

They possess great managerial skills.

Investors are more than happy to sink their money into India and China, but why shouldn't Bangladesh get a share of that money?

What must also be understood is that change will not occur over night and that a conference is after all just a conference. What Bangladesh needs to do is change the global perception people have of the country and that is no small task. As Khaled says, "Bangladesh is known around the world the country of cyclones, floods and political instability. That is not a good advertisement for the nation. What the world needs to know is that even after all the natural disasters and political problems as a nation we are a resilient bunch. Just look at our agriculture sector it is terrorised by natural disasters yet year after year we achieve bumper crops. That shows management skill, I would go so far as to say Bangladeshi's are some of the best managers in the world. Those are the aspects we need to highlight and show to the world."

While it is certain that one conference will not change the global perception of Bangladesh, at least it's a start.

The Director General of the World Trade Organization, Pacal Lamy sent his compliments to the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry on the eve of DCCI International Business Conference. In his message of felicitation Pascal Lamy said, "I would like to congratulate the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry in its Golden Jubilee. After 50 years, and against the background of current world turmoil, it is useful to look at the experience of the past to devise solutions for our future challenges. I wish you all the best for a most inspiring debate." The message of felicitation is as one might expect, courteous and vague but when he talked about devising solutions for the future unwittingly he hit on one of the most important aspects of the conference. More than just about branding Bangladesh and making it an attractive destination for business the conference also focuses on planning for the future. It will be of no help if business pours into Bangladesh and our banking system remains as archaic as it is. Issues such as this and devising solutions for future problems will also dominate the agenda at the conference.

The roundtable discussions will include ministers from around the regions such as Prof. G.L. Peiris, Minister of Export Development and International Trade, Colombo, Rajendra Mahato, Minister for Commerce and Industry Nepal, Said Amer Sultan Al-Riyami, Minister of Commerce and Industry of Oman, Jal Ram Ramesh, State Minister of Commerce, India and the Dasho Sonam Tshering, Deputy minister of Economic Affairs Royal Government of Bhutan. They will speak and discuss issues that range from business strategies in world of change to the impact of the a world trade organisation on SMEs. Along with the roundtables there will a light and sound show with couture and cuisine celebrating the change of Dhaka over the past 400 years and a book on the commercial history of Dhaka will also be launched. The event hopes to cover everything Dhaka and Bangladesh have to offer and if it proves successful then the benefits will be very tangible. ■