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FBCCI administrator appointed to hold polls in 120 days

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The government yesterday stepped in to end the row inside the FBCCI by appointing Syed Manzur Elahi as administrator and charging him to hold an election to the country's leading trade body within 120 days.

The election of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) was scheduled for August 2007, but did not take place due to disputes among business leaders over the polls procedure.

"My first priority is to conduct a free and fair election before the expiry of the government timeframe," said Elahi, chairman of Apex Group, adding that his target would be to hold the polls within 90 days.

The disputes in the organization came to a head when the FBCCI Electoral Arbitration Council dropped five voters of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association from the



Syed Manzur Elahi, the government-appointed administrator of FBCCI.

final voters list. The BGMEA filed a case against the move.

Yesterday Elahi termed the disputes among the business community as 'not desirable'.

He also said before conducting the polls the voters' list might be reviewed.

The FBCCI election becomes an image issue for the business community, he said, adding, "I hope

HC says 5 BGMEA leaders eligible for FBCCI polls

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court yesterday declared eligible five BGMEA leaders to become voters for election to the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), the country's apex trade body.

Pronouncing the judgment upon a writ petition, a two-member bench headed by Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain ordered the FBCCI electoral arbitration council to include the five in the final voter list before holding its election.

Among them is ex-president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) Annisul Huq, who was a presidential candidate for the FBCCI's stalled election.

The FBCCI election arbitration council dropped them on September 25 from the final voter list for the apex-chamber elections following a complaint from a garment businessman.

"With today's court order the stay on the process of election stands vacated," one court source said.

everybody will help me to conduct the election on time."

Meantime, the BGMEA won their legal battle yesterday as the court declared the FBCCI arbitration council's decision as illegal.

Earlier, the last board meeting of the FBCCI elected body headed by Mir Nasir Ahmed was held at the Federation Bhabany yesterday.

Addressing a press conference in Dhaka, the outgoing president said the FBCCI members will appreciate the government decision and help the newly appointed administrator.

He said government should put confidence in FBCCI.

Asked about the government's role in providing business support, he said, "Some policy reforms have taken place in recent time, but bureaucracy is still there."

Nasir suggested that the government should come forward to take some other steps to restore businessmen's confidence, although it is a long-term process to recover confidence.

Local hospitals now compete with foreign treatment

Medical services expo kicks off

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The increased number of quality private hospitals in Dhaka has reduced the number of patients who travel abroad for treatment, a manager at a leading local hospital claimed yesterday.

"Local entrepreneurs have been making huge investments in the health sector," said Ali Ahad, manager of Delta Hospital, which operates in Dhanmondi and Mirpur. "The trend of going abroad for treatment is gradually declining," he added.

Traditionally wealthy and middle class Bangladeshis have looked to India, Singapore and Thailand for complex health care. However, in the past few years several high profile new hospitals have sprung up in the capital offering a cheaper alternative.

These include the Apollo in Bashundhara Residential Area, United Hospital in Gulshan and Square Hospital on Panthapath.

Ali Ahad said local hospitals and physicians are able to provide the modern medical treatment even for conditions such as cancer.

Ahad was speaking on the opening day of the three-day Medexpo-2007, an annual exposition of medical services and equipment, at the city's Dhaka Sheraton Hotel.

National Professor M R Khan formally inaugurated the fair as the chief guest, where a total of 45 local and foreign companies are showcasing their products and services at 57 pavilions.

Despite the rise in local service provision the fair showed that there was still demand for foreign treatment. Vijaya Sreenidhi, senior director of SingHealth, a Singapore based hospital said Bangladeshis

are on their top ten list of foreign patients.

"The people of Bangladesh go to SingHealth mainly to receive the treatment of cancer, cardiac, orthopedic, and ENT (eye, nose and tooth)," said Sreenidhi who was busy providing information to potential clients at the SingHealth stall.

She said every month between 100 to 200 patients from Bangladesh go to SingHealth for treatment.

At the inaugural ceremony Chairman of Medexpo-2007 Kazi Wahidul Alam said the main objective of the fair is to inform about better medical services at home and abroad.

He said sometimes many people spend a lot of money but do not receive a good treatment in time for the lack of proper information.

"I hope people will be able to know the information about the medical treatment and medical equipment," he said.

"A few years ago people could not even hope that there would be modern medical services in the country. But now they are receiving better treatment due to the progress in medical sciences," M R Khan said.

Highlighting the current success of the private sector in medical services, M R Khan said the public medical sector should also update its services to provide good services at lower costs.

