



13th Bi-Annual Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO)

13-14 June 2023, Grand Sylhet Hotel, Sylhet, Bangladesh



**Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Bangladesh**

13th Bi-annual Meeting of the IORA Committee of Senior Officials (CSO)

Grand Sylhet Hotel & Resort
Boroshala, Khadimnogor Union Parishad, Airport Road, Sylhet
13-14 June 2023
Local Time GMT(+6)

ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

A. DATES & VENUE

13-14 June 2023: 13th Bi-annual Meeting of the IORA Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) Meeting (In person only), Sylhet, Bangladesh.

B. ORGANIZER

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Maritime Affairs Unit
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Segunbagicha, Dhaka
Phone: +8802 47119436/+8802 223357090/+01517310272/+8801553543875
Email: mau2@mofa.gov.bd and mau@mofa.gov.bd

C. CHECKLIST AND DEADLINES FOR DELEGATES

No.	Items	Deadline
01.	IORA Member States to convey names of Delegates Contact Point (DCP)	12 May 2023
02.	Registration Deadline for the Meetings	15 May 2023
03.	Submission deadline for travel arrangements/ itinerary of the Delegates of the CSO	01 June 2023
04.	Confirmation for courtesy accommodation of Head of Delegation of the CSO	01 June 2023

D. REGISTRATION

All participants from the Member States are expected to be registered and accredited by the National Focal Point. All the filled-in Registration Forms (**Annex-A**) are to be sent to mau2@mofa.gov.bd with a copy to mau@mofa.gov.bd and hq@iora.int by 15 May 2023.

E. VENUE

The Meetings will be held at:

Grand Sylhet Hotel & Resort

Boroshala, Khadimnogor Union Parishad, Airport Road, Sylhet

Phone: +8801321201593/+8801321201587/+8801321201597/+880 1321201600
/ +88 02 9977 00456

Website: <https://grandsylhet.com/>

Email: sales3@grandsylhet.com / sales2@grandsylhet.com

F. ACCREDITATION

Conference IDs will be provided as per registration. Respective participants will collect the IDs from the Conference Venue at Grand Sylhet Hotel & Resort by presenting a valid passport and confirmation notification/Email that will be sent via e-mail after registration is completed by respective participants.

IDs must be worn at all times in the venue of all related events. Due to security reasons, only participants with a visible ID will be granted access to the Conference Venue.

G. HOSPITALITY

->**Hospitality for HoD of CSO:** Local Hospitality (Accommodation, selected meals, airport pick-up and transport pool as per request) to the HoD of CSO from each Member State;

->**LDC Member State:** Full Hospitality (Economy Class Air ticket, accommodation, selected meals, airport pick-up and transport pool as per request) to HoD of CSO from each LDC Member State (Comoros, Madagascar, Mozambique, Somalia, Tanzania and Yemen).

H. ACCOMMODATION

Courtesy accommodation at the Grand Sylhet Hotel & Resort will be provided for Heads of Delegation of CSO on 12-14 June 2023.

Delegation Contact Points (DCPs) must indicate the name and the designation of the Head of Delegation of the CSO in the registration form for courtesy accommodation.

All other delegates are responsible for their own accommodation reservations and expenses. Delegates are requested to make reservations at their convenience preferably at the Grand Sylhet Hotel & Resort.

Hotel Facilities:

Grand Sylhet Hotel & Resort is located within 5 minutes distance of Sylhet's Osmani International Airport. Apart from luxurious rooms & suites and rooftop swimming pool, the resort boasts of a plethora of indoor & outdoor activities including badminton court, chic rooftop restaurant, fantasy Arcade, 3D movie hall, a luxurious spa & Salon and a well-decorated fitness center.

Special Rate for deluxe king and deluxe twin (Approximately USD: 75/- per night inclusive of all taxes & services) will be available for the IORA Delegates at Grand Sylhet Hotel & Resort. To avail the Special Rate, delegates are requested to directly contact the following reservation officials of the Hotel through email with copy to the Organizer:

1. **Mr. Shamim Rahman**
Asst. Sales Manager, Sales & Marketing
Grand Sylhet Hotel & Resort
Mobile: +8801321201593
Email: sales3@grandsylhet.com

2. **Md. Ashekur Rahman Dipu**
Asst. Sales Manager, Sales & Marketing
Grand Sylhet Hotel & Resort
Mobile: +8801321201587
Email: sales2@grandsylhet.com

I. FLIGHT SCHEDULE

The arrival and departure of the delegates will be through Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA), Dhaka with connecting flight to Sylhet. The delegates can easily avail domestic flights from HSIA for Sylhet as there are number of airlines (i.e. Bangladesh Biman, US Bangla Airlines, Novo Air etc.) that have direct flights for Dhaka- Sylhet -Dhaka sector. Flight schedules for Dhaka- Sylhet -Dhaka sector of different airlines are available at **(Annex-B)**.

