



## German companies eager to discover Bangladesh

OAV -- German Asia Pacific Business Association conducts delegation trip for German businesspeople

GERMAN businesspeople have the unique opportunity to experience the dynamic, modern Bangladesh during a one-week-visit organised by OAV German Asia Pacific Business Association. During the trip sponsored by the German Federal Ministry of Economics and organized by OAV German Asia Pacific Business Association, companies from sectors such as shipbuilding, energy, engineering, wholesale, and textiles seek market information and contacts to potential business partners as well as updates on the economic developments and the framework for doing business in Bangladesh. German companies are interested in benefiting from the potentials of a rapidly growing market as well as in sourcing from Bangladesh manufacturers. As a supplier of specialty chemicals, capital goods and equipment or partner for infrastructure development German companies offer excellent technological standards and a sense of long lasting partnerships. German companies are prepared to share know-how as well in marketing and logistics.

Leading Bangladeshi entrepreneurs will share their rich professional experiences and open their factory doors. The delegation will visit well known Bangladeshi companies such as Ispahani Group or the Bangladeshi branch of the German company Siemens among others. Appointments with important chambers and associations and the Board of Investment are also part of the itinerary. One of the highlights will be a seminar organized by Bangladesh German Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BGCCI). Peter Clasen, member of the OAV Board and chairman of OAV's Bangladesh committee, emphasises the importance of political consultations: "I have always been impressed by the vim and vigour of entrepreneurs in Bangladesh and their openness for innovations. But without the necessary framework important initiatives cannot be

successful. Thus I find most interesting Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's announcement to cooperate closer with the private sector". He is now hoping for new economic initiatives: "Decision-makers have to change their attitude to encourage economic life instead of regulating it. Essentially this means cutting down red tape and wiping out excesses of bureaucracy with the Government focussing much more than hitherto on improvements of infrastructure." As owner of the company "Wilhelm G. Clasen", Mr Clasen is well acquainted with Bangladesh. His firm has been doing business in Bangladesh respectively erstwhile East Pakistan for more than 60 years and is engaged in Gerban Fibres Ltd., a Joint Venture in Narayanganj.

Representatives of Metro

Group are also taking part in the delegation trip to explore business opportunities in Bangladesh. As one of the most renowned international wholesale companies, Metro has been active in many Asian countries as an investor and has contributed to an upgrading of agricultural production through implementation of quality control, training and effective marketing and supply chains.

Peter Clasen is looking forward to come to Bangladesh again: "We have arranged an attractive agenda for our delegation trip that appeals to newcomers and old hands alike. And the exchange of ideas and views among the participants and with Bangladeshi counterparts will certainly be very interesting." On the spot OAV's preparation of the trip is supported by the German embassy and the Bangladesh German Chamber of Commerce and Industry. "We are grateful to the German Embassy and to BGCCI for their efforts. Without them our delegation's trip could be hardly as successful" says Mr Clasen.

Information on OAV -- German Asia Pacific Business Association  
OAV German Asia-Pacific Business Association is a network of more than 500 German companies from all industries (production, trade, finance, services). High ranking corporate representatives with a long track record in the region are active in the OAV board and committees. Mr Juergen Fitschen, Member of



Picture taken at a meeting organised by BGCCI during OAV's last delegation trip to Bangladesh in 2006.

## German partner schools in Dhaka

IN 2008, the German government initiated the PASCH (=partner school) programme to build up a worldwide network of at least 1000 schools which will share a common platform of German language and culture. It is run in more than one hundred countries with support of the local German cultural centres (Goethe-Institut).

In Bangladesh, the training of German teachers began in January 2009. Only a few months later, in May 2009, the first two schools, Oxford International School and South Point School & College, became official members of the network. The then German Ambassador, Frank

Meyke, attended the signing ceremony of the memorandums at both schools and was very pleased to see a cooperation in the educational sector, adding to the already prospering bilateral relations between Germany and Bangladesh.

The partner schools in Dhaka are offering German classes and their best students have access to scholarships. Three from each of the schools were selected to attend youth camps in India which combined learning German in an outdoor atmosphere together with exploring nature and learning about the environment. One of the students from Oxford International School even turned into the

star of a documentary on the PASCH youth camps, made on behalf of the Goethe-Institut New Delhi.

Nine other students of the Bangladeshi partner schools have just returned from a language training in Germany. They stayed in the southern part of Germany for three weeks, in a beautiful area called the Black Forest. Along with students from 17 other nations, they enjoyed classes in well equipped rooms and with modern teaching methods. An abundant leisure programme, including sports, creative activities, outings to a TV-station and an amusement park, were offered as well.

