



**Minister
Ministry of Agriculture
Government of the People's Republic
of Bangladesh**

MESSAGE from Agriculture Minister

I am delighted to know that the Cotton Development Board (CDB) under the Ministry of Agriculture, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh is going to host the Sixth Meeting of Asian Cotton Research and Development Network in collaboration with International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC) in Dhaka, Bangladesh from June 18-20, 2014. The meeting is also supported by BARC, KGF, BCA, BTMA, BKMEA. This meeting will create an opportunity for the Cotton Scientists and Cotton Experts from public and private sector of the Asian countries including Bangladesh to share their experience, views and ideas for the development of research and development network among the cotton growing countries of Asia.

Textile sector in Bangladesh is the largest sector among the industrial sector and contribute to the national economy. Cotton is an important raw material for this sector and provide huge workforce in the country. Bangladesh requires about 4- 4.5 million bales of cotton every year to feed the cotton industry and considered a leading cotton consuming country in the world. The participants from different research organizations, Agricultural Universities, BCA, BTMA, BKMEA, different cotton associations and related organizations from textile sector of the country will be benefited from the meeting.

Government of Bangladesh is committed to increase cotton production in the country to sustain the textile sector of the country. In this context, Cotton Development Board was established in the year 1972 by our great leader and the father of the nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the then Prime Minister of the country. Present government has taken several steps to increase cotton production for the sustainability of the textile sector in the country.

Genetically Modified (GM) for cotton is another important issue for Bangladesh. Bangladesh Government has approved biosafety rule for the introduction of GMO crop. Within this time, Government of Bangladesh has approved the Bt Brinjal for growing at the farmer's level. Very urgently we are trying to introduce Bt cotton in the country. China, India and other many cotton growing countries are more advance in Bt cotton cultivation and they have increased their national cotton production through the introduction of Bt cotton. They can provide assistance for introduction of Bt cotton in Bangladesh. ICAC can also extend their cooperation for introducing Bt cotton in Bangladesh.

The ICAC is an association of governments of cotton producing, consuming and trading countries. It is a formal body to make collaboration between the member countries on cotton research and development and cotton trade and stocks and provide technical information about cotton and cotton textile. The main role of the ICAC is to assist governments in fostering a healthy world cotton economy.

Bangladesh feels proud to host the meeting and welcoming the participants from home and abroad for their active participation in the meeting.

I hope that the Sixth meeting of Asian Cotton Research and Development Network will be flourishing.

(Matia Chowdhury)