J. TRANSPORTATION

(i) Airport Transfer:

All delegates will be provided with the pick and drop transport from Shylet Airport to Grand Sylhet Hotel & Resort and from the Grand Sylhet Hotel & Resort. The Heads of Delegation are requested to contact the help desk at the venue for their courtesy transportation as and when required.

(ii) Privately-arranged Vehicles:

Delegates, who wish to use additional vehicles (rented/private), can do it at the expense of the respective delegates. For security reasons, the delegates are requested to inform the details of the privately-arranged vehicle to the organizer in advance.

K. ENTRY VISA PROCEDURES

All delegates are required to possess a valid passport with an expiration date at least 6 (six) months before the date of entry into the territory of Bangladesh. Information on the visa arrangement for a short visit to Bangladesh is available at **(Annex-C)**. Any enquiries regarding visa can be directed to the Organizer at the following email addresses: mau2@mofa.gov.bd and mau@mofa.gov.bd .

All delegates are requested to obtain visa from Bangladesh Embassy/ High Commission or Consulate General in their respective countries. Conditional Visa on Arrival (VoA) may be provided for those who do not have Bangladesh Missions in their respective countries. The visa application form is available at (**Annex-D**).

Visa application form can also be found at <http://www.dip.gov.bd/site/forms/bb066c04-ae73-4edd-b82f-1b0f7b324c07/->

L. DIETARY RESTRICTIONS

Delegate Contact Persons are requested to complete and submit the registration form for any dietary restrictions no later than 15 May 2023. All efforts will be made by the Organizer to cater for dietary requirements throughout the event.

M. MEDIA

i) Media Registration:

All foreign media covering the meetings must register online by sending the registration form (**Annex-A**) to mau2@mofa.gov.bd with a copy to mau@mofa.gov.bd and hq@iora.int. Media/ press may join the inaugural session for a formal photo session on 13 June 2023. They may also join in the press briefing session on 14 June 2023.

ii) Visa Requirement:

Registered foreign journalists entering Bangladesh to cover the events are required to have a valid visa/permit. Visa can be obtained from the Bangladesh Missions located in their respective countries. Details can be found at (**Annex-C**).

N. FACILITIES FROM THE ORGANIZERS

i) Delegates Meeting Room:

A Delegates Meeting Room (ROYAL ORCHID) will be provided at the Grand Sylhet Hotel & Resort. The delegates can have bilateral meetings as per prior intimation and scheduled by the organizer.

ii) Medical Requirement:

A 24-hour medical service will be available at Sylhet Shahid Shamsuddin Ahmed District Hospital. Delegates will be responsible for the costs incurred of any hospital treatment.

iii) Help/information Desk:

Help/Information Desk will be available at the venue to provide information related to schedule of the meetings, vehicles and other information.

O. GENERAL SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS

Every effort shall be made to provide participants with the highest security standards at the venue. In order to provide the necessary security, various levels of security checks and screenings will be implemented.

Security checks consist of visible Conference IDs, electronic (X-Ray) scan or physical search of belongings, and walk-through metal detectors. Where necessary, individuals may be subjected to a physical search.

Only vehicles with Access Pass Stickers are allowed to enter and park in the restricted areas of the venue. The vehicles will be subjected to electronic and physical search before entry.

P. COVID-RELATED REQUIREMENTS IN BANGLADESH

Delegates with full dose of Vaccination travelling to Bangladesh can enter Bangladesh with the official proof of Certification of Vaccination. No RT-PCR based Covid-19 negative certificate is required. Alternatively, delegates who are not vaccinated may provide a negative RT PCR test report taken within 72 hours prior to arrival of Bangladesh. Passengers may undergo health screening upon arrival and may have to be quarantined at government facilities if symptoms are present.

Q. SITE VISIT

A site visit will be organized to Sadapathor, Bholaganj, the largest stone quarry area in the country wrapped in nature delusion located in Companyganj Upazila, bordering Sylhet district. The Bholaganj border stands as a natural wall with high mountains in the Indian state of Meghalaya. The waterfalls coming down from that hill are on the water supply of the Dhaali river, and on the other hand, this water flow is the source of the natural form of Bholaganj. The white stone that descends with green hills, cloud handiwork, and the rainy mountain slopes has added to the beauty of Bholaganj by mixing it with the sloping river. The white stone area looks more like a delta. Bholaganj Ropeway was constructed from 1964-1969 to make stone extraction easier.

Interested delegates are requested to inform the help desk by 13 June 2023 for arrangement of vehicle.