"Although the medical science has made a commendable progress, there are still many things to be done for more progress of this sector," Khan said.

The exhibition will remain open from 10am to 8pm everyday until December 8.



National Professor M R Khan (L) visits a stall at Medexpo-2007, an annual exposition of medical services and equipment, at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel yesterday. Around 45 local and foreign companies are showcasing products and services at the 3-day show.

New sweater factory to supply Marks & Spencer

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh's SQ Group and UK-based Crystal Martin Knitwear have signed a \$ 5.5 million joint venture deal to manufacture sweaters, especially for clothing retailer Marks & Spencer, according to a press statement Thursday.

SQ Group Chairman M Ghulam Faruq and Crystal Martin's Chief

Executive Officer Lawrence B Ward signed the deal.

The factory will be built at Bhaluka, Mymensingh and will be operational by December 2008, employing over 4,000 people, SQ said.

Crystal Martin's Chief Executive Ward said his company is proud to be associated with M&S through the new joint venture.

Pizza Hut to open third outlet next week

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

International food chain Pizza Hut will open its third outlet in Bangladesh next week.

The new outlet will be opened on Sat Masjid Road in Dhanmondi before December 16, Victory Day of the country, said Akku Chowdhury, executive director of Transcom Foods Ltd, the franchisee of Pizza Hut in Bangladesh.

Chowdhury was talking to reporters at a function in Dhaka

yesterday to mark the 4th anniversary of Pizza Hut Gulshan outlet.

Transcom Foods Ltd, a subsidiary of Transcom Group, started the operations of Pizza Hut on December 06, 2003 at Gulshan in Dhaka.

Pizza Hut's second outlet in Bangladesh is located in Chittagong.

Transcom Foods Limited is also the franchisee of KFC in Bangladesh.



Akku Chowdhury (3-L), executive director of Transcom Foods Ltd, the franchisee of Pizza Hut in Bangladesh, cuts a cake to mark the 4th anniversary of Pizza Hut Gulshan outlet.

Citigroup forecasts 6pc FY '08 growth for Bangladesh

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh will see a moderate 6 percent growth in FY '08, down from 6.5 percent in FY 07, due mainly to political volatility, high inflation rate and fuel prices, said Citigroup.

The US-based Citigroup published the growth prediction in its annual economic and market analysis on Asia Economic Prospects 2008 released recently.

It said Bangladesh economy continues to face multiple risks, including political volatility, weak governance and vulnerability to natural disasters.

"Political uncertainty and weakening of business sentiment are likely result in a continued slowdown in private sector investment," the analysis said.

Politics has had a major impact on Bangladesh public finances, external sector and inflation and will determine how domestic and foreign investment pans out.

The analysis said that the economic growth will continuously be driven by private sector consumption, which comprises 75 percent of GDP. This is a result of a steady inflow of workers, remittances, growing urbanisation and rising incomes.

The analysis also predicted fueling of consumption by the caretaker government's anti-corruption drive, as it is resulting in previously unaccounted for money coming back into the system.

The group sees inflation and food price as major risks for

Bangladesh economy.

"As witnessed in most countries across the globe, food prices also pose a key concern for Bangladesh. Floods in July damaged most of the agriculture products. Further contributing to higher primary products prices are higher global commodity prices and ban on wheat export from India," the analysis said.

The group forecast that an administered oil price regime would considerably weaken the banking system as banks ultimately finance these heavy subsidies.

The analysts of group commented that government's budget deficit of 4.2 percent for FY '08 appears ambitious, while revenues are relatively buoyant, higher administrative expenses, due to the revamping of the electoral roll and flood rehabilitation efforts could make achieving the target difficult.

Terming the recent export fall a deceleration, the analysts identified the reasons behind the export fall are warmer winter in the US, a higher base effect and political uncertainty which deterred some buyers.

Lifting safeguards on Chinese exports, coupled with competition from Vietnam and Cambodia, could pose risks for Bangladesh textile industry.

The analysts predicted that in the present climate of uncertainty, economic growth will depend largely on politics and the outcome of the next elections before the end of the 2008.

CAREER OPPORTUNITY

The Smiling Sun Franchise program is recruiting for the following positions. Interested candidates should send their CV with a cover letter indicating current salary to jobs@smilingsunhealth.com. Please specify the position of interest in the subject line. Closing date is 12 December 2007. English fluency is required for all advertised positions.

