

Speech by Md. Sabur Khan, President, DCCI at the "Official Opening of Swedish Trade delegation to Bangladesh" (February 25, 2013 at 12:00 noon Venue: Hotel Westin, Ball Room, Gulshan 2, Dhaka)

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

- Professor Gowher Rizvi, Advisor to the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Government of Bangladesh;
- H.E. Gunnar Oom, State Secretary to the minister for Trade and Head of the Swedish Trade Delegation to Bangladesh;
- Dr. S. A. Samad, Hon'ble Chairman, Board of Investment, Bangladesh;
- Mr. Arild Klokkehaug, President, NCCI;
- Distinguished Members of the Swedish Trade Delegation to Bangladesh;
- Representative of electronic and print media;
- Ladies and Gentlemen.

Assalamualikum and very good afternoon,

On behalf of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI) and on my own behalf, I would like to thank Embassy of Sweden and Business Sweden for inviting me in this "Official Opening of Swedish Trade Delegation to Bangladesh". It is a great honour and privilege for me to speak in this august gathering. I understand that 11 renowned Swedish Companies have participated in this programme to share and disseminate information. The delegation members provide products and services in the areas like compressed air and gas equipment, construction and mining equipment, industrial tools and assembly systems, export transactions, flood barriers, soil erosion products and other solutions for controlling the flood situation, IT and outsourcing, high-quality beauty products, engineering products and services catering to the infrastructure segments, tools for metal cutting, equipment and tools for the mining and construction industries, stainless materials, special alloys, metallic and ceramic resistance materials as well as process systems, manufacturer of trucks and busses, savings, loans, wealth management etc. I hope the delegation will be able to explore their business in Bangladesh.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me introduce Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI). DCCI is the largest and most active chamber in the country rendering trade supporting services to its more than 14,000 members and other business communities in the country. The chamber has taken various activities to build capacity of the private sector to face the challenges of globalization and exploit the emerging opportunities in the international market. **During its journey towards promotion of trade and investment, DCCI has been maintaining a close relationship with Embassy of Sweden in Dhaka.**

Bangladesh-Sweden relationship has been vital from trade, investment and economic perspective. Sweden is important bilateral donor for Bangladesh. Its development cooperation has a sharp focus on poverty reduction, health sector, education sector, promoting human rights, support to the voter registration process, climate change, infrastructural development etc. Bangladesh and Sweden can play an important role to strengthen bilateral trade and investment between the two brotherly countries and to boost up the trade with other Scandinavian countries which includes Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Iceland.

Distinguished gathering,

Since the independence of Bangladesh a quite extensive development cooperation has dominated the bilateral relations between Bangladesh and Sweden. At the same time, however, trade has

developed in a positive way even though from a low level. **According to the available statistics, during 2011-12 Bangladesh imported goods worth US\$ 74 million (equivalent to 0.21% of total import of Bangladesh) from Sweden while its exports to Sweden amounted to US\$ 358 million (equivalent to 0.20% of total import of Sweden).** There is a potential for increasing trade between Sweden and Bangladesh. The positive image of Sweden in Bangladesh is an important factor when promoting Swedish industries in Bangladesh in the areas like energy, environment, paper pulp, leather-products, textiles, readymade garments and pharmaceuticals which indicates the significant opportunities for growth in our trade relations.

Distinguished Members of the Delegation,

Investors from Sweden are most welcomed to invest in Bangladesh. The government of Bangladesh has provided various opportunities and a unique package of incentives to foreign investors. Most potential sectors for investment in Bangladesh are: Agro-based sectors like food and fruit processing, Paper and pulp from Jute, Power, Fertilizer, Renewable energy, Backward linkage of RMG including composite Textile Mills, IT sector, Leather and leather goods, Ceramics, Pharmaceuticals, Electronics, Light Engineering, Steel, Infrastructure Development, Hospitals, Education, Tourism & Hotels etc. We recognize the development assistance by Sweden to Bangladesh. For the development of private sector Sweden should emphasize on improvement of trade and investment climate by working with the government to eliminate business impediments, provide assistance for economic infrastructure and offer assistance for human resource development and capacity building for private sector companies.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Bangladesh has lots of non-traditional products that are not marketed in a professional way. There is a huge demand of these non-traditional items throughout the world. For example, green papaw has tremendous demand in the world to prepare various delicious food items and textiles fiber can be prepared through the use of pineapple leaves. The papaw and pineapple grow plenty in Bangladesh. Papaw is eaten as curry and the pineapple leaves are thrown away as we don't have necessary technology and marketing strategy to market those products. So, **Swedish companies can invest with their own technology to utilize these types of non-traditional products of Bangladesh and assist to market those products in the world.**

Distinguished Participants,

In order to support the business communities at home and abroad, Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) has established DCCI Helpdesk at its own premise. DCCI provides business related services from this exclusive Help Desk to all its members and the business communities from home and abroad. Swedish companies can also take the opportunity in getting services from the Help Desk regarding trade, commerce and business. I strongly believe this type of facilities will facilitate the process of business and investment between Bangladesh and Sweden.

I will not prolong my speech further. Before concluding, I once again thank you all.

Allah Hafez

Md. Sabur Khan

President, DCCI