relations dates back to 1973, when Bangladesh established formal diplomatic relations with the newly enlarged community. Bangladesh Embassy in Brussels is concurrently accredited to the Kingdom of Belgium, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, the Swiss Confederation and the European Communities (The European Commission and other EU Institutions). Consequently the functions of the Economic Wing involve strengthening of Bangladesh's economic relations with these countries and multilateral entities.

The Economic Wing is one of the four Wings of the Embassy and is headed by a First Secretary (Economic). The First Secretary performs his functions under the direct supervision and guidance of the Ambassador.

Functions of Economic Wing- Brussels:

This Mission is unique in its category in that it operates on both bilateral and multilateral platforms. On the bilateral side, it covers three countries, namely Belgium, Switzerland and Luxembourg. Its multilateral dimension comprises mainly of its interaction with the European Commission and other EU institutions. The Economic Wing serves as the conduit between the development partners and the Economic Relations Division, Ministry of Finance and other relevant ministries, and performs an important role in the mobilization of external resources. In a nut-shell, the responsibilities of the Economic Wing of Bangladesh Embassy in Brussels include: dealing with project aid, food aid, technical assistance, and all other economic matters concerning Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland and the European Commission. Furthermore, the Wing is also expected to attend to matters like investment promotion, civil aviation, tourism, cultural affairs, education and students' welfare, and banking and labour-related issues. In discharge of its responsibilities the Wing coordinates very closely with the concerned agencies of the countries and the institutions under accreditation and provides the government with pertinent information on aid climate in the countries, developments in the economies with bearing on aid and trade, important international negotiations and policy outcomes on aid matters, and periodic reports on development assistance and investment flow.

Present Activities of Economic Wing- Brussels:

- The Economic Wing of this Mission serves as the conduit between the Economic Relations Division (ERD), Ministry of Finance and the development agencies of the European institutions under the accreditation of this Mission, including Directorate General for External Relations, Directorate General for Development, EuropeAid Cooperation Office, European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO), DG Economic and Financial Affairs, DG Environment, European Investment Bank (EIB), European Investment Fund, Development Committee of the European Parliament, and Economic and Social Committee of the European Union;
- The Mission closely monitored the European Commission's programming exercises and facilitated the EU's resource flows to Bangladesh and in this regard this Mission has been

maintaining liaison with the senior functionaries of the European Commission, the European Council and the European Parliament;

- This Mission provided necessary support to the ERD for effective participation in the fourth Session of the Bangladesh-EC Joint Commission in Brussels that was held on 2nd April 2008. The Session deliberated on the state of the European Commission's programmes of assistance in Bangladesh, including multilateral, regional as well as bilateral trade issues. Moreover the session has fruitful discussion on human rights, good governance, Anti-corruption initiatives, Chittagong Hill Tracts, Climate changes issues and so on;
- The Mission has also been coordinating the European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO)'s external actions in Bangladesh;
- This Mission's keep close contact with the concerned officials of EC regarding aviation matters. Recently this mission is coordinating the issue of Horizontal Agreement in the civil aviation sector that are being in the stage of negotiation between EC and Bangladesh side;
- This Mission has kept up excellent contacts with the European Investment Bank (EIB) and ERD regarding the side line meeting between the GoB delegation and EIB delegation during the 41st ADB annual meeting that was held in Madrid in the first week of May, 2008. This mission also informs other related agencies and chambers time to time about the excellent investment opportunities of Bangladesh;
- This mission keeps in touch with different institutions for getting fellowship programs for the Bangladesh Government officials and students;
- The Ambassador and the First Secretary (Economic) attended various conference, workshops, meetings, seminars and economic forums organised by the different European Commission's offices on development co-operation, humanitarian assistance and disaster preparedness, trade related technical assistance and investment promotion and sent reports to the concerned Ministries/ Divisions.