

Address by Mr. Md. Sabur Khan, President, DCCI in the information sharing meeting on "Business to Business (B2B) Support Programs for Private Sector Development" jointly Organized by Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI) and the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands on January 14, 2013. Time: 3:00 p.m. Venue: DCCI Auditorium (5th Floor), 65-66, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

Mr. Carel Richter, Chargé d'Affaires a.i., Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands;
Mr. Shahzada Hamid, President, Dutch-Bangla Chamber of Commerce & Industries;

High Officials of Netherlands Embassy;

My Colleagues in the Board of Directors, DCCI;

Distinguished Business Leaders;

Friends from the Media both Print and Electronic;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Assalamu A'laikum and a very good afternoon

On behalf of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI) and on my own behalf I have the pleasure to welcome you all in this very important on Business to Business (B2B) Support Programs for Private Sector Development jointly organized by Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI) and Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. We are well aware that many of you have traveled a long distance which reminds us about how important our today's program is.

We are honored to have amongst us Mr. Carel Richter, Chargé d'Affaires a.i., Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and Mr. Shahzada Hamid, President, Dutch-Bangla Chamber of Commerce & Industry which we consider as an encouragement for private sector of Bangladesh to develop joint businesses with Dutch business entrepreneurs.

I take this opportunity to sincerely thank the government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands through its Embassy to Bangladesh for their continuous support to different Private Sector Development Programs.

I would also express my thanks to the Representative of International Business and Cooperation (EVD) who will act as a Resource Person today.

One of the objectives of our today's program is to inform all of you present here about different schemes available for the private sector in Bangladesh for establishing joint venture in collaboration with the Netherlands. The schemes are Private sector Investment (PSI) Program, Match Making Facility (MMF), and Infrastructure Development Program (ORIO).

Distinguished Guests,

You all know that DCCI is the largest and most active Chamber of Bangladesh having about 4000 members. They represent a cross-section of exporters, importers, manufactures and other SMEs. The basic functions of DCCI are related to the promotion and development of the private sector and strengthen bilateral trade and economic cooperation with foreign partners. It signs MOUs with foreign chambers, arranges bilateral business meetings, buyers & sellers meet and other business meetings

to promote business and investment cooperation in the country. DCCI has taken up various programs and services for its members to build capacity of the private sector to face the challenges of globalization and exploit the emerging opportunities in international market.

DCCI is the first chamber of Bangladesh who has achieved **ISO 9001:2008** certifications for its international standard of quality. It has also won other prestigious awards like: **“MLS-SCM (P) Best Network Partner Institution Award 2010”**; **“The 4th Confederation of Asia Pacific Chambers of Commerce & Industry (CACCI) Award in Big Chamber Category”**; **“World Chambers Competition Award 2007”** in **“Best Skills Development Program”** at Istanbul etc.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

We organized a **similar program in April, 2010** and a good number of entrepreneurs had shown their interest to make joint venture with Dutch business partners. I believe today's program will refresh our memory and help us to take a stock to the activities of the last program.

A number of entrepreneurs engaged in the field of **Agriculture and Agro Business, Information Technology (IT), Jute and Pharmaceuticals, Infrastructure, RMG, Poultry and Fisheries sector are present** here to interact on the issue. I think that Bangladesh has ample opportunities in development of these business sectors. Support from Netherlands Embassy will help our entrepreneurs to diversify their products and at the same time explore new markets.

We believe and hope that today's program will help find out ways and means to implement more Projects under **Match Making Facility (MMF) and Infrastructure Development program (ORIO)**. **We have missed several deadlines of Call for Proposals; the Seminar today will give you an opportunity to prepare yourselves to attend next Call.**

Distinguished Guests,

We express our gratitude as Netherlands was one of the first European nations to recognize Bangladesh as a country and since the country's independence the Netherlands has been extending economic assistance, especially technical cooperation in water resources and food security.

