

Snow sledges made in Chittagong

Who should have thought it possible to produce snow sledges in sunny, tropical Bangladesh for export to snow clad Norway? However, this is not just an imaginary vision, but a true fact.

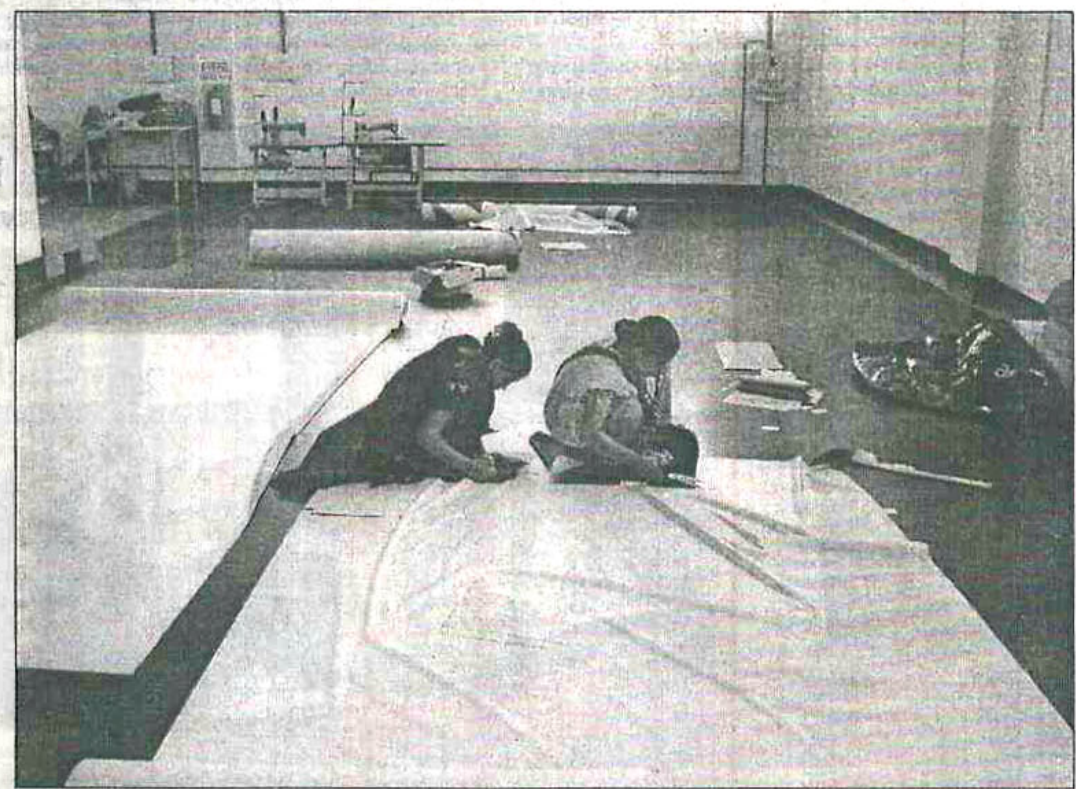
In 2005, DANIDA's Business-2-Business Programme (B2B) supported a partner match between Cold Legeredskaber ApS of Denmark and Multi Safh Bags Limited of Chittagong. The Danish partner had been in search of a place to outsource some of the production of their kindergarten items. Cold Legeredskaber is specialising in play items such as trampolines, sack chairs, bouncing castles, air and foam mats, foam pillows a.o. all made in PVC free

material. International competition, however, has called for combining high quality products with attractive pricing. Both requirements could be fulfilled in Bangladesh.

Multi Safh bags Ltd. in Chittagong a company producing high quality backpacks and specially designed pants for export saw immediately the product range of Cold as an interesting way to expand their business. Many of the work routines involved in the Cold product range are quite labour intensive cutting, sewing and welding of the plastic components and the cost level in Bangladesh is suitable for making such production internationally competitive.

A joint venture company between the two partners was established in 2006 and DANIDA's B2B Programme has supported the project and made it possible to transfer knowhow from Denmark in areas such as PVC free production techniques, production efficient measures, quality assurance, logistics, sales and marketing just to mention a few.

So thanks to Cold and Multi Safh Bags, Scandinavian children can enjoy hours of fun of playing on bouncing air mats, air trampolines and with colourful kindergarten foam items. And on riding the fast-going snow slides even though that product is coming from a country, which never had any snowfall.