Apart from German classes

and scholarships for their students, partner schools are involved in a cultural programme. A monthly film screening has started at Oxford International School with "Emil and the Detectives", a movie inspired by the novel of the German writer Erich Kaestner. A theatre performance is going to take place in October, followed by an exhibition on occasion of the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin wall in November.

The training of German teachers is still going on. A course for advanced teachers, who already had intensive language training in Germany in July, is currently held at the Goethe-Institut

in Dhanmondi. Moreover, two courses for beginners have just started at the schools. Scholarships for advanced language trainings in Germany are available for the best participants.

In short, the PASCH programme offers many benefits for any school with interest in teaching German. The Goethe-Institut plans to include three more partner schools from Bangladesh into the PASCH programme; negotiations are running. Schools in Dhaka or elsewhere which would like to know more about or even join the programme are called to contact the PASCH representative at the Goethe-Institut: pasch@dhaka.goethe.org

## A country rejoices -- when the Berlin Wall fell

ON the evening of November 9, 1989, the Wall fell in Berlin and with it the frontier that had divided Germany for 28 years. The very same night, thousands of GDR citizens rushed to the border with West Berlin. Although they had no official order, the border guards opened the crossings. Complete strangers from East and West fell into one another's arms, spontaneously celebrating the opening of the Wall together. Germany experienced a night of jubilation, a night that was to change the world.

Willy Brandt, the honorary chairman of the SPD,

appeared at the Brandenburg Gate the next morning and announced a little later in front of Schöneberg City Hall: "Now what belongs together will grow together." The newspaper headlines read: "Berlin is again Berlin" and "Germany cries tears of joy".

Exploring the West

In the days that followed, millions of GDR citizens headed westward in their Trabi and Wartburg cars, many of them travelled to the Federal Republic for the first time in their lives, visited relatives, explored cities and landscapes as well as western "shopping paradises" with 100 marks of "Welcome Money" from the Federal Republic in their pockets.

What had happened? On November 9, shortly before 7 p.m., during an international press conference, Günter Schabowski, a member of the SED Politburo, had hesitantly announced a new, liberal exit rule live in front of television cameras. In reply to a question, Schabowski explained that as far as he was aware the policy would come into effect "immediately, without delay." This news, which had not been approved in that form by the GDR government, spread throughout the GDR at lightning speed and triggered the opening of the border cross-

ings in Berlin and the fall of the Wall.

This historic day had been preceded by mass exodus from the GDR during summer 1989 (via Hungary and Czechoslovakia) and remarkable demonstrations by the opposition movement within the GDR government authorities. On October 18, 1989, the resignation of Erich Honecker, the man who had been SED general secretary and chairman of the State Council for many years, triggered a collapse of the SED regime that his successor Egon Krenz was also unable to stabilize.

The reunification

Because of the rights and responsibilities of the four Second World War victor nations towards Germany as a whole and Berlin, reunification could not be accomplished without their consent. In February 1990, the victor powers agreed to joint negotiations with the two German states. The Treaty on the Final Settlement with Respect to Germany, September 12, 1990, regulated the international legal aspects of reunification. Germany thereby regained its full sovereignty.

During the evening leading up to October 3, 1990, thousands of people celebrated the GDR's accession to the territory of the Federal Republic in front of the Reichstag building in Berlin. Finally, after four decades, Germany's national unity was restored.

The Wall fell in Germany and in the world beyond the Iron Curtain had fallen between East and West. At the end of November 1990, the NATO countries and the states of the Warsaw Pact signed the first comprehensive disarmament agreement on conventional forces at the CSCE summit in Paris. The Charter of Paris for a New Europe declared: "The era of confrontation and division of Europe has ended" and that "a new era of democracy, peace and unity" had begun. East-West conflict was officially declared over almost exactly two years after the fall of the Wall, on November 7/8, 1991, at the NATO summit conference in Rome. The Cold War was finally consigned to the history books.

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## Bangladesh German Chamber