The existing relation between Bangladesh and Netherlands is excellent, characterized by commonality of views, deepening economic cooperation and increasing bilateral trade. Presently bilateral trade between Bangladesh and Netherlands which is in favor of Bangladesh is not at a satisfactory level. According to the official statistics from in 2011-12 export of Bangladesh to Netherlands was **US\$ 691.30 million** against import of **US\$ 138.80 million**. Export of Bangladesh to Netherlands is concentrated on a very few products like: Knitwear, Woven Garments, Frozen Foods, Agro-products and Jute goods. To enhance bilateral trade between these two friendly countries, we need to diversify our exportable products and developing non-familiar products. Dutch entrepreneurs may import more **international standard Bangladeshi products including readymade garments, ceramic, jute and jute goods, leather and leather goods, plastic goods and pharmaceuticals, considering their very competitive prices.**

Some initiatives have been taken by both government and private sector of Bangladesh for diversifying our exportable products and export destination to ensure sustainable

export growth of the country. In Bangladesh, the young entrepreneurs are manufacturing various agro-based products and some non-familiar goods like dry-papaw/ Pineapple /Guava /Mango /Banana, textiles fiber from pineapple leaves, exportable sea animal etc. A lot of papaws & these foods are grown elsewhere in Bangladesh which is mostly consumed as curry or as common food. The dry papaws have a huge demand in the international market. International quality textile fibers can be made from the pineapple leaves which are either burnt or thrown away in Bangladesh. There are a lot of business entrepreneurs in the world who are following the process of making fiber from the pineapple leaves. They are also eager to invest in Bangladesh for the development of this process. We can use information technology to market these types of products for exporting into various countries of the world. New and innovative projects can be planned under joint initiatives of private sector of Bangladesh and Embassy of Netherlands to explore the market of these non-familiar products.

Distinguished Guests,

The cooperation of **CBI-an organization promotes imports from developing countries** for building capacities of DCCI Members is praiseworthy. DCCI organized an international Conference on **“Positioning Bangladesh: Branding for Business”** in December last year where CBI cooperated with us by providing foreign experts and speakers in that conference. We would like to appreciate your contribution for closer cooperation with CBI.

Infrastructure development of Bangladesh is one of the major challenges to economic development. There is an extreme need of improving its infrastructure to support the emerging entrepreneurs of the country. We feel that this useful initiative of the Netherlands government will play a significant role for development of energy and support for environmental pollution free industrial sector of Bangladesh We need to initiate energy saving projects; cooperation with Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands (EKN) will be highly appreciated in these sectors. There is also a need to exchange more trade and investment delegations between Bangladesh and Netherlands to increase the economic relations between the two friendly countries.

Distinguished Participants,

The present government of Bangladesh in 2009 has announced **vision 2021** with a target of a Middle Income Country (MIC) by the year 2021 and DCCI, in 2010 organized a Conference on **“Bangladesh 2030: Strategy for Growth”** where it was projected that Bangladesh has all the potentials to become the 30th largest economy of the world by the year 2030. The economy of the country is also rapidly growing and today, Bangladesh is the **42nd largest economy of the world whereas it was 48th largest economy in 2010**. We would like to see our Dutch friends to be with us towards this journey to step forward.

Bangladesh offers conducive investment climate compared to the other South Asian economies. Geographical location of the country is ideal for global trade with very convenient access to international sea and air routes. Political stability prevailing in the country is one of the key factors of investment decision. Bangladesh government has liberalized its industrial and investment policies in recent years by reducing regulatory requirements and opening up many areas. In order to attract FDI, Bangladesh government is providing large number of incentives and preparing for signing

several regional and bilateral agreements which will be an added advantage to get an access to expanded markets.

Mr. Barry Brouns, Senior project officer from International the Netherlands Agency for International Business and Cooperation (EVD) will provide us all related information through his presentation. You all are free to ask him any question to make your understanding clear. I would request you to take benefit of this program as much as possible so that some good projects can be undertaken and implemented.

I will not prolong my speech further. Before concluding I would like to thank you all once again for joining us and sharing your interest to amass benefits from DCCI program. I wish this Initiative of the Netherlands government and DCCI a success.

Allah Hafiz

Md. Sabur Khan
President, DCCI

January 14, 2012