The political system

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12 and the working classes. The Social Liberal Party (Det Radikale Venstre, founded 1905), with the smallholders' associations and the city intellectuals, Denmark's Liberal Party (Venstre, founded 1870), with the agricultural societies and the cooperative movement, and the Conservative People's Party (Det Konservative Folkeparti, founded 1870), with the employers', trade and business associations, the large landowners and senior civil servants. Concurrently, the four-party system was established. Each party had a loyal newspaper in every region of the country.

With a total electoral support of 83 to 97%, the four old parties dominated Danish politics until the early 1970s. From 1960, The Socialist People's Party (Socialistisk Folkeparti, founded 1959) also played a part.

The boom period from the late 1950s resulted in major economic and social changes. The welfare state was established and the tax-funded social sector developed rapidly with a huge increase in the number of both tasks and employees. As a result of these changes, the traditional ties between party and social class gradually loosened and the four-party system likewise crumbled.

The Development Since 1973
The general election in 1973 dramatically changed the party system. Support for the four old parties dropped from 84% to 58%. Three recently established parties - The Christian People's Party (Kristeligt Folkeparti, founded 1970, from 2003 called The Christian Democratic Party (Kristendemokraterne)), The Progress Party (Fremskridtspartiet, founded 1972), and The Centre Democratic Party (Centrum-Demokraterne, founded 1973) were elected, while The Danish Communist Party (Danmarks Kommunistiske Parti, founded 1920) and The Single Tax Party (Retsforbundet, founded 1919) made a comeback. Since then, there have never been less than seven parties in the Folketing. At the same time, a recession hit and Danish politics entered an unstable period with weak Social Democrat minority governments, elections every other year and a highly volatile electorate. Since 1973, 20-30% of the Danish voters have changed party at every election. Despite this volatility, the party system has nonetheless shown stability in the distribution of seats between the right-wing and left-wing block in the Folketing. Fluctuations in seat distribution have mainly been

between parties within the same block. As a result the centre parties especially The Social Liberal Party, but also The Centre Democratic Party and The Christian People's Party until 2001 determined which side was able to form a majority in the Folketing and therefore also which party was in power.

In 1982, the centre parties chose to support the formation of a right-wing minority coalition government headed by the Conservative Poul Schlüter (b.1929). He remained in power with different coalition partners until 1993, when The Social Liberal Party changed sides again and supported the formation of a coalition government led by The Social Democratic Party under Poul Nyrup Rasmussen (b.1943).

This lost its majority at the 1994 election, but The Social Democratic Party remained in power until 2001, initially in coalition with The Social Liberal Party and The Centre Democratic Party, then from 1996 with The Social Liberal Party only. Since 1994, the extreme left has been represented by The Unity List (Enhedslisten, founded 1989), originally a collaboration of several left-wing parties for election purposes.

Danish Politics 2005-2006
The main political issues include revision of the welfare measures,

the balance between public and market control, the degree of tax funding of welfare measures as opposed to the insurance principle, the extent and nature of privatisation and contracting-out, support for or opposition to further political integration in the EU, law and order. Since The Danish People's Party (Dansk Folkeparti) was founded in 1995 by a break-away group from The Progress Party, it has managed to put aliens policy, integration of immigrants and refugees, the attitude to the multi-ethnic and multi-religious society and the Danish national identity at the centre of the political agenda. As a result, The Danish People's Party increased its number of seats from 13 to 22 at the General Election in 2001 and to 24 in 2005.

The 2001 and 2005 elections made history, because Denmark's Liberal Party became the largest party for the first time since 1924, and because the right-of-centre parties together gained a majority for the first time since 1929. The centre parties in the Folketing lost their traditional influence on the formation of the government.

The elections resulted in the formation of a minority government Denmark's Liberal Party and The Conservative People's Party led by Anders Fogh Rasmussen

the potential of the IT sector in Bangladesh and at the same time do some active match making. The successful outcome hereof was followed by a new delegation from Denmark taking active part in the SoftExpo 2005 the year after. More than 250 match making meetings were held during these two occasions.

January 2007 a new approach was tried out whereby a selected number of IT companies from Bangladesh went to an IT Fair and match making arrangement in Copenhagen.

The measurable outcome of the B2B's focus on this sector is that 30% of all projects funded under the programme today are IT related co-operations and joint ventures. The projects cover a broad range of business areas software programming and development, DTP and graphic production, architectural design, digital mapping just to mention a few but all having a common basis of being dependent on strong IT skills.

For the Bangladeshi partners



involved under the B2B Programme in these projects, these co-operations have led to a good number of positive spin offs such

as introduction of new technology, improvements in production planning, quality assurance, new and efficient management tech-

niques introduced, focus on Corporate Social Responsibilities and the opening up for new export opportunities.

