

MESSAGE

The Dutch-Bangla Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DBCCI) and all its members extend their warmest felicitations to her Majesty the Queen of the Netherlands, Queen Beatrix. Although April 30 is actually the birthday of the Queen Mother, we join all Dutch nationals in celebrating Queen Beatrix' birthday on this date. On the occasion of this Dutch National Day we recognise that private sector entrepreneurs contribute towards the socio-economic development and the goal of self-reliance of both Bangladesh and the Netherlands. DBCCI will play its role in supporting the implementation of policy reforms and in creating a more open and competitive climate for trade and investment.

Bangladesh and the Netherlands have historical and cultural ties from ancient days; the Netherlands was among the first countries to recognise Bangladesh, almost immediately after liberation. The two nations also show remarkable similarities. For instance, both countries have to cope with the problem of combating water threats of rivers and seas. There are many differences as well. Bangladesh has an enormous population density, its people deeply involved in agriculture and farming. It still has a long way to go to obtain advanced knowledge in sectors such as water management, health, energy, education, environment and many others. On the other hand, the Netherlands has succeeded in overcoming many obstacles and has been on a path of continuous development towards advanced prosperity. DBCCI aims for co-operation with the hope of emulating the success of the Dutch.

A healthy and growing business community can develop easily and quickly. DBCCI can find means and ways to foster the development of a healthy and growing business community with the co-operation of both governments through friendly and congenial political atmosphere. DBCCI feels that Bangladesh has abundant manpower resources and cheap

labour costs which provide a convincing argument for investment. And in fact, Dutch investors have been in this region since long ago.

As stated in its terms of reference, DBCCI is to promote economic co-operation between the Netherlands and Bangladesh, particularly in the private sector, and to provide facilities and services to persons, firms and companies interested in economic transactions such as trade, commerce and industry between the Netherlands and Bangladesh. The Dutch-Bangla Chamber of Commerce & Industry seeks to combine the substantial reserves of adaptable and youthful labour forces in Bangladesh with the wealth of technical know-how of the Netherlands. Together, we can form a winning combination. In fostering this combination further, the main objective of the organisation is to make an effort on behalf of trade and industry to facilitate exchanges of views and ideas.

To disseminate knowledge and information related to trade, commerce, industry and other economic fields, DBCCI has been planning to organise visits of business delegations from the Netherlands to Bangladesh as well as visits of business delegations from Bangladesh to the Netherlands. Continuous efforts of DBCCI also ensure promotion of Dutch products in Bangladesh as well as products of Bangladesh in the Netherlands. In addition, DBCCI can assist in resolving business transactions and disputes between companies from the Netherlands and Bangladesh as and when necessary, thereby strengthening economic co-operation between the two friendly countries.

The tasks involved are no doubt difficult, yet by the support and co-operation of the members, it will continue to provide contributions towards the achievement of the desired objectives.

**Kh. Mokarram Hossain**  
President  
Dutch-Bangla Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DBCCI)

The Netherlands and Bangladesh: Development partners

THE Netherlands is a long-standing development partner of Bangladesh. In the year 2000, the Netherlands provided a total of 60 million Dutch guilders, over 27 million euros (25 million US dollars), as development assistance under the core programme. For this year 77 million Dutch guilders, 35 million euros, have been made available. However, development is not just an issue of the size of the available budget. During the past few years, the Netherlands started placing more and more emphasis on the effectiveness of our development co-operation programmes. The Netherlands therefore decided on some important policy shifts.

In the first place a choice was made to limit our bilateral activities to only 17 countries, of which Bangladesh is one. In the second place, the core bilateral development programmes were to be

focused on only a few sectors. On the basis of consultations with the Government of Bangladesh, representatives of civil society and other development partners in Bangladesh, the Netherlands concentrated its development co-operation activities in three sectors: **integrated water resources management, basic health care, and basic education.** In addition, it was agreed that possibilities would be studied for a fourth sector programme in rural electrification.

Another important element of the renewed Dutch development co-operation policy is the choice for a sectoral approach. Through this approach, isolated projects are to be replaced by coherent sectoral programmes. The Netherlands began providing long-term support to the sectors (or sub-sectors), tailored to the policy framework as drawn up by the

Government of Bangladesh. **Poverty Reduction Strategies** are an instrument to further enhance the effectiveness of development assistance. The Netherlands attaches great value to thorough comprehensive poverty reduction strategies that reflect the views of the society at large and that can give the necessary direction and focus to the poverty alleviation activities of all development partners. Therefore, the Netherlands is prepared to support this process, which the Government of Bangladesh has embarked upon wherever this could be helpful.