Franchise Development Officer: This is a leadership position responsible for the overall operations of the Franchise Development Team that develops the Smiling Sun Health Franchise services at the clinic level. This 12-month position reports to the Franchise Manager and supervises five professional staff. Specific duties include:

- Supervise the implementation of all project activities carried-out by the Franchise Development Team.
- Supervises the development and implementation of the operations research, marketing, brand promotion and organizational development plans and activities.
- Maintains close contact with stakeholders who have current or potential input into the delivery of Smiling Sun Health Franchise health services and activities.

Qualifications: An advanced degree in public health, marketing, or business or a related field. At least 10 years successful previous experience working in marketing, branding and/or promoting health services.

Operations Research Specialist: The Operations Research Specialist will take a leadership role in the development and implementation of an operations research agenda that will improve the service delivery capacity and efficiency of the Smiling Sun Health Franchise. Specific duties include:

- Set-up a system that will continuously generate operation research ideas and questions among the various stakeholders, including but not limited to potential users.
- Assist NGOs develop research agendas and ensure that agendas reflect their business and marketing plans.
- Develop the solicitation and take the lead in selecting local firms that can carry-out operations research activities.
- Design and plan a system for disseminating research results and ensure that those results are incorporated into Smiling Sun Health Franchise activities and programming.

Qualifications: An advanced degree in social sciences, demography or a related health field with 5-8 years conducting health or consumer research. Must have excellent writing skills and possess an ability to work as part of a team.

Business Planning/Market Research Specialist: The Business Planning/Market Research Specialist will assist NGOs develop and implement business plans and marketing strategies intended to expand clinic services base and increase client access to these high quality health services. Specific duties include:

- Assist NGOs develop business and marketing plans that will promote and lead to the development of a responsive and efficient clinic system that is responsive to health needs of the target population and can generate sufficient revenue.
- Make recommendations for survey research to determine client preferences and needs.
- Transfer the capacity to develop and monitor the implementation of business plans to NGO members.

Qualifications: A degree in business, marketing or related field and 5-8 years experience in the marketing field. Must have excellent writing skills and possess an ability to work as part of a team. Comprehensive understanding of both rural and urban health issues in Bangladesh.

Health Field Support & Monitoring Specialist: The Field Support and Monitoring Specialist will provide assistance to the franchise clinics to ensure that they are in compliance with Smiling Sun Health Franchise clinical operations guidelines. This position will work as part of the Franchise Operations team and will report to the Franchise Operations Officer. Specific duties include:

- Make regular site visits to all Smiling Sun Health Franchise clinics.
- Work with NGOs to design and implement ways of ensuring that all aspects of their clinical operations are consistent with Smiling Sun guidelines and standards.
- Make recommendations for training to various technical specialists.
- Provide input into project reports and other project documents.
- Engage in local level problems solving with clinic staff.

Qualifications: The successful candidate will possess a degree in a relevant field and have 5 years of experience in the delivery of clinical health services. Familiarity with NGO health and primary care service delivery is preferred.

"Women are especially encouraged to apply"

CAREER OPPORTUNITY

An International humanitarian organization invites applications from qualified professionals regardless of their race, religion and gender for the following senior level positions. The purpose of these positions is to design program interventions, provide technical support and ensure quality and compliance of standards in the relevant sector. All positions will be based in Dhaka at its head office.

Agriculture Coordinator : Candidate must be Master's Degree in any agricultural discipline. Experience in livelihood planning, production management, marketing and adapting household food security strategies is essential.

Engineer (Civil) : Candidate must be B. Sc in Engineering (Civil) from BIT / university.

Health Programs Coordinator : Candidate must be-MBBS, MPH degree preferable.

WATSAN Coordinator : Candidate must be MBBS with experience in public health and WATSAN programs.

Common Requirements :

- Five years' work experience in the relevant field at a managerial level.
- Ability to persuade and negotiate.
- Ability to work in a complex, diverse working environment.
- Must be willing to travel 60% time to remote projects.
- Must have knowledge of MS-word and MS-excel.

Other Information :

- Salary commensurate with qualification and experience.
- Only short-listed candidates will be called for interview.
- Please mention the position applied for, at the top of the envelope.
- Any personal persuasion will result in disqualification.
- Mention your contact number and / or e-mail address in your CV.
- Women candidates are encouraged to apply.

Interested candidates are requested to send their applications along with CV, a recent passport size photograph and photocopies of academic certificates before/ by **December 31, 2007** to:

P.O Box No - 9071
Banani, Dhaka 1213