From Savar to Switzerland's postal offices

ABOUT one hour's drive north of Dhaka in Kabirpur, a joint venture between Treco A/S of Denmark and Unitech Products Ltd. of Bangladesh has been established.

In 2006 Treco was on the look out for a suitable place to produce special designed metal components for their supplies to customers in the metal industry. With the initial help of DANIDA's B2B Programme, the choice of Unitech a company established in 1999 and run by Mr. Anis Ahmed - seems to be the perfect partner match. Both companies are experienced in sheet metal processing and the need for outsourcing by Treco and the need for exploring new market opportunities by Unitech made the

two partners "click" right from the beginning.

The co-operation has now resulted in a production of special sorting trays that are being exported to Switzerland for use by the National Postal Service.

With currently 40 workers employed, the partners have great expectations for developing their co-operation into new products and markets. One of the newest ideas a metal lamp production is combining Danish design and know how with local production skills in metal work.

DANIDA's Business-2-Business Programme has supported the co-operation in order for Unitech to be upgraded in drawing and measuring techniques, production plan-



ning and optimisation, quality control, surface treatment and other areas. Part of this training and upgrading has been done in Denmark, part of it has been

through a Danish technical advisor stationed at the factory.

The joint venture co-operation has clearly demonstrated the possibility of Bangladesh to

become an outsourcing target for overseas steel manufacturers and which will help to position Bangladesh as a quality supplier of thin plate steel products.

Healthy food for diabetics

MANY diabetics are deprived of quality of life, as their situation will restrict them from enjoying a wide range of foodstuffs, as these will be harmful to their health.

In Bangladesh at least 8 million people are known to be diabetics. Probably the actual number is being much higher.

The Danish ISIS Food International A/S has been active since 1993 in producing conventional food products that are espe-

cially complying with requirements of diabetics. By removing sugar and fat and replacing this with natural dietary fibres, ISIS has managed to live up to EU requirements on Diabetes Standards and at the same time produce products that are matching the texture and flavours of traditional food products.

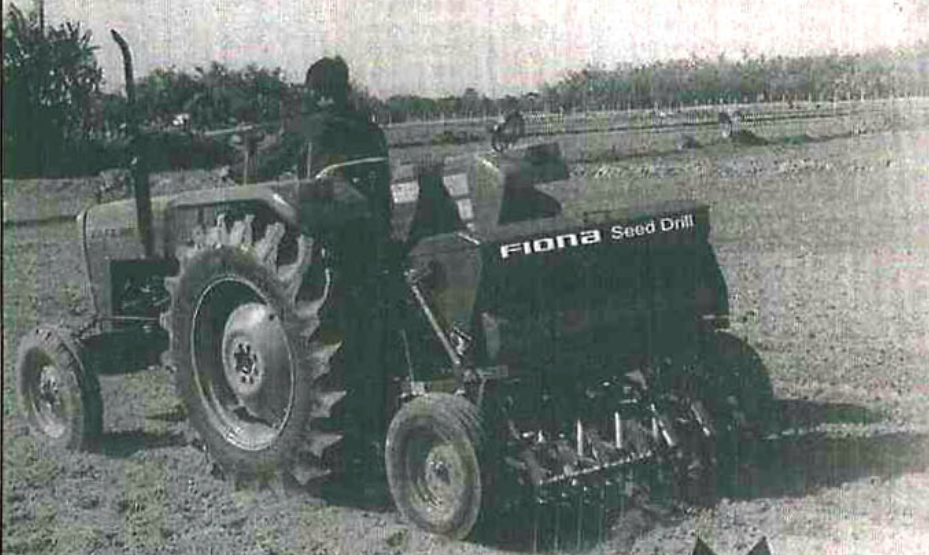
ISIS of Denmark formed in 2006 a joint venture in co-operation with Healthcare Pharmaceutical Ltd. of Bangladesh for the production in Bangladesh of diabetic friendly

food products. As step number one, the products will be marketed in Bangladesh. Production for export under the ISIS brand is planned at a later stage. The joint venture has already started out producing and marketing a vanilla and a strawberry ice cream that are now distributed all over Bangladesh. The next range of products in the pipeline jelly, jam, ketchup, biscuits and chilli sauce are soon to be launched.

Warmest felicitations to
the Government and the friendly People
of Denmark on their Constitution Day

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Track & Trade extends
warmest greetings
to the
Constitution Day of Denmark

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