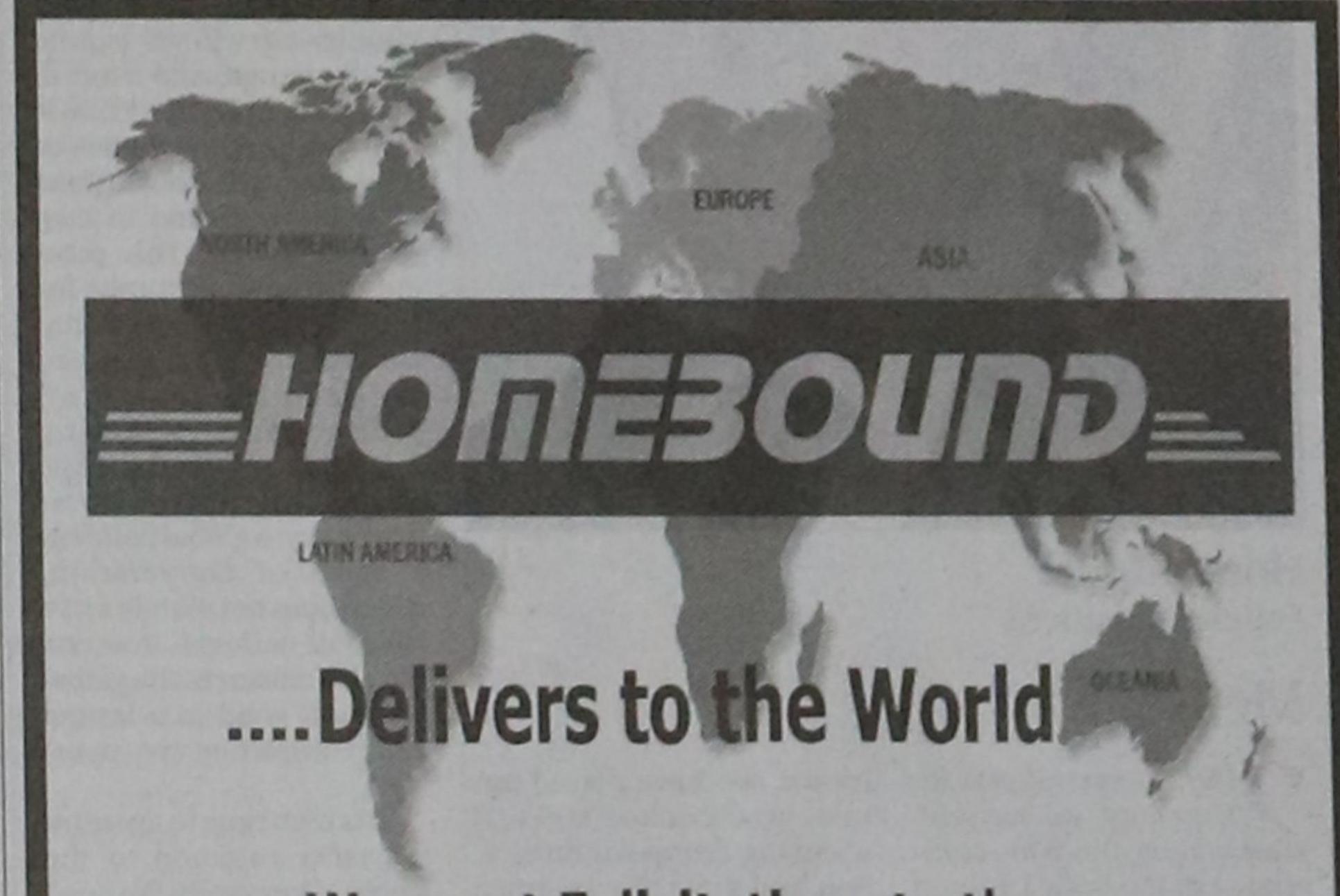


BGCCI

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If you are interested in further information about BGCCI please contact: info@bgcci.com

Md Saiful Islam is President of the Bangladesh German Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Managing Director of Picard Bangladesh, Chairman of Western Marine Bangladesh.



Warmest Felicitations to the Government and the Friendly People of The Federal Republic of Germany on the Day of German Unity