R. LOCAL FOOD

(i) **Pansi Restaurant:** Pansi is a well-known restaurant in Sylhet. Rice, beef and chicken are the most popular items. The restaurant has a wide space and delicious food. This is one of the best restaurants in Sylhet city.

(ii) **Pach Vai Restaurant:** Pach Vai Restaurant is one of the popular restaurants of Sylhet. The restaurant has tasty local cuisine including different meat curry, variety of fishes, mixed veggies, daal and a variety of vortas and dessert.

S. SHOPPING

There are some local famous markets (Blue Water Shopping City, Kakoli Shopping Center, Sylhet Millennium and Elegant Shopping Mall) where delegates may go for their shopping needs. These all are shopping malls and situated at Jallarpar Road, Zindabazar, Sylhet. The interested delegates are requested to inform at the information desk earlier so that organizer can arrange the vehicle for them.

T. OTHER TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

(i) Ratargul Swamp Forest: Ratargul Swamp Forest is one of the most attractive tourist spots in Bangladesh. Ratargul is Bangladesh's only Swamp Forest. It is located about 26km outside of Sylhet city. The Ratargul forest is spread over an area of approximately 30,325 acres. The 504-acre site is full of forests, and the rest of the area is complete with small and big water bodies. Ratargul is known as a "Sundarbans of Sylhet". For four to five months out of the year, water completely covers the ground. Tourists from all over Bangladesh flock to see the forest trees submerged in the water. Many tourists called Ratargul the 'Amazon of Bangladesh.'

In the rainy season, there are different species of birds seen in the trees' branches, and then some wildlife also takes shelter in the branches of the trees. Besides, thousands of migratory birds sit in the water bodies of Ratargul in winter. It is usually the right time to travel to Ratargul from July to October (towards the end of the monsoon). In 1973, the Bangladesh Forest Department declared a 504-acre area of Ratargul forest as a wildlife sanctuary.

(ii) Malnicherra Tea Gardens: Malnicherra Tea Gardens located on the Airport road, only about 3.1 kilometres from Khadimnagar. Malnicherra Tea Garden is the largest and first established tea garden in the subcontinent. In 1849, the garden began its journey on 1,500-acre-area. The tea garden is currently well known as a favorite place for tourists to have a beautiful time.

(iii) Shrine of Hazrat Shahjalal (R): Sylhet is known as the city of 360 Auliya (religious preacher). One of the most prominent of them is Hazrat Shahjalal (R). People of all religions rever Hazrat Shahjalal (r). Every year, people are seen flocking to The Shrine Of Hazrat Shahjalal (R) irrespective of religion. The shrine of Hazrat Shahjalal (R) has a pond nearby. The pond is adorned with numerous gauzar fish. It is said that Hazrat Shahjalal (R) brought the gauzar fish when he came to Sylhet with 360 Auwalia.

(iv) Panthumai fountain: Panthumai is one of the most beautiful villages in Bangladesh. This village is in the Meghalaya hills on the Bangladesh-India border. It is located in the West Jaflong Union of the Goainghat Upazila of Sylhet which situated on the Meghalaya Hills banks and the Piyan River. This village hosts the Panthumai Waterfall. Panthumai waterfalls are known to the local people by different names including 'Fatachari's fountain,' 'Borohil Jharna,' and 'Mayaboti'.

(v) Hakaluki Haor: Hakaluki Haor is the largest freshwater wetland in Bangladesh spreading over 5 Upazilas in Sylhet and Moulvibazar. Hakaluki Haor is the largest freshwater wetland in Bangladesh. It also has about 100 species of local birds. Travelers rush to The Hakaluki Haor in awe of the beet land, the native life, and the migratory birds.

Other tourist attractions and distance from Grand Sylhet Hotel & Resort are mentioned below:

NAME	DISTANCE
1. Khadimnagar National Park	14 km
2. Temple of Sri Chaitannya Dev	24 km
3. Jaflong	59 km
4. Bichanakandi	43km
5. Lala Khal	50km
6. Dibir Haor	45km
7. Lavachora	66km
8. Tamabil	56km

U. CURRENCY EXCHANGE

Bangladesh's national currency is Bangladeshi Taka (BDT). The current exchange rate is around BDT 107.00 for 1 USD (flexible).

V. TELECOMMUNICATION

The country code for Bangladesh is +88, while the local area code for Sylhet is 0821.

W. CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Bangladesh has a tropical climate with high humidity. The average temperature is expected to be around 34-42° Celsius during the meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO).

X. ELECTRICITY AND POWER PLUG

The standard electricity & power plug in Bangladesh is 220 volt AC with a frequency of 50 Hz. Standard two-pin power plugs and sockets are the most commonly used in Bangladesh.