The Dutch development co-operation programme only offers grant funding, no loans. Of the 35 million euros that are available for the present year, approximately 50% is expected to be absorbed by the **Integrated Water Management Sector Programme.** This sector programme provides sup-

port for policy development, including assistance in the process of drafting the National Water Management Plan, and for institutional support for BWDB, WARPO and related institutions. Three major sub-sector programmes are also covered: Ganges Dependent Area (GDA), Integrated Coastal Zone Management, and Small Scale Water Resources Development.

Under the **GDA-programme** dredging activities take place to keep water flowing into the Gorai River, in anticipation of more structural solutions, which are expected to come under World Bank funding. Another major activity in the GDA is the Sundarbans Biodiversity Conservation Programme, where the Netherlands participates on the basis of co-financing with the ADB. In the Coastal Zone the major activity is the Char Development and Settlement Project in Noakhali, Feni

and Chittagong districts. The Small Scale Water Resources Development Project, which covered the smaller polders in western Bangladesh, is expected to be extended to the eastern part. This new phase to the programme, another joint activity of ADB and the Netherlands, is presently under appraisal.

Basic Health Care and Basic Education are the other two ongoing sector programmes of the Dutch aid programme. In the **health sector** the Netherlands is a strong supporter of the Health and Population Sector Programme (HPSP), in which it contributes a substantial share of the budget support provided by the pool funders to this programme. HPSP is considered as one of the forerunner programmes with respect to the sectoral approach. Its promising start will hopefully open the way to further sectoral approaches

in other ministries. In the health sector substantial support is also given to the National Nutrition Programme, which is seen as a necessary complement to the HPSP. Furthermore assistance is provided for the programmes of the Bangladesh Women Health Coalition.

In the **education sector** the Netherlands focuses on the Non-Formal Primary Education programme of BRAC. Possibilities for supporting the Bangladesh Government's primary and mass education programmes are being studied.

Development objectives cannot be achieved without the contributions and participation of women in Bangladesh. The Netherlands is especially concerned with poverty-related inequalities between women and men, and continues to promote equality in the areas of health, education and water resources management.

The water resources systems in Bangladesh and the Netherlands

ROH KOUDSTAAL

THIS article gives some background information on the physical conditions of the water resources systems (WRS) of Bangladesh and the Netherlands, aiming to contribute to the understanding and comparative interpretation of the institutional and participatory issues in water management.

Main characteristics of the water resources systems of Bangladesh and the Netherlands

**General features:** It should be mentioned that Bangladesh is more dependent on upstream countries than the Netherlands, which occupies an almost twice as big part of the total river basin

area as Bangladesh. Roughly 70 per cent of the land area of both countries can be earmarked as floodplain. In the Netherlands -- where without protection works 2/3 of the country would be flooded by sea water at high tides -- dominates the coastal floodplain, while in Bangladesh the riverine floodplain occupies a much greater land area than the coastal floodplain. Consequently, in Bangladesh inundations are mainly caused by high river discharges and intensive local rainfall.

In the Netherlands, extreme floods in the western part of the country are a combination of a storm induced set up of water levels in the funnel shaped North Sea and high river discharges (which can be in the order of several meters, such as 3 meter in February 1953). In Bangladesh, cyclonic storms usually occur in the pre- and post-monsoon periods and are considered separate phenomena, not related to the flood regulation capacity of the Bangladesh flood plains.

**Level of protection:** In the Netherlands, physical capital has complemented and replaced natural capital to a great extent. That holds, for example, for the wastewater treatment facilities complementing the natural waste assimilation capacity and for all the infrastructure that reduces the intrusion of salt water in absence of sufficient surface water flows. It holds as well for the flood protection system where higher and higher dikes have to be built to compensate for the lack of natural storage capacity of the flood plains.

In the coastal areas, there is a continuous effort in both coun-

tries which aims at full protection. In the riverine flood plain, however the situation is different. In the Netherlands, where the need for safety dominates, almost 100% of the riverine floodplain is protected. In Bangladesh, floods have many more, and often conflicting, functions. Agriculture and fisheries, for example, are intrinsically related to different stages of flood. They not only depend on the peak and duration of the floods, but also on the onset and recession of floods, while their requirements are different. In Bangladesh, roughly about 50% of the flood plain area is protected.