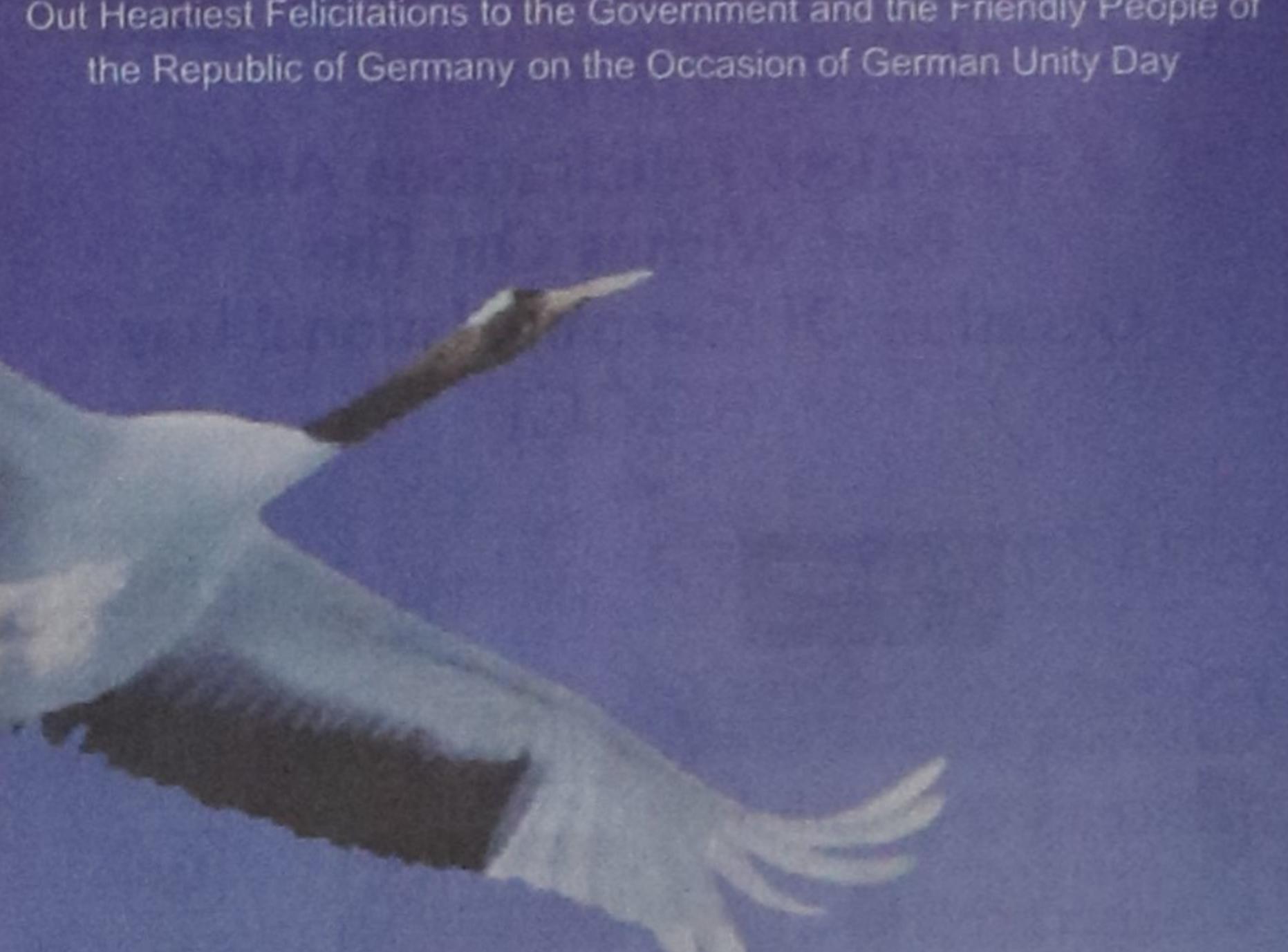
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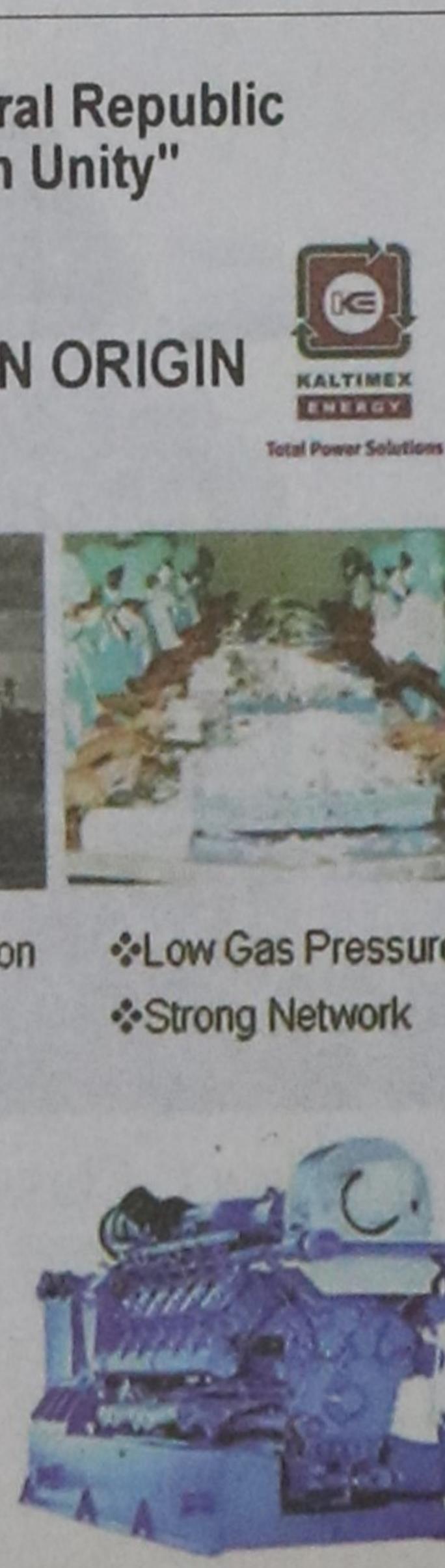
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