

Welcome Speech of Mr. Hossain Khaled, President, Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI) at the Business Seminar on “Hong Kong: Sourcing and Distribution Hub in Asia” jointly organized by Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI) and Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC).

Date: 27th January 2015, Tuesday
Time: 06:30 p.m. Venue: The Westin Hotel,

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

Chief Guest of today’s program, Mr. Mahbubur Rahman, President, International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), Bangladesh and Former President, FBCCI & DCCI;

Ms. CHIU Ngam, Regional Director, Southeast Asia & India, Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC);

Distinguished Key-Note Paper Presenter, Mr. Rajesh Bhagat, Consultant, Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC);

Distinguished Former Presidents and Directors, DCCI;

Distinguished Business Leaders;

Respectable Guests and Participants;

Representatives of Print and Electronic Media;

Assalamu-Alaikum and Good Evening to you all.

I would like to begin by expressing my gratitude to Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) for jointly organizing today’s Business Seminar on “**Hong Kong: Sourcing and Distribution Hub in Asia**” with Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI). I believe today’s business seminar will provide an opportunity for Bangladeshi entrepreneurs, manufacturers, exporters, importers, etc. to further expand their global operations through the robust platforms created by HKTDC to promote international trade.

Mr. Mahbubur Rahman, President, International Chamber of Commerce, Bangladesh and Former President, FBCCI & DCCI, has graced us with his presence today and I am honored to have him among us to participate in this discussion.

My special thanks also goes to **Ms. CHIU Ngam, Regional Director, Southeast Asia & India, HKTDC** for jointly organizing this valuable seminar with DCCI.

I also express our gratitude to the distinguished Keynote Paper Presenter, **Mr. Rajesh Bhagat, Consultant, HKTDC** who will deliver today’s focal presentation.

We are honored to invite you all to this important seminar.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The economy of Bangladesh is driven by the private sector. DCCI is the largest representative of the private sector in the country and is the leading voice of the business community. It is the largest and most active chamber in the country rendering trade supporting services to its around 4000 members and other business communities in the country. DCCI has taken various steps towards building capacity of the private sector to face the challenges of globalization and exploit the emerging opportunities in the international market. The basic functions of DCCI

revolve around promoting and developing the private sector of Bangladesh and strengthening bilateral trade and economic cooperation with foreign partners.

Distinguished Guests,

Hong Kong is viewed as the best location for many company's headquarters because of its strategic location and its gateway role to the Chinese mainland and Southeast Asia. There are also many opportunities for international business communications. Hong Kong is a leading logistics hub in the Asian region and is the leading global air cargo hub. The port is also one of the worlds biggest in terms of volume having the flexibility to access global markets through Hong Kong. These and other business promoting facilities has ranked Hong Kong as the world's eighth largest trading economy and eighth largest banking centre in 2014.

China and Hong Kong rank as the **1st** and **12th largest** importing partner for Bangladesh respectively. Together China and Hong Kong account for **22.8%** of the total import volume of Bangladesh. Although, bilateral trade shows increasing trend over the years for both exports and imports, the total volume of trade is still small and the balance of trade is in favor of Hong Kong, (with a **trade ratio** of **Exp: Imp = 1: 2.72**). In **FY13-14**, total imports from HK were worth **USD 762.88 million** against export receipts of **USD 280.51 million**.

Major Export Items of Bangladesh to Hong Kong include:

Woven Garments, Knitwear, Home Textile, Agro-Product, Frozen Food, Leather & Leather Products, Footwear, Raw jute and Jute goods and others.

Major Import Items of Bangladesh from Hong Kong are:

Cotton, yarn/thread and fabrics, Apparel and clothing accessories, Electrical machinery and equipment, Man-made filaments and textile materials, Woven and textile fabrics, Chemicals, Nuclear plant machinery, paper and plastic goods and others.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The **Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC)** is a statutory organization with a mission to create business opportunities for Hong Kong companies. It is the international marketing arm for Hong Kong-based traders, manufacturers and service providers. With more than **40 global offices**, including 13 on the Chinese mainland, the HKTDC promotes Hong Kong as a platform for doing business with China and throughout Asia. The HKTDC connects millions of international buyers and sellers through a variety of integrated services, namely its **trade fairs, online marketplace and product magazines**. **9** of the **fairs** organized by HKTDC are the **biggest** of their kind **in Asia**, while **3** of them are the **world's largest**.

Today, economies are globally connected and to properly benefit from international markets, businesses must be aware of both international sourcing channels for their inputs and markets for their final products. To this end, trade facilitating organizations such as the HKTDC can contribute significantly towards promoting local businesses in international markets. I believe that HKTDC and DCCI can work together to make Bangladeshi companies aware of international sourcing trends and markets and in the process expand their opportunities for international trade.

Competitive Edge of Labor Market: We are strongly in favour of investment and regional trade development. Trade facilitation with each other in this Asian region will open up the opportunities for greater economic development. Bangladesh is a market of huge potentials. About three (3) million people are coming into the work force every year. 2 million out of these are being employed. About 67% of our populations are aged below 25 years. China can import our labor force for their industries.

Technology know-how Transfer: Government is giving various incentive packages to the foreign investors. We have skilled, semi skilled and easily trainable workforce. For enhancing technical know-how, training institutes could be established as an initiative of technology transfer. For regional economic development technology transfer is necessary now a days.

Relocation of Sunset Industries: Considering all these Bangladesh is one of the attractive destinations to invest in this region. Bangladesh is the 2nd largest RMG exporter Europe. Despite, China is the major trading partner of Bangladesh; still China can grab the opportunity to relocate their sunset industry in Bangladesh enjoying the congenial investment packages and competitive labor force. Besides, for Chinese investors RMG, Agro-processing, cold storage, Ship building, IT could be the attractive sectors where investment we are encouraging.

Invest in Infrastructure under PPP: We have seen a major development in the infrastructure sector implementing through PPP especially in the communication sector in Bangladesh which will be maintained by the private stakeholders in the near future. In this respect, Chinese investors are welcome to invest to grab this opportunity.

FDI: The government has set a target to become the middle income country by the year 2021. Besides, we have a strong desire to see Bangladesh as the 30th largest economy by the year 2030. Business community of the country is committed to achieve the goal by attracting FDI and local investment. We have 8 export processing zones in the country. In 2013-14, of the total inflow of FDI to Bangladesh, China and Hong Kong accounted for 2.72% (USD 40.71 million) and 7.58% (USD 113.43 million) respectively.

Hong Kong a Sourcing hub: It is true that Hong Kong is a major sourcing and distribution hub in Asia and we believe Hong Kong is a gate way to access the world trade. Bangladesh's SMEs could be connected through Hong Kong's business platform. HKTDC is surely building the bridge between the Hong Kong's SMEs and business clients and partners across the world through promotional activities, trade fairs and trade missions.

Avenues of Cooperation: As part of strengthening its international cooperation, DCCI signed MOUs with more than 91 foreign chambers and organizations worldwide. So, DCCI is very much willing to work closely with HKTDC by signing a MOU for enhancing cooperation in strengthening bilateral trade and investment relationship. To materialize this deal, we propose that HKTDC may establish a local country office in Bangladesh or even in DCCI for that matter.

I strongly believe that the valuable comments and suggestions from this business seminar will play a pivotal role in addressing the issues of bilateral trade, investment and economic relations between Bangladesh and Hong Kong, China.

Once again I want to extend my thanks and gratitude to HKTDC for organizing this seminar and thank you all for being a part of it.

Hossain Khaled
President, DCCI

Date: 27th January 2015