The different physical, social and economic conditions in both countries has also triggered a different approach to safety through flood protection. In the coastal areas in the Netherlands flood protection under normal conditions is considered a must and crest levels of dikes are designed at water levels which are exceeded only once in 10, 000 years. In Bangladesh the design criterion is only once every 100 years. In the riverine flood plains, similar differences exist: in the Netherlands design frequencies range from once every 1,250 to 2,000 years, while in Bangladesh a design frequency of once every 20 years is used.

It is interesting to observe that in both countries an intensive public debate is ongoing on the level of protection. In the Netherlands, the debate focuses on the environmental implications of the advanced level of protection. What is at stake in Bangladesh, is a discussion and trade off between various flood plain users and their interests. This indicates that what long has been considered to be

mainly a technical and economic issue, in fact is a matter of social preference.

Issues of water management

Both in Bangladesh and the Netherlands, IWRM has been presented as an institutional and participatory challenge. Implementation of IWRM is not any more the respon-

sibility of one single agency such as the Bangladesh Water Development Board or the Dutch Rijkswaterstaat. It is considered to be a corporate affair, in which line agencies have to agree on a common approach, for the implementation of which they will be (partly) hold responsible. This requires models of governance, which are in development in both

countries. In Bangladesh, a National Water Policy is recently formulated (1999), which clearly states the dominating national objectives which relate to its status of a developing country: food security and poverty alleviation. A proper institutional framework of coordinating agencies and correspond-

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Heartiest felicitations on the Occasion of the National Day of the Netherlands.



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Heartiest Felicitations to her Majesty Queen Beatrix and the friendly people of the Netherlands on the occasion of the National Day

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International Conference on Corruption to be held in The Netherlands

MINISTERS and experts from some 180 governments from all over the world will meet at the Global Forum on Fighting Corruption and Safeguarding Integrity II, to be held from 28 - 31 May in The Hague, The Netherlands. Global Forum II is the follow-up of Global Forum I, hosted by Vice President Al Gore in 1999. The Netherlands Minister of Justice, Mr. Benk Korthals, will be the host of Global Forum II.

The Netherlands offered to host Global Forum II as it has always been active in promoting justice and international law. In addition, it regards the fight against corruption as relevant for all. Corruption is a phenomenon that not only undermines economic growth and trade in general, but also tends to affect the most vulnerable groups in our societies the most. Preventive measures and promotion of integrity are just as important in the fight against corruption as aspects of criminal law and law enforcement.

**Global Forum II** is an intergovernmental conference with the general objective to confirm governments' commitments to fight corruption and promote integrity. It is expected that Ministers will adopt a Final Declaration, containing a number of ideas related to a future legal UN-instrument against corruption, to the monitoring of the effectiveness of national anti-corruption strategies and to best practices.

In addition to Ministers responsible for national anti-corruption strategies, government experts in the fields of integrity, law enforcement, customs, development co-operation and trade will attend the conference. Also a limited number of international governmental and non-governmental organisations have been invited.

The conference will cover five themes:  
1. Integrity and Governance  
2. Law Enforcement

3. Customs
  4. Corruption, Transition and Development
  5. Government and the Business Sector
- The conference will bring together Ministers responsible for the fight against corruption from, in principle, all countries in the world. Participants will engage in a lively debate on ways and means to promote the monitoring of the effectiveness of national and international strategies against corruption. The conference will conclude with the formal adoption of the Final Declaration of the conference.

**FISH PROCESSING PLANT, POTATO COLD STORAGE**

Grasso Refrigeration Systems

Compressor সহ পূর্ণিক যন্ত্রাতি Grasso, Holland এর ব্যারাকি সহ সরবরাহ করে থাকি। Grasso Compressor -ই কম বিদ্যুৎ ব্যয় ও উচ্চ কার্যক্ষমতা মানে নিশ্চয়তা দিতে পারে।

Testimony of Grasso (a member of GEA)  
- Saudi Government awarded project worth approx. US\$ 125 million for refrigeration system for Slaughtering & Processing unto 400,000 animals sacrificed by Pilgrim during Hajj in Mecca.  
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