



Constitution Day of Denmark



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MESSAGE

It is a privilege and honour for me to address the people of Bangladesh on the occasion of the Constitution Day of Denmark. On the 5th of June 1849 King Frederik VII of Denmark approved a democratic constitution with a two-chamber parliament and political parties. All subsequent changes of our constitution have entered into force on the 5th of June.

As Denmark's Ambassador to Bangladesh since September 2006, I am pleased to use the celebration of our Constitution Day as an opportunity to assess the relations between our two countries. During my stay in Bangladesh I have observed how our long and strong history of develop-

ment cooperation has developed into a mature partnership with now also strong ties in the area of business and trade and not least our political relations, where a number of ministers have been visiting our two countries in recent years.

First of all on behalf of the Government of Denmark I would like to thank Bangladesh for playing a proactive and constructive role before, during and after the climate conference COP15 held in December 2009 in Copenhagen. Bangladesh continues to play a commendable and constructive role in tackling the global and national challenges of climate change. COP15 was also an opportunity for the Honourable Prime Minister and several ministers to visit Denmark. The Danish Climate Minister also visited Bangladesh.

Just recently in the middle of April the Danish Minister for Development Cooperation, Mr. Søren Pind, visited Bangladesh, where he met with the Government of Bangladesh and representatives from civil society and private sector and visited a number of private companies in Dhaka and Chittagong. A visit was also made by the Minister to the Chittagong Hill Tracts where he saw development activities related to water supply and agricultural production. The Minister was satisfied with the programmes and committed Denmark to further cooperation with Bangladesh.

Many of you will know that Denmark provides substantial devel-

opment assistance to Bangladesh, especially within the areas of human rights, democratisation and good governance, agriculture and water supply/sanitation and private sector development. We are also supporting a successful private sector instrument in Bangladesh called the B2B (business-to-business) Programme. The B2B Programme seeks to match and support long-term commercially viable business collaborations between companies in Bangladesh and in Denmark. The Programme has so far supported around 70 projects in sectors such as IT, shipbuilding sector, food processing and sustainable energy. I am very pleased to say that the Programme contributes to creating jobs and links Bangladeshi private companies with the international markets.

The most striking development for me is however the level of interest from Danish companies to do business in Bangladesh. In the past six months 31 Danish companies have come to Bangladesh. It started with 21 companies looking at the shipbuilding and fishery sectors. Of these companies five have already started doing commercial business in Bangladesh and four are about to start joint ventures for local production of trawls, hydraulics for ships, sonar equipment and other electrical equipment for ships. Another four companies are expected to start in Bangladesh very soon bringing the success rate to more than 50 % in only six months. Last month 10 Danish companies came to

Bangladesh to focus on the energy sector as well as introduction of cleaner technology and it looks like eight of them will start doing business in Bangladesh.

It is good news for Bangladesh that foreign companies are interested in investing in the country. In order to ensure growth and reduce poverty it is also important to continue strengthening the framework conditions necessary for attracting foreign direct investments.

On behalf of the Government of Denmark I would like to commend the Government of Bangladesh for its initiatives to improve Public Financial Management, the recent establishment of the National Human Rights Commission and the strengthening of important guardian institutions, such as the Election Commission and the Anti-Corruption Commission, and other key institutions. Working towards a more functional parliament will also strengthen inclusive parliamentary practices being a cornerstone of any democracy.

In all programmes supported by Denmark special attention is given to the alignment of Danish development assistance with the national policies, systems and procedures. We therefore continuously explore opportunities for strengthening donor harmonisation and alignment with Government in order to ensure maximum efficiency and impact of the combined development assistance. One important milestone in strengthening donor harmoni-



Danish Minister for Development Cooperation, Mr. Søren Pind, speaking at an energy conference in Dhaka in April 2010.

sation is the Joint Cooperation Strategy by the Government of Bangladesh and 18 Development Partners, in support of the implementation of Government's Poverty Reduction Strategy. Here I would like to commend the Government of Bangladesh for its continued efforts to improve aid effectiveness and for hosting the successful Bangladesh Development Forum in February this year, which further strengthened the close dialogue between the Government of Bangladesh and the Development

Partners.

In closing, I would like to reassure Denmark's continued commitment to the longstanding and strong partnership with Bangladesh that has been ongoing ever since the Independence. I am hopeful that the warm relations between Denmark and Bangladesh will continue and become even stronger in the coming years.

Einar Hebogaard Jensen
Ambassador of Denmark to Bangladesh

Danish-Bangladeshi energy and clean tech projects in the pipeline

Danish Energy and Clean Tech Solution to Support Development in Bangladesh

In April 2010 the newly appointed Danish Development Minister, Mr. Søren Pind, visited Bangladesh. With him followed a group of 10 Danish companies working within the areas of wind power, solar, biogas, conventional energy and clean-tech water solutions.

More than 20% of all electricity is produced by renewable energy sources in Denmark and Denmark is by far a world leader in this area.

Denmark is also one of the market leaders when it comes to clean water. "When you visit the capital of Denmark, Copenhagen, in the summer-time, you will actually see people swimming in the canals in the middle of the capital. A number of designated areas for swimming have been set-up and these places are crowded with people on the sunny days. Not a lot of capitals can provide clean enough water in the middle of the city for swimming, but thanks to a tight regulatory framework and the implementation of high tech cleaning solutions it is possible in Denmark", says the Danish



Chimney at HHK kiln, which reduce energy use and local pollution

Danish B2B-support programme, but also by assisting Danish and local companies establish partnerships on purely commercial basis.

"We will of course follow-

up on this success", says Morten Siem Lynge. "I hope that we will be able to convince more Danish companies to come to Bangladesh to explore opportunities in

the country. Visiting Bangladesh is essential for the foreign companies in order to understand the opportunities that exist here. Most of the companies in the

April 2010 delegation came to Bangladesh a bit skeptical, but left with a lot of enthusiasm and eagerness to return.", says Morten Siem Lynge.

Heartiest congratulations to the people of Denmark on the occasion of the Danish Constitution Day

We express our sincere thanks and appreciation to the people of Denmark for their relentless support in the technological advancement of Bangladesh

Ambassador to Bangladesh, Mr. Einar H. Jensen and moves on to talk about the need to transfer some of the Danish knowledge to energy starved and pollution affected Bangladesh.

"We had at the Embassy been talking about establishing a Danish Delegation to Bangladesh in late 2010. However, when it was decided that that newly appointed Development Minister was to visit Bangladesh beginning of April 2010 we decided to move quickly. The delegation was organized with a very short timeframe of 1½-2 months and we were very happy that we were able to identify 10 Danish companies wanting to visit Bangladesh. Bangladesh is firmly established in the minds of the Danish IT-sector, but within other industries, Bangladesh is still an unknown country for most Danish companies", explains the Danish Ambassador.

The Energy Delegation was a success and hopefully more companies will follow

According to the Danish Embassy the Energy and Clean Tech delegation was an enormous success. "Of the 10 companies, I'm sure we will see at least 8 being active in Bangladesh within the coming months. We have already seen the first MoUs being signed and some of the Danish and Bangladeshi companies are still discussing, their next step. We see both companies within large scale biogas, solar and wind power, but also within water cleaning coming up with project ideas and local partners to move on with.", says Morten Siem Lynge, B2B-coordinator and the Danish Embassy.

In light of energy and water pollution being some of the biggest challenges in Bangladesh, the Danish Embassy has decided to continue its focus on these two areas. Both in terms of supporting partnerships with the



We wish all the best to the people of Denmark on their 'Constitution Day' on 5th